The dispositif of terror:

Islamic State, biopolitical governance, and the digital conjuncture

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Abstract

This thesis re-conceptualises contemporary articulations of terrorist governance through Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's (D&G herein) concept of assemblage, and Michel Foucault's theories of dispositif (dispositive, apparatus) and biopower. It unpacks the media and governmental strategies of the group known as the Islamic State (IS) by teasing out the resonance between the group's internal administrative processes, external media output, and its supporters' social media discourse. A consideration of IS's social ontology as an assemblage, and their terroristic conduct through Foucault's dispositif, seeks to problematise the group as more than just a terrorist organisation. Rather, an analysis of globally fluid and conjunctive terrorist strategies executed via media, governance, and conduct, as part of and produced by a dispositif, accounts for intersections of social power, epistemology, production, circulation, function, a/effects, and the techno-discursive moment from which the group emerge and reside.

Taking both media and administration as my objects of study, I consider how IS's articulations of terror, in terms of media and governance, constitute what Foucault called a dispositif. That is, to what extent was IS's media and governmental strategy, and its implementation, composed of 'a heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions'? (Foucault 1980, p. 194). I argue that to understand the group more holistically, as well as how contemporary terrorist groups produce subjects through local and global concentrations of governance, an analysis of both their administration and media is necessary. To achieve this, I conduct a dispositif analysis (Jäger & Maier 2009, 2016; Caborn 2007).

A dispositif analysis, essentially a tripartite discourse analysis of texts, actions, and objects, has a pronounced focus on the materiality of discourse which this thesis seeks to address within the context of IS's activities. Specifically, I analyse internal administration documents used in an official capacity in the caliphate, media produced in English directed outside the caliphate, and social media content produced by IS supporters.

My analysis bears a number of conclusions. There is strong discursive continuity across IS media and governance which was retained over time. That is, IS have a strong sense of in-group identity and a discursive worldview that is very rigid. IS govern through the logic of the biopolitical which I show to be a dominant mode of power in IS media and administration. As well, by putting theorists of dispositif and discourse theory into conversation, I develop and show dispositif analysis to be both a productive methodological device for conceptualising an object of study, as well as its own mode of analysis. Following a reflection on the ongoing resilience of IS online, I ultimately locate IS within the mediatisation of terrorism: the increasing extent to which acts of terror are mediated by terrorists themselves.

Attestation of authorship

"I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning."

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<u>Acknowledgements</u>

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Glossary

Bay'ah	"'Oath of allegiance" amongst Sunnis sworn by the community of Muslims, often in the person of one of its chief representatives, to the caliph, thus conferring on him the legitimacy of power" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 24)
Da'wah	To call, summon, or invite: "Koranically, the word most commonly means to evoke the deity, and so to place one's faith in that deity. It also means to call to religion, and in this sense Muhammad is a *dāʿī* or caller" (Glassé 2001, p. 114)
Dabiq	A town in Syria. It is mentioned in the Hadith as the place where a great battle will take place during the Muslim Malahim (Armageddon). It is for this reason that IS have named their magazine *Dabiq*.
Dhimmi	"'Tributary' protected according to the rules of the pact of dhimmi who, in return for this, was bound by various conditions… (Jews, Christians, and even Zoroastrians). These people were allowed freedom of worship provided they paid the tribute known as jizya and accepted an inferior status" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 39)
Diwan, Dawawin	A book, record, or collection of records. Used here to refer to a government office (Glassé 2001, p. 120)
Dunya	Refers to concerns in the material world, as opposed to the heavenly or Godly world (Esposito 2003)
Emir	"'he who commands'… used originally to refer to the head of the community or caliph… then to the military leaders and provincial governors" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 45)
Hadd	"'limit'… used in the Qur'an to refer to those 'restrictive prescriptions' that are divine in origin. It has come to refer also to the 'legal punishments' imposed for; -fornication… the drinking of wine… theft… brigandage…apostasy" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 56)
Hadith	"'Utterance' and, more particularly, the 'word' attributed to Muhammad" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 56)
Hijrah	"'Emigration' of Muhammad and the first Muslims who left Mecca for Medina… *Hijra* is also used of the emigration of Muslims who, in imitation of Muhammad, leave a hostile land for a region where they settle and from which they will return as conquerors" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 63)
Hisbah	"Function of the official known as muhtasib whose job it was, in city life, to 'promote good and forbid evil'" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 64)
Imam	"Guide, leader" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 73)
Jahiliyya	"'days of ignorance', when Islam was not yet known (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 82)

Jama'ah	"Community of the believers" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 82)
Jannah	"Garden – Term generally used in the Qur'an to refer to Paradise" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 83)
Jihad	"Original meaning, 'struggle'. – It was used first in the treatises on religious law (fiqh), to mean the 'effort of war' that must be waged against infidels (kafirun) in the name of the law (Shari'a) to ensure the triumph of the true religion" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 84)
Jizya	"'Tax' imposed according to the Qur'an on the 'People of the book' [Christians, Jews]" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 85)
Kafir/kufr	"Infidel, unbeliever, miscreant... pagan, idolater" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 87)
Khilafah	Caliphate
Khums	"Fifth" (92), "A fifth share of booty (ghanima) acquired as a result of conquest that, according to the Qur'an was owed to Muhammad and part of which he would then distribute" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 50)
Maslahah	The underlying basis of law contingent on the public interest (Esposito 2003).
Muhammad	"Founder of Islam" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 116)
Muhsan	"Legal concept describing the personal status of an individual who is free (not a slave) and who either has never committed an act of illicit intercourse or has consummated a lawful marriage to a free partner. In the latter case, the person is subject to the sentence of death by stoning if he or she commits adultery" (Esposito 2003)
Mujahidun (Mujahedeen)	"Warriors of the jihad" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 118)
Murtadd/murtaddin	Name for an apostate (Glassé 2001, p. 54)
Mushrikin	"Someone guilty of 'shirk'" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 121)
Muwahhidun	"The supporters of the oneness of God (tawhid) (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 123)
Qur'an	"meaning 'recitation', referring to the entirety of the message transmitted by Muhammad and collected together by his Companions" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 141)
Ramadan	"Ninth month of the Muslim year during which a fast (sawm) is observed" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 143)

Sadaqah	"Charity, alms" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 149)
Safawi/Safavid	Reference to the Persian dynasty and called on as an epithet to refer to Iranians.
Sahwa	Sunni tribes which rebelled against IS.
Salaf	"'the ancients'. – known for their literalist interpretations of the Qur'an and chosen as guides by the traditionalists who see them as guarantors of fidelity to the Sunna" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 151)
Shahadah	"Witness. Recitation of the Islamic witness of faith, "There is no god but God and Muhammad is the messenger of God"; the first of the five pillars of Islam. Shahadah is accepted as a declaration of acceptance of Islam by a convert: the convert has only to repeat it twice in the presence of at least one other Muslim." (Esposito 2003)
Shari'a	"Law established by God" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 157)
Shia/Shiite	"Politico-religious movement" formed after death of Muhammad (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 159)
Shirk	"To associate other gods with God" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 159, 19)
Sunna, Sunnis	"used to describe how Muhammed acted" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 166)
Sura	"Chapters of the Qur'an arranged according to length" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 167)
Taghut	"Quranic term for false god or idol. Also applied to tyrannical rulers who arrogate God's absolute power and use it to oppress people. In modern Iran it is applied to the fallen shah and all those who supported him. In the same way that **jahiliyyah** is used in Islamic history to refer to the pre-Islamic age of paganism, *taghut* stands for the pre-Islamic-revolution period in the history of modern Iran." (Esposito 2003)
Tawhid	"Fundamental belief in Islam, the rejection of which is condemned as associationism (shirk)" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 172)
Ummah	"Community" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 178)
Wahhabism	"Politico-religious movement... It laid the basis for the rigorist regime of Saudi Arabia which enforces a strict interpretation of Shari'a law and condemns certain aspects of Sufism and also 'pious visits' (ziyaras) to the tombs of the saints" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 180)
Yazidi	"Non-Shi'ite religious movement... emerged in the twelfth century" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 184)

Zakah	"'Obligatory alms'. Tax... which purifies Muslims from the stain of sin" (Sourdel & Sourdel-Thomine 2007, p. 185)

Introduction

A gold logo forms on a black screen above text that reads 'Al-Hayat Media Centre'. Computer code runs. A montage of news coverage of a terror attack plays and is overlayed with targets on victims and locations on maps. Paramedics load people into ambulances while news commentary continues before audio and image fade out.

Upon fading in again, we are now in the desert. We watch a man in military gear shoot targets on a wall as we hear acapella in Arabic. A soldier kneels on a man's back and holds a knife at his throat. The man on the ground wears an orange jumpsuit. The camera shifts so only the knife-wielding soldier is in frame. We can only see the look on his face and the sawing motion of his arm. This motion is not mechanical; it requires a lot of effort and he is struggling. The montage shifts location again to a man speaking to the camera in front of a black and white flag. This scene is interspersed with shots of soldiers loading handguns or holding a single finger in the air with blood-spattered hands as prisoners in orange jumpsuits kneel in front of them. For the rest of the video, montage footage of terror attacks plays as previously shown martyrs' audio messages are heard.

Following speeches from camouflage-clad soldiers back in the desert, another soldier wielding a knife begins a speech as a man kneels before him. He holds the knife to the kneeling man's throat, and we fade out. When we fade back in, the soldier holds a disembodied head up high as music plays. We are then shown a monochrome version of the beheading in slow motion before the message 'Blood for Blood' appears on-screen and a final clip of David Cameron announcing, 'We stand with you, united.' Across the screen, white text reads 'Whoever stands in the ranks of kufr will be a target for our swords and will fall in humiliation.' More computer code appears, and we fade out.

In May of 2014, only a month before the group now known as the Islamic State declared a caliphate in a huge area of land spanning across Iraq and Syria, the following pledge of allegiance was used in an official capacity in Aleppo:

Disavowal

God- Almighty and Exalted is He- has said: "An example of merit has been for you in Ibrahim and those with him when they said to their people: 'We disavow you and what you worship besides God, we have declare you to be disbelievers and thus have enmity and hatred begun between us and you forever until you believe in God alone.'"

And the one upon whom be prayers and peace has said: "Whoever has said there is no deity but God and has declared to be disbelief what is worshipped besides God has entrusted his property, blood and reckoning to God"- narrated by [Sahih] Muslim.

[...]

I affirm and so with all power of my mind and definitive belief without any pressure or compulsion:

1. I disavow to God every religion that contravenes the religion of Islam
2. I disavow to God every guidance that contravenes the guidance of the Prophet- may prayers and peace be upon him.
3. I declare to be disbelief every idolatrous tyrant that worships beside God and at the head of these idolatrous tyrants Bashar 'al-Assad' and those like him from the idolatrous tyrants of the Arabs and non-Arabs as well as their soldiers and those who are loyal to them.
4. I disavow to God the Sufis and their beliefs as well as their imams, at the head of whom are Ibn Araby, al-Sha'arani and al-Nabahani.
5. I affirm that I embrace what has been ascribed to the Prophet (PBUH) with the understanding of the Companions- may God be pleased with them.
6. I affirm that the uprightness of this religion in 'a Book [Qur'an] guides and a sword gives victory.'
7. I affirm embrace of the clear guidance of the Prophet from the obligation of the beard and not letting the clothes drop [below the ankles].
8. I affirm that I bear the result of any contravention of the above from the consequences according to Shari'a.

And God is witness to what I say.

I the affirmer:
First witness:
Second witness:
Official for the Diwan al-Awqaf

Figure 1 - Specimen P available at https://www.aymennjawad.org/2015/01/archive-of-islamic-state-administrative-documents

A video which houses a beheading and celebrates the deaths of 137 in a series of coordinated attacks, and a document which functions as a contract with one's soul at stake could seem

only distantly related. However, these two objects are part of the same strategic logic of the Islamic State (IS).

This thesis re-conceptualises contemporary articulations of terrorist governance through Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's (D&G herein) concept of assemblage, and Michel Foucault's theories of dispositif (dispositive, apparatus) and biopower. Considering the governmental and media strategies of the group known as the Islamic State (IS), this thesis accounts for modern expressions of terrorist governance as a discursive set of biopolitical strategies and processes with a variety of goals in mind. A consideration of IS's social ontology as an assemblage, and their terroristic conduct through Foucault's dispositif, seeks to problematise the group as more than just a terrorist organisation. Rather, an analysis of globally fluid and conjunctive terrorist strategies executed via media, governance, and conduct, as part of and produced by a dispositif, accounts for intersections of social power, epistemology, production, circulation, function, a/effects, and the techno-discursive moment from which the group emerge and reside. A dispositif analysis, essentially a tripartite discourse analysis of texts, actions, and objects, has a pronounced focus on the materiality of discourse which this thesis seeks to address within the context of IS's activities.

Taking both media and administration as my objects of study, I pose the following research questions:

- How do contemporary terrorist groups such as Islamic State institute bureaucratic and media forms to govern subjects locally and incite terror globally?

- How congruent are IS media discourses with IS's governmental strategies, deployment of cultural policy, juridical strategies, and judicial decisions?

- How do Islamic State's regimes of exclusion operate?

- What are the discursive stakes of biopolitical imagery and how does such knowledge dictate cultural and political exclusion?

Rather than assigning research questions to specific chapters, I address these questions differentially throughout the thesis. That is, while all analysis chapters are concerned with IS's regimes of exclusion to some extent, some chapters such as Chapter 7 are more directly concerned with the relationship between biopolitical imagery and cultural and political exclusion. Moreover, others such as Chapter 6 are concerned with IS media governmentality, while Chapter 5 focuses on the global incitement of terror. To approach these questions, I consider how IS's articulations of terror, in terms of media and governance, constitute what Foucault called a dispositif. That is, to what extent was IS's media and governmental strategy, and its implementation, composed of 'a heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions'? (Foucault 1980, p. 194). I argue that to understand the group more holistically, as well as how contemporary terrorist groups produce subjects through local and global concentrations of governance, an analysis of both their administration and media is necessary.

One of the primary concerns of this thesis is the biopower of the Islamic State. It would seem that an assessment of necropower (Mbembe 2003) would instead be more apt for an analysis of IS. However, I follow Goldie Osuri's suggestion that Foucault's conceptualisation of biopower 'attempts to describe necropower without naming it as such' (Osuri 2007, p. 35). Foucault's biopower includes the sovereign right to kill as well as racial categories that function as a 'technology of taxonomy in the exercise of biopower' (Osuri 2007, p. 35). As I will show, the biopolitical in the caliphate has simultaneous murder and care functions: social categorisations outlined in IS discourse provide the conditions within which one is regulated or excluded. In short, the murderous function of the necropolitical is baked into biopower in the Islamic State.

Though I go to some length to highlight the specificity of biopower in the caliphate, many of the methods of IS governance are not necessarily novel; what characterises biopower in the caliphate is the discursive base of the IS dispositif on one hand, and their outwardly aggressive claim to sovereignty on the other. Understanding these aspects of IS governance will show that the methods of governance articulated by IS are not exceptional. An investigation into IS governance reveals the extent to which the common relations of the biopolitical permeate a great many modes of governance of which IS is just one example. A consideration of biopower, as Jasbir Puar notes at the outset of *Terrorist Assemblages*, reveals not just who is excluded, but *how* they are excluded (Puar 2007, p. xii). In what follows, I outline the context of the group known as the Islamic State, an explanation of their ideology, the research methods undertaken in this thesis, and a preview of the chapters to come.

Context

As Olivier Roy (2017, p, 78), has noted, there are a good number of works that deal with the history and rise of IS (see, Celso 2018; Manne 2017; Roy 2017; Atwan 2015; Cockburn 2014; Stern & Berger 2014). I will address them briefly here in order to contextualise the following chapters.

One of the primary contours which lead to the rise of IS is the post-9/11 context of Iraq (and the wider Middle East) initiated in-part by the War on Terror. As Stern and Berger note, terrorism in Iraq skyrocketed following the US invasion in 2003 to the extent that some say the Iraq war saved a waning 'Jihadi' movement after the destruction of Al-Qaeda's base in Afghanistan (2014, pp. 18-19). Over 100,000 Ba'athists were removed from power in Iraq as the consequence of US intervention which resulted in mass disenfranchisement in the coming years (2014, p. 20). However, the history of IS goes back further than that to 1989 and a Jordanian man named Abu Musab al-Zarqawi (born Ahmed Fadhil Nazzal al Kalaylah)

(Stern & Berger 2014, p. 13). Born into a relatively poor family, al-Zarqawi was a petty criminal before engaging with violent Islamism (Manne 2017, pp. 146-147). In 1989, he attempted to join the insurgency against the Soviets in Afghanistan but arrived too late. Following this failure, and until 1992, he engaged in battles with other Islamists in the region before meeting with the famed proponent of Salafi Islam, Sheikh Abu Muhammad al Maqdisi. In the 1990s, Zarqawi did a six-year stint in a Jordanian prison (1993-1999) where he founded Jama'at al-Tawhid wal-Jihad (Monotheism and Struggle). Following this, his 'Millennium Plot' which targeted two Christian sites, a border site, and a hotel, was thwarted and he fled to Afghanistan where he met and spent time with Osama bin Laden. Incidentally, Zarqawi never got on well with bin Laden and never gave him *bayah* (pledged allegiance) (Stern & Berger 2014, p. 14). Later, Zarqawi was criticised by bin Laden for targeting other Muslims (Shi'a in particular) even though he did find support for his ideas in a foundational text for IS known as *The Management of Savagery* (Stern & Berger 2014, p. 22-23). Regardless, over the next few years Zarqawi developed his ideas and was allowed by Al Qaeda to set up a training camp in Afghanistan. He joined Ansar al-Islam in 2002 and, following the US invasion, was injured and subsequently spent time in Iraq and Iraqi Kurdistan.

It is from al-Zarqawi that IS originates. A forerunner group known as Jama'at al-Tawhid wal-Jihad (Monotheism and Struggle) was founded by al-Zarqawi in 1999 before transitioning to Tanzim Qaidat al-Jihad fi Bilad al-Rafidayn or Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) in 2004 (Ingram, Whiteside, and Winter 2020, p. 10; Riedel 2008, pp. 94-105). Following leader Zarqawi's death in a US airstrike in 2006, a Mujahideen Shura Council made up of many 'Jihadi' organisations was formed. However, by 2008 the organisation was beginning to wane, largely in part due to the 'Sunni Awakening' alongside a surge in activity on the part of

the US army. Following the death of ISI leader Abu Omar al-Baghdadi in 2010, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of IS until his death in late 2019, took the leadership.

Al-Baghdadi had a PhD in Islamic Culture and Sharia law and so was well-versed in the Islamic knowledge required by IS in both their media and governmental activities. He came to 'jihad' in 2003 following the US invasion of Iraq and was the co-founder and head of Jamaat Jaysh Ahl al Sunnah wa-al-Jamaah's Shura Council (Army of the Sunni People Group). Importantly, Baghdadi spent time in Camp Bucca around 2004/2005. As Stern and Berger note, camps like this may have helped to 'radicalize' people (2014, p. 33). Baghdadi ended up employing many Ba'athists in his ranks (who he possibly met in Camp Bucca) which is likely to have facilitated ISI's military, organisational, and bureaucratic sophistication (Stern & Berger 2014, pp. 38-39).

By 2012, Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's policies, including deep-set de-Ba'athification at every level, were beginning to result in widespread sectarianism and unrest in Iraq (Stern & Berger 2014, p. 39; Khoury 2014). We ought to recall here that the Syrian Civil War was in its nascency and the Arab Spring was in full force, circumstances of which IS certainly took advantage and which I will return to. It was also during 2013 that Baghdadi, in charge of the then ISI (Islamic State of Iraq) conducted the 'Breaking down the Walls' campaign by blowing up prison walls and freeing hundreds of prisoners from places like Abu Ghraib and Taji. Many of these prisoners were formerly members of ISI (and its forerunners) and subsequently ended up joining its ranks (Stern & Berger 2014, p. 39; Cockburn 2014, p. 74).

By April 2013, ISI had moved into Syria and merged with Jabat al-Nusra, renaming themselves to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). However, Ayman al-Zawahiri, the then leader of Al-Qaeda, and Abu Mohammad al-Jawlani, the leader of Al-Nusra, were not fond of this merger and there were confrontations between the two groups (Stern & Berger

2014, p. 40). By February of 2014, Al Qaeda officially split with IS primarily due to the violence of their methods. In June of 2014, in a post-Arab Spring Middle East and in the middle of the Syrian Civil War, al-Baghdadi had declared an Islamic Caliphate in an area the size of Britain which stretched out across both Syria and Iraq.

During 2014 and 2015, the 'heyday' of IS, one of their most striking points was their use of both social and legacy media. IS and their supporters were a huge presence across social networking sites (SNS) and social media including Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, and so on, before they largely shifted to more secure apps such as WhatsApp and Telegram[1]. However, as of late 2020, IS continue to maintain a presence on Twitter which I discuss in this thesis's conclusion, though attention on the group in news media has waned due to both their territorial losses and a global pandemic. Nevertheless, Twitter was at one time IS's go-to online platform, a phenomenon which has been widely studied, perhaps most effectively by Berger and Morgan (2014). Just before the official announcement of a caliphate, IS provided battlefield updates on Twitter via accounts which were said to be official or at least officially endorsed (Irshaid 2014). However, the platform was also used to produce the terror spectacle of the group in order to gain visibility and legitimacy (Kellner 2003a, 2003b, 2004). IS and its supporters were adept at the platform, using techniques such as the reappropriation of popular hashtags like #WC2014 and #Brazil2014 to gain global notoriety (Milmo 2014). Their techniques of emergence are captured by what Ali Fisher called the 'Media Mujahideen' (2015). The Media Mujahideen is the term Fisher uses to account for the cohort of IS supporters online who were adept at organising and reorganising themselves: they would quickly download and save IS legacy media before it was flagged and banned, re-uploading it so it could be shared once again.

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[1] Telegram eventually became preferable over WhatsApp due to its end-to-end encryption meaning that only the sender and receiver of a message can see it: chats are not logged making it difficult for authorities to access conversations. (see Bloom, Tiflati & Horgan 2019)

When their social media accounts were banned, they would quickly create new ones. At this time, IS legacy media seemed to flow freely across the networked spaces of the internet, thus producing a global spectacle of terror: between 2015 and 2017, a Google search would net a direct link to IS legacy media in the first few results.

The spectacle of IS online was not only characterised by the group's social media pursuits. Both the production and violence of 'official' or what I term 'legacy' media was widely discussed in both news media and academia. While media commentators referred to IS's media output as 'slick and sophisticated' (Becker 2014), some scholars argued that it did not deserve the 'Hollywood style' description some had given it due to widespread access to HD video technologies, as well as to faults such as editing inconsistencies (Bender 2017, pp. 59-83). The legacy media output of IS was markedly different from the grainy, boring, terrorist videos of the early 2000s: these were spectacles which took advantage of HD video, montage, slow motion, and editing techniques which gave the impression of sophistication. As I discuss in the following chapters, it was clear that IS had a methodical media production workflow and their outputs included a variety of content, not just the violent removal of life.

Equally important is IS's use of bureaucratic and administrative methods. It is clear that since at least April 2007, IS known then as ISI (Islamic State of Iraq) sought to implement various ministries (Diwan) in a plea to assert their governing power over various territories (al-Tamimi 2015, p. 118). Conflict in Iraq, and especially the Anbar Awakening, staggered these attempts and by 2011 the group were more akin to an organised crime syndicate (al-Tamimi 2015, p. 119). However, from 2013, more concrete administrative institutions and processes began to materialise including the establishment of an Islamic Services Committee in Raqqa (the de facto capital) that monitored a range of infrastructure and social services such as 'electricity supply, health spending, education, street cleaning, and food provision', and even had a complaints office (al-Tamimi 2015, p. 123). In 2014,

following the official declaration of the caliphate, institutions analogous to official governmental departments were solidified which included local administrations directed toward the conduct of daily life who answered to higher departments (al-Tamimi 2015, p. 123). However, it is the intervention in everyday life via administrative institutions on a local level and via media on a global level which this thesis seeks to understand.

Ideology

IS's interpretation or appropriation of Islam has an obvious and significant intersection with 'Islamist' terrorism and therefore terrorist governance. Cole Bunzel claims that IS identify with two main schools of thought for 'Jihadis' which came to prominence in the late 20th century — the Muslim Brotherhood and Salafi-Jihadism. The latter is far more salient for framing IS:

> The movement is predicated on an extremist and minoritarian reading of Islamic scripture that is also textually rigorous, deeply rooted in a premodern theological tradition, and extensively elaborated by a recognized cadre of religious authorities. (2014, p. 7)

The writings of Ibn Taymiyya in the 13th century and Abd al-Wahhab in the 18th century inform contemporary renderings of Salafi-Jihadism too (Bunzel 2014, p. 8). Salafi-Jihadi discourses are not only baked into IS's own discourse, they are directly referenced in both media objects and administration documents: they are the reason for particular governmentalities and often inform the material ways in which these governmentalities are expressed. Because IS incorporate what they understand as the rule of God (Allah) into their conduct, a consideration of this mode of Islamist hermeneutics is necessary to understand its articulation to bureaucracy, governance, and media. In other words, to understand IS's governmental dispositif, it is fundamental that their specific Islamist hermeneutics is understood as one of the primary knowledge-systems that inform their conduct.

Above, I have used scare quotes to talk about jihadism. This is because the notion of 'jihad' is a contested term that has been thrown around very loosely, especially since the

events of September 11, 2001. While the concept is often used as a shorthand for holy war or

a kind of struggle, notions of jihad vary considerably depending on who is making the claims

(Peters 2008, p. vii; Myers 2006). Functional definitions of jihad sometimes differentiate

between lesser and greater jihad: the former is related to war and the latter concerns an inner

struggle. Within the limits of this definition, jihad has been thought of as both individual and

collective duty. Importantly, there have been very few calls for jihad throughout history, but

an important part of its recent development is its use as a term in anticolonial struggles and

nationalist movements (Newby 2002, pp. 115-116; Roy 2017, p. 13). Olivier Roy's (2017)

work on jihad reveals that the genealogy of the term 'jihad' does not necessarily equate to

how it is understood today:

> Since the time of the Prophet, a whole range of scholarly legal literature has developed to
> regulate jihad, to prevent it from serving as a pretext for revolt and sustaining *fitna* (violent
> discord) in the community. Regulation also aims to enable sovereigns to control external wars
> and avoid dangerous escalations. Most scholars therefore do not view jihad as one of the five
> pillars of Islam. It is not a personal obligation (*fard 'ayn*), but instead a collective obligation;
> it pertains to a specific community threatened by non-Muslims and applies to all the Muslims
> in this community. It cannot be carried out against other Muslims. It must be declared by the
> competent religious authorities. Volunteers must meet specific requirements (have their
> fathers' permission if they are underage, repay their debts, make sure their families have
> adequate income and support, etc.). (Roy 2017, p. 12)

He uses the term 'jihadism' to refer to something that developed in the 1950s following a

failed Arab offensive against Israel and which can later be found in the writings of Sayyid

Qutb (who is constantly referenced by IS), Abd el-Salam Faraj, and Abda'llah Azzam.

Azzam, for example, argues that jihad is a kind of training in which one becomes a 'global'

Muslim unhinged from other social categorisations (2017, pp. 14-15). However, Roy notes

that jihad does not correlate directly with terrorism: instead, it ought to be thought of as a way

of being, one of the goals of which is to go out and live one's desired Islam which is precisely

what IS seemed to offer (Roy 2017, pp. 14-15). It is clear that IS use a range of definitions of

jihad which include an inner personal struggle against sin and temptation and an armed

struggle against apostates. From a Foucauldian perspective, jihad functions as a

power/knowledge for IS who deploy it to inform their conduct and produce a norm against which the group's subjectivities can be measured.

Methods

The primary method I have used to gather data is online data collection. Firstly, I gathered legacy media[2]. During 2017 and 2018, I downloaded all media tagged with 'Al-Hayat Media Centre' on Aaron Zelin's jihadology.net archive and saved it to an external hard drive. Since then, and during the tenure of my PhD, I have constantly checked back for any more media and saved it, regardless, of whether or not I thought it would become a significant part of my analysis. It ought to be noted, however, that IS legacy media has always been very easy to find online: a simple Google search (at least in the early days of the caliphate) would usually net links to IS media within the first page of results. This accessibility to IS media on the surface web also led me to forego investigating IS on the dark web. To access the dark web is a very deliberate practice that requires at least some understanding of the special browser needed to access it in the first place, as well as an idea of what one is specifically looking for. In other words, accessing the dark web lies outside the common sense of techno-ideology in our digital conjuncture where smartphones are mainstream technologies, and the phrase 'google it' has become ubiquitous. The prevalence of IS on the open web and the ease with which their content might be accessed via Twitter or elsewhere is, to me, much more pertinent to an understanding of the governing rationality than are sites on the dark web replete with more private information regarding events and rumours between soldiers (Gross Jr. 2020, p. 346; Weimann 2016).

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[2] I use the term 'legacy media' throughout my thesis to refer to 'older' forms of one-to-many media such as magazines and video productions.

My second primary source of data was Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi's archive of internal IS administration documents. Since 2014, al-Tamimi has gathered and translated internal IS administration documents, sometimes even offering analysis (2020). These were an invaluable primary resource that provided me with an insight into the internal machinations of the caliphate. During the course of my research, the *New York Times* released an article titled 'The ISIS Files' and a supplementary podcast titled 'Caliphate' by the journalist Rukmini Callimachi which detailed the recovery of thousands of internal IS documents. In September of 2018, it was announced that the *New York Times* would collaborate with the George Washington Program on Extremism to recover, translate, and archive the documents (The New York Times Company 2018). The archive itself was launched on June 29 2020 in the midst of the global Covid-19 pandemic. Many of the documents made available at the launch were mundane such as housing application forms and receipts. Despite this, I have addressed some relevant documents from this archive in Chapter 7.

Over time, I realised I needed to pay more attention to social media although, as I note in Chapter 5, social media and online social networking sites are difficult objects to analyse due to their fleeting nature; this issue is amplified when the content sought is seen as objectionable by most and is quickly removed. Despite this, I discovered a list of IS-linked accounts produced by the online anti-terrorism collective CtrlSec (al-Arabiya News 2015; Channel 4 2015; Cottee 2015; see also CtrlSec 2020). This group were responsible for producing large lists of IS-linked accounts in 2014 and 2015 which were reported to Twitter. Though their website was inactive by the time I got to it, it was still accessible via the Internet Archive where I found a list of around 9000 IS-linked accounts, and another of around 22000 (See Web.archive.org 2015a, 2015b). To avoid the painstaking process of manually searching the Internet Archive to check which accounts had been saved, seeing as it

was highly likely that they had all been reported and banned, I enlisted the assistance of a local computer scientist. Together, we produced a programme that would automate a search of the Internet Archive for each individual Twitter account and save any of those archived to a list which I could then manually search. Of the first list of 9000, 239 accounts had been archived at various points in time while we found 190 in the second list. These accounts provided me with snapshots of various IS-supporters which allowed me to more clearly render a picture of the kinds of discourses circulated online by supporters and members.

The majority of the Twitter accounts in the CTRLSec lists were automatically archived via the Wayback Machine on the Internet Archive (IA). This was done through IA's live web proxy crawls. These 'crawls' are conducted over the open web in order to capture 'web elements, pages, sites and parts of sites' (archive.org 2020). According to its predetermined rules, crawls will save different amounts of data. For example, a crawl may attempt to capture the data on a webpage, follow links and capture other URLs, continue to other links and URLs, and so on until the crawl finishes, or according to the limits placed on it by its particular rules. A crawl, thus, may only capture and archive a limited amount of information. This is exacerbated in the case of Twitter accounts. The IA is fine for capturing pages coded in html, but 'when a dynamic page contains forms, JavaScript, or other elements that require interaction with the originating host, the archive will not contain the original site's functionality' (archive.org 2020). In other words, the snapshot of banned Twitter accounts from the heyday of IS-on-Twitter is even more partial due to both the platform on which they reside and the way in which they were captured. However, due to the relatively significant sample size of accounts (429), we can still garner an understanding how social media was brought into the logic of the IS dispositif.

Though most accounts were associated with IS, some intuition needed to be used during an initial scan of the accounts to ascertain their authenticity. In most cases, a quick scan of an account's bio, tweets, and a check whether it was still active or not would point to its veracity. As the case is with any anti-terrorist effort, and perhaps intensified by the fact that the CTRLSec list was crowdsourced, folks who were obviously not pro-IS were caught in the proverbial crossfire. In some instances, accounts associated with news outlets such as *CNN* and *Al Jazeera* were in the list and are clearly not pro-IS accounts. There were also accounts belonging to journalists active throughout Syria and Iraq during the Syrian Civil War, as well as accounts associated with Saudi Arabian citizens who were not necessarily pro-IS. It is unclear why these accounts appear on the list. They could be mistakes based on the unclear and ever-shifting (mis)understandings of retweets as endorsements, they may be due to misunderstandings of 'Islamic' accounts as pro-IS accounts, or they could merely be trolls. Whatever the case, these accounts could usually be intuitively scrutinised and left out of the analysis where applicable. Following a cull, 280 accounts remained.

Analysing IS social media accounts is difficult for a number of previously stated reasons. IS showed a preference for the encrypted app Telegram following the mass deletion of mainstream social accounts (Bloom, Tiflati & Horgan 2019; Yayla & Speckhard 2017). Social media and SNSs were brought into the IS dispositif and sought to extend the IS assemblage; moreover, they functioned as networked concentrations where official content could flow and endlessly circulate, seeking to embolden the visibility of the group while simultaneously seeking to concretise the governmental function of media production.

Procession

In Chapter 1, I explain the concepts of assemblage and dispositif, and introduce governmentality and biopower/biopolitics as complementary critical tools for understanding both the organisation and arrangement of IS on one hand, and their specific governmental

strategies on the other. This chapter will form the theoretical bedrock of this thesis and pre-empts a proposed methodology of dispositif analysis in Chapter 4. It is here that I explain what IS 'are', as well as my theoretical rationale. Specifically, I outline the contingent components of the IS assemblage (D&G 1980) and the group's governmental dispositif (Foucault 1980, p. 194). The first half of this chapter is composed of an outline of the heterogeneity of assemblages, types of assemblages, and an explanation of the kinds of assemblage IS can be counted as. After this theoretical exposition, I provide a sketch of the various components of IS's dispositif which consists of both governmental procedures and media. By accounting for the ontology of IS as an assemblage, I seek to capture and account for the complexity of the group's convoluted arrangement of material and immaterial components.

In the second half of Chapter 1, I explain Foucault's notion of a dispositif as a critical heuristic for examining IS governance. Foucault's work is pertinent to the study of terrorism and has been used as such previously, though the unique nexus of concepts across his work have scarcely been used in relation to modern terrorist governance and its relationship with media in the way that this thesis proposes. This section of the chapter pre-empts a proposed methodology of dispositif analysis discussed in Chapter 4 largely informed by the work of Jäger (2001), Caborn (2007) and the discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe (2014). In the final section of Chapter 1, I introduce governmentality and biopower which I explicate more thoroughly in Chapters 3 and 7, respectively.

In Chapter 2, I provide an account of relevant critical perspectives on IS media and administration. The point of this chapter is to map conceptualisations of IS both similar and different to my own understanding of the group and their media and governance strategy. By mapping out a range of perspectives which, I argue, are most closely aligned with Critical Media and Cultural Studies, I seek to achieve two goals. Firstly, this chapter enframes

Chapter 3 where I theorise IS media itself using a governmentality approach. Secondly, it allows me to show how dispositif analysis goes further as it uncovers how the aggregate contours of power, knowledge, and subjectivity inform the direction of strategic governance in response to an urgent need. Furthermore, a dispositif analysis approach has the scope to understand both macro processes such as governance strategies, as well as more micro processes such as how individual subjects are intervened on and, importantly, the connection between these two elements.

In my third chapter, I theorise the complexity of IS's use of media. This is a difficult task as Islamic State produced media, and the media produced by its supporters, spans a wide range of forms as I have stated previously. In this case, IS media must be theorised in a multitude of ways in order to account for their range of media practices, content, dissemination, and circulation. In this chapter, I provide an account of officially ordained media production processes drawing from Milton (2018) to consider how IS media spread throughout the internet and propose a media governmentality approach to IS in order to account for the ideal function of IS media. Importantly, the theorisation of IS media in this chapter is amenable to my methodology of dispositif analysis laid out in Chapter 4.

It may seem curious that I discuss the concept of dispositif at two points in this thesis. This is due to the theoretical rationale of this project. The literature on dispositifs and their analysis renders the concept in two primary ways: dispositif as object (of analysis) and dispositif as method(ology). This thesis uses the term in both these ways in that its object of analysis is the IS dispositif, and its theoretical foundation and method of inquiry is dispositif analysis. I deploy this framework as it is conducive to understanding a wide range of processes at the macro, meso, and micro levels. The establishment of an Islamic caliphate which featured a sophisticated transnational media messaging apparatus is a novel process that requires suitable research tools to understand it. While the concept assemblage helps us

to understand IS in motion, the use of dispositif to conceptualise IS's governmental strategy, its implementation, and its media apparatus, facilitates an understanding of the group at a number of levels. In other words, dispositif (analysis) has the theoretical clout to address overarching regimes of knowledge, their implementation via state and media processes, and investigate how they manage the conduct of individual subjects. Thus, in my opinion, dispositif is a crucial concept for understanding the curves of power, knowledge, and subjectivity deployed by IS.

Chapter 4 of this thesis contains a proposed methodology of dispositif analysis. As stated above, a dispositif analysis is a tripartite discourse analysis of texts, actions, and objects. Such a methodology is appropriate for analysing the governance of a group like IS as it has the capacity to consider regimes of knowledge that precede and inform its governmental and medial discourses which, in turn, regulate populations and are complicit in producing and perpetuating exclusive, violent regimes of truth. This chapter houses a methodologisation of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis as suggested by Jäger (2009). However, I intervene by discussing the importance of non-discursive practices. By suturing approaches to theories of dispositif and dispositif analysis with Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory (2014), I offer an apposite mode of dispositif analysis, the utility of which is not limited to this thesis's objects of study.

I execute my dispositif analysis in Chapters 5, 6, and 7. In Chapter 5, I analyse the extension of IS governmentality via social media by conducting a discourse analysis of pro-IS social media accounts as discussed above. This analysis reveals the kinds of discourses IS supporters took up online and, importantly, how IS deployed social media as a technology of governance to conduct and recruit deterritorialised subjects. Chapter 6's focus is on IS legacy media: that is, 'official' media produced by the group such as magazines *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* (Rome), as well as video media. The emphasis in this chapter is on the ways in which legacy

media seeks to govern distant subjects, how practices of terrorism are discursively delineated, and how both the coding of public spaces and practices of police work to shore up the state assemblage of the caliphate. Chapter 7 is the final conjunction of the goals of this thesis: this is where I analyse the intersection of governmental processes implemented via IS bureaucracy and the mediation of such processes. The discussion in this chapter pre-empts a consideration in the thesis Conclusion of various perspectives on biopower/biopolitics taken up by thinkers such as Agamben (1998, 2007), Rose (2001), Rabinow and Rose (2006), and Hardt & Negri (2009), in addition to Foucault (1980, 2003). One of the theoretical goals of this thesis is to expand the horizon of where technologies for the management of life are found. Biopower, as explicated by Foucault, is considered in its capacity as a technology of power to foster the lives of desirable subjects within a population by excluding abnormal others. In the formation of an assemblage that explicitly pursues the inclusion and exclusion of subjects based on cultural conduct, biopolitical techniques are imperative. The primary technology of power I identify within IS's media and governmentality is Foucault's dynamic of biopower. Within regimes of biopower, in the pursuit of homogeneity, 'abnormal' bodies must be excluded to foster the health of normal bodies. However, for IS, a typology of norms is established to facilitate a variety of modes of exclusion. In enunciating the enmeshment of biopolitics and terrorism in a dispositif analysis of IS, it is pertinent to the concerns of this thesis to consider the variety of ways that biopolitics/biopower are rendered both inside and outside the caliphate.

In my Conclusion, I reflect on the theoretical and analytical contributions of this thesis. To highlight the robust diachronicity of IS discourse online, I also offer an analysis of more recent pro-IS twitter accounts. By conducting an analysis of accounts drawn attention to by the online group CtrlSec, I show how IS discourse has changed very little in the years since the caliphate's heyday. I also note that since accounts are still being flagged by the

CtrlSec group every few minutes, an online presence of supporters on Twitter remains, even since the caliphate's deterritorialisation. These factors of my analysis suggest both that there is an ongoing support base for IS, and that the discourse of the group, which has direct implications for the identities they seek to produce, has largely remained the same. It also speaks to the potency of IS governance too: if the deterritorialised citizens of IS are participating in the ongoing resonance of IS online, then they continue to perform as good citizens in the name of the caliphate and the ummah. With relation to the broader concerns of the thesis, I ultimately locate IS within the wider process of the mediatisation of terrorism. Such an intensification of this process becomes possible in spectacle societies which take as their common sense the techno-logic of the digital in which an existence offline cannot be imagined. It is further solidified by the ways in which terrorists increasingly participate in the mediation of terror attacks among other content. Much like the governance of IS that we ought not think of as necessarily novel, the mediatisation of terrorism is more an intensification of terrorists' processes of mediation rather than a new development.

Chapter 1: Mapping the Islamic State: Assemblage, Governmentality, Dispositif

In this chapter, I map the Islamic State assemblage and sketch a picture of the group's dispositif. Firstly, I unpack Deleuze and Guattari's (1988) notion of assemblage in order to flesh out the ontology, mobility, and flexibility of the group. An assemblage is a useful model for understanding a variety of complex processes and is a conducive framework for accounting for IS as a group with both local and global intensities. The notion of an assemblage accounts for dispersion, movement, and expansion; the ever-shifting rubric of the assemblage considers organisation, movements, trajectories, velocity, and speed, as well as allowing a preceding understanding of forms of conduct, governance, and productions of discourse which can be explained more clearly by Foucault's conceptions of governmentality and dispositif.

Following an account of the IS assemblage and its various elements, I explain Foucault's dispositif (1976), governmentality (2007), and biopower (1990 [1978]), as critical heuristics for understanding the terroristic governance of the Islamic State. I explicate some key components of IS's media-governmental dispositif as it pertains to the concerns of this thesis. I introduce what Foucault has delineated as a dispositif and argue that the way terror groups such as IS govern populations and individuals can be accounted for by this concept. This theoretical discussion and proposed methodology of dispositif analysis is developed in Chapter 4. A dispositif can be preliminarily described as a 'thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions — in short, the said as much as the unsaid' (Foucault 1980, p. 194). Though the dispositif was not wholly elaborated on before Foucault's death, scholars such as Agamben (2009), Bussolini (2010), Deleuze (2016 [1994]), Legg (2011), and others have advanced his thesis, while others such as Jäger and Maier (2009; 2016) and Caborn (2007) have developed more formalised methods of

dispositif analysis. Such an analysis is composed of three discourse analyses in which one examines texts, actions, and objects. By placing the rubric of the dispositif onto contemporary articulations of terrorist governance for analysis, we can then begin to investigate and unpack terrorist governmentalities in new and novel ways. In this case, the purpose of characterising modern terrorist governance via the dispositif is to account for the flows, structures, and processes of subjectification of terror; it is to express and understand the multiplicitous nature of terrorism today as it relates to state-semblant formation and sovereignty.

The dispositif in Foucault's work has received far less attention than concepts like discourse, power, and knowledge, yet it remains an invaluable tool for analysing the complex strata in which these three concerns manifest in respondent strategies. The dispositif reaches beyond discourse. For Agamben, this means that 'the apparatus always has a concrete strategic function and is always located in a power relation'; in other words, 'it appears at the intersection of power relations and relations of knowledge' (Agamben 2009, p. 3). Before this chapter's close, I unpack the notion of the dispositif explained by Foucault as it relates to the specific media and governmental practices of the Islamic State. I then outline the governing role in processes of subjectification formulated by the dispositif. The extent to which apparatuses imply a process of subjectification, or are machines which produce subjectifications, must be underscored if contemporary articulations and enactments of terror can be considered dispositifs (Agamben 2009, pp. 19-20). The role of governance is then fundamental to a discussion of the dispositif if we are to fathom a dispositif of terror as delineating both subjects' desirable and undesirable everyday and exceptional conduct. In what follows, I consider the ways in which texts are taken up by IS, and subsequently, the ways in which their media and administrative texts work to inform the use and functions of actions and objects in the IS dispositif.

While closely related concepts, assemblage and dispositif are not different words for the same idea, though they are complementary. The combination of assemblage, dispositif, governmentality, and biopower, as concepts, allows a consideration of the phenomenon of IS that captures the complexity of the group's local governance and transnational media messaging. Put differently, the combination of these conceptual modalities has the capacity to question and understand the global stakes of IS's administrative and media governmental practices. Moreover, the utility of the dispositif as a critical heuristic lies in its ability to consider a variety of governmental elements ranging from media messaging and healthcare to law and bureaucratic processes. Being that media is a constituent part of IS's governmental apparatus, and because IS's dispositif pertains to both local and global geographical contingencies, I seek to explain the function of IS media by asking two questions: what does IS media do, and how does it do it?

The IS Assemblage

An assemblage, simply put, is a 'collection of contingent features' which are in an 'incomplete process', the sum of whose parts add up to more than its whole (Nail 2017, p. 24). It is a set of relations that cannot be reduced to a single component; it is heterogeneous and constituted by lines of flight; it is always undergoing change. D&G developed this concept in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1988), a book that André Pierre Colombat claims 'invent[s] new tools for thinking' (1991, p. 12). *A Thousand Plateaus* is a kind of thought experiment: the chapters (or plateaus) ought to be read in any order (apart from the last) and it houses an enormous range of concepts and ideas: bodies, assemblages, multiplicities, rhizome, space, affect, mobility, faceicity, and so on. It fulfils D&G's later claim that the primary task of Philosophy is to create concepts (Deleuze & Guattari 1994, p. 5), and more specifically, 'intellectually mobile concepts' (Deleuze 1995, p. 122). These new tools that D&G sought to develop arose from a post-1968 context and were bound to both their critique of

psychoanalysis and structuralism (Colebrook 2002, p. xxxv). More specifically, Deleuze claimed that the concept of assemblage could replace that of 'behaviour', though he was talking specifically about the relation of assemblages to territories and behaviour to animal behaviour (2006, pp. 177-179). Assemblages have the ability to inscribe movement into thought: assemblage thinking acknowledges the lack of fixity in the world, that objects and things might not have essential identities. Instead, relations between objects are formulated according to their context and within their very relation to other objects. Again, movement is key here, particularly in the way that assemblage thinking might allow us to assess how amorphous and unsettled groups like IS change over time, move, make rules and codes, produce knowledge, and so on. Simply put, an assemblage is an 'experimental genre form that is thus organic to the contours of the object of study' (Marcus & Saka 2006, p. 103). Thus, the conceptual language of D&G gives us a framework for capturing the complexity of IS; it allows us to generate knowledge about and derive knowledge from the group.

The oft-quoted example at the outset of *A Thousand Plateaus* (1988) is the example of the book as assemblage. For D&G, a book is composed of 'variously formed matters, and very different dates and speeds' (1988, p. 2). They go on:

> In a book, as in all things, there are lines of articulation or segmentarity, strata and territories; but also lines of flight, movements of deterritorialisation and destratification. Comparative rates of flow on these lines produce phenomena of relative slowness and viscosity, or, on the contrary, of acceleration and rupture. All this, lines and measurable speeds, constitutes an *assemblage*. A book is an assemblage of this kind, and as such is unattributable. It is a multiplicity—but we don't know yet what the multiple entails when it is no longer attributed, that is, after it has been elevated to the status of a substantive. (1988, p. 2)

An assemblage is not fixed, even if it may seek to fix meaning or function. It can be composed of hierarchical elements and horizontal arrangements at the same time. Like the French translation, *agencement*, a process of arranging, assemblages are multiplicities of movements, speeds, and materials which are unstable and constantly in flux. Assemblages intersect and interact with other assemblages (are composed of them) and have a materiality:

they have a distinct focus on function over signification, material over symbolic. Though this does not mean that assemblages do not signify, are not, or do not house semiotic systems themselves. Rather than foregrounding signs when considering an assemblage, we should primarily ask what it *does* rather than what it signifies (1988, p. 2). Further, in the example of the book-assemblage, D&G claim we should investigate what machines or assemblages the assemblage under scrutiny intersects and acts with: 'A book itself is a little machine; what is the relation (also measurable) of this literary machine to a war machine, love machine, revolutionary machine, etc.—and an *abstract machine* that sweeps them along?' (1980, pp. 2-3). The notion that IS is an assemblage would at first seem to complicate the matter further before it simplifies it. Yet, by understanding IS through a complex theoretical heuristic such as that of assemblages, I account for the group's multitudinous contingencies, intensities, flows, discourses, and power relations that are expressed within and from them. To that point, what assemblages and machines do IS intersect with? Describing the rhizomatic cartography of IS as represented by western media and institutions, Dietmar Offenhuber writes that

> All attempts to create a single, objective map of the IS are thwarted by the rhizomatic nature of the insurgents' state: its heterogeneous global support networks, its sprawling online presence that reaches deep into popular culture, the popularity of the ISIS hymn "clashing of the swords" on YouTube and game modifications that let players virtually fight alongside ISIS. The regional campaign that includes governorates in Libya, Nigeria, Russia, and several other places of the world give an example of which form a despotism of the rhizome can take. (Offenhuber 2018, p. 207)

It seems obvious that IS connect with a multiplicity of multiplicities: the western imperialist war machine, the truth machine of radical Islamism, subjectifying machines of terror, and so on. To understand what the IS assemblage does, it is necessary to explore the key components that make up assemblages, and secondly the different types of assemblage outlined by D&G and developed by others.

Thomas Nail notes that an assemblage is not merely a heterogeneous collection of random things (2017, p. 24). That is, 'there is a sense that an assemblage is a whole of some sort that expresses some identity and claims a territory' (Wise 2005, p. 77). An assemblage is

both 'singular and heterogeneous' though it will have three elements which inform its arrangement: conditions, elements, and agents, or, an abstract machine, a concrete assemblage, and personae (2017, p. 24). The abstract machine or conditions of an assemblage is 'the network of specific external relations that holds the elements together' (Nail 2017, p. 24). An abstract machine is not a physical object though it informs the arrangement of concrete elements in an assemblage; it facilitates the combination of elements that make up an assemblage. Nail uses the example of a star constellation to tease out this point further: 'without stars in the sky there are no relations between stars, but without relations between stars there is only radical heterogeneity' (Nail 2017, p. 25). The abstract machine, or elements, in this case is 'the relational lines that connect the stars and the concrete assemblage is the stars that are connected' (Nail 2017, p. 25). The concrete assemblage, its 'skeletal form' (Nail 2017, p. 26), are the concrete elements of which the assemblage is composed. The concrete elements are the material elements that are arranged within the relations of the abstract machine. We should also note that the relationship between the abstract and concrete components of the assemblage 'has to be constructed piece by piece' (Nail 2017, p. 26). As stated above in Nail's analogy of the constellation, the stars are the concrete components organised according to the abstract machine of the conditional lines between the stars. The final essential element of the assemblage is personae or agents. Nail refers to these as 'the mobile operators that connect the concrete elements together according to their abstract relations' (Nail 2017, p. 27). A paradox of the immanence of assemblages is also highlighted by Nail in his discussion of personae: how can one have a persona with no assemblage and bring about an assemblage with no personae? (2017, p. 27). To get around this, he claims, D&G argue that the production of personae and assemblages occur simultaneously: they 'occur together in mutual presupposition" (Nail 2017, p. 27). A key tenet of the assemblage, particularly in the case of personae, is that it privileges the collective

over the individual. The importance of the first and second person is subordinate to the third person (Nail 2017, p. 27). In turn, the 'larger third-person assemblage that arranges the conditioning relations and concrete elements' produces a meaningful world for the persona (Nail 2017, p. 27). I outline the modalities of assemblages below.

Modalities of assemblages

The effectiveness of a theory of assemblage lies in its ability to account for the uncertain. Assemblages are in 'constant variation, are themselves constantly subject to transformations' (D&G 1988, p. 95). Given that IS have largely been driven from previous caliphate territories in Syria and Iraq, the assemblage subsequently becomes a conducive framework for analysing the group as a historical manifestation on one hand, and as a unique articulation of terror, technology, subjectification, violence, Islamist hermeneutics, and governance on the other. It thus provides a more fluid framework than does Foucault's dispositif alone. This is not to repudiate the dispositif altogether; the dispositif is certainly an effective tool for considering complex *agencements*, particularly in the case of governance and power. However, though understated by Foucault and his followers, there is a kind of fixity in the dispositif not found in the assemblage, despite their similarities. Certainly, the dispositif seems to rely on and emphasise a top-down power dynamic more so than the fetishised 'power is everywhere' maxim. This comes across in the assumed automatic functioning of power, and this would certainly be understandable in the caliphate where misconduct was often met with injury or death in order to ascertain correct conduct. Yet, there has been widespread critique of IS as 'un-Islamic' (Awad 2014; Wilson Centre 2014), as well as reported ruptures and inconsistencies in the group's conduct not in line with their ideology (Milton 2018). Importantly, these contradictions provide a dispositif analysis with some of the paradoxes it seeks to reveal. It can account for specific strategies, particularly ones that seek to governmentalise and produce certain kinds of conduct. Though without a

consideration of the assemblage, the dispositif lacks an ontological backing which explains its coming-togetherness.

This brings to bear the following question: what is the relationship between the dispositif and assemblage? Firstly, it seems that assemblages are (more) ontological and that dispositifs almost always pertain specifically to the political. Stephen Legg has attempted to 'think assemblage and governmentality studies together' and draws attention to their simultaneous pursuit of order and disorder as a defining factor (2011, p. 129). He contends that 'assemblages and apparatuses operate in a dialectical sense in practice, but that they emerged dialectically in the thought of Deleuze and Foucault' (2011, p. 129). Because dispositifs are 'etymologically and genealogically indissociable from regulation and government… their very multiplicity necessarily opens spaces of misunderstanding, resistance, and flight' (2011, p. 131). Simply put, dispositifs and assemblages operate dialectically. The claim that dispositifs are kinds of assemblages is coherent with Deleuze's claim that dispositifs are components of assemblages, since assemblages are made of and produce other assemblages. Deleuze clearly states that dispositifs are not reducible to state apparatuses (2016, p. 223); though, the thrust of Legg's claim is that dispositifs are a kind of assemblage that are concerned with governance, management, productivity, and in the Deleuzo-Guattarian lexicon, 're-territorialisation, striation, scaling' (2011, p. 131). It seems a truism that dispositifs are *kinds* of assemblages. Regardless, in a theory of assemblage which acknowledges the dispositif as a constitutive component, emphasis should be placed on the latter as that which has the *capacity* for governance, productivity, and capture. This need not operate officially via governmental institutions, though does to a significant extent in the case of IS. Therefore, we should synthesise the claims of both Deleuze and Legg: dispositifs are assemblages; they are components of assemblages; and they have the capacity to, as

Agamben claims, 'capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behaviors [sic], opinions. or discourses of living beings' (2009, p. 14).

Following Fuller (2005), we can thus argue that dispositifs are (more) stable parts in an assemblage that are prone to those features of control and governance: re-territorialisation, striation, governing, and coding. The dispositif, to its detriment, appears to be more fixed than does an assemblage; it operates according to asymmetrical relations of power. Its fixity also lies in its strategic function: dispositifs respond to some kind of urgent need. Again, we should consider Deleuze's claim that dispositifs of power, IS's governance in this case, are a component of assemblages/*agencements*:

> It is not the dispositifs of power that assemble, nor would they be constitutive; it is rather the agencements of desire that would spread throughout the formations of power following one of their dimensions. (2016, p. 225)

IS, the group themselves, their movement, ruptures across the globe and within their own territorialities, as well as the objects they come into relations with, constitute a heterogeneous process of arrangement (*agencement*): they are an assemblage. Their process is incomplete: their presence in terms of pledges of allegiance or bay'ah in North Africa and the Philippines, in addition to their subsequent deterritorialisation, allows a flexibility for continuing this incomplete process. Without an assemblage of presence and organisation, IS would not be able to deploy their dispositif of terror. The material and immaterial components produced by the assemblage constitute their dispositif. This need not occur exactly as Foucault specifies the components of the dispositif; the ethic of IS's dispositif, through many or few components, continues to be enacted through contemporary acts of terror and the ongoing production of media which both seek to governmentalise, deterritorialise, and reterritorialise. The synthesis of the dispositif and the assemblage can account for a more productive dynamic of power whose discourses are both rhizomatic *and* arborescent. In the following

section, I will further unpack the different kinds of assemblage and their features following

Nail (2017) before applying these features to the IS assemblage.

Territorial Assemblage

Building on Deleuze and Guattari, Nail notes four different kinds of assemblage: territorial assemblages, state assemblages, capitalist assemblages, and nomadic assemblages (2017, p. 28). The territorial assemblage is where 'concrete elements are coded according to a natural or proper usage' and which seeks to 'divide the world into coded segments' (2017, p. 28). Nail draws on D&G's examples of segmentarity to explain territorial assemblages: the way a house is split and arranged according to the use of each room, 'streets, according to the order of the city; the factory according to the nature of the work and operations performed in it' (D&G qtd in Nail 2017, p. 28). The key to understanding territorial assemblages as they pertain to specific places is by considering how they are delineated by physical limits and boundaries. That is, territorial assemblages 'express the pregiven, essential, and proper limits and usage of persons and objects in a given assemblage by explaining how the world is related to the past, to an inscription of memory' (Nail 2017, p. 29). Nail claims that to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of territorial assemblages, we must consider three syntheses of territorial coding. The first of these is the 'connection synthesis.' This kind of coding selects some content from 'uncoded flows, allowing some of them to pass through while others are blocked' (Nail 2017, p. 29). This has two knock-on effects: we avoid a ubiquitously chaotic and '"meaningless" world by allowing flows of connection, circulation, and codes; as well, by separating these flows, the connective synthesis is able to qualitatively organise them into an identity' (Nail 2017, p. 29). The result of a connective synthesis within the territorial assemblage is a coherence: 'everything has its proper code: the proper time, the proper place, and the proper people to do it' (Nail 2017, p. 29). Examples here are clear

enough in the case of IS, particularly when we consider the kind of governance they execute which intercedes at the level of everyday life: the connective synthesis within IS's territorial assemblage included prayer times, curfews, and restrictions on where it was possible to travel (according to one's social categorisations). The coding of daily life is emergent with the mobilisation of particular jobs too in terms of what one would think of as typical in the caliphate (soldiers, fighters) in addition to the more everyday (garbagemen, street cleaners, doctors). The disjunctive synthesis or 'detachment cut' also has a knock-on effect. Though, its is a distinctly negative ethic, it is concerned with blocking some connections from fastening themselves through means such as moral codes. The goal of the detachment cut is to allow a quantitative stock of code to circulate inside a 'qualitatively distinct territory, and it detaches a remainder … in order to begin a new chain of code further along' (Nail 2017, p. 29). Nail uses the examples of town borders and the identity limits of race, ethnicity, and gender (2017, p. 29). The disjunctive synthesis, again, is concerned with placing limits, boundaries, and borders upon and within the territorial assemblage. The final synthesis of territorial coding is the 'conjunctive synthesis' or 'redistribution of the remainder' (2017, p. 29). Whatever remainder is left by other kinds of coding, in order to avoid melding all codes in a 'single qualitative stock' (2017, p. 29), the conjunctive synthesis seeks to redistribute surplus code by realigning it with new code. Though there are a vast typology of ways to redistribute and synthesise code, Nail uses the examples of potlatch, struggle, dowry, and gifts (2017, p. 30).

These syntheses are prevalent in the IS territorial assemblage. The 'selection cut' (connection synthesis) which orders uncoded flows ensures the correct function of components in the assemblage: 'codes of kinship, codes of worship, codes of communications, codes of exchange, codes of location (places of worship, places for eating, places for rubbish, and so on)' (Nail 2017, p. 29). In the caliphate, such codes manifested in

familial relationships relating to inheritance, the discursive limit of what is sayable (e.g. blasphemy), and the attempted institution of the gold dinar and Islamic banking, to name three examples. The disjunctive synthesis, that is, limits or blockages placed in the code of the territorial assemblage, are much easier to ascertain. Blockages in the caliphate were expressed in phenomena such as IS's narrow view of Islam, the roles (un)available to women, the disavowing of queer subjectivities (in actual fact, all those modes of subjective expression not congruent with IS's worldview are deemed untenable in the caliphate and globally by IS), restrictions on alcohol and diet, as well as checkpoints and various borders as outlined in Specimens M[3] and 14I of al-Tamimi's archive (2015a; 2016a). Conjunctive syntheses, or the redistribution of codes that are left over after selection and detachment cuts, are more ambiguous. The best example which adheres directly to Nail's mention of potlatch and dowry at least, is exemplified during IS's original territorialisation. As Dukhan notes, when IS moved across Iraq and Syria, they established relationships with significant tribal families in areas such as Raqqa and Deir Ezzor to facilitate deeper control in these territories: 'ISIS paid great attention to enlisting the tribes in trying to fill the governance gap in eastern Syria that resulted from the collapse of the Syrian state' (2019, p. 147). Due to the group's domination of oil and gas reserves, they were able to provide drinking water, irrigation services, and transport infrastructure. Presciently, IS allowed Sheiks governance over their own tribes (which, Dukhan notes, included duties facilitated by IS elsewhere such as collecting and distributing Zakat) in addition to delivering them various forms of capital. This included the paying of dowries by foreign fighters to families within Syrian tribes in exchange for marriage with their daughters, which was seen 'as a political tactic to strengthen their social position and avoid ISIS's animosity… ISIS saw this step as a method of strengthening its

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[3] Documents in Al-Tamimi's archive are referred to as 'Specimen x'. The best approach to navigating the 4 unwieldy webpages is using the ctrl + f or ⌘ + f function to search directly by Specimen via the links provided in the reference list.

position within the Syrian community by creating what is known as a 'marriage of alliance' within the tribal customs' (Dukhan 2019, pp. 147-148). The syntheses of territorial assemblages are thus not static. In what was a highly coded and territorialised assemblage such as the Islamic State, multiplicitous forms of allowing, blocking, and redirecting forms of content and expression were crucial to the group's organisation, conduct, and identity.

State Assemblage

The second type of assemblage is the state assemblage. A key point of differentiation compared with territorial assemblages is that state assemblages can lack conjunctive syntheses so that surpluses of code, rather than aligning with concrete elements, can 'begin to form an unchecked accumulation—agricultural, social, scientific, artistic, and so on—requiring the maintenance of a specialized body' (Nail 2017, p. 30). State assemblages are concerned with the resonance of specific points together and are both horizontally and hierarchically arranged. That is, to return to the earlier discussion of the abstract machine, within the state assemblage, the abstract machine seeks to 'cut itself off from and rise hierarchically above the concrete relations and personae of the assemblage' (2017, p. 31). However, much like territorial assemblages, state assemblages have three types of arrangement conducive to specific processes of stratification: binary segmentations (boundaries), circular segmentations, and linear segmentations (Nail 2017, p. 31). Binary territorial segmentations are demarcated by 'multiple binaries that are always defined by a third' or the synthesis between two binaries: this kind of state segmentation seeks to establish and secure the hierarchasition of segments (Nail 2017, p. 31). As Dovey notes, binary segmentations are groupings whose contours are informed by hierarchical discourses of race, class, and gender: white/not-white, working class/middle class, man/woman, etc. (2009, p. 19). Circular territorial segments are characterised by a 'multiplicity of centres' (Nail 2017, p.

31). They 'form a resonance of concentric circles around an axis of rotation, converging on a single point of accumulation' (Nail 2017, p. 31). Dovey uses the example of a room, which is engulfed by a 'house, neighbourhood, city, and nation' (2010, p. 19). Linear territorial segmentation functions through 'homogenized segments geometrically organised around a dominant segment through which they pass: a space or spatio rather than a place or territory' (Nail 2017, p. 31). In terms of space, linear segmentation indicates that 'there is a progression over time through different segments which may or may not be spatially contiguous' (Dovey 2009, p. 19). Although they need not be spatial, linear segmentations can be thought of as a kind of process through which practices of power can be enacted. In the Islamic State, they can be obtusely produced through disciplinary/exclusionary processes as one passes from city space, to interrogation, to prison, to rehabilitation, back to city; or, from city, to interrogation, to court, to scaffold. It should also be noted that linear segmentations are characterised by the 'over-coding and striation of space' (Holland 2013, p. 117). Excessive coding and striated space in the Islamic State translates to a limit on both subject positions and the movement between spaces in the caliphate. As mentioned above, these factors are articulated to each in that those who occupy specific subject positions such as 'woman' may only travel to certain areas with a mahrim (al-Tamimi 2015a) and are thus limited in terms of both movement and conduct.

Binary segmentations in the state assemblage manifest in categories such as Muslim/kufr, or even as simply as man/woman. This could be seen to resonate with something as simple as a city-space or a street which is produced as a masculine space in which women cannot be alone. IS is characterised by masculinity at the level of almost all state institutions, so the masculinisation of city spaces which comes to co-produce the limits of spatial conduct and presence would come to inform the territorial relations of the state as they relate to the assemblage. The simple binary segmentation of man/woman thus has a

political stake in that it informs the relation of spaces and governance, and thus seeks to make-rigid the strata of the state.

Capitalist Assemblage

The capitalist assemblage seeks to remove the contingent differences, identities, and codes from the abstract machine, concrete assemblage, and personas so that they can be circulated 'more widely as abstract quantities' (Nail 2017, p. 31). Where in the territorial assemblage it was concrete elements that primarily drove conditional changes, and where in the state assemblage the abstract machine primarily informed the concrete elements of the assemblage, within the capitalist assemblage, the persona becomes 'disengaged from the assemblage and tries to force unqualified concrete elements into strictly quantitative relations' (Nail 2017, p. 31). In other words, capitalist assemblages seek to re-code the qualitative exigencies of the assemblage into quantitatively defined elements: they are concerned with economic output and measure all activity according to such productivity. These are what D&G call processes of axiomatisation where an axiom is understood to be the 'independent or disengaged point that forces unqualified elements into homologous quantitative relations' (Nail 2017, p. 31). This kind of re-coding, that would usually establish differences between qualitative elements within the assemblage, thus seeks to quantify them. Differentiating the capitalist assemblage from the territorial assemblage, Nail reminds us that

> Capitalism goes further. On one hand, it decodes qualitative relationships through the privatasition of all aspects of social life, free trade, advertising, freeing of labour and capital, and imperialism; on the other, it axiomatizes them as 'productions of the market.' (Nail 2017, p. 32)

To summarise, in the pursuit of markets and global exchange, the capitalist assemblage seeks to produce qualitative difference as capacities that are quantifiably exchangeable.

IS both adhere to and depart from the characteristics of the capitalist assemblage that Nail outlines. For example, IS sought to increase its finances by selling oil to the Assad

regime (Yayla & Speckhard 2016) and, as I discuss in Chapter 7, also quantitatively coded its

subjects by charging for healthcare (or not) according to social categorisation. That is, while

citizens were allegedly charged for healthcare services, soldiers were not (Michlig et al.

2019). Rather than being a strictly capitalist assemblage themselves, IS had to intersect and

engage with the digital forces of contemporary neoliberal capitalism in the online realm.

Simultaneously, IS pursued an Islamic economic system which eschews many characteristics

capitalism is wont to facilitate such as individualism and greed. Moreover, it will become

clear in the course of this thesis that IS's political economic logic and arrangement is highly

centralised. Though it is outside the scope of the current discussion, IS's relation to the notion

of a capitalist assemblage ought to be located within the logic of semio-capitalism in which

signs and emotions are brought into the logic of capital in the pursuit of constant excitation

online (see Berardi 2009). Regardless, like the discussion below, I explain the capitalist

assemblage as part of my theorisation of IS.

Nomadic Assemblage/War Machine

   The final type of assemblage is the nomadic assemblage or war machine. I note it here

to provide a rigorous account of assemblages as explored by D&G and developed by Nail.

However, this kind of assemblage is one that IS both resembles and differs from. Nomadic

assemblages are not so concerned with a fixed or static territory as much as they are with a

kind of 'trajectory' (Nail 2017, p. 32). They are arranged in a way that their abstract machine,

concrete assemblage, and personas are not as limited by striated spaces; rather, they move

and shift across smooth spaces; they 'enter new combinations without arbitrary limit or so-

called 'natural' or 'hierarchical' uses and meanings' (Nail 2017, p. 32). Again, the nomadic

assemblage or war machine does resemble IS to some extent, yet, not to the degree that has

been claimed previously. For example, Marwan Kraidy conceptualises IS as a war machine,

'an ever-shifting combination of humans and technology' in order to underscore their position as terrorists who act in the West rather than as a 'territory-holding, state-building enterprise' (2017, p. 1). Certainly, conceiving of IS as a war machine to underscore their role as terrorists who act in the West, which they are, takes for granted the group's violent methods of terroristic governance which were enacted sub-formally in Syria between 2014 and 2019. Nevertheless, Kraidy's synthesis of IS and the work of D&G brings to bear a number of other possible claims of conceiving the group and their modes of terror which are congruent with IS's dispositif. Primarily, in classing the group as a war machine, Kraidy highlights IS's simultaneous execution of terrorism and statism (2017, p. 3). Importantly, Offenhuber has noted that D&G account for states as hierarchical (arborescent) and war-machines as 'decentralized' and 'autonomous' (2017, p. 199). He also acknowledges that state assemblages and war-machines/nomadic assemblages are not necessarily binary categories, and I agree with his claim that 'IS seems to combine both, harnessing the power of decentralized networks to strengthen its territorial ambitions' (2017, p. 199). To amalgamate and extend Kraidy's Deleuzo-Guattarian thesis with my own, I would suggest that IS are a terror assemblage whose roots intersect and sometimes puncture surfaces, arborescing in territories such as North Africa and the Philippines, thus emerging and endeavouring to institute their specific governmentalities. IS as war machine-terror assemblage provides the link between the local and the global in IS's mission and stratifies their media's previous 'obsession with territoriality' (2017, p. 3). Yet, we should not gloss over their partial resemblance to a nomadic assemblage. It is evident that IS have something of a structure, or at least have planned a structure as such (See Fig. 2). Due to the nature of terror actions, IS's own media spectacle, the proliferation of digital technologies, and a risky and unpredictable global presence, any terror attack around the world can be entered into from any point of the IS assemblage, thus construing their dispositif of terror as larger than is

perhaps true. IS then partially resemble a more horizontally arranged assemblage to the extent that their existence and movements are incitements to discursive actions. In other words, they *produce* terror. In this case, can IS still be a war machine/nomadic assemblage? For war machines are against the formation of new states and seek to destroy extant states (D&G 1988, p. 418). Do IS become a war machine after their state (if it is such a thing) becomes dissipated? Or do they continue to be a war machine because of their unstable nature, that is due to their negotiation of both stability and change (Adkins 2015, p. 14)? Or, finally, is considering IS as war machine most productive for thinking about them from a historical standpoint? IS resemble a war machine to the extent that they seek to destroy profane geographical borders and differ from it in that they strive for the governance of their own territory and populations. Within a conception of IS's strategy as dispositif, the reach and effectiveness of their global guerrilla warfare is what constitutes the group as a war machine in that it is one of the key elements (along with a variety of others) which prevents their legitimacy as a state.

What kind of assemblage is IS?

Of the four kinds of assemblage sketched above, IS pertain to all of them to some extent. Firstly, they are a territorial assemblage in that they seek to code physical elements of the world and set limits on the meaning of objects. This is largely articulated through the way in which IS sought to alter the use of pre-existing infrastructure to facilitate their will to a disciplinary ethic. An example: IS has largely appropriated pre-existing buildings as part of a range of strategies to respond to the urgent need of religious duty and sovereignty. This is apparent in the use of, say, al-Baladi Stadium in Aleppo as both a base for Islamic police and a temporary detention centre (Almohammad et al. 2017, p. 14). The use of such an architectural form, previously used for football matches, provides IS with a range of demarcated rooms and open spaces for administration, detention, and torture. The form is

somewhat conducive to the use here, though this is not so in all occurrences. For instance, it has been reported that IS also used houses as makeshift prisons (Brown 2017). All that was needed was a few cordoned spaces to facilitate the disciplinarian's gaze and subsequent administration and torture when needed. It seems the use of buildings for makeshift prisons was relatively exceptional in the Islamic State; more specific architectural forms do not seem to have been produced. In this case, a few essential characteristics of modern buildings is important to facilitate specific uses: separated offices with thresholds connected by systems of hallways, lobbies, and the like. Architectural forms in the Islamic State thus become secondary to the *use* of buildings, to which a dispositif analysis is advantageous as it specifically addresses paratexts which inform their use (Caborn 2007). In terms of its territorial assemblage, however, it is imperative to again highlight the *novel* usage of buildings that undermine their previous uses and constitute IS as a group that seeks to simultaneously de- and re-territorialise spaces to enable their own goals.

IS's territorial assemblage is further embodied by connective, disjunctive, and conjunctive syntheses. In the Islamic State, these syntheses seem to circulate the same centre: it would seem that a specific, strict, and violent interpretation of Islamist hermeneutics can both account for the connective and disjunctive synthesis being that this hermeneutics is what concurrently allows and blocks possible identities and abject forms of conduct. Here, we should return to focus on the materiality of territorial assemblages. While a specific Islamist hermeneutics is most certainly what informs possible conduct as it manifests in IS's dispositif, the disjunctive synthesis should be thought of as the ontic elements and physical acts (in addition to the immaterial) that block undesirable coding in the Islamic state: hadd punishments[4] and their threat operate alongside the moral imperative of the state assemblage.

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[4] Hadd means limit or prohibition and hadd punishments are a category of punishment within Sharia law though they are rarely meted out in Muslim countries (Johnson and Vriens 2014).

Still, the remainder of that which escapes these syntheses must be reorganised; the produced but unstable subjects of the caliphate must be subsumed. While in many cases the physical means of the disjunctive synthesis would be enough, this is not always the case. Subjects in and of the Islamic State must be immaterially produced as subjects—they must be spoken into subject positions as well as work on themselves to adhere to IS's narrow range of such positions. Though processes of subjectification took a range of forms in the caliphate (and abroad), one prescient way of understanding how they specifically function is via Foucault's notions of governmentality and dispositif. Preceding my discussion of governmentality, it is first worth explaining the components of the IS-assemblage.

Components of the IS assemblage

The IS assemblage is composed of a wide range of elements. It is useful to return presently to D&G's example of the feudalism assemblage as a point of comparison for an outline of the components of the IS assemblage. When addressing feudalism as an assemblage D&G claim a variety of factors must be assessed. These include the relationships between bodies in the feudalism assemblage: 'the body of the earth and the social body; the body of the overlord, vassal, and serf', but also assemblages on a smaller scale such as that of 'the body of the knight and the horse and their new relationship to the stirrup; the weapons and tools assuring a symbiosis of bodies—a whole machinic assemblage' (D&G 1988, p. 89). Here, D&G are referring to part of the horizontal axis of the assemblage that is concerned with content and expressions: the machinic assemblage of bodies (content), or the 'actions and passions reacting to one another.' Though, they note that one must also take account of the collective assemblage of enunciation, that is, 'of acts and statements, of incorporeal transformations attributed to bodies' (D&G 1988, p. 88). Expressions of the feudal assemblage thus manifest themselves in 'statements, expressions, the juridical regime of

heraldry, all of the incorporeal transformations, in particular, oaths and their variables (the oath of obedience, but also the oath of love, etc.)' (D&G 1988, p. 89). Additionally, D&G note that on the other axis of the feudal assemblage, one would need to acknowledge 'the feudal territorialities and reterritorialisations, and at the same time the line of deterritorialisation that carries away both the knight and his mount, statements and acts' (1988, p. 89). In light of D&G's comments regarding the feudalism assemblage, what might an imagining of the IS-assemblage look like?

As above, the IS assemblage is composed of an abstract machine, a concrete assemblage, and personae. The abstract machine, for DeLanda (2016, p. 68) at least, can be considered as something like the diagram of an assemblage. An abstract machine is not physical but informs the arrangement of concrete elements in an assemblage. It is the relations (relationality) between the concrete elements. For D&G, this means that abstract machines are the 'cutting edges of decoding and deterritorialisation' (D&G 1988, p. 593). What we must then consider are the diagrammatic aspects of the IS assemblage; what is the diagram that holds together and informs the relations between the concrete elements of the assemblage? We can consider the diagram of IS from the perspective of its organisational structure. As an example, if the whole ontology, epistemology, ethos, and legal apparatus of IS is derived from an Islamist hermeneutics, how then do those Islamist hermeneutics articulate the concrete elements of the assemblage and its personae? Moreover, to what extent is the IS assemblage hierarchized? We can firstly think about the diagrams of the Islamic State in a traditional sense. For example, the *Structure of the Caliphate* video I discuss below provides its viewers with an organisational model of the state assemblage and includes deliberations on its figureheads, departments, and hierarchies. This video also outlines (to some extent) the geographical organisation of the state assemblage (at a particular time).

Such a video, as well as plans for state structures recovered by the likes of *Der Spiegel* (Fig. 2) certainly fill in for the role of a diagram here.
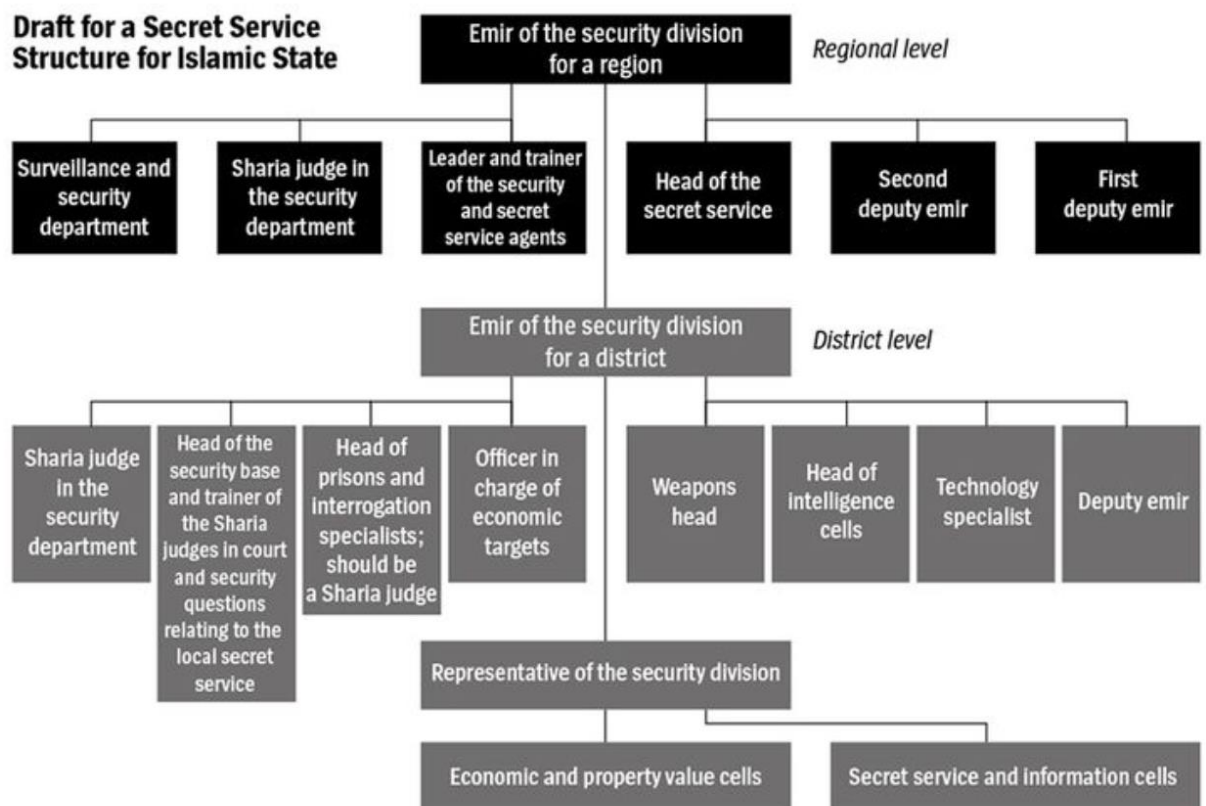
We should not, however, limit our understanding of the territorialised diagram of the IS assemblage or constrain it to the aspects of it within the geographies of the regions and provinces. Instead, we must consider to what extent the IS assemblage facilitates the unpredictability of global terrorist attacks and the capacity for deterritorialised entry into this assemblage from any other point. Again, the historical thrust and use of terror tactics play a role in the IS diagram(s). Established techniques of global terror groups such as bombings, hijackings, car rammings, and so on, play an important role in continuing the resonant force between the personae of the Islamic State and the concrete elements of its assemblage, as

well as the concrete elements exterior to it, but which nevertheless are brought into it for annihilation.

The IS assemblage is then a complex aggregation of subjects, objects, movements, and speeds. The territory of the caliphate itself represents a locus for many of these components. Certainly, those personae that support its animation by adhering to IS's preferred modes of conduct and subjectivity within the caliphate are just as much part of the IS assemblage as dissidents. Non-adherents are either redistributed (conjunctive synthesis) or blocked from attachment to the territory (disjunctive synthesis). Put simply, the IS assemblage within the caliphate is made up of bodies which take up various subject positions, but also have a relation to one another, and to the natural and built environment. The IS assemblage was not limited to the territory of the caliphate and its previously extant satellite territories, however. Those external to the caliphate remain articulated as agents to the assemblage proper. IS's global reach intensifies in terrorist attacks, such as those in the US, Australia, France, Canada, the Middle-East, and so on. External supporters of IS such as Anjem Choudary in the UK or those addressed by IS in *Dabiq* who cannot perform hijrah remain deterritorialised actors in the Islamic State assemblage in that they are the personae which constitute IS as a global threat: they seek to take up the subject positions offered by IS, and subsequently seek to extend the IS assemblage through media and interpersonal communication. What is more important at this stage than the categorisation of such subject positions is each subject's good practice of Islam(ism) and the rules of IS as territorial and state assemblage. Yet, the production of subjects is contingent on IS's vast media apparatus.

The notion of articulation is useful for thinking through IS's abstract machine(s) which informs the relations between the group's concrete components and subjective agents. For Stuart Hall, articulation is 'the form of the connection that can make a unity of two different elements, under certain conditions. It is a linkage which is not necessary,

determined, absolute and essential for all time' (Grossberg 1986, p. 53). So, articulation can thus be read as the contingent connection of more than one thing, at a certain time, but which is dependent on a variety of factors. An important articulation in the IS assemblage is that of Islamist hermeneutics to bureaucratic processes. This articulation is crucial to an assessment of the interrelations between the material (bodies, objects) and immaterial (expressions, discourses) components of the IS assemblage. Moreover, this articulation (alongside others) allows for the possibility of new assemblages akin to those outlined by D&G in their discussion of feudalism: as an example, what stake does the new terrorist-computer-spreadsheet or terrorist-desk-pencil have for the population of the caliphate? The use of bureaucratic processes to govern populations and individuals to thus extend the lives of conductable subjects is not a usual rendering of terrorist activity. However, taking account of the articulation of Islamist hermeneutics to bureaucracy (the abstract machine) is a first point in understanding the relations between the subjects that activate the assemblage (personae) and the objects of which it is made (concrete assemblage).

The use and production of media by the Islamic State is another resonance between the material mechanisms of the IS assemblage, what regulates it, and what expands it. For IS, media is simultaneously a component of the dispositif and the element that binds and extends the IS assemblage. IS have their own media production entities which includes Amaq News Agency (Milton 2018; Farwell 2014, p. 49); local media bureaus (Milton 2018; Kraidy 2017b); and individual supporters of the group historically circulated 'official' content via mainstream social media channels (Greene 2015; Berger & Morgan 2015). The group produced their own apps (Weiss & Hassan 2015, p. 113; Berger and Morgan, 2015, p. 25) and at least postured video game mods (Atwan 2015, p. 19); used 'pastebin' and archive style websites to upload and circulate their own content (Liang 2015, p. 2); used third-party apps such as 'Pidgin, Telegram, and WhatsApp' and others to communicate internally and with

recruits (Milton 2018); and by conducting a campaign of terror, maintained a presence on social media that continues as of early 2021.

D&G's notion of smooth and striated spaces is elucidating for understanding the circulation of IS media and its capacity as expansionary components of the assemblage. Christian Beck describes it as follows: 'Striated space is segmented, partitioned, and stratified as a means to utilise the space to a desired end. Smooth space, on the other hand, remains open, accessible, and malleable' (2016, p. 338). While the internet may be rhizomatic and thus an appropriate platform for the dissemination and circulation of content, it is not a wholly smooth space that is freely traversed. IS media had a presence within the striated corporate spaces of the internet such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter, but these spaces proved too limited and eventually IS-related content became heavily regulated and censored. Instead, the general smoothness of the internet facilitates the circulation of content called for by IS. In other words, the smooth*er* spaces of the internet such as Pastebin style sites and archive.org, as well as encrypted apps like WhatsApp provide IS with the tools needed for anonymity, de-regulation, and freely circulated links. I expand on the structure of the internet's relation to the facilitation of IS media in the following chapter. Presently, I introduce the concept dispositif before providing cursory explanations of governmentality and biopower in the final sections of the chapter.

What *is* a dispositif?

Though the notion of an assemblage is an important theoretical modality to provide a comprehensive account of IS's practices, it needs to be coupled to Foucault's idea of dispositif which is the primary critical heuristic, and object of study, whose function this thesis seeks to understand. Dispositif is often rendered as 'apparatus' in English[5] and used

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[5] The transliteration of the French 'dispositf' to 'apparatus' or 'dispositive', much like 'agencement' to 'assemblage', is contentious (Bussolini 2010). I use the term dispositif throughout this thesis on one hand to

frequently throughout Foucault's work though it does not experience the same privilege and place as his notion of discourse. Certainly, discourse coincides with it inasmuch as dispositifs are organised by discourse, but the idea of the dispositif underscores the importance of non-linguistic elements too (Caborn, 2007, p. 113). While the dispositif is constituted by and itself seeks to constitute discourse(s), it is also made up of actions and objects; an explicit dispositif analysis would analyse not just the extant components of a dispositif, but also the links between them and the power relations which are produced in response to the urgency which that specific dispositif addresses (Caborn 2007, p. 116). This is not to suggest that discourse does not consider actions and objects. Rather, a dispositif merely has a more material focus: text is privileged as much as actions and objects. It would also be important to note here that dispositif analysis should be considered as a kind of discourse analysis, not something altogether separate. In an interview from 1977, Foucault outlines his use of dispositif as the following:

> What I'm trying to pick out with this term is, firstly, a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions – in short, the said as much as the unsaid. The apparatus itself is the system of relations that can be established between these elements. Secondly, what I am trying to identify in this apparatus is precisely the nature of the connection that can exist between these heterogeneous elements. Thus, a particular discourse can figure at one time as the programme of an institution, and at another it can function as a means of justifying or masking a practice which itself remains silent, or as a secondary re-interpretation of this practice, opening out for it a new field of rationality. In short, between these elements, whether discursive or non-discursive, there is a sort of interplay of shifts of position and modifications of function which can also vary very widely. Thirdly, I understand by the term 'apparatus' a sort of – shall we say – formation which has as its major function at a given historical moment that of responding to an *urgent need*. The apparatus thus has a dominant strategic function. This may have been, for example, the assimilation of a floating population found to be burdensome for an essentially mercantilist economy: there was a strategic imperative acting here as the matrix for an apparatus which gradually undertook the control or subjection of madness, mental illness and neurosis. (Foucault 1980 [1977], p. 194)

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evoke Armstrong's (1992) and Agamben's (2009) articulation of dispositif as 'apparatus' or 'social apparatus', and on the other, in an attempt to preserve Foucault's original deployment of the term and capture both its philosophical and everyday usage. Where the terms apparatus and dispositive are used, I am discussing others' work.

Why can the conduct of terror be considered a dispositif? Conceptualising terror as merely text or material strategy alone is not a sufficient account of the effective capacities of contemporary terrorism; instead, the nature of the connection between the elements Foucault outlines above, as they pertain to IS's various governmental strategies, should be delineated, unpacked, and critiqued. An analysis of IS's dispositif then provide us with an identified range of strategies and techniques that will inform either a trend in contemporary articulations of terrorism, or a mode of differentiation, situating IS as its own unique beast.

IS speak with and through a vast number of discourses. For example, from the declaration of the caliphate, IS locate their practices within an anticolonial discourse. They seek to portray themselves and their actions as anti-nationalist, anti-imperialist, and anti-colonialist in their wish to unite the global Muslim ummah (community) into one caliphate. The paradoxical deterritorialising logic of IS in which geographical borders are dissolved has been prevalent since the production of videos like *End of Sykes-Picot* (2014), but a rhetoric located within a discursive retaliation against western hegemony permeates a great number of other texts and video media too. I discuss below the extent to which IS's own discourse(s) is also informed by a specific Islamist hermeneutics that is deployed in a particular region due to the spectral subjectivities locally and historically available there. By this, I mean to highlight the specific knowledges and contingencies of the regions IS previously took hold in such as Iraq and Syria. Yet, how do we discuss a reading and subsequent deployment of an 'Islamic' discourse locked into a vast genealogy of readings, as constituting a variety of elements in a dispositif without dovetailing into Orientalism?

The context of the dispositif: Islam/ism and representation

Discursive representations of Islam and the Middle East in Western media are instructive here and need to be considered as elements to which the IS dispositif responds. Of course, for Edward Said, such representations arise from and perpetuate the discourse of

Orientalism (1979; 2008; 2012). For Said, orientalism is the way in which the West has discursively constructed the 'Eastern world'. Orientalism is a textual and aesthetic production which exoticises the Oriental Other by placing them as strange, different, savage, overly sexualised, violent, greedy, and lazy, in order to construct the Western self as embodying the exact opposite of those characteristics: familiar, sexually repressed, peaceful, industrious, civilised, and so on. It is a way of seeing, thinking, and talking about the domain historically known in Europe and the colonies as the Orient (Middle-East, North Africa, Asia). And at the core of Orientalism is the problem of representation.

A critical understanding of the idea of representation is the basis of media and cultural studies and is crucial to discourse and dispositif analyses. Media, like our senses, do not provide us with direct access to the world; as Richard Dyer argues, 'there is no such thing as unmediated access to reality' (1993, p. 3). Rather, media re-present the world for us. The prefix 're' is important here: the signs that we comprehend in media are not the events themselves which occur in the world. Instead, these images, sounds, and words are re-presentations of events, people, places, and so on: they are abstractions. Because of this, any representation of an event is partial. Though the implicit inference by media is that media representations are holistic presentations of events, this is not the case: even though media posture themselves as providing holistic representations, they have a structural limitation which prevents them from doing so. The argument can be made that a range of news sources on the same story may bring us closer to the 'truth' of an event by allowing us access to it from a range of viewpoints informed by cultural context and political economic forces, but that range of perspectives nevertheless remains incomplete.

The discussion of representation here is important to understand the context that IS arise from, as well as to what the IS dispositif is responding. Again, for Dyer, 'representations here and now have real consequences for real people… representations

delimit and enable what people can be in any given society' (1993, p. 3). Is it any wonder that after numerous religious conflicts over the past thousand or so years, Orientalism in more recent centuries, Western imposed imperialism during and since the Sykes-Picot agreement, the constant advent of US-fuelled war since the 1990s and European imperialism beforehand, ongoing forces of destabilisation by Western powers, widespread local corruption, alongside a media campaign that exoticises and simplifies the Arab-Muslim-other, that between 2014-2015, people were joining IS in droves?

Representation is thus an important concept to acknowledge in the context of IS and East-West relations. This is because Western media, particularly since 2001, has not meaningfully engaged with the complex histories, knowledges, and power relations in the Middle East or Islamic religions for that matter (Ahmed & Matthes 2017; Said 2008). Ahmed and Matthes's (2017) meta-analysis of research on representations of Islam and Muslims between 2000 and 2015 showed that both were constantly simplified, usually within the confines of an orientalist discourse. Media representations showed that Islam has been mediated as being inherently oppressive towards women, including portraying them as victims that need to be saved from their religion and as symbols anathema to modern ways of life; it is usually characterised by 'irrational violence'; personifying the precise inversion of Western values and ways of living; as a threat to 'our' way of life; and, Muslims as consistently being violent terrorists or analogous with terrorism at the very least (Ahmed & Matthes 2017).

The folly of representation is exasperated in news media by a range of other structural limitations. The well-trodden ground of news values research argued that events had to meet a range of criteria before they could be counted as news (Galtung and Ruge 1965; see also Peterson 1979; Weimann & Brosius 1991; McGregor 2002). The more criteria an event met, which included pragmatic considerations such as cultural proximity and staff adjacent to the

event, the more likely it was that a story would be included in the news cycle. In light of these values and in addition to institutional pressures, how could whatever it is that we are referring to as Islam, Muslims, or 'Islamic' countries ever be meaningfully represented in Western news media? News outlets have a limited range of staff and time to deliver stories that are considered 'meaningful' within given geographies. It is not surprising, then, that the complex histories, knowledges, and power relations of Islamic religions, cultures, and countries has not been meaningfully explained in Western news media, nor that such concerns are almost entirely ignored on those rare occasions we receive news about such topics. This is not to let those outlets off the hook; it is to assert that we should not be surprised: detailed, nuanced histories of such topics are unlikely to net as much attention and therefore advertising revenue as sensational stories, spectacular forms of violence, and harmful reductions of complexity that are complicit in producing such violence. Couple this with the publics of late-stage capitalism who are too busy or inundated with information to explore or think about these issues further and it is not difficult to see how reductions of complexity, such as in the case of media representations of Islam and the Middle-East, are perpetuated. If we follow Dyer's assertion that representations put limits on who, what, and how it is possible to be in the world (1993, p. 13), the reactive violent spectacles of IS become less surprising.

The claims made here in accounting for contemporary terrorist governance enacted by IS as negotiating between the rudimentary and the sophisticated dispositif may seem at first to resemble Orientalism, being that in this reading, the Qur'an and hadith are complicit in the paratextual constitution of the caliphate. The point is, however, to subtract the ideological elements as well as the perception of the goals of IS; we must take at face value (to begin with), the *group* IS's goal to form a *sovereign* Islam*ist* caliphate. In this case, we can consider

the very conscious and specific deployment of a series of Islamist hermeneutics rather than Islam itself as a discourse which has been deployed to inform and justify practices of terror.

I distinguish between Islam and Islamism throughout this thesis. While Islam constitutes the faith of over a billion people (Courty and Rane, 2018), Islamism

> is a political ideology that bases its legitimacy on narratives and interpretations derived from the religion of Islam, specifically the Quran and prophetic traditions (hadith) as well as early, classical and modern Muslim history, customs and traditions. The goal of Islamism is the reorganisation of Muslim states and societies according to norms, values, systems and institutions advocated by its proponents, which they declare to be 'Islamic' or part of the religion of Islam. (Mahood and Rane 2017, p. 15)

Such a distinction allows us to locate the majority of global Islamic practices outside that of the violence instituted by groups like IS. In making this claim, it is certainly not my intention to account for Islam as having an essential/peaceful/truthful practice. It is my claim that one reading of Islam out of a whole range of possibilities, has been specifically used in a region where there is a history of Islamic practices. The benefit of this specific discourse is to take advantage of extant knowledge and repurpose and recycle the spectral subjectivities through knowledge and practices within the region. Syria and Iraq are countries with Muslim majorities so the formation of a Christian or Communist State was unlikely; the formation of a state assemblage with a compliant if unwilling population was contingent on history and knowledge in the region. Pushing the complex genealogy of Islam with terrorism to the side renders the conduct and articulation of Islam as a grid through which violence is pushed through and reasoned by, rather than the sole reason sovereignty via violence is pursued. Finally, we should also note that to perform or conceive of terrorism as a dispositif is not contingent on Islam specifically. Regardless, the intention of the present discussion is to frame part of the context to which IS is responding, as well as to explain how this thesis addresses Islamism. In the following, I discuss the specific manifestations of which the dispositif is composed.

Components of the IS dispositif
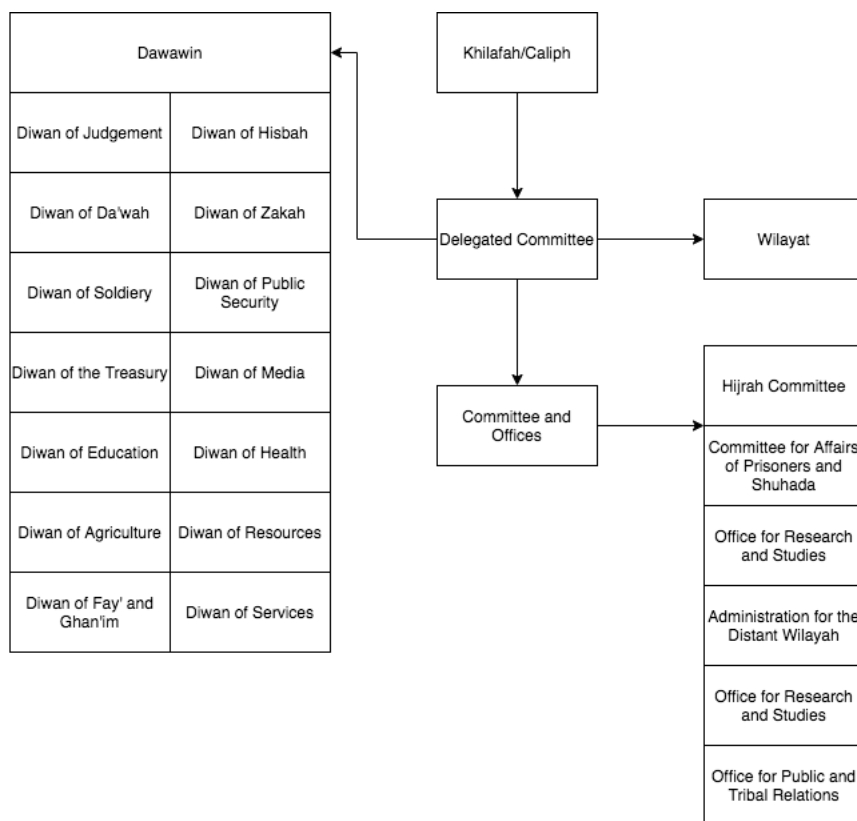
Figure 3 - Islamic State Government Structure

Within IS's dispositif of terror, we find a number of intersecting organisations who have been responsible for the cultural conduct within the caliphate. The image above (Fig. 3) is a rudimentary map of the governance structure of the Islamic State and is derived from the video, *Structure of the Caliphate* (2016). The lesser sovereign of the caliphate is Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and his duties are carried out by various governing bodies. Immediately below him is the Delegated Committee, and under them are the components that make up the Islamic State's governmental system proper. It is made up of Wilayat or regions; Committees and Offices who deal with 'various matters' and are run by 'specialized personnel' who are overseen by the Delegated Committee. However, the most interesting bodies for the purposes

of this thesis are the various Dawawin who resemble the gatekeepers of the social contract of the caliphate. There are 14 Dawawin with various purposes that resemble the kinds of ministries and departments found in liberal democracies. As an example, the Diwan of Zakah is in charge of collecting and redistributing resources to the 'needy'; the treasury manages the state's wealth; the Diwan of Education oversees appropriate teacher training and adherence to IS's instituted curriculum; the Diwan of Health is IS's healthcare department; the Diwan of Judgement and grievances seeks to resolve conflicts between citizens; and the Diwan of Services acts much like a city council by maintaining public utilities such as roads, electricity, and water. These governing bodies are also directed towards both the securitisation of the Islamic State (Diwan of Soldiery, Diwan of Public Security) as well as the daily conduct of citizens (Diwan of Hisbah). The Diwan of Media is not elaborated on in *Structure of the Caliphate* though it has been discussed by Daniel Milton (2018) from the Combating Terrorism Centre. In Chapter 3 I theorise IS media in more detail, but it is useful to outline some known functions of the Diwan of Media as part of my process of mapping the IS assemblage.

Based on documents recovered from Islamic State Khurasan by the US military, Milton (2018) has established how the Diwan of Media functioned. The Diwan of Media placed a significant amount of importance on producing both a vast range of media outputs as well as reporting on a variety of issues 'from military operations to governance initiatives undertaken within the caliphate' (2018, p. 6). Their four main kinds of media releases included 'photo reports, videos, individual images, and statements' (2018, p. 6), according to the released documents. The Central Media Diwan is separate from local media bureaus, though they still maintain dominion over them and regulate their content. As an example, in a document titled 'Organisation Structure of the Media Office', it is suggested that local media bureaus create four teams for publishing and distribution (delivering media to soldiers and

citizens), a media points team (in charge of managing local media centres where it was possible to take pamphlets and watch IS-produced videos), a flicks and ads team (who managed physical media such as posters and billboards in city spaces), and an Al-Bayan radio team who were to coordinate with Al-Bayan radio (IS's main radio station broadcast locally and streamed online) and record audio content (2018, p. 11). In this case, internal media (directed within the caliphate) is produced by regional media bureaus while external media is produced by the Central Media Diwan which is in charge of production and distribution under the supervision of the Media Monitoring Committee (2018, p. 11). However, the central media bureau had stringent quality control protocols in place in order to regulate content that was being produced in the regions such as scoring systems and pre-publication reviewing revision processes, facilitated via group chats in Telegram and WhatsApp (2018, p. 16). I discuss this in greater detail in Chapter 3.

The Committees and Offices serve a more bureaucratic function than do the Dawawin. These committees are as follows: the Hijrah Committee is responsible for receiving new emigres to the Islamic State and ensuring they are assigned to a correct position on arrival; the Committee for Affairs of Prisoners and Shuhada' follow up on imprisoned Muslims and take care of their families while they are exiled; the Office for Research and Studies seems to be a kind of academic department responsible for researching issues pertaining to sharia where vagueness occurs in order to develop a consensus for a rule; the Administration of Distant Wilayah is responsible for maintaining contact with and ensuring correct governance of distant territories outside of Iraq and Syria (e.g. North Africa, Philippines, Afghanistan, etc.); and the Office for Public Relations maintains relationships between the Islamic State and tribal leaders within the Wilayah. I mention these components of the caliphate here in order to map the Islamic State's governmental assemblage and to expose some of the components of the group's dispositif.

All of these governing bodies are articulated to the governance goals of the caliphate. For instance, the hisbah have been shown to monitor practices such as fashion and the legitimacy of products during the caliphate's 'heyday' (See VICE 2014). However, intervention by Islamic police, raid squads, and emni (security forces) were also elicited to regulate conduct within the caliphate (Almohammad, Speckhard, & Yayla 2017, p. 2). It should also be noted that institutions brush up against and overlap into other elements of the dispositif. For example, the institution of, say, the hisbah (morality police), is not entirely self-referential. Rather, the hisbah very much operated as a visible disciplinary institution whose goal was to regulate daily conduct in the lives of subjects within the caliphate (disjunctive synthesis), the mediation of which I discuss in Chapter 6. Its ethic was then informed by philosophic and moral propositions derived from IS's specific deployment of Islam which is, in turn, informed by a historical emanation of previous hisbah. Importantly, the hisbah could also be considered as the material rendering of biopolitics in the caliphate to the extent that they sought to regulate bodies in public spaces according to a particular norm, exposing the abnormal to both social and literal death in the process. In this way, the institution of police in the Islamic State was not amorphous; it derived its own conduct, regulations, rules, and ethics, from a conscious appropriation of Islam by intervening in the daily lives of the citizenry. The practice of police within the entangled operationalisation of the dispositif cannot escape discourse either, for the institution, imbued with philosophical and moral propositions then delimits what can be said within the caliphate and even so-called 'non-discursive' practices such as economic exchanges (Foucault 1972, p. 175). The role of police, within the caliphate, then puts practices into discourse previously outside the limits of speaking in order to regulate both discursive practices like public behaviour, and non-discursive practices such as economic exchange. I discuss later the extent to which recovered and translated administrative documents of IS further inform the function of institutions such

as the school and delimit what is taught there. However, cognasint to a discussion of the interconnectedness of the dispositif is a deliberation on the materiality of IS's coding of spaces and practices: as I have shown, even architectural forms can be appropriated within, for, and by articulations of terror. Within the caliphate, the generalised use of architectural forms was in fact taken up by police as mentioned in my discussion regarding the re-use of al-Baladi stadium as a prison cum processing centre.

As with discourses and institutions, IS's regulatory decisions are informed by a specific Islamist hermeneutics which does not always materialise in conduct and often serves the purpose of any current goal of the group. Regulatory decisions usually manifest in the administrative documents of the caliphate, though that is not to say regularasition is not apparent in IS media, particularly in the case of bodily conduct with the transcendental soul at stake. Such regulatory decisions are somewhat boundless: they range from what can be taught in schools, to the price of food, to gendered conceptions of dress. At the level of the subject, the decision of what to learn, charge for food, or dress, is not inherently bound to a conception of terror: their location within a series of terroristic practices which suggest punishment or murder for misconduct is what constitutes these regulatory decisions as part of a dispositif of terrorist governance. There are a great many more regulatory decisions that make up IS's dispositif of terror though I highlight these 'everyday' ones to show the minute detail addressed by the group.

Laws and administrative measures are somewhat addressed through institutions and regulatory decisions discussed above. Though, it should be noted that from IS's perspective, they have instituted Sharia law. In many respects, Sharia law precedes the discourses, institutions, regulatory decisions, laws, and administrative measures issued by IS. It also has consequences for the moral, philosophical, and philanthropic propositions put forward by IS. Simply put, the moral, philosophical, and philanthropic propositions put forward by IS

inform their governmentality: they provide the population with the upward continuities of

good self-conduct as a precondition of good governance (Foucault 2007, p. 94). Because this

thesis is expressly concerned with the governmental capacities and procedures of IS, an

explication of the concept governmentality is needed here. Though, I note that this is a

preliminary introduction to the concept which I unpack further in Chapter 3 in close relation

to media.

Governmentality

Governmentality is a concept used by Foucault both as an analytical method and as a

way of identifying historical logics of governance or governmentalities (Nadesan 2008, p.

217). Stripped of its complexity, it can be described literally as a governing mentality (Lemke

2001, p. 191). But governmentality is concerned with the governance of others as much as it

is with the governance of oneself (Foucault 2003). Beginning with the observation of an

emergent body of literature concerning government in the 16th century (e.g. Machiavelli's

The Prince), Foucault captures the complexity of governmentality by differentiating between

what he terms upward and downward continuities. This split is informed by the assumption

that if a sovereign (or Prince in the case of Machiavelli) is well-educated, then he could

govern well, his subjects could be governed well, and importantly, they could govern

themselves well (Foucault 2003, p. 94). Upward continuities can be described as the

sovereign's knowledge of how to conduct himself, while downward continuities occur from

the bottom-up:

> When a state is governed well, fathers will know how to govern their families, their wealth,
> their goods, and their property well, and individuals will also conduct themselves properly.
> This descending line, which means that the good government of the state affects individual
> conduct or family management, is what begins to be called 'police' at this time. The
> education of the Prince assures the upward continuity of forms of government, and police
> assures their downward continuity. (Foucault 2003, p. 94)

Governmentality is then best described not only as an art of governing, but as the purposeful

distribution of instigative trust in the populace that they will govern themselves well too.

Specific governmentalities can be deployed too, such as in the case of the Islamic State where a mode of Islamist discourse informs how its population should be conducted, and how they should conduct themselves. Preceding a discussion of the utility of governmentality in media studies in the forthcoming chapters, it is worth noting two ways Foucault sums up the concept so that it might be grasped as a critical heuristic that is congruent with the assemblage and dispositif. An understanding of governmentality must take into account the following elements so that they can be made useful and flexible:

> the ensemble formed by institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, calculations, and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific, albeit very complex, power that has the population as its target, political economy as its major form of knowledge, and apparatuses of security as its essential technical instrument

> the tendency, the line of force, that for a long time, and throughout the West, has constantly led towards the pre-eminence over all other types of power—sovereignty, discipline, and so on—of the type of power that we can call 'government' and which has led to the development of a series of specific governmental apparatuses on one hand, [and, on the other] to the development of a series of knowledges (Foucault 2007, p. 108)

Similar to the dispositif, governmentalities are multiplicitous and composed of a variety of features: institutions, procedures, analyses, and so on. The primary disjuncture with the first aspect of governmentality in the Islamic State is that political economy was not the major form of knowledge in the caliphate, though Islamic economics were certainly pursued. The major form of knowledge in the caliphate is Islamist discourse which has recourse to transcendental salvation via worldly conduct; though it is not the only form of knowledge— herein lies the utility of governmentality and its intersection with the dispositif. The forms of knowledge in the Islamic State, derived from Islamist hermeneutics, thus inform the way the components of IS's dispositif function: this is certainly the case when it comes to security apparatuses. The second quotation above is where some improvisation and re-contextualisation must occur. Genealogies of government are not restricted to the west, yet techniques deployed within an art of governance are privy to similar techniques of power which Foucault identified as having been deployed in the west. Sovereign, disciplinary,

pastoral, and biopolitical techniques are all deployed inside and outside the Islamic State via both material and immaterial means. As above, they are also vulnerable to Islamist hermeneutics which inform IS's conduct of conduct.

Upward continuities, or, the ideal insurance that the population will conduct themselves well, are formulated in a variety of different ways in the caliphate. Of course, there is a base level of good self-conduct in any religious articulation—important people of any religion are incessantly drawn upon for their good self-conduct and used as examples and IS is no different: Ibrahim, Mohammed, the companions, historical caliphs, and scholars among others are often drawn upon in both media and administration as examples of those who conducted themselves well, as kinds of lessons. Curiously, there seems to be a lack of reference to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi (IS leader until his death in 2019) in IS media[6]. More immediate examples of upward continuities appear in the form of interviews with or reports on martyrs in magazines like *Dabiq*. In issue 7, for example, we see an article titled 'The Good Example of Abū Basīr al-Ifrīqī'. It is a report on the deeds of one of the perpetrators (Amedy Coulibaly) of the January 2015 Paris Terror Attack. The article, apparently recounted by someone close to him, is split into subheadings according to each good trait: 'His enjoining of good and forbidding of evil'; 'His Da'wah'; 'His dhikr'; 'His following of the evidence'; 'His thirst for seeking knowledge'; 'His fasting'; 'His night prayer'; 'His harshness against the kafirin [sic] and humbleness towards the believers'; 'His generosity'; 'His jealousy for the religion' (2015, pp. 69-71). The intended function of this article is to set out the parameters of a good IS citizen or subject. Though al-Ifriqi was not technically a leader, his martyrdom allows him to be elevated to the status of an example, thus fulfilling the conditions of an upward continuity: the good self-conduct of a leader.

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[6] This could be for a number of reasons—it could be strategically short-sighted to consistently reference or fabricate the good self-conduct of Baghdadi because he is not strictly a religious figure in the same sense as the Prophet is, it may be that his position as a lesser sovereign is not the most ideal as an exemplary of good conduct when there are other options available.

What is more common in IS media at least is a kind of lateral continuity where good self-conducting agents in the IS assemblage are used as examples. That is, relatively unexceptional citizens are used as examples of subjects who have been able to conduct themselves correctly. This is certainly so in the case of Abu Adam in *Inside the Caliphate #2* who I discuss throughout the thesis. He is not represented as any kind of senior IS member and is instead used as a good example of someone who has committed hijrah from the West (Australia) and, subsequently, conducted himself correctly.

The governmentality of IS has a history drawn from Islamist hermeneutics and primary texts. In those propositions that are etched into the governmentality of IS we then find both transcendence and immanence, in that the caliphate claims heredity to the caliphate in the time of Mohammad using his example of good governance via Allah. The immanent examples of governmentality in the caliphate rely on the transcendent: that is, the transcendent informs the immanent example to produce a downward continuity of good, self-governing subjects (Foucault 2007, p. 94). This is an important distinction, as the role of Islamist interpretation I have underscored above is primarily rendered into material practices of governance.

It would seem that terror, in the eyes of IS, is a means of sovereignty. But due to the ongoing dispersion of IS as their position in Iraq and Syria diminished, ongoing terror has become a hurdle to sovereignty rather than an end goal. While there are certain geopolitical and historical contingencies that have enabled the IS's success in Syria, what really seems to have given the group traction in its ploy for sovereignty and an Islamic State in the region has been a combination of force, governance, and media operations. In other words, their strategic apparatus of terrorism. Before closing this chapter, I wish to introduce the primary mode of power that animates IS: biopower. Like my discussion of governmentality, the following is a cursory introduction to biopower. Though I discuss how biopower emanates

throughout the IS dispositif during the course of this thesis, I return to theorise the specific mode of biopower IS deployed in the final chapter and conclusion.

Biopower

Biopower is the primary technology of power which characterizes the IS dispositif and thus informs the group's governmentality. I introduce biopower here as it was discussed by Foucault (1990; 2003) and because it is one of the primary modes of power deployed by IS which I discuss throughout the following. However, I develop my theorasition further in Chapter 7 as a means of articulating IS media to its administrative and legal assemblage—it is here that I explore the development of biopower and biopolitics.

Biopower is discussed most elaborately in the final chapter of *The History of Sexuality: Volume 1* (1990) and the final lecture from *Society Must Be Defended* (2003). Foucault conceptualizes biopower as a technology of power which develops from the 17th century in Western Europe and claims that it can, in the first instance, best be explained by distinguishing it and its techniques from what he called sovereign power. Sovereign power was primarily characterized by seizure and deduction: that is, the capability for the sovereign to take life from their subjects by exposing them to death (via war), the direct removal of life if the sovereign's life is threatened, and of course the seizure of 'things, time, bodies' (Foucault 1990, p. 136). Perhaps the best way of distinguishing these two types of power, while remembering that technologies of power are not sequential and disaggregate but, rather, intersecting and unevenly developed, is that while sovereign power was the power to 'take life or let live', the object of biopower was to 'make live and let die' (Foucault 2003, p. 241). Biopower operated along two poles: the body as machine and the species body (Foucault 1990, p. 139). Like disciplinary power (Foucault 1975), which it is an annexation of, biopower sought to extend the capacities of the body by making it useful, efficient, and disciplined. This is what Foucault calls its anatomo-politics of the body (Foucault 1990, p.

139). The other pole, the species body, is what makes biopower unique: this is the pole concerned with populations rather than individuals and it intervenes at various levels of life: 'propagation, births and mortality, the level of health, life expectancy and longevity, with all the conditions that can cause this to vary' (Foucault 1990, p. 139).

As above, this technology of power arises via various processes such as demography in the 18th century (Foucault 2003, p. 243). The implementation of statistics sought to regularize populations, treated as a problem and addressed in terms of health. A productive way of understanding this is as the production of a healthy workforce, the achievement of which is maintained in a number of ways. When states begin to govern through the techniques of the biopolitical, they are concerned with maintaining productivity by reducing illness and its risks. The implementation of biopower includes public hygiene practices and education directed toward public healthcare. Additionally, Foucault notes that we see 'the introduction of more subtle, more rational mechanisms: insurance, individual and collective savings, safety measures and so on' (Foucault 2003, p. 244). Put differently, a crucial goal of biopower is to mitigate risks to the health of the population so that production remains uninterrupted.

In Foucault's nascent formulation of biopower in *Society Must Be Defended*, state racism plays on operative role. Racism here does not only inhere in ethnicity, culture, and physical appearance, but in the prioritisation of a norm antagonistically placed against those categorised as abnormal. The state racism discussed here involves a 'series of techniques for identifying and ordering groups that are either 'good or inferior' for the health of the population' (as cited in Crampton & Elden 2007, p. 225). In this way, biopower can be understood as the management of risk against abnormality which might be harmful to both the life of the population as well as their 'way of life'. For Foucault, this means creating a stark delineation between who gets to live and who must die (2003, p. 254). He notes that

death here refers to social or political death via exclusion, as well as exposure to death, of increasing someone's likelihood of death so that the population remains healthy and productive (Foucault 2003, p. 256). We ought to recall here, however, that biopower annexes other forms of power such as pastoral power, sovereign power, disciplinary power, and so on. In other words, while they might execute the 'soft' means of social exclusion, biopolitical regimes are certainly capable of abject forms of violent death too, such as in the case of the Islamic State.

What, then, is the relation of this form of power, developed in Europe during the 17th and 18th centuries, to a terrorist organisation who took control over large swathes of territory in Iraq, Syria, and elsewhere? As I argue in Chapter 7, biopolitical power is contextual and functions differentially within various geographies with their own historical contexts. The argument I make in this thesis is that the particular way in which biopower is formulated in the caliphate and IS's media apparatus is specific to the group's discourses and aims. This is not to say that their mode of biopower is completely unique; rather, it is to assert the specificity of IS's goals and means. The general logic of fostering productive lives in the name of the population's posterity via the violent removal of subjects is different to the 'softer' means of biopower found in neoliberal societies. Yet, IS combine a range of biopolitical techniques which operate via regimes of inclusion and exclusion, meted out symbolically, slowly, and corporeally.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have sought to map both the theoretical bedrock of this thesis as well as the bodies and institutions that constitute the Islamic State's ontology and governance. It is my contention that IS constitute an assemblage in their material composition as a collection of heterogeneous and contingent elements with both localized and global intensities. The IS assemblage is a complex of bodies, technologies, movements, and speeds which are subject

to change. Theorising IS as a global assemblage in this way allows a consideration of the group as one which pursued territorial governance and who was much more than a terrorist organisation. It also allows an appreciation of how the group changes over time. Rendering IS as an assemblage is crucial for contextualising the group as it takes into account the genealogical forces which give rise to IS, its organisational logic and, as I will show in the course of this thesis, the group's deterritorialisation. Additionally, interpreting IS as an assemblage, in its very fluidity, lays the ground for comprehending the other assemblages that IS connected to and engaged with such as the global capitalist assemblage of digitally networked social media.

Following my discussion of the IS assemblage and media which simultaneously hold it together and expand it, I fleshed out Foucault's dispositif and sought to link it to governmental institutions and practices both inside and outside the Islamic State. To show the importance and suitability of understanding IS's governmental strategy as a dispositif, I sought to map the organisation structure of the Islamic State; in other words, I sketched some of the components of its dispositif. Conceptualising the media and governmental strategy of IS imperative for understanding their goals and means. As I have stated, dispositif as a concept is articulable to assemblage. However, using dispositif as a conceptual heuristic facilitates an understanding of the more solidified components of the IS assemblage and their modalities of governance in particular. By pursuing a structural, strategic, and discursive understanding of IS governmentality, we can begin to understand the kinds of subjects IS seek to produce, and how they seek to produce them. The concept of dispositif simultaneously allows one to understand the material forces of governmental structures and processes as well as media governance. The minor analysis performed in this section precedes a more elaborate theorisation of dispositif analysis in Chapter 4.

Finally, I outlined governmentality and biopower as articulated by Foucault. Though this introduction to governmentality was brief, I leverage the work of Ouellette (2009) and Ouellette and Hay (2009) on governmentality and television in Chapter 3 to provide a starting point for analysing the governmental function of IS media. The same goes for my preliminary discussion of biopower: my elucidation of biopower here is to guide the reader through this thesis before developing an informed theorisation of biopower in Chapter 7. Nevertheless, as I show throughout the course of this thesis, the above conceptual framework is vital for understanding the governmental logic, organisation, primary modes of power, ontology, epistemology, and ideal subject of IS. In the next chapter, I provide an overview of critical media and cultural studies perspectives on IS media.

Following my mapping of IS's governmental structure and introduction to the theoretical rationale of this thesis, I now explore a range of other perspectives on the Islamic State and their use of media. The primary task of this chapter is to delineate the perspectives from which IS and its relationship with media have been analysed and critiqued. IS media has been thought through from a variety of perspectives: some researchers have analysed specific IS-produced videos such as *Although the Disbelievers Dislike It* (Tinnes, 2015; Winter, 2014), while others have theorized the process of 'radicalisation' that some foreign fighters are thought to have gone through (Picart 2015). Scholars such as Haroro Ingram take a strategic communication perspective across multiple media platforms to analyse how IS-produced media leverages support from both allies and enemies (2014, p. 4). Importantly, researchers such as Archetti have sought to problematize counter-terrorism measures that deploy certain kinds of media in order to produce counter-narratives against IS (2015). Others, such as Alkaff and Mahzam (2018) have analysed the output of IS-produced media during and after conflicts such as the Fall of Mosul and Raqqa. And of significant relevance to this thesis is Mello's work on the violence of IS which seeks to synthesise Foucault's scholarship on 'discipline and punishment and Fanon's analysis of colonialism and anticolonialism' in order to make 'ISIS's violence more intelligible' (2018, p. 140). Crucially, Mello also conducts an analysis of a popular Jihadi-Salafist text titled *The Management of Savagery* which is widely known to have been an important founding document that informed IS's organisation media production. Some, such as Friis, take an International Relations perspective and have analysed the ways in which IS use publicly mediated forms of violence to produce a global spectacle and that an understanding of IS as 'crazy' or 'psychopathic' elides a comprehensive understanding of the group, a point with

which I agree (2018, p. 248). Though without using this specific term, Friis also theorizes public forms of violence enacted by IS as disciplinary practices (2018, p. 248). Artrip and Debrix (2018) seek to approach the circulation of IS media holistically by taking a Baudrillardian perspective and locating the meaning of IS's images within our saturated global media environment. Similarly, Marwan Kraidy considers the circulatory potential of IS-produced media within the theoretical rubric of hypermedia space (2017) while Sara Monaci argues that IS's media strategy utilizes a transmedia approach which operationalizes multiple media platforms with complimentary and repetitive messaging (2017). These are merely a sample of approaches some have taken to IS media which intersect with critical media and cultural studies. I plot the co-ordinates of these perspectives and others in order to underscore this thesis's contribution to literature on IS media, and on terrorism and the deployment of media more broadly. Furthermore, the following perspectives inform my theorisation of IS media in Chapter 3.

Previously, there seems to have been a distinct focus on violence in IS media even though some scholars (Ingram 2015; Winter 2015) have shown that violence is not the main focus in a large amount of media outputs. As Winter (2015) disclosed, a significant amount of IS media is concerned with life in the caliphate, the 'everyday', and a utopian representation of the Islamic State rather than one that is characterized by violence. This thesis does not shy away from the violent capacities and representations in IS media and the practices they seek to incite. However, it also analyses the operationalisation of techniques of power which intercede into the mundanities of everyday life.

Critical Perspectives on IS Media

The following is an attempt to establish key perspectives on IS media in order to identify gaps in the current literature. As above, there is an overwhelming focus on violence in IS media. While much of the scholarly work on violence in IS media is useful, it does not

provide us with a holistic picture of the group's attempt to produce a state-like municipality.

Of course, there is not scope to explore all academic perspectives on the relationship between

IS and media. I have therefore not included all literature consulted to construct this review;

instead, I have privileged what can broadly be described as perspectives from (or which

intersect with) critical media and cultural studies. What do such perspectives address or

entail? For Babe, '*Cultural studies* may be loosely defined as the multi-disciplinary study of

culture across various social strata, where *culture* refers to arts, knowledge, beliefs, customs,

practices, and norms of social interaction' (2009, p. 4). Kellner, writing in reference to

mainstream western media's reaction to the War on Terror, notes that 'A critical cultural

studies, however, should dissect dominant discourses, images, and spectacles of all

contending sides, denoting manipulation, propaganda, and questionable policies' (2004, p.

21). The perspectives below do not exhaust the possibilities of the accounts held by Babe and

Kellner. However, they do intersect with them in that their main concerns are the dissection

of knowledges, practices, dominant discourses, and images.

Perspectives on IS often (though not always) fall into two broad categories.

Chouliaraki and Kissas have noted that much literature across a variety of disciplines

(including media studies) has thought through the relationship between terrorism and

communication via two analytical dichotomies: '*strategic* communication, which is

concerned with the instrumental value of terrorism as a means of propaganda and *political*

communication, which looks into the broader political dynamics of the spectacle of terror'

(2018, p. 26). Strategic communication sometimes uses what the authors term cultural

analysis and argues that violent portrayals of death are an integral part of 'ISIS' digital

practice' alongside 'the management of its image as a state-aspiring militant entity' (2018, p.

26). In contradistinction, political communication approaches are more concerned with the

'socio-political implications' of IS media: 'Images of annihilated bodies, this literature has it,

participate in broader projects of ideological hegemony in global geopolitics' (2018, p. 27).

For them, strategic communication approaches focus on the messages in IS media, largely

ignoring the deployment of power, while political communication approaches (which

sometimes use cultural analysis) do the inverse. Though the literature is not so clear-cut that

it can be split cleanly into two categories, this distinction remains useful for thinking through

the following myriad perspectives on IS media. Moreover, it pre-empts and informs my

discussion of critical media and cultural studies approaches to IS media that are the most

pertinent to my analysis and of which the forthcoming discussion is composed. The

acknowledgement of these two principal bodies of literature is therefore a useful starting

point that informs my analysis.

Though strictly media and cultural studies perspectives on IS are somewhat scarce, some

productive work has been accomplished. For example, Marwan Kraidy has produced a

number of articles that analyse IS from a media and cultural studies perspective. Notably, he

has reflected on his concept of hypermedia space to account for IS's activity across multiple

media technologies (2017a). The notion of hypermedia space

> (a) account[s] for the broadest possible spectrum of what we mean by 'media' and (b) [can] be
> used as a generative analytical framework that probes the changing nature of media dynamics in
> global public life and the 'corrections' that our prevalent concepts might necessitate to
> accommodate these social and political changes. (Kraidy 2017a, pp. 167-168)

Hypermedia space is a useful concept for analysing the media output and remediation of a

group like IS as it acknowledges their 'multipronged communication campaigns that integrate

every possible media modality' (Kraidy 2017a, p. 168). Moreover, much like transmedia and

intermedial perspectives, hypermedia space is able to account for both 'old' and 'new' forms

of media and the stake they have digitally and materially. In other words, an in-depth

consideration of hypermedia space as it pertains to and is taken up by IS is useful for multiple

communicative outputs such as 'print pamphlets, media kiosks, public viewings of execution

videos, and other low to mid-tech media activities that are not on the radar screen of most

media researchers' (Kraidy 2017a, p. 169). While hypermedia space has the capacity to descend into technological determinism, Kraidy is prudent to write that it is not a 'disembodied apparatus of media and technologies' (2017a, p. 168) and underscores the importance of humans to operate these media technologies.

Kraidy has also written on the affective capacities of IS's media content (2017b). In an analysis of two primary source 'jihadi' texts and one ultraviolent video produced by IS titled *Healing the Believers' Chests*, Kraidy claims that digital images produced and circulated by IS stimulate our 'scopic drive and direct[ing] it towards death, moving images act as projectiles that subjugate our bodies to the spectacle, compelling us to experience terror as a bodily intensity' (2017b, p. 1204). Here, terror is an affective intensity, 'an embodied experience' (2017b, p. 1199) that reverberates through projectilic images and manifests in 'purely autonomic reactions most directly manifested in the skin—at the surface of the body, at its interface with things', supposedly outside of ideology (Massumi 1995, p. 85). Important here is the operative role media images play in image-wars and the ways that they echo sentiments laid out in an official IS media handbook titled *O Media Worker You are a Mujahid!* (Kraidy 2017b). The link between the pursuit of specific effects of media (from the point of view of IS) and guidelines actually put forward in official documentation is a component of contemporary terrorist governance this thesis seeks to draw out.

Kraidy has also deployed the work of Guy Debord (1968 [2012]) and the situationists to consider the spectacular capacity of non-violent IS imagery and its reactions from Iraqi public broadcasters (Kraidy 2018). The kernel of this work is his appraisal of the ways in which IS appropriate the logics of global media. IS melds its own spectacle onto the 'planetary diffuse spectacle of cable news histrionics and the instant circulation of stories via social media' (Kraidy 2018, p. 53). The group thus leverage attention through the assumption and delivery of imprudent reactions by mainstream media, appropriate hashtags from

significant events (e.g. FIFA 2014 World Cup), and 'implants apps that turn sympathizers'

smartphones into prolific pro-I.S. bots, in order to insert its non-violent spectacle of the good

life into global media obsession over I.S. violence' (Kraidy 2018, p. 53). While my study is

more focussed on how IS-produced media seeks to capture and conduct the everyday

mundanities of citizens' and supporters' lives, a consideration of the spectacle of nonviolent

IS media certainly provides the foundations of a bridge between studies of spectacularly

violent IS media and the tasks of this thesis. My conceptualisation of media use by IS is

similar to Kraidy's, although I refer to the smooth and striated spaces of the internet rather

than to hypermedia space in my assessment and analysis. Additionally, my uptake of

dispositif analysis provides an understanding of the connections between internal governance

of IS subjects and mediated subject formation.

In line with a media and cultural studies approach to IS media, some work has been

done on the biopolitics of the Islamic State. Salih and Kraidy, for example, have analysed the

biopolitical management of women in the caliphate (2020). Focussing on the ways in which

women are managed within the caliphate in both the public and private realms, Salih and

Kraidy conducted a textual analysis of *Dabiq* to establish the contours of biopolitical and

necropolitical power, as they pertain to women, and non-Sunni Yezidi women in particular,

within the caliphate. For the authors, the enslavement of Yezidi women locates them within

Agamben's state of exception where they are rendered as bare life; that is, able to be disposed

of but not sacrificed (1998). While this analysis goes some way toward accounting for the

aspects of biopolitics of the Islamic State, it does not go far enough. I argue in Chapter 7, for

instance, that the institution of slavery in the caliphate is more sinister than the state of

exception. The practice of enslavement (and sex slavery in particular) is better addressed as

an inclusive exclusion: subjects are addressed by way of their exclusion *and* cannot be wholly

excluded from the state. As I will show, in a pamphlet on slavery issued by IS's Fatwa

Issuing department, slavery is seen as a mode of inoculation against abnormality, as well as a means of increasing the population. While the production of slavery is tantamount to the reduction of life to a bare minimum, its ideal function is as a mode of subjectification where those enslaved engorge the productivity and size of the IS assemblage.

Violence

As above, many scholars have focussed on violence in IS media. There are a number of possible reasons for this. For one, IS garnered huge media coverage and notoriety for their spectacular acts of violence and its mediation, their brutal governance, and the ways in which they took territory. Certainly, a clandestine, violent group taking up media and communication technologies in ways not previously possible, alongside media coverage that focussed on the spectacle of IS violence, in addition to the humanitarian crisis of the ongoing Syrian Civil war and the previous two decades of strife in the Middle-East is wont to stir up interest among academics. The use of obstinate violence by IS, then, as one of the most visible aspects of the group's activities that seems far removed from the conduct of most governments, seems to have struck the interest of many people, including researchers. However, some of the perspectives on the violence of IS are worth discussing.

Pertinent to the concerns of this thesis, Mello (2018) has sought to synthesize the work of Foucault and Fanon and considers disciplinary and biopolitically charged arrangements of power as well as the constitution of identity through violence. Mello notes that a multitude of factors differentiate IS from previous groups such as their deployment of media, sectarianism, and the imminent production of an Islamic caliphate (2018, p. 141): 'unlike other militarized Islamist organisations, ISIS has advanced forms of violence, governance, and sectarianism that have actively sought to remake borders (and by extension the state system) throughout the entire Middle East and beyond' (2018, p. 139). But the

violence perpetrated by IS and present in its media is not a new aspect of terrorists' use of media which Mello claims stems from resistances to the 2003 invasion of Iraq (2018, p. 142). Additionally, the violence present in IS media reflects the violence of the Hussein and Assad regimes in Iraq and Syria respectively, as well as by 'Jihadi-Salafist ideologists in the decade prior to the declaration of an Islamic Caliphate' (2018, p. 142). Vitally, however, Mello understands public acts of violence and their mediation as instantiations of disciplinary power. Following Foucault, he claims that 'we ought to focus as much on how punishment is designed to produce particular behaviours as it is designed to deter them' (2018, p. 143). In other words, what are the productive rather than repressive effects of punishment in the Islamic State? Mello brings to bear an important consideration for the mediation of violence which can be paralleled to the less-violent aspects of IS media: corporeality. He adds: 'How, in essence, should we interpret the corporeal dimensions of Islamic State brutality? In what ways does ISIS's brutality seek to shape the behaviour both of its adherents and its adversaries?' (2018, p. 143). Subsequently, he turns to an expression of sovereign power— the execution—the optics of which is polyvalent in that it seeks to 'restore justice', solidify the power of IS, punish the subject, produce docility in the population, ask potential subjects to join IS, and threaten enemies (2018, pp. 144-145). The protean nature of the violent act as a discursive feature of IS is not limited to these pursuits, however. For IS, the extermination of life is in line with Islamic jurisprudence and therefore part of good conduct and the upper continuities constitutive of governmentality. The spectacular execution is one that stimulates the presence and knowledge of the group by global populations in its capacity to be circulated within the global media environment (Artrip & Debrix 2017). Despite IS's mediation of violence, Mello is right to note that IS's state-building practices also reveal the group's ideology (2018, p. 147). Against Celso (2014), the deliberation of IS is what imbues them with horror, not madness. Additionally, Mello asserts that the governmental regulations

deployed in the caliphate constitute a form of biopower: 'The Islamic State's ideology serves as the legitimating anchor for its governing practices. It is an ideology that promises emancipation to those who are willing to live out the Islamic State's way of life' (2018, p. 148). Unfortunately, this point is not developed. The acknowledgement of the deployment of biopower in the caliphate, however, does have a critical articulation with my development of biopower in relation to IS.

It is also worth noting Mello's use of Fanon to understand IS as an anticolonial movement. Like the anticolonial violence given precedence by Fanon, the violence of IS is 'constitutive of identity' (2018, p. 150). Fanon claims that resistance to colonialism on the part of colonized peoples can be perpetrated by employing an 'authentic' identity from before the advent of colonialism. Although this identity is itself imagined and constructed, it nevertheless functions to incite a collective identity and foster imagined communities 'specifically designed to resist and present an alternative to colonialism' (2018, p. 152). For Mello, IS employ similar identity-making strategies by appealing to a pre-colonial iteration of Islamism, that of Salafi-Jihadism. This occurs through a range of processes. For example, the re-coding of space by dissolution of state borders functions as an authentic identity-making act in its plea to good conduct being that, for IS, borders are man-made and therefore sacrilegious: 'existing states are artificial colonial constructions that divide the ummah, or Islamic community' (2018, p. 153). To summarise, the violence of IS enacted against border and body is one process (in harmony with others) which seeks out the production of a macro-collective identity 'premised on the power of Sunni Muslims to remake the Middle East, to rid the region of Western and heretical influences, and to restore the Islamic Middle East to its once great heights' (2018, p. 153).

Like many others, Mello is concerned with the violence of IS. However, his tempered approach which acknowledges the importance of state apparatuses of IS, remains useful for

considering the flows of identity-production as they pertain to the group. While Mello's

deployment of Fanon's work is pertinent for historicising IS, his application of Foucault to

understand disciplinary practices and the biopolitics of IS governmentality highlights the

polyvalence of acts within the caliphate: in other words, the meaning of an act can be

multiple and limited only by context and perspective[7]. My conception of the way that IS use

media is certainly in line with Mello's Foucauldian perspective where media has a conduct-

correcting function.

Friis' (2018) concern is with the global spectacle of violence that is essential to IS's

global campaign of terror (2018, p. 244). Specifically, she tasks herself with understanding

the precise type of 'political practice a public display of violence is' (2018, p. 245). Friis, like

Mello (2018), claims that the specific kind of political violence perpetrated by IS is not

necessarily new—the novelty of IS lies in the visibility and circulation of images which

produce a global spectacle (2018, p. 245). Poignant to the concerns of this thesis is Friis's

understanding of execution videos as housing a power-relation in that the victim is often

asked to participate in the performance of the execution which constitutes said power

relations (2018, p. 249). Though she discounts the importance of the materiality of IS, Friis

does acknowledge the importance of the visual and communicative constitution of the group

via their visual self-actualisation:

> the group's ability to shape political representations and public imaginaries does not
> necessarily depend on its military performance… it is imperative to explore the
> communicative and – most crucially – the visual dimensions of the group's activities. (2018,
> p. 245)

Simply put, public displays of violence are essential to IS's global campaign of terror. This

understanding relies on the classic definition of terrorism propagated by Schmid and de Graaf

that terrorism is a kind of violence-based communication: it 'depends on the spectacular

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[7] In *The History of Sexuality Volume I: an introduction*, Foucault discusses what he calls the polyvalence of
discourse. Mark Kelly (2021) has developed and extended what Foucault means by this, but we can shorthand
the term 'polyvalence' here to understand an act with multiple meanings and interpretations.

display of violence to instil terror in designated spectators' (Ignatieff 2004, as cited in Friis, 2018, p. 249). As mentioned above, for Friis, there is a discrete power relation within the context of execution videos as the victim is asked to participate in the performance of the execution by delivering his confession. Drawing on Foucault, Friis argues that 'a confession is a performance of truth… a confession transforms an act of violence from a process carried out against the victim into a performance with a form of 'voluntary affirmation' and 'consent'' (2018, p. 249). But Friis's understanding of Foucault's dynamic of power is misconstrued here. If we follow Foucault and locate relations of power as always-already simultaneously sites of resistance, then the relation between executioner and executed is not a relation of power, it is one of pure domination. The performance of truth-telling here is not one of freely speaking as in practices of *parrhesia* (Foucault 2010); instead, it is one in which the confessor speaks under duress. There is no power relation because the speaker's fate is already sealed—they are the living dead. That said, Friis is correct in her claim that such executions are 'manifestations of a distinct type of political violence that relies on the visual impact of suffering and death on a target audience for its political impact and that mobilizes the victim to enact the perpetrators' political superiority' (2018, p. 250). Additionally, publicly mediated killings can be seen as examples of both terror and state project (2018, p. 253). That is, mediated executions as acts of terror simultaneously seek to spread the message of IS while adhering to the rule of IS governance: they are both a threat and the materialisation of a legislative act, or 'order-building acts' (2018, p. 260).

Like Mello's understanding of IS's use of media, Friis' is similar to my own. That is, IS media has a governance function that seeks to drive the correct conduct of the population. This means that the ideal function of IS media is to provide the population with certain kinds of subjectivities while dissuading others. Moreover, by mediating violence against abnormal subjects, IS teaches its audience who it is permissible to kill (and how), or whose conduct it is

permissible to intervene on. Media, thus, has a regulatory power which seeks to intervene on subjects' conduct.

Other scholars have offered more fine-grained theorisations of IS media violence. For example, Chouliaraki and Kissas (2018) have theorized what they term the 'horrorism' of IS through an analysis of three IS videos which they claim are thanatopolitical spectacles. As previously mentioned, they also note that a significant amount of scholarship on IS seems to fall into two genres: a strategic communication approach and a political communication approach. For them, strategic communication approaches focus on the messages in IS media, largely ignoring the deployment of power, while political communication approaches (which sometimes use cultural analysis) do the inverse. The result of this duality in the analytic dichotomies of IS media is that neither approach on its own 'can offer insights in how death spectacles may produce ethico-political effects: how such spectacles may legitimize or challenge hierarchies of death and norms of subjectivity' (2018, p. 27). Following Cavarero (2009), the authors differentiate between terrorism and horrorism where the former 'is associated with proximity and addresses the eyewitness of violent death, horror is associated with mediated witnessing and addresses the distant spectator' (Chouliaraki & Kissas 2018, pp. 24-25). Horrorism in IS videos then functions through a 'logic of recontextualisation, which fuses Western with non-Western genres and narratives with a view to mirroring and ultimately subverting dominant hierarchies of grievability', of what the authors call spectacular thanatopolitics. The horrorism of IS's spectacular thanatopolitics is located along three contours: the grotesque, the sublime, and the abject.

The authors pinpoint what they term grotesque horrorism in their analysis of the documentary-style video *The Shield of the Cross* in which two Turkish pilots are burned alive. Their analysis utilizes a multi-modal approach to consider 'the aesthetic rendering of the annihilation of the prisoners' bodies' and here understand recontextualisation as

'symbolic annihilation' (2018, p. 30). The vicious form of execution, as explained in the video's voiceover, is a reaction to the bombing of Muslims in the Islamic State and elsewhere. Thus, for Chouliaraki and Kissas, grotesque horrorism here relies on a combination of 'Western and non-Western styles and secular/religious truth claims in order to perform the communicative act of denunciation against the 'coalition's' deaths and to establish itself as a force of self-righteous justice in global spaces of publicity' (2018, p. 31). The objective of the video is thus to degrade IS's victims by connecting 'their bodies to a sectarian logic of justification that treats their death as an act of retribution' (2018, p. 35).

In their second analysis of an untitled execution video released in 2016, the authors identify in the execution of five supposed British spies the ''"abject moment"—the in-between moment suspended between life and death, when anguish is written on the body and the flesh is split apart by a bullet' (2018, p. 32). Importantly, Chouliaraki and Kissas note that this aesthetic feature is excessive within Western optics as it 'challenges Western norms of public visibility around death and, in so doing, further undermines the sacredness of human corporeality' (2018, p. 32). The suggestion that the manifestations of death in IS execution videos are effective, partly because they are inconceivable in the West, is a tacit and sometimes explicit assumption made by scholars writing on IS. The authors note that the video, which mimics the aesthetics of sensational crime-dramas like *CSI*, 'works intertextually to re-position the body into a global register of media consumption, where it is the hyper-real effects of the camera that tell the truth of the victims' final moments' (2018, p. 33). Abject horrorism, in the execution of five supposed British spies, represents the 'liminal body of impending death' as a 'site upon which a particular evaluation of western subjectivity takes place' (2018, p. 33).

Sublime horrorism is formulated slightly differently. Chouliaraki and Kissas's third and final analysis is of the IS video *Impenetrable Fortress* which celebrates the caliphate

during the Battle of Mosul (2018, p. 33). The authors argue that death is formulated multiplicitously in the video: 'ISIS' imagination is portrayed in the figure of a groomed 'rested-in-peace' body kissed farewell by a child, while the enemy's one is presented in open-eyed, disfigured and infested faces, scattered in the battlefield' (2018, p. 33). Operative here is the juxtaposition of the peaceful body against that of the brutal reality of grotesque horrorism in the enemy's body. The constitution of IS soldiers as worthy of grieving against apostate bodies as ungrievable, thus 'establish[es] a hierarchy of grievability at the service of heroic subjectivity: while desecrating the hostile body, the video sanctifies the ISIS warrior' (2018, p. 34). This is what the authors refer to as sublime horrorism:

> [it] turns the dead body into the site upon which ISIS' jihadist subjectivity is formed. As aesthetic practice, the hybridity of the video mixes, as before, the secular epistemology of objective truth with an epic religious eschatology, in ways that subordinate the grotesque to the sublime—to the pleasure-giving spectacle of heroic death. (Chouliaraki & Kissas 2018, p. 34)

The typology of horrorism provided by Chouliaraki and Kissas as a kind of distant mediated spectatorship acknowledges the multiplicitous contours of death in the caliphate and their mediated signification. Though it remains one of the few pieces of work from a critical media studies perspective that concerns itself with IS, it does follow the trend in scholarship that focusses on the violence of IS media.

The frequency and kind of violence prevalent in IS media has been a focal point of other researchers too. Winkler et al. (2018) assessed violent imagery in IS media through an analysis of death and about to die images across English and Arabic print publications and founds that publications in Arabic were more likely to show gruesome images of death and dying than were their English-language counterparts. They note that the mediation of death and about to die images has a 'symbiotic relationship with state actors' (2018, p. 2). For Winkler et al., this means that they can upset social and structural orders, help to structure collective memory, and 'bolster the sense of state control by establishing who has the right to

take life… by defining the enemies of the state… by demonstrating dominance over enemies… and by lending a moral purpose to the state's war efforts' (2018, p. 2). Here, we should recall Kraidy's claim that global networked affect functions through the diffusion of 'images-as-projectiles' (2017b, p. 1203) and Artrip and Debrix's acknowledgement that IS commandeer the logic of global western media in that 'the media system's own response to the image of terror is to (re)circulate it in infinite exchange' (2018, p. 84). Winkler et al argue that although there is resistance to showing graphic images in Western media, media are more likely to show 'graphic death images when the pictured bodies are those coming from cultures physically distant from the state' (2018, p. 3). For example, following the release of *Although the Disbelievers Dislike It* in which American Peter Kassig was killed following the execution of a number of Syrian officers and pilots, mainstream western media focused almost completely on the killing of the Western subject (Tinnes 2015, p. 81). In this case, the spectacle and therefore spread of IS media is not only embodied in the logic of global media and its competition for higher and higher quantities of production and consumption, but also in the Orientalist conscience of the West and its media institutions. Terrorism itself 'has to rely on the distribution power of mass communication outlets to unfold maximum publicity' (Tinnes 2015, p. 76).

Technical assessments of violent IS media can help to ascertain the authenticity of acts of violence. Some scholars, such as Charlie Winter (2015) have opted for analyses of individual videos in their assessments of the violence of IS. Winter (2015) has analysed the violent video *Although the Disbelievers Dislike It*, accounting for it as 'an attempt to project IS' political influence, theological legitimacy and military prowess' (Winter 2015, p. 3). Although Winter's account is mostly descriptive, and his analysis could be considered more technical than critical, he does make some important contributions. As an example, he claims that a video showing a mass beheading has not previously been produced by state actors or

terrorist groups (2015, p. 6). In addition to this, he notes that there is a focus on the executioners in the video whom he later seeks to profile. The kernel of Winter's technical assessment of the video, however, lies in his evaluation of the finale execution of Peter Kassig, an American aid worker whose beheading was widely reported on in Western media. For Winter, this scene does not cohere with the rest of the video. This is because the message of the overall video, that of the ongoing growth and extension of the caliphate, is undermined by the video's direct reference to the US (which is actually a common feature of IS media) and its inclusion of lower quality sections in comparison to the rest of the video (2014, p. 25). Of utmost importance, then, is that Kassig's actual execution is not shown, indicating, for Winter at least, that the execution may not have gone to plan. This is crucial as Winter notes that, among jihadis online, there had been 'rumours abound that Kassig again declared his faith in Allah instead of issuing the prescribed statement [made for him], something that made his execution impermissible by Islamic Law' (Winter 2014, p. 26). Daniel Milton has noted that although there are disputes regarding the shahadah (declaration of and acceptance into Islam) and automatic entry into heaven, under Islamic law, it is not permissible to kill someone who has stated their shahadah (declaration of faith to Allah) (Milton 2018). However, in an internal document titled 'General Guidance and Instructions' anonymously produced but circulated internally between IS's central media diwan and regional media offices, the following decree is made:

> **Caution:** The cameramen should be reminded to avoid filming the apostates saying the Shahadah [declaration of faith] before executing them, and if this happens, it should be removed during the editing of the clip. ('General Guidance and Instructions')

The contradiction here, of that between IS's supposed adherence to Islamist laws and their mediated rupture written directly into the discourse of their dispositif, is stark but not surprising. Certainly, such an admonition is the first in many contradictions in IS's discourse and conduct that I explore in this thesis.

Although the Disbelievers Dislike It houses spectacular, violent imagery which is perhaps the reason it was talked about so much by commentators and researchers. For example, Judith Tinnes has analysed the video, though she focuses on its symbolism as part of a wider study of what she terms 'hostage videos' (2015). As an example, she discusses symbolic hierarchies within various scenes: the executioner and his allies stand as the victim kneels and the victim is in an orange jumpsuit resembling those worn by prisoners at Guantanamo bay (2015, p. 77). More broadly, however, Tinnes makes astute observations regarding the relationship between IS media and Western news media, such as the short lengths of many media products so that they might fit into Western news schedules, in addition to self-censorship (i.e. not showing beheadings) which she links to palatability for audiences (2015, pp. 78-79). IS media is not just structurally connectable to Western media; for Tinnes, some of its content functions through cultural references to Western media tropes. For Tinnes, the 'terror marketing' of IS is overtly connected to Western media tropes. This is apparent in the juxtaposition of slow and fast motion in IS videos, the proximity of Jihadi John's (the famed IS executioner) use of the phrase 'I'm back' to Arnold Schwarzenegger's famous 'I'll be back' from *Terminator* (1984), and even his hand gestures which, for Tinnes, resemble the ways that rappers move their hands in Western pop videos (2015, p. 83). IS media, then, cannot be considered outside the context of the global western media ecology, for it is not only present in it, but also resembles it and subsumes its tropes and cultural anchors in order to expand the relevance of IS to as broad an audience as possible.

Strategic Communication

Not all scholarship on IS and media focuses on violence; strategic communication approaches have been crucial in giving another dimension to understandings of the group. Ingram (2015; 2016; 2017) takes what could broadly be called a strategic communication perspective on IS media. He notes that IS media is produced by 'central media units,

provincial information offices', as well as its global support network (Ingram 2015, p. 734).

Interestingly, Ingram shows that regional information offices produce media which are more

precisely directed towards local issues and are produced in a variety of formats (billboards,

posters, local radio, etc). Regional (wilayat) offices also produce most of IS's official media

output (Ingram 2015, pp. 734-737). Local media is central to the conduct of populations. In

the caliphate, a significant amount of content was concerned with local governance and

attempts to charm local populations who would be affected by government initiatives (e.g.

the implementation of a forensics team in Kirkuk, a fish Market in Mosul, redistributing

wealth (zakat), repairing infrastructure, etc.) (Ingram 2015, p. 738). In this respect, it is

important to acknowledge Ingram's observation that violence does not permeate all IS media

(Ingram 2015, p. 730).

Ingram has also conducted an analysis of *Dabiq* (2016). Like others such as Archetti

(2015), Ingram strives to understand the 'radicalisation' process and considers how '*Dabiq's*

contents seek to radicalize its readership by triggering 'awakenings', driving the process of

'cyclical cognitive reinforcement' and legitimising political violence' (Ingram 2016, p. 459).

Through his analysis of *Dabiq*, Ingram argues that the magazine (alongside Al Qaeda in the

Arabian Peninsula's *Inspire*) supplies its audience with a 'competitive system of meaning',

an alternative perspective of the world compared to that presented by their opponents, that

acts as a 'lens' through which to shape their supporters' perceptions, polarize their support,

and, ultimately, convince them to mobilize (Ingram 2017, p. 358). This competitive system of

meaning helps him to avoid falling into the trap of the hypodermic needle model of media

effects and assuming that exposure to content will automatically indoctrinate or produce an

immediate change in audiences. Simply, Ingram claims that *Dabiq* employs 'a diverse array

of messaging that fuses rational- and identity-choice appeals as a means to ensure its message

and broader 'system of meaning' resonates with a broad and diverse spectrum of its potential

supporters' (2016, p. 459). The bi-polar reinforcement of identity is achieved by linking the 'crisis' of the global Sunni Muslim Ummah with the threatening Other of essentially anyone who does not follow IS on one hand, and linking the solution to this crisis with IS-Sunnis (2016, p. 470). Like Picart (2015), Ingram seeks to capture the complex process of radicalisation. He goes on to theorise identity as a 'package of values, rooted in an historical narrative, strategically constructed in response to a socio-historically specific reality' (2016, p. 462). This means that IS subjects have particular values and lenses through which they make meaning of events and other subjects. Finally, Ingram identifies a range of important terms in the IS lexicon: 'kufr (disbeliever), safawi (derogatory for Shi'a), murtaddin (one who abandons Islam) and apostate sahwah (enemy factions), which are derogatory and have jurisprudential connotations justifying violence' (2016, p. 470). Such social categorisations are important in the Islamic State. This is because they do not merely function at the public/social/cultural level of exclusion, but because they have a very real 'legal' function which I discuss in Chapter 7. Consider, for example, Specimen 1C in al-Tamimi's archive (2015a). This table provides what IS have sanctioned as legal/official punishments for various social/subjective categories: death for blasphemers, death for apostasy, and so on. In short, categorisations in the IS lexicon are the example of discourse as the concretisation of language *par excellence* in that their function is both material and symbolic.

Ingram's conceptualisation of media is both similar and different from my own. We both cite the importance of particular social categories in our analyses and understand how crucial such terms are with regard to both symbolism and jurisprudence. Broadly, out mutual understanding of *Dabiq* as a text that participates in processes of subjectification is clear. Where we differ, somewhat, is in my preference for the term 'subject/ification' over 'identification'. I do discuss processes of identification in my analyses and, in particular,

processes of dis/identification. However I prefer the use of the term subject(ification) as explained by Foucault:

> There are two meanings of the word 'subject': subject to someone else by control and dependence; and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge. Both meanings suggest a form of power which subjugates and makes subject to. (Foucault 1982, p. 781)

I use the term 'subject' in this way as it captures the power effects of the IS dispositif which call for both the subjection of individuals to caliphate (and its attendant mechanisms) and Allah. It also speaks to the ways in which IS subjects are asked to govern themselves which includes a degree of self-knowledge.

Predictably, some research on IS media seeks out counter-terrorism solutions to the group. Christina Archetti (2015) has sought to understand the radicalisation process as it pertains to terror groups and is primarily concerned with how media itself can be used as a counter-terrorism measure. She critiques counter-terrorism measures that use strategic communication to combat IS and claims that such initiatives assume the aforementioned hypodermic needle model of media effects (2015, p. 50). Arguing against the technological determinist view that sees the internet as being responsible for the longevity of groups such as Al Qaeda, Archetti, like Kraidy, suggests looking to multiple media platforms other than the internet to reveal how they are used by terrorist groups (2015, p. 50). Importantly, she argues against the formulation of strategic communication measures against IS, criticising the idea that 'if Western governments craft the 'right' narrative and this is received by extremists, they will stop committing acts of terrorism' (2015, p. 51). Due to the social construction of narratives, and their reliance on networks of relationships for meaning to be made, the one-way form of communication thought to be pertinent by Western governments is misguided. Echoing Ingram's notion of a competitive system of meaning, Archetti claims that 'any incoming information, including other actors' narratives, will never be absorbed as it is but will be filtered and *appropriated* through the prism of the individual's own narrative' (2015,

p. 53). That is, in order for processes of subjectification to work for IS via media, subjects usually already need some subjective resonance with the narrative of the group. If this occurs and the subject develops appreciation with the media messages of the group, other narratives are likely to be seen through the subject's competitive system of meaning (i.e. the one that IS provides) and are likely less effective. Instead, Archetti suggests that any media counter-attack be directed at networks around extremists in order to intervene in medial processes of subjectification (2015, p. 56).

The production and reinforcement of identities is an important lens through which IS media has been assessed. Implementing Castells' theory of a network society (2011), Sardarnia and Safizadeh deliberate the extent to which the internet provides simultaneous opportunities for the expansion of networks and the propagation of identities (2017). Their study considers the role of 'cyberspace and social networks' as the animators that extend IS (2017, p. 2). Asserting that politics since the Cold War has been conducted in terms of identity, they use Castells' tripartite schema of identities to understand IS online: legitimising identities are those created by institutions in society and thus 'extend[s] and rationalize[s] their domination over social actors'; resistance identities are 'generated by the actors that are in a situation in which dominant authority considers them worthless and may even stigmatize them'; and project identities are when actors 'using available cultural materials that can redefine their status in society, build a new identity with which they seek to transform the social structure' (Sardarnia & Safizadeh 2017, p. 6). IS fall within the framework of the latter two identities (2017, p. 10). The authors put the expansion of IS online down to other radical groups who were themselves 'dissatisfied with fundamentalist Islamic groups in corrupt and repressive governments', in addition to the ongoing processes of Western colonisation in Arabic and Islamic constituencies (2017, p. 6). In short, the authors' primary concern is the role of the internet in facilitating processes of IS identity-making (2017, p. 10). Although

mediated forms of extreme violence are crucial to processes of identity-making in the ploy to produce a community of subjectified agents willing to animate endless jihad against any and all non-proponents, Sardarnia and Safizadeh do acknowledge the nonviolent capacities of IS media too:

> However, this [extreme violence] is merely one side of the coin, and the other side reflects a friendly, kind, and good human face of ISIS in the media. In many of the media coverages produced by ISIS such as books and cultural programs, a good face of ISIS is depicted which is attributed to the Islamic state and its ideals. ISIS is trying to represent itself as an Islamic state with discipline and security to maintain and expand its population and its members. (2017, p. 15)

Although Sardarnia and Safizadeh operationalisation of Castells' tripartite schema of identity is a useful first step towards thinking through the potential of the internet to comply in extensive processes of identification, their article lacks the fine-grained analysis that such a claim calls for. Elizabeth Pearson's quantitative and qualitative study of affect and gender in relation to Twitter's suspension of IS accounts, however, provides such an analysis (2018).

Pearson recognizes two primary parts of affect: the communal aspect of feelings, and the potential for 'non-conscious affective dimensions of emotion' to 'nourish other conscious feelings, such as shame or humiliation, which can be explicitly instrumentalized to create radical identities, as in the context of violent jihad' (2018, p. 854). She mobilizes this understanding of affect by connecting it to shared feelings of Muslim oppression when IS Twitter supporter accounts are shut down. More pertinent for this thesis, however, is the way in which Pearson has observed the relationship between gendered norms of conduct and representation within online IS communities:

> These gendered communities… visibly served the function of propagating offline ISIS norms—relating for example to women's dress, or men's duties to engage in battle—in the online space, with a high level of coherence between norms in the two domains. These norms serve to keep the Islamic State functioning through the prescription of female domestication alongside ideological commitment, and a male preoccupation with battle. Conformity to such norms is needed to ensure the future of the state, and the online communities therefore act in ways to ensure individuality is repressed. Male–female divisions in obligations are repeatedly emphasized. Women police one another into maintenance of ISIS norms, and men encourage one another to battle. Each gendered community also acts to shame and police the other sex, as well as their own, into their role. (Pearson 2018, p. 859)

Pearson shows the ways in which supporters of IS conducted themselves in particular ways and policed the behaviour of others according to the gender norms of the caliphate. This is manifested in various ways such as women shaming other women when their Twitter profile picture lacked a niqab (veil for women that covers the face) (Pearson 2018, pp. 860-861). Additionally, content propagated online by women also had a critical articulation with official IS media: 'Their attitude toward their own responsibilities was consistent with ISIS norms set out in propaganda such as *Dabiq*, and centred on having children as future fighters, in lieu of participation in violence' (2018, p. 861). Moreover, as Pearson notes, the gender binary in terms of what kinds of conduct is expected is clear: men fight and are violent, while women, particularly as migrants, are 'state-builders, wives and mothers' (2018, p. 861). While Pearson's focus is on the affective dimension of account suspension by Twitter and its ability to propagate a sense of community, she also draws attention to the link between the self-policing of conduct between subjects that is in line with the content of official IS media. The connection teased out by Pearson gives weight to claims made in this thesis regarding the critical articulation between the preferred conduct of subjects outlined in IS media and its biopolitical function (with the subsumption of disciplinary power). In other words, Pearson's study shows how the messages of official IS media are concomitant to the ways in which IS supporters conducted themselves from outside the caliphate.

Global Terror

It is also worth considering the small but significant literature on IS's appropriation of media to communicate its strength. Against mainstream media and some academic discourses, Piotr Szpunar (2018) has considered how IS often appropriates violence rather than inspires it. A primary example is the Las Vegas terror attack where Stephen Paddock murdered 58 people and injured 851 before turning a gun on himself. In the following days, IS laid claim to the attack and stated that Paddock had previously converted to Islam while

overseas (2018, p. 232). Szpunar appropriately highlights that such a claim to a terror attack which did not have a connection to IS was located within the context of the group's territorial losses. This piece of work is an attempt to show how

> ISIS appropriates media by reinforcing the mediated and discursive routes that stabilize the terror refrain. In the group's shift to the inspired narrative, its textual poaching of al-Qaeda propaganda, and its appropriation of media texts—and, this, the bodies of dispersed individuals with no 'natural affinity'—ISIS makes do by reinforcing racial constructs of terror, telling 'us' exactly what we want to hear. (Szpunar 2018, p. 236).

In other words, IS becomes complicit in the racialisation of terror and the production in media discourse of 'homegrown terrorists' as those who are 'inspired by terrorists—a kind of double at home that might look like 'us' (2018, p. 234). To highlight the multiplicity of terrorism, Szpunar accounts for terrorism as a refrain: 'an assemblage of interests, actors, texts, actions, strategies, tactics, and utterances—that structures contemporary security' (2018, p. 233). The Deleuzo-Guattarian notion of a refrain (or chorus) is described as 'an assemblage that traces out a territory by attracting, consolidating, and holding together a regular cast of characters, scenarios, texts, and actions that may be 'devoid of any so-called natural affinity'' (2018, p. 234). The meaning of terrorism is thus located within contemporary discourses of security that circulate in global legislative and medial realms.

The core of Szpunar's article is his analyses of *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* and the AQAP-produced *Inspire*[8]. In its focus on the internal machinations of the caliphate, Szpunar argues that *Dabiq* is 'primarily a place-making or territorialising text; it is the literature of a contiguous quasi-statecraft' (2018, p. 237). In contrast, *Rumiyah* is a 'deterritorialising text aimed at inspiring violence in the space of the other' (2018, p. 237). By framing *Dabiq* as a text that territorialises, and *Rumiyah* as one which deterritorialises, Szpunar highlights not only the temporal order of IS, but its flexibility in strategies in the pursuit of statehood.

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[8] *Inspire* is a magazine produced by Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and bears some similarity to *Rumiyah* in its inclusion of content which instructs readers how to conduct terror attacks. As Ingram (2017) notes, a salient component of *Inspire* among academics and analysts was the "open-source jihad" section which is somewhat similar to *Rumiyah*'s "Just Terror Tactics" (see Ingram 2017; Droogan & Peattie 2018)

During *Dabiq*'s tenure, IS sought to intensify state and legislative mechanisms adjuvant to a highly coded way of life in the pursuit of salvation. As has been noted, such state and legislative mechanisms, alongside a complex and highly regulated media apparatus and abject forms of violence, helped to constitute IS and its subjects. Yet, as the geographical intensities are drawn away from the outside, the project of a unified Muslim ummah constituted through deterritorialised ruptures of violence must nevertheless be pursued. The medial task of this project was thus taken up by *Rumiyah* and other media such as *Inside the Caliphate* which draws attention away from the dissolution of the caliphate. The shift from *Dabiq* to *Rumiyah*, then, and their contents from that concerned with the internal machinations of the caliphate, to the external incitement to terror, reveals the tactical flexibility of IS. Where media had previously sought to present a picture of the mundanities and constituents of everyday life, of infrastructure and healthcare, on its back legs, IS subsequently reverted to the propagation of deterritorialised acts of terror. His claims, then, highlight the need for assemblage thinking to capture the complexity of IS. Assemblage thinking has the capacity to acknowledge unpredictability and changes in the group, its context, and how it functions. It is Szpunar's assertion that *Dabiq* is a territorialising text while *Rumiyah* is a deterritorialising text that resonates mostly with my conception of IS media in this thesis. I find these claims to have strength in my analysis and discuss them as such in Chapter 6.

Of further relevance in Szpunar's piece is IS's preference for material mediation over digital mediation in the support and claim of terror attacks. He notes a suggestion in *Rumiyah* for IS supporters to pledge allegiance at the site of a terror attack in a variety of ways: 'the suggested means include pinning a note to a victim's body, tossing leaflets that read (tellingly) 'The Islamic State will remain!' onto the streets during an attack, or tagging the scene of an attack with spray paint or a permanent marker' (2018, p. 239). The purpose of this is to let symbolic support and pledges of allegiance spread through mass media (2018, p.

239). External pledges of allegiance are important as they extend the IS assemblage. Pledges of allegiance or bay'ah are encouraged through media and are encouraged to materialise in mosques, Islamic Centres, and organisations (Al-Hayat Media Centre as cited in Szpunar 2018, p. 239).

The focus on materiality here has a critical intersection with other perspectives on IS and media which highlight the importance of the reappropriation and circulatory capacity of IS images on one hand (Artrip & Debrix 2018), and the representation of IS' own material means in buttressing their image on the other (Bruscella & Bisel 2018). As I have discussed above, like Szpunar (2018), Artrip and Debrix (2018) discuss how IS images spread through the global mediascape. They argue that digital media have a penchant to 'overproduce, overextend, and oversaturate' and that this is key to understanding IS's media strategy (2018, p. 75). They develop the concept of reversibility in relation to Baudrillard's notion of fourth stage simulacra, hyperreality, in which images point to copies of copies, rather than any 'real' referent. For Artrip & Debrix, reversibility can be broadly understood as the free exchange of meanings, truths, and facts, where reversal is understood as a 'generalized principle of truth's operationality' (2018, p. 82). That is, the reversibility of IS messages means that they can be freely circulated and exchanged and deployed to leverage specific contextualized truth claims within global media[9]. We should note here that Baudrillard's claims are synthesis of technological determinism and social constructionism which work to produce a productive theory of the material-semiotic. What is central to the notion of hyperreality is technology and its complicity in the massive proliferation and circulation of images. Even if the signifier hides the reality that it has no 'real' referent, the content of the image nevertheless remains

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[9] It should be noted that this is very similar to Foucault's notion of the tactical polyvalence of discourse where the communicative meaning of speech/words is not guaranteed and that the original sender's message may not be received and comprehended accurately by the receiver and can, in fact, be co-opted for other means (see Foucault 1990, pp. 100-102; see also Kelly 2020). Comparisons could also be drawn here with Hall's encoding/decoding model, though I think that, here, Artrip and Debrix, are talking about specific perspectives in which truth and consensus are sought by deploying certain IS images.

important due to its symbolic potency. Regardless, within the so-called post-truth era, 'ISIS takes advantage of the oversaturated and hyper-connective global condition of digital/viral media that, in a way, allows the image and meanings to spread like viruses' (2018, p. 80). That is, IS seeks to take advantage of the logics of global media, or, as I outline in Chapter 5, the digital conjuncture (2018, p. 87). This has proven to work well for IS, for within the context of hyperreality, 'the media system's own response to the image of terror is to (re)circulate it in infinite exchange… to subject it to the constant gauntlet of semiotic profusion' (Artrip & Debrix 2018, p. 84). The effects of meaning produced by the mediation of terrorist events are excessive and can extend well beyond their intended function (2018, p. 84). The kernel of Artrip & Debrix's piece is that IS appropriate the logics of global western media in order to assert their message. The point is to have a presence in the global mediascape to spread the group's message; thus, the global media system is complicit in the mediation of IS.

Perspectives on IS which take a more global perspective have been developed in relation to both media and materiality too. Bruscella and Bisel (2018) have taken a communication constitutes organising (CCO) approach to IS media, applying it to the first 11 issues of *Dabiq*. They extend the Four Flows theory of the Montreal School of CCO to explore the relationship between terrorist-produced media and materiality. This theory rests on the premise that 'organisations are constituted through the intermingling of four kinds of communication process – be they text or dialogic forms': self-structuring communication in which meaning-making is directed towards ;'reflexive control and the division of labor [sic]', rights, and responsibilities; membership negotiation in which meaning making configures which individuals can be included as members of the organisation (or not) and which also implies such an organisation exists; activity coordination communication where meaning making is directed at 'mutual adjustments of action to get work done'; and institutional

positioning where meaning making is 'oriented toward spanning the boundaries of the organisation' (2018, p. 332). When two or more of these 'flows' overlap, the result is the communicative constitution of the organisation. IS inhibit more than one of these flows: members of the group work together by producing media (activity coordination) in order to symbolically augment the status of the caliphate both as a response to competitors ranging from the apostasy of the West to other jihadi groups (institutional positioning), and as an appeal to potential members (membership negotiation) (2018, p. 333). Within Bruscella and Bisel's CCO framework, the media practices of IS thus comprise the requirements of communication constituting organisation.

Though such a theory would seem to elide the importance of the material, Bruscella & Bisel claim that this is not the case. They assert that all communication is at least partially material but not all material is communicative (2018, p. 334). Their understanding of the '"material-social" dichotomy' is that it is both ontologically enmeshed and recursive' (2018, p. 334). Thus, they aim to escape what they term 'extreme technological determinism or social constructionism… by acknowledging materials, while also maintaining analytic attention on *human* communication and constitutive activities' (2018, p. 334). In other words, Bruscella and Bisel acknowledge the mutual importance of processes of materiality and semiosis where the physical world maintains an important position alongside meaning-making and signification: their goal is to straddle the space between technological determinism and social constructionism while remaining consistent with the tradition of the Montreal School.

Bruscella and Bisel pose the following two questions: 'what strategies does ISIL employ to position its institution among an English-speaking audience?' and 'how does ISIL's institutional positioning communication involve materials?' (2018, p. 337). To investigate these questions, they conducted an analysis of the first eleven issues of *Dabiq* and

claim that the magazine 'is a form of institutional positioning designed, in part, to constitute the image of the organisation itself… as well as reinforce its identity to members' (2018, p. 337). The three primary communication strategies are instantiation, co-optation, and intertextual allusion. Instantiation involves the representation of IS's material objects as means of showing legitimacy, success, strength, and so on. Here, part-whole appeals are used: 'material acquisitions stand in place for, and represent some supposed whole, of the organisation's entirety' (2018, p. 339). These part-whole appeals also manifest in images of smiling children and the discussion of the implementation of a new gold-based currency. This is also apparent in the high-quality production of the magazine itself in addition to the visual representations in the magazine: 'resources, infrastructure, land, and population' (2018, p. 339). The description and representation of infrastructure and utilities on one hand, and military victories on the other, also play important roles in *Dabiq*. Bruscella and Bisel argue that representations of hospitals, pharmacies, electrical infrastructure, cancer treatments, street cleaning, and homes for the elderly, function as part-whole appeals to 'the complex organisation's image and permanence' (2018, p. 340). In this case, the representation of livelihood and social welfare technologies suggests to readers that future emigres will also receive such services. Such representations are an important part of membership negotiation in IS's communicative strategy. Military victories, too, are mediated in *Dabiq* so as to frame IS as perhaps more powerful than they really were. Victorious campaigns are a ubiquitous feature in IS media that are discussed in *Dabiq* in addition to their constituent stories such as training camps. For the authors, emphasising material military victories is a tactic employed by IS to 'bolster their organisational image by representing the (supposed) massiveness and permanence of the whole of the complex organisation's existence' (2018, p. 341).

Co-optation, the re-appropriation of enemy messages that is different from their original purpose, is paid less attention here but is related to other elements of IS media I

discuss in this chapter. A common form of co-optation in *Dabiq* is the 'In the words of the

enemy' section (2018, p. 341). This can involve, say, remediating the comments of Western

leaders about IS' material gains. The intended function is to bolster membership negotiation

by delineating particular groups as 'enemy', while simultaneously working to emphasize the

stature and capabilities of IS.

The final primary communication strategy used in *Dabiq* is intertextual allusion:

> a language form in which an association with a sacred, mythic, or origin text is insinuated by way of communication shortcuts… Many of the allusions made in the pages of *Dabiq* invoke Quranic vocabulary and phrasing, especially as they are associated with ISIL's material possessions (Bruscella and Bisel 2018, p. 343).

Certainly, this is prevalent in the name of the magazine *Dabiq* as a Qur'anic reference to a

town in which an important battle is said to take place during the Islamic apocalypse. Though

Bruscella and Bisel note that intertextual allusions also materialise in the destruction of

material borders and their mediation in *Dabiq*, this could be extended to consider the

destruction of antiquities perpetrated by IS. For IS, the destruction of funerary reliefs in

Palmyra functions as a hark back to the Qur'an in that it alludes to the strict prohibition of

idolatry apparent in IS's strict deployment of Islam. Qur'anic vocabulary and phrasing are

present throughout IS media, and quotes from the Qur'an and hadith permeate all IS media.

Intertextual allusions even extend to the realm of legislature, with each recovered document

in al-Tamimi's archives housing a quote from the Qur'an at its outset.

To summarise Bruscella and Bisel's synthesis of the material and semiotic, they offer

the following explanation:

> material resources are used by the complex organisation as part-whole appeals, in which material parts, such as land, infrastructure, and even enemy corpses, come to represent the whole of the organisation's image and meaning… this work contributes empirical examples of how objects, sites, and bodies are kinds of materials that may be imbued with symbolism in a complex organisation's constitutive institutional positioning. (Bruscella & Bisel 2018, p. 345).

This piece of scholarship is a useful example of an exploration of materiality and semiosis in IS media that is well-needed. Although my proposed approach to IS media and governance is similar to that of Bruscella and Bisel's, I differentiate it by seeking to understand the resonance between internal governance and external media. Bruscella and Bisel, rather, are focused on the ways in which communication constitutes the organisation itself. As previously stated, the point of understanding IS as an assemblage is to capture the complexity of the group, its movement(s), and its eventual dislocation. Moreover, by understanding the governance of IS and its media strategies as a constituent component of its assemblage, we are afforded an understanding of the ways in which the group sought to govern its citizens within the caliphate border, in addition to how media directed outside the caliphate sought to conduct subjects from afar. In other words, my approach seeks an understanding of these phenomena as connected parts with distinct power relations. Such an approach must rely on and investigate the visual and discursive regimes of IS media. However, it must do so with IS legislature in mind, in addition to a consideration of how representations of IS's materiality have a stake in its processes of semiosis.

Considerations of the material and semiotic, as they relate to IS's use of media, are peripheral to some understandings of the importance of gender in IS media. Previously, women living in the West were pursued online on social media, including via the likes of Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, WhatsApp, Kik, SureSpot, and Ask.FM (Perešin 2015, p. 26). With regard to Bruscella and Bisel's operationalisation of Four Flows theory, the objective of IS engagement online with women was 'to demonstrate that their living conditions will be better than in the West—both in terms of material as well as intangible benefits' (2015, p. 26). The goal for more women to commit hijrah, at one time, was then tightly bound to not only the brute fact of the material constituents of existence, but also, the conduct of oneself in pursuit of oneness with God (tawhid) and the performance of religious

duty for salvation. Perešin underscores a normative regime of life in the caliphate with regard

to the specific kind of content used to target women and encourage them to perform hijrah:

> By presenting their daily activities, such as cooking, making Nutella pancakes, doing housework, playing with children or posting pictures of romantic sunsets in Syria, online promoters are offering a picture of life under ISIS' rule that is positive and attractive to would-be followers. Such communication is specially intended to help prospective recruits to easily identify themselves with the chatty young female jihadists who express their happiness at living in the 'Caliphate'. (Perešin 2015, p. 26).

Social media posts also included practical tips for travelling to the caliphate including what to

bring and what not to bring. Furthermore, Perešin discusses the establishment of the Zora

Foundation (2015, p. 26), an 'organisation' that was tasked with training female emigres for

duties in the caliphate. These ranged from sewing to weapons operations, first aid to editing,

and even included recipes from an IS cookbook which took into account nutrients and

calories fighters might need to endure a long battle (Perešin 2015, p. 26). She also discusses a

manifesto produced by Al-Khansaa brigade on the conduct of Muslim women in the

caliphate. Perešin's claims echo many of the sentiments of Pearson's (2018) work: social

media was the primary way women were engaged with by IS and the starkly gendered binary

in terms of conduct materialised within the caliphate is echoed on social media.

Certainly, the present chapter does not exhaust current perspectives on IS media. This

is not only due to the lack of critical perspectives on IS media, but also the vast differences in

objects of study, potential outcomes of research, and research methods. As an example,

Golan & Lim have examined IS media from a Third Person Effect theory perspective and

shown how many Americans thought that American Muslims and young American Muslims

would be more susceptible to the subjectifying effects of IS-produced media than they

themselves would (2016). In distinction to this work, others such as Erdem & Bilge (2017)

have deployed Derrida's understanding of the Greek *pharmakon* as a critical heuristic for

comprehending what they term 'cyber media'. *Pharmakon* is construed as remedy or poison,

or not remedy or not poison, meaning that it lacks consistency, thus combining oppositions to

'make the meaning or subject continuously inconsistent' (2017, p. 20). Such work is useful for highlighting the historical contingencies of jihadi deployments of Islam in the name of Muslim emancipation and identity constitution. I mention these approaches to show how current critical perspectives on IS media depart from and inform my programme of research. They, however, elide considerations of the relations of power/knowledge enough that they need not be discussed in any great detail.

What, then, can be concluded from the above perspectives on IS and media that have a critical articulation with the present programme of research? Firstly, it should be clear that the production of official IS media is highly regulated (Milton 2018). IS have a range of 'official' media outlets which produce different kinds of content in addition to catering to various geographical and linguistic contingencies (Macnair & Frank 2017). However, internal media was published in the provinces (wilayat) and regulated by the Central Media Diwan, while external media was governed by the Central Media Diwan and bore the hallmark of 'companies' such as Al-Hayat Media Centre (Milton 2018).

The circulation of IS media depended on both the smooth(er) and striated spaces of the internet. That is, sites like archive.org, via the well-intended liberal auspices of freedom and education for all, facilitated the spread of IS media. Moreover, the highly populated striated spaces of capital and surveillance (YouTube, Twitter, etc) gave visibility to IS at one point in time. The speed of agents which circulated material (both human agents, re-tweeting Twitter bots, and the websites which hosted content themselves) is accounted for in Fisher's (2015) notion of the swarmcast model of netwar in which these agents remained flexible. Put differently, a dispersed network of supporters remained resilient via the sustained use of hashtags over time, speedy with regard to the reaction to uploaded media where it was quickly downloaded, and agile in supporters' capacity to operate across a range of platforms. Importantly, Pearson (2018) noted the extent to which the game of 'whack-a-mole' played by

Twitter moderators became productive and constituted a means of boasting for some IS supporters.

Conclusion

Above, I have sought to explain how IS's relationship to media has been considered from a variety of perspectives, some of which implicitly theorise their objects of study. Although these perspectives' frameworks and focuses shift, there are some general trends. Broadly, many of these perspectives are concerned with how IS operationalize media for their own goals. Within this broad categorisation, researchers are mainly concerned with either the function of IS media and ask questions pertaining to how subjects become 'radicalized', or they are concerned with how IS appropriate media and use it to increase visibility. Most of the perspectives here either implicitly or explicitly acknowledge the importance of spectacular violence to IS's media and/or its quasi-state project. I agree that this is an important element in the IS media apparatus, but also that it ought to be considered alongside other factors.

Some of the perspectives discussed above were proximal to my own perception of IS media. For example, Kraidy discusses the notion of hypermedia space (2017a). While this term is certainly useful for capturing a broad range of media and the contexts in which they lie, I have sought out a higher degree of specificity in relation to my methodology: in turn, I discuss the smooth and striated spaces of the internet, as well as differentiate between IS legacy and social media. Closer to my understanding of the ideal function of IS media is the work of Mello (2018) and Friis (2018). Both of these scholars offer Foucauldian perspectives on IS media which understand media as having a governance function as it pertains to the production and deterrence of subjectivities and conduct. I agree with both Mello and Friis that some IS media has a disciplinary function. This means that it has a governance function and therefore a subjectifying function. In other words, by mediating violence against

abnormally-performing subjects, IS teach their audiences who it is permissible to kill or whose conduct it is permissible to intervene on and correct. Media has a regulatory power which seeks to intervene on subjects' conduct. Further, I concur with Szpunar's (2018) assessment of *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* as territorialising and deterritorialising texts. As I noted above, I agree with Ingram's (2016) critique of *Dabiq*, however I also acknowledge my preference for the term 'subjectification' over 'identification' for the most part, and certainly over 'radicalisation'. These perspectives, while proximal to my own, are not the only ones which provide me with a map to navigate IS media and governance in all its terrain. Kraidy's (2017c) acknowledgement of the affective capacities of IS death videos, alongside the technique of hurling images toward global media also drawn attention to by Artrip and Debrix (2017), Mello (2018), and Friis (2018), is crucial for thinking about how IS appropriate media for visibility and ideological goals. Importantly, Bruscella and Bisel (2018) have approached IS via a communication constitutes organising (CCO) approach, thus highlighting the need to critically assess the media and governance of IS through processes of materiality and semiosis. As noted, their approach has similarities with mine though, as stated above, my concern is the resonance between internal IS governance and external media messaging.

My uptake of dispositif analysis acknowledges some of the components of the literature above. However, it is broader in scope and has the ability to zero in on particular elements of the IS dispositif. A dispositif analysis seeks to understand the contours of power, knowledge, and subjectivity in the name of governance within a given dispositif. The above analyses are largely concerned with symbolic elements in IS media which is also a concern of dispositif analysis. But dispositif analysis goes further in its ability to capture, on one hand, a huge variety of medial and non-medial elements and, on the other, its addressal of the discursive-materiality of objects. A dispositif analysis, more than merely being concerned

with violence, symbolism, appropriation, or, on its own terms, power, (or) subjectivity, (or) knowledge, seeks to understand the complex coming-together of all these elements and their complicity in the governance of near and far subjects. In other words, dispositif analysis has the theoretical clout to examine large-scale governance strategies such as that of the Islamic State by seeking to understand a wide range of elements. It explicitly understands power, knowledge, and subjectivity as the primary contours of a governmental strategy and assesses where these forces are materialised in institutions, texts, and practices. Moreover, a dispositif analysis of both external media and internal documents has the capacity to draw out how statements and imagery in the former have a stake in the latter, which are therefore pertinent to the attempted governance of a global ummah. As I note in the conclusion to this thesis, my analysis will eventually lead me to the claim that IS are an example of an intensified process of the mediatisation of terrorism. In sum, dispositif analysis does not stop short at media or governance: it deals with both by addressing how they are simultaneously directed within a range of elements.

As I have suggested above, social categorisations/identities had a legal function in the Islamic State that is imbued in the articulation of religious rule to bureaucracy. Thus, the internal legal decrees ordained by IS will be shown to be apparent in the images and statements present in external media that seek to govern the conduct of conduct in the global ummah. To frame my analysis, an understanding of IS media being a media of governmentality is necessary. In the following chapter, I sketch a theory of IS media. I outline the scope of media I will be analysing later in the thesis and theorise IS media in terms of its production, function, and circulation. This chapter will be informed by both media studies scholarship on the kinds of media that IS media resemble, as well as a reading of internal documents that were used to instruct media operatives in the Islamic State.

Chapter 3: Theorising IS Media: Governmentality and deterritorialised citizens

Following my exploration of perspectives on IS media in the previous chapter, I now theorise and explain how this thesis conceptualizes IS's media. The group's use of media is a key connective component between their social ontology (assemblage) and governmental technologies (dispositif). IS use media flexibly across a variety of platforms and their uptake of media has a stake in both the digital and material realms. Thus, this chapter has three primary tasks. The first is to outline the production processes of IS media. This includes a brief outline of 'official' IS media outlets and a discussion of what is known about internal media regulation policies within the Central Media Diwan and the provinces of the caliphate. The section on internal media regulation policy is largely derived from work by Milton (2018) in addition to my own assessment of internal documents that were recovered from the Islamic State in Khurasan. Following this discussion, I provide an account of how IS media spread throughout the internet. Here, I deploy a Deleuzo-Guattarian framework in order to understand the internet spatially and think through the wide dissemination of IS media. To fortify my account of the spatial contingencies of the internet, and how IS media moved through it, I unpack Ali Fisher's (2015) claim that the IS 'mujahideen' conducted a form of information war known as netwar in what he calls a Swarmcast model. The Swarmcast model of information and media dissemination online shows the flexible nature of IS in its global media dissemination and accounts for the networked dissemination of its messages.

The second primary task of this chapter is to theorise the function of IS media. Informed by my review of perspectives in the previous chapter, my theorisation of IS media acknowledges its production and dissemination, in addition to the ability of media to participate in processes of governance. To account for the complexity of IS's use of media, I foreground perspectives on the intersection of governmentality and media, such as that of

Ouellette & Hay (2008), Nolan (2006), Stauff (2010), and Dearman et al. (2018). In addition, I also acknowledge transmedia and intermedial perspectives (Monaci 2018; Jenkins 2006). As this chapter proceeds, I attempt to think through how IS media circulates through hypermedia space, an assemblage of technologies and bodies (Kraidy 2017). To develop my own theory of IS media, I deploy a media governmentality approach that understands media as being fundamental to the conduct of conduct. The utility of a media governmentality perspective is that it can acknowledge other approaches to IS-produced media which address circulation, production, remediation, and so on, while also considering media's productive capacities to direct bodies and subjectivities toward various processes of becoming. Deleuze (and Guattari) use the concept of 'becoming' rather than 'being' as part of their philosophical project of introducing movement into thought. For Stagoll, the concept of becoming is Deleuze's solution to the West's focus on being and identity (2010, p. 25). Although a becoming is non-linear, it can be thought of as the difference between a start point and an end point. Rather than being a phase between two states, or transformative stage between two states, becoming is 'the very dynamism of change' (Stagoll 2010, p. 26). The concept of becoming allows us to focus on change as such rather than the pursuit of a final form or goal. Thus, I use the term here to highlight the ongoing processes of subjectification in the Islamic State that are continuous but not necessarily complete. Though this thesis focuses on officially produced IS media in English, I seek to provide an account of IS's broader media activity in order to understand the constitutive components of the IS assemblage.

What is at stake in IS media, and the group's administrative apparatus, is the governance of subjects. In the final section of this chapter, I sketch an outline of the relationship between IS media, the primary technique of power which the group deploy which is a form of biopower, and their intersecting relationship with administrative rule in the caliphate. Biopower is a specific technique of power which is articulable to the mode of

Islamism which IS deploy and propagate through media and administration. Biopower, as a technique, cuts through and comes to characterise the pursued effect of IS's deployment of Islamism through media and administration. Though I sketch some of the components of IS's mode of biopower here, I offer a more in-depth account of the group's deployment of biopolitics in the final chapter.

The IS Mediascape

For IS, media is simultaneously a part of the group's dispositif and the element that binds and extends the group itself: the IS assemblage. The following section is an exposition of the way that IS animated this connective component. Informed by scholarship on IS media in the previous chapter, this section's purpose is to reveal the constitutive role media played in the extension and intensification of the IS assemblage. An outline of the group's intersective uses of media reveals the nomadic nature of the organisation, its discursive war, its potential to govern from afar, and its incitement to deterritorialised acts of terror.

Official Media

IS have a number of official media outlets, each tasked with discrete responsibilities. Their four primary media outlets are Al-Hayat Media Centre, Al-Furqan Media Foundation, Al-I'tisam Media Foundation, and Ajnad Media Foundation. Al-Hayat Media Centre create high-quality videos, magazines, and news reports in English, Russian, French, and German, and their content is largely directed towards the West (Macnair & Frank 2017; MEMRI 2014). Media produced by Al-Hayat makes up the majority of the legacy media analysed throughout this thesis. Al-Hayat Media Centre produced some of the more well-known videos such as *Flames of War* I (2014) and II (2017), the *Inside the Caliphate* series (2017-2018), *The Religion of Unbelief is One* (2016), *Healing of the Believers Chests* (2015), *End of Sykes-Picot* (2014), and *No Respite* (2015), to name a few. Al-Hayat media is also

responsible for producing flagship magazines such as *Islamic State News*, *Dabiq*, and subsequently, *Rumiyah* after the publication of *Dabiq* ceased.

In internal documents pertaining to the production and regulation of media discussed by Milton (2018), IS delineate between external and internal media. Local media bureaus produce most of the internal media, directed at those within the caliphate, but also answer to the Central Media Diwan and Media Monitoring Committee. They do not produce media for external distribution. However, the Central Media Diwan and Media Monitoring Committee provide guidance, regulations, and rules for producing external media, much of which bears the watermark of Al-Hayat Media Centre (Fig. 4). Al-Furqan, however, produced audio and video in Arabic and English and was IS's original media wing (Zelin 2015). It was founded in 2006 when the group was known as ISI (Islamic State of Iraq) and previously produced 'CDs, DVDs, posters, pamphlets, and web-related propaganda products' (Cunningham, Everton, & Schroder 2015, p. 3). Additionally, Al-I'tisam produced videos in Arabic, English, and French. Al-I'tisam seemed to be tasked with producing content related to internal political speeches and occurrences within the caliphate, as well as content relating to intrastate relations in the Middle-East, seen in videos such as *Message to Jordan* (2015) and *Message to the People of Tunisia* (2015; jihadology.net 2018). Finally, Ajnad Media Foundation produces nasheeds (religious songs) in Arabic (Department of Homeland Security, 2019).

Figure 4 - al-Hayat Watermark, screenshot from No Respite, 2015
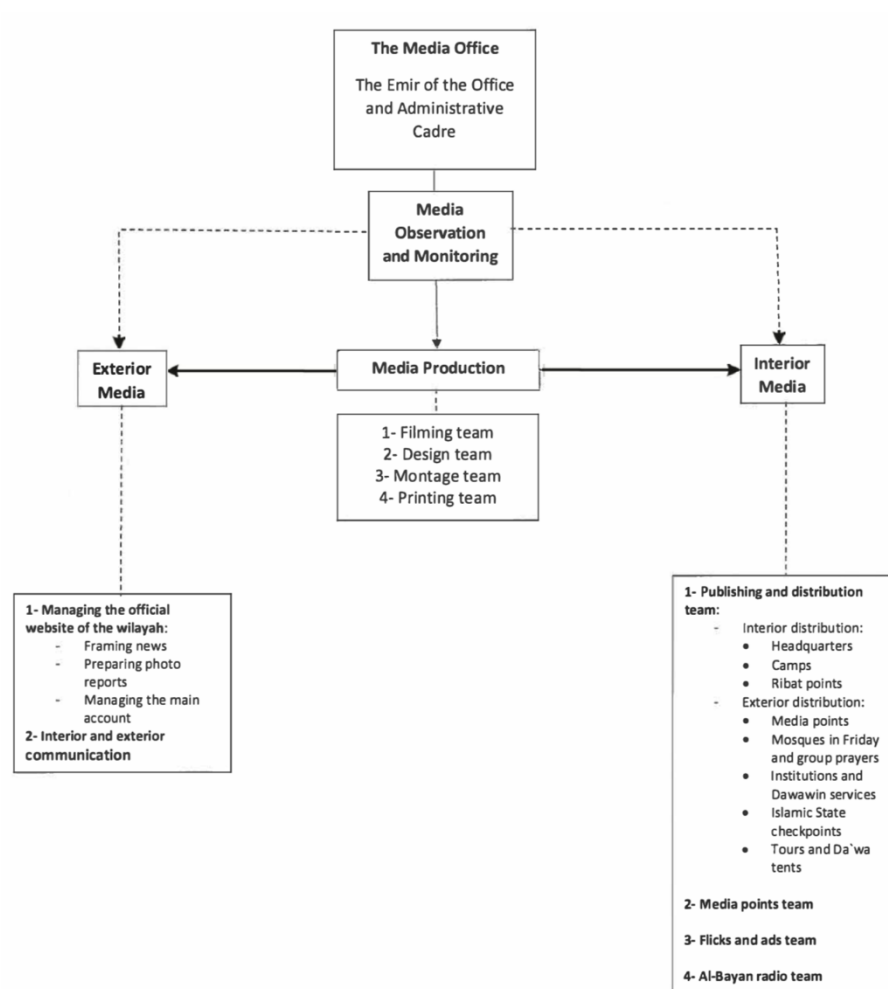
Figure 5: Organisational Structure of the Media, CTC, 2018

IS had other peripheral media outlets not specifically related to the concerns of this thesis. For instance, IS's al-Bayan Radio provided 24/7 online audio streaming in 'various languages', and Amaq News Agency, previously thought to be a pseudo-arm of IS media, has been officially linked to the organisation (Milton 2018). Additionally, it has been noted by Winter (2015) that the group also had 35 local media bureaus, one for each of its Wilayat or territories. This thesis is concerned with its social media and the resonances between IS administration and its official media outputs in English. Preceding a discussion of how IS media is circulated, it is first worth examining what is known about its internal media regulation policies. This is because the way in which the production of media was regulated by IS resembles the hierarchical formulation of the group's various governmental departments. Moreover, such a discussion gives credence to the argument against IS being 'crazy' or 'psychopathic' and, rather, allows us to focus on their calculation, planning, and accomplishments.

The most comprehensive study of the internal production of official IS media appears in an article by Daniel Milton (2018). Milton analyses documents recovered from Khurasan in Afghanistan where IS had a branch of fighters. Importantly, Milton notes that nothing in the documents suggest that they are specific to the Khurasan region (Milton 2018, p. 1). More likely, he argues, is that these documents were provided by the Central Media Diwan and were used to train IS media operatives throughout the organisation. Thus, the information provided in the documents is composed mostly of instructions that were intended to inform the Khurasan municipality's media output, but were not necessarily unique to it (Milton 2018, p. 1). IS themselves claimed to have 35 Wilayat (provinces) as of July 2016 which Winter has mapped (2015; See also *Structure of the Caliphate* Al-Hayat Media Centre, 2016a); it is likely that the same or similar documents were delivered to all those producing media such as in the case of Raqqa and Deir Ez-zoor in Syria, in addition to Diyala, Saladin,

Mosul, and Kirkuk in Iraq (Stern & Berger 2015, p. 131). The Central Media Diwan is in charge of the production and distribution of all external media: that is, content directed towards the outside of the caliphate, under the supervision of the Media Monitoring Committee (Milton 2018, p. 10). They place importance on both producing a wide range of media products such as 'photo reports, videos, individual images, and statements', as well as reporting on a vast range of issues 'from military operations to governance initiatives undertaken within the caliphate' (Milton 2018, p. 6). Drawing on Milton's work and the documents themselves, I discuss below some of the ways that the local media bureaus were organised to sketch a picture of IS's internal media apparatus. Media produced by local bureaus is not put under scrutiny in this thesis, though a consideration of the conditions of their production, distribution, and circulation, in addition to the organisation of the workers who produce their content, can give insight into the reach of IS's organisational and governmental dispositif.

In the document titled 'General Guidelines and Instructions', the authors make clear a variety of guidelines for various types of media. As an example, guidelines for photo reports are that they must cover events within the caliphate, the status of the caliphate which ranges from coverage of service provisions to battles, and 'the status of the Muslims there' ('General Guidelines and Instructions'). Moreover, videos should be free of errors, presenters should appear tidy and sound articulate, and filming should always be conducted with multiple cameras (presumably so that there are more options for editing) ('General Guidelines and Instructions'). As Milton rightly notes, existence of such documents with strict guidelines for the production of media in local provinces indicates either a firm grasp over local media diwan, or at least an attempt to establish control (2018, p. 7). There are also guidelines for what kinds of stories local media bureaus should publish: 'Sharia news; news related to al-Hisba [sic], courts, Da-wa, mosques', services inside the caliphate such as infrastructure

maintenance and repairs, and miscellaneous events: 'other events not included in the topics above like the event of snowfall in the areas of the Islamic State and the rise of the water level in a river' (2018, p. 7). There are also rules for representing specific kinds of content. During the mediated implementation of the hudud, for example, producers must only show the faces of apostates, never Muslims, and those delivering punishments must remain stoic when punishing Muslims (2018, p. 7).

The documents mentioned above also include guidelines for the hierarchasition of local media bureaus. It is suggested that they separate into four teams: publishing and distribution, in charge of delivering media to soldiers and citizens within the caliphate; a media points team, in charge of local media centres where it was possible to consume official IS media, also in charge of monitoring media produced and facilitating its distribution; a flicks and ads team, in charge of posters inside the provinces; and an Al-Bayan radio team who coordinate with Al-Bayan radio, broadcast in the provinces and record audio content (Milton 2018, pp. 9-10).

At least with regard to internal media, the Central Media Diwan has strong control over the quality of the provinces' media output. The quality regulation process occurs over three chat rooms in encrypted apps like WhatsApp or Telegram (Milton 2018, p. 15). Following the creation of a media product by the local media bureau, it is posted to a group chatroom which members of the local media bureau and workers at the Central Media Diwan both have access too. It is marked up for revision and the local media bureau revise the product. The product is subsequently put into a second group conversation in WhatsApp or Telegram when it is ready to be published and cannot be published without first appearing here with no further requests for edits. During this process, videos undergo a scoring process marked out of 100%: scenario, idea, and comment account for 30% of this grade, the quality of filming and raw footage for 30%, and 'montage, graphics, effects, editing and choosing scenes' are

worth 40% (Milton 2018, p. 11). Videos with a score of over 75% receive a score of 'excellent'; 60-69% is 'very good'; 50-59% is 'good'; and 40-49% is 'acceptable' (Milton, 2018, p. 11). Although there are no details pertaining to it, it is clear that there was also a separate evaluation process in which Media Bureaus themselves were assessed. The measurement for this assessment was in relation to the amount and quality of the bureau's media output; their cooperation with Amaq news agency; and 'another evaluation' relating to videos sent to Amaq, the specifics of which are unclear (Milton 2018, p. 14). Media operators may have been rewarded for their efforts but, again, there are no outlines of rewards or punishments for successful productions and failures, respectively (Milton 2018, pp. 14-15). Regardless, this does show that official IS media production was highly regulated and hierarchized (See Fig. 6 & 7).

In the Name of God the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

An Interior Media Leaflet

[2]

Organizational Structure of Media Office

```
          ┌─────────────────────────────┐
          │       The Media Office       │
          │                             │
          │   The Emir of the Office and │
          │    Administrative Cadre      │
          └──────────────┬──────────────┘
                         │
                         │
              ┌──────────┴──────────┐
              │ Media Observation and│
              │     Monitoring       │
              └──────────┬──────────┘
                         │
                         ▼
┌──────────┐   ┌─────────────────────┐   ┌──────────┐
│ Exterior │◄──│   Media Production   │──►│ Interior │
│  Media   │   └─────────────────────┘   │  Media   │
└──────────┘                              └──────────┘
```
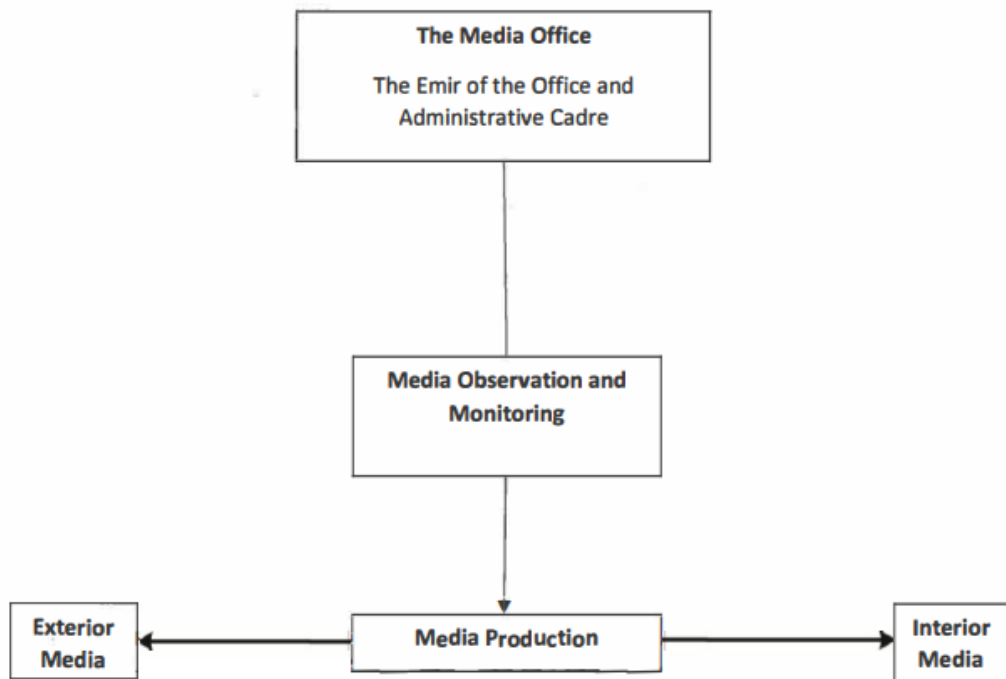
Figure 6 - Organisational Structure of the Media Office (CTC, 2018, p. 1)
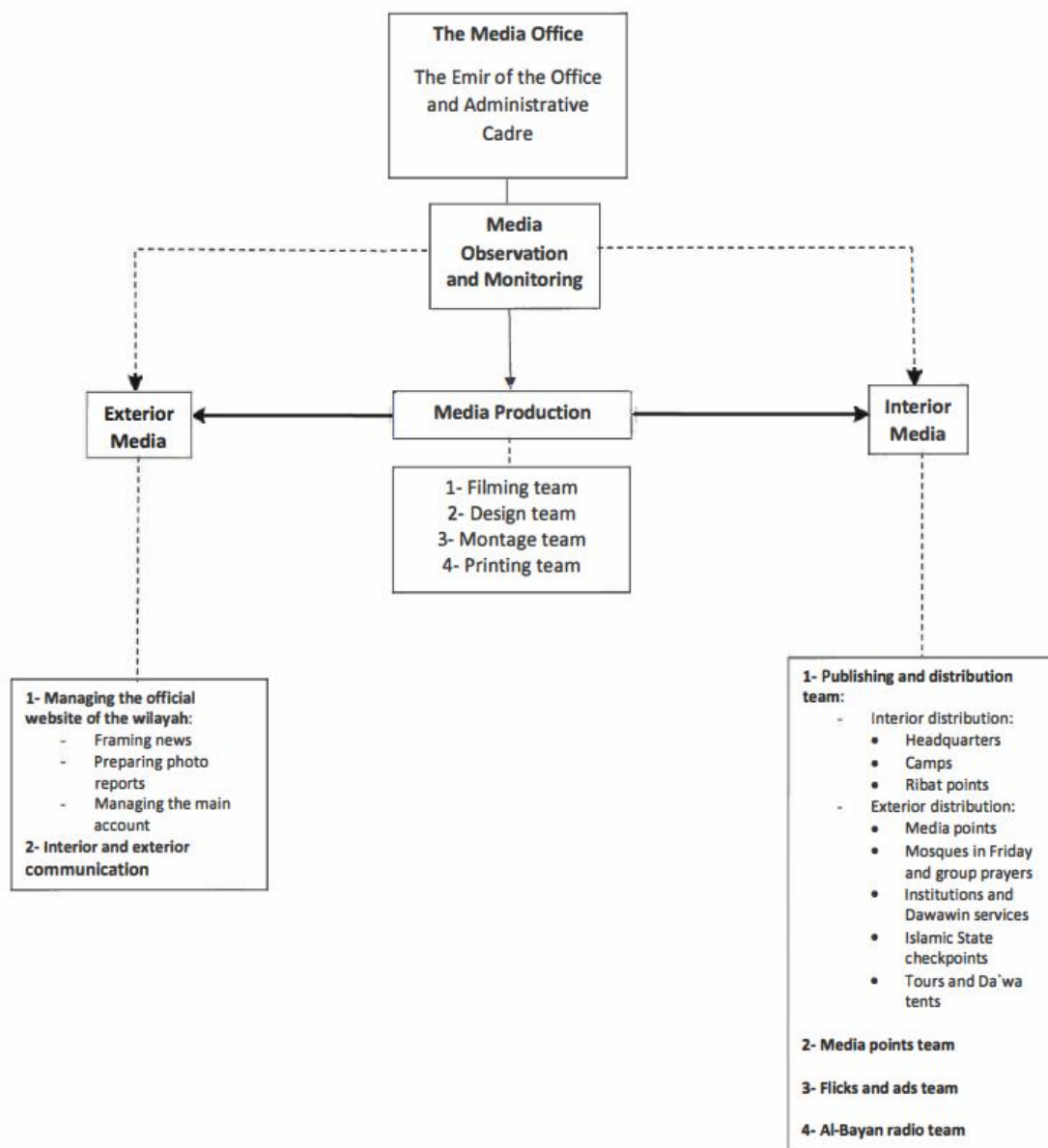
Figure 7 - Organisational Structure of the Media Office (CTC, 2018, p. 2)

Milton also speculates on the possible slackening of standards of media as IS experienced

duress and territorial setbacks, in that it may have been difficult to maintain such a high-

quality product over time (2018, p. 17). However, seeing as the quantity of official IS media

dropped rather than its quality, it does seem that media products continued to be highly

regulated:

> On the other hand, the group may choose to be even more centralized and vigilant of its media production process. It may view the setbacks as the time to be careful and calculated as it waits for the chance for more favourable conditions to emerge in which it can resume its efforts. In this circumstance, we might also expect to see a reduced number of releases. It may be less due to capability and capacity and more a conscious choice by the media organisation to wait for the 'right time.' (Milton 2018, p. 17)

Of course, there is the possibility that seeing as IS had produced high-quality media products

for a significant period of time, media operatives may have had an understanding of what was

expected of them in the late stage of assaults on the caliphate. In this case, there would not

have been as much of a need for such formal reviewing and revising processes. Regardless,

the material limitations experienced by IS during intense periods of the caliphate's waning

battle are undoubtedly the reason for a subsequent lack of media output.

The aforementioned recovered documents also reveal the ways in which IS sought to

protect media and escape both surveillance and cyber-attacks. Information security was a

significant factor within the IS media regime and manifested in 'three general lines of effort:

encryption, physical security of media information and locations, and the cautious use of

social media by media operatives' (Milton 2018, p. 18). Media operatives were encouraged to

encrypt files with the application TrueCrypt (which, interestingly, stopped receiving updates

in 2014) to prevent access if they were to fall into the wrong hands. It is also suggested that

operatives use programs like Eraser and CCleaner—these programs are to ensure that deleted

files on hard drives cannot be recovered by enemies. As Milton notes, encryption is not

limited to files alone—it also applies to messages sent between operatives. As stated above,

WhatsApp and Telegram were favourites of the group, as was Pidgin, instructions for which

were attached to the recovered documents (2018, p. 18). Physical space and its security were

also an important component of information security. For example, media workers were

instructed to use Local Area Network (LAN) connections instead of Wi-Fi and were not to

open any encrypted files on any machine connected to the internet (2018, p. 18). Milton also

notes that any hardware (presumably routers) that provided media offices with internet access

should be distanced from the office itself, presumably to escape tracking for US air or drone

strikes. In short, the media production process implemented by IS was highly hierarchized

and regulated in terms of both raw digital content and its processing on one hand, and its

physical security on the other.

Social Media and the Spatiality of the Internet

Outside the caliphate, IS were well-known for the widespread dissemination of their

messages online. The spread of IS on the internet can be understood by thinking through the

spatial structures of the internet. The internet is not a smooth space over which one can freely

move: it is constituted by both striations and smoothness. Jodi Dean's (2009)

conceptualisation of the internet is useful here:

> The Internet is not a wide-open space with nodes and links to nodes distributed in random
> fashion such that any one site is equally as likely to get hits as any other site. This open,
> smooth, virtual world of endless and equal opportunity is fantasy. (Dean 2009, p. 43)

In other words, the internet is a facilitator of potential connections rather than a completely

formless space. We can go further and suggest that the corporatisation of the internet via the

institution of striated spaces of capital and surveillance structurally predisposes content to

certain spaces in the digital realm. Christian Beck notes how corporations and states seek to

control the kinds of communication which take place on the internet:

> State surveillance and corporate complicity explicitly attempts to striate digital space. While
> we navigate through a seemingly smooth space with perceived freedom, the striations of
> capitalism and State surveillance remain persistently present by directing, monitoring, and
> redirecting the flow of Internet traffic and content. (Beck 2016, p. 340)

Applying this logic to IS, one can begin to consider how IS-produced media moved between

the various corporate striations of the internet in the early life of the caliphate: Facebook,

YouTube, Twitter, Tumblr. These kinds of social media and SNSs are the striated spaces of

the internet that are latched onto by subjects: they are intensifications in the digital space around which content, conversations, new potentials for ways of being, and the reification of old subjectivities, are constituted. Simply put, the most popular sites used by the most people, at one time, provided the best platform for visibility and the extension of the IS-assemblage. However, we should not discount the importance of the smooth(er) spaces of the internet.

The smooth(er) spaces of the internet are what allow for the longevity of uploaded content by groups such as IS. Though they may have a will to generate capital at least to keep their operations running, they are largely characterised by a commitment to both the free exchange of information and the privacy of their users. Yayla & Speckhard note that IS uploaded content to 'free and open mediums' such as 'Google drive, Cloud.mail.ru, Yandesk, YouTube, Sendvid.com, Dailymotion.com, Drive.ms, Archive.org, Justpaste.it, Bitly.com and some other recent platforms' (2017, p. 2). We can consider these websites as smooth(er) spaces of the internet. Take, for example, archive.org, an online archive of the internet whose mission is to 'provide Universal Access to All Knowledge' (archive.org/about 2018). Because of such a commitment, archive.org tries to protect the identities of its users and has in the past successfully challenged FBI national security letters (NSLs) which are formal requests for information about a specific user of an organisation's website (Nakashima 2008). Because of the commitment to the preservation of and access to all forms of knowledge, archive.org was a useful host for IS media operatives and supporters to upload media. In fact, many of the original links to videos and other content on Aaron Zelin's jihadology.net, an 'archive of jihadi media' and material directed towards researchers and academics, are archive.org links. Regardless, a website such as archive.org is a smoother space of the internet compared to mainstream social networking sites. The spread of IS media is also due to the relative smoothness of the internet, or, the possibility for content forms such as videos,

portable text documents (pdfs), and audio files, to travel across and be accessed via different platforms. Put simply, the smoothness of the internet facilitates the resonance of content on the free and open mediums mentioned by Yayla and Speckhard (2017). But the success and visibility of these forms of content (in this case, media produced by IS as well as messages of support by fan/supporters) also relied on the striated spaces of capital such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter, to garner major media attention. The sheer volume of content at one time made IS content difficult to censor, though the aforementioned corporations made significant efforts to mute IS content online. Though the mass suspension of pro-IS Twitter accounts was effective, it also had a productive capacity related to affective practices of community building, as I discussed in the previous chapter (Pearson 2018). Nevertheless, projects such as archive.org which seek to smooth out the striated spaces of the internet under the liberal auspices of freedom of knowledge, access to information, and the fetishisation of personal privacy, are what aid in the resonance of IS-produced media online.

Despite the efforts of corporations such as Twitter and Facebook to censor IS-produced content, the circulators of official IS media and supporters of the group remained persistent. Ali Fisher's (2015) notion of Swarmcast as the prevailing model of how IS spread its media is most useful here:

> In the Swarmcast model there is no longer a clear division between the audience and a content producer in control of the means through which to broadcast content to that audience. Instead, once content is produced and released, it is often the distributing network of media mujahideen, rather than the original producer, that ensures continuing content availability. (Fisher 2015, p. 4)

Fisher synthesises the notion of IS as Swarmcast with the idea of netwar, a war largely concerned with knowledge 'about who knows what, when, where, and why, and about how secure a society, military, or other actor is regarding its knowledge of itself and its adversaries' (Arquilla & Ronfeldt 1996 as cited in Fisher 2015, p. 5). The swarmcast model of netwar is achieved through a highly complex and interconnected system which eternally

rearranges itself, just like 'a swarm of bees or flock of birds constantly reorganises in flight' (Fisher 2015, p. 8). The swarmcast's utility in disseminating media and thus extending the IS assemblage which seeks to govern subjects far and near, lies in its flexibility. Flexibility or fluidity in the swarmcast is informed by three primary characteristics for Fisher: resilience, speed, and agility (2015). The resilience of the IS Swarmcast, or the Media Mujahideen who disseminate IS media online, is found both in the sustained use of the same hashtags over a period of time in addition to the decentralized nature of the network of media disseminators themselves. The coupling of a dispersed network rather than a 'hub and spoke' one that is animated by and relies on a central node, in addition to hashtags (which are harder to police than accounts), allowed IS media to spread online. The speed of the dispersed network of users is an aggregate characteristic of the Media Mujahideen which facilitated the spread of IS media. Speed, here, refers to the promptness with which supporters downloaded media before it was taken down and uploaded it elsewhere (Fisher 2015, pp. 11-12). Fisher uses the example of the pre-caliphate video *Clanging of the Swords Part IV*. Between the 17th and 19th of May 2014, the name of this video was tweeted 6428 times by Twitter users. Within some of these tweets were links to the video on a range of platforms including YouTube, but also justepaste.it and archive.org. Fisher also noted that the most popular justpaste.it page itself contained links to other sites where the video could be found such as archive.org and gulfup.com (2015, p. 12). Further, Fisher also draws attention to the agility of the IS swarmcast. The agility of the IS swarmcast has an acute relation to the speed of the media mujahideen in that it manifests in their uptake of a vast range of platforms. He uses the example of the circulation of *Flames of War*, the trailer of which was uploaded to YouTube and viewed more than 750,000 times, while the full version was widely available on Vimeo, LiveLeak, and Gulfup (2015, p. 14). The ability to utilise a variety of platforms on an as-

needs basis speaks directly to the flexible, agile, quick, and dispersed nature of the way in which IS media spreads throughout the smooth and striated spaces of the internet.

The media assemblage of IS was not limited to officially produced content, however: supporters also produced video game imaginings, memes, pro-IS merchandise, and apps. For instance, at one time, a trailer for a supposed video game modification (mod) of the popular *Grand Theft Auto V* with IS fighters as protagonists circulated the internet (Crecente 2014; Thornhill 2014). Though it never seemed to materialise, the trailer provides a preview for what the product could have looked like. At its outset, we are presented with the following text: 'Your games which are producing from you, we do the same actions in the battlefields !!'. This is followed by the famous *Grand Theft Auto* (*GTA*) logo with the IS flag behind it, Arabic characters, and an image of a masked man holding a gun with an explosion in the background. The video is largely a montage of regular occurrences in the Gameworld of *GTA*: vehicles are blown up, we witness killings from a first-person perspective, and dead and dying police officers are shot point blank. The only suggestion that a video game might have been made are the concept cover art mentioned above, as well as the nasheed that plays over portions of the video and an Arabic voiceover declaring the greatness of God. Most of the video could have simply been made by navigating to a geographical area within the game's map which resembles parts of Syria and Iraq, and subsequently recording and editing footage of quite usual events from within *GTA*. The point is that IS supporters sought to propagate real enactments of hijrah to the caliphate by appealing to a youth audience and suggesting that what they are already doing digitally is what they can do in reality should they travel to the caliphate. Other forms of media were also produced. As Imogen Richards has noted, pro-IS merchandise appeared in both Indonesia and Turkey, as well as online webstores (2016, p. 210). Pro-IS t-shirts, sweatshirts, and hats bore IS flags, maps, AK-47s, and were sold online and advertised via Twitter before specific sites such as Zirah Moslem

were shut down in 2015 (Richards 2016, p. 210). Additionally, online supporters produced various IS-related memes which were circulated via social media.

So far, I have attempted to sketch a picture of the IS mediascape. Though official IS media is highly regulated, it is clear that online agents, in addition to the structural exigencies of the internet which I have sought to conceptualize spatially, facilitated the spread and extension of IS online. An examination of the proliferation of IS and IS-related media affirms my claim regarding flexibility and movement as they pertain to IS in Chapter 1. In other words, accounting for IS online and the way that IS media deterritorialised and reterritorialised in the smooth and striated spaces of the internet that is animated by agents, as well as the structure of digital space itself, helps us to understand the relationship between IS and media over time. Moreover, an explanation of IS's regulations concerning media reveals the extent to which its highly structured governmental dispositif operated at all levels of the state assemblage. Anthony Celso has argued against claims that IS is a rational entity as that contention 'confuses the group's instrumental rationality with a logical long-term vision' (2014, p. 1). In other words, IS's apocalyptic vision (underscored in the title of the magazine *Dabiq* where, in an Islamic prophecy, the end of the world is said to take place during a final battle against Crusaders) elides any sense of pursued longevity on the part of the group. Though he is correct in his understanding of the use of media such as *Dabiq* to 'attract recruits, frighten opponents, and discredit jihadist rivals' (2014, p. 1), his argument is distinctly at odds with the content of early issues of the magazine which explicitly seek to extend the life of the caliphate itself. As an example, in the first pages of Issue 1, the Call for Hijrah (Al-Hayat Media Centre 2014a, p. 11) is made to a variety of types of actors essential to the pursuit of any state-building project (Doctors, Engineers, Scholars, and Specialists). His claims are also at odds with the highly organised, hierarchized, and labour-divided practices of IS's official media production. For Celso, the theological underpinnings of

Islamist terrorism are what makes the actions of a group like IS irrational or 'fanatic', subsequently undermining the tactical capacities of the group. Despite their inefficiency, lack of resources, and constant bombardment, the implementation of health and social services is in line with the pursued organisation of a state assemblage where IS can carry out their (rational or not) religious duty. From IS's perspective, the attainment of statehood is the attempt to set up the conditions for the possibility of salvation via good conduct. A mass mobilisation of the entire population as suicide bombers is irrational; the endeavour for infrastructure, housing, a sophisticated media apparatus, and healthcare more resembles the calculated rendering of a diagram that is in line with IS's pastoral and biopolitical project. The precision and concern with posterity is what made IS terrifying rather than the easy recourse to theological irrationality. I turn now to formulate a theoretical understanding of the group's use of media.

Theorising IS Media

How should we conceive of media produced by IS? IS's use of media must be theorised in a multitude of ways in order to account for their range of media practices. Moreover, it ought to be considered in light of the complex amalgamation of the deployment of Islamism, bureaucracy, and the biopolitics of the caliphate. As one of the core concerns of this thesis is the governmentality(ies) of IS and IS media, an approach that acknowledges the governmental capacities of media is a first step towards theorising it. To investigate the resonance between IS's media and governmental institutions, I pose the following questions: to what end does media have the capacity to govern subjects? How does IS media seek to produce and foster extant subjectivities and modes of conduct on one hand, and formulate new ones on the other? How does IS media respond to the tumultuous representations of Muslims and other foreign bodies in the West, particularly since 2001? Moreover, how does IS media leverage contemporary Muslim subjectivities in order to garner support? It is here

that we should return to the Deleuzo-Guattarian question regarding assemblages, that to find

out what an assemblage is, is to ask firstly what it does. To aggregate this question, we should

then ask how does it do what it does? Then, what current tools do we have to assess what IS

media is and what it seeks to do? The primary line of enquiry in the following section

explores the constitution of citizenship via mediated governance that is communicated to

globally deterritorialised agents. As well, it is here that I seek to explore the relationship

between media, bureaucracy and administrative power, the deployment of religion, and

biopolitics. Firstly, however, we must follow and depart from a range of ways in which media

has been understood as seeking to materialise various governmentalities.

Media and Governmentality

The main area which governmentality has been taken up in media studies concerns

analyses of reality television. Studies of governmentality usually address arts of government

in liberal and neoliberal nation-states, and this holds true for studies pertaining to reality

television too. For instance, Laurie Ouellette has written about the courtroom show *Judge*

Judy as a 'neoliberal technology of everyday citizenship' that 'attempts to shape and guide

the conduct and choices of lower-income women in particular' (2009, p. 224). For Ouellette,

shows like *Judge Judy*

> supplant institutions of the state… and, using real people caught in the drama of ordinary life
> as raw material, train TV viewers to function without state assistance or supervision, as self-
> disciplining, self-sufficient, responsible, and risk-averting individuals. (Ouellette 2009, p.
> 224)

In other words, such television shows are congruent with the ethics and practices of

neoliberalism such as individual responsibility, the erasure of social welfare, the replacement

of public institutions by private ones, the fetishisation of the self, and the management of risk.

In the case of *Judge Judy*, this kind of media takes a particular subject as its target (working

class women in this instance) and seeks to cultivate them into normative modes of conduct

which obscures the force of complex structural issues at play. Thus, minor conflicts are

melded into a 'recurring narrative that emphasizes individual shortcomings over societal complexities and inequalities' (Ouellette 2009, p. 228).

A more elaborate articulation of governmentality and its relationship to media is that of Ouellette and Hay, who consider governmentalities administered by reality television as 'techniques through which individuals and populations reflect upon, work on, and organise their lives as a condition of citizenship' (2008, p. 9). Certainly, in the Islamic State, conducting oneself correctly and being conducted correctly are constituent components of citizenship. Drawing on Nikolas Rose, Ouellette and Hay frame television as a cultural technology that assesses and intervenes in the lives of individuals, thus highlighting

> The extent to which television culture is an object of regulation, policy, and programs designed to nurture citizenship and civil society, and an instrument for educating, improving, and shaping subjects. (Ouellette & Hay 2008, p. 14)

For Rose, cultural technologies are crucial to contemporary governance as they have the ability to disguise the preferred conduct of governments into 'diffuse guidelines for living with no obvious connection to official government, formal laws or regulatory procedures' (Ouellette & Hay, 2008, p. 129). This is not necessarily collusion between privately owned media companies and governments in liberal democracies but instead highlights the function of ideology as such. However, this distinction does not matter in the case of IS: their media products are overtly connected to the preferred conduct of their territory. More importantly, I argue that aspects of IS media work in a similar way to the ideal function of reality television in that they perform as cultural technologies which seek to govern the conduct of supporters from a distance, foster migration, and in their most abject form, incite deterritorialised acts of global violence. Thus, it is worth examining how IS media functions in a similar way to individual citizens, 'whose most pressing obligation to society is to empower her or himself privately' (2008, p. 24).

Milton (2016) describes major categories in IS media which can be equated with Ouellette and Hay's claim of television as a cultural technology that regulates citizens' subjectivities and conduct. As previously discussed, aside from military news, internal IS media focuses on Sharia-related news (that pertaining to both jurisprudence and updates on Mosques); general services (maintaining public utilities); and miscellaneous news (this can range from snowfall in Syria to changes in water levels) (Milton 2016, p. 7). These are not themes gleaned from an analysis of IS media. Instead, they are categories referenced by IS themselves in recovered documents (2016, p. 7). The experiential difference between television and other forms of media should not be obscured here; it is therefore worth considering the extent to which media objects can function as cultural technologies that regulate, classify, conduct, and direct discourses and ideology.

The governmentality of reality television can only function as a starting point for understanding the suture between governmentality and IS media. In some cases, forms of lifestyle reality television do resemble the governmental capacity of IS media in the ways that they directly address audiences (see my analysis of *Inside the Caliphate* below). Further, the governmentalities administered in such videos sometimes intend to govern at a distance, as is the case within neoliberal states (Ouellette 2009).

Markus Stauff, considering media governmentality, considers the following theoretical questions:

> To what extent do media contribute to the problematisation and to the governance of modes of conduct? To what extent do the discourses and practices of governing contribute to the constitution of media—and their political affectivity? (Stauff 2010, p. 267)

As it pertains to the Islamic State, the area this thesis seeks to explicitly unpack and analyse is the resonant space between media and governmental institutions. Nolan (2006) and Nolan and Marjoribanks (2011) have also written about media governmentality. Writing on public broadcast services in Australia, Nolan (2006) importantly underscores the extent to which

public service broadcasters constitute governmental technologies of citizenship. He understands citizenship as a

> performative outcome of the field of government, since it is this field that determines both the extent to which particular subjects are included in and/or excluded from the polity, and their varying capacity to act in ways that will effect (or resist) change within it. (Nolan 2006, p. 231).

Translating this claim to the realm of IS is an important task in establishing how the group govern via a system of inclusion and exclusion. Certainly, in the context of the caliphate, official IS media operates as a semi-traditional public service. An investigation into the governmental technologies which precede the constitution of subjects' governability by laying a claim to their inclusion (or not) can be arrived at through investigating and analysing both the medial and governmental capacities of the Islamic State.

The governmentality of media that Stauff proposes, and which I take up in my thesis is one

> at that point at which media contribute to the direction of behaviours and to the interconnection of other-directedness and self-directedness precisely by the fact that they become problematized themselves, are being discussed and thus become objects of concern and guidance. (Stauff 2010, p. 268)

I would suggest that a media governmentality approach, or an approach that acknowledges that media production and messaging is complicit in the conduct of conduct, is the most suitable approach to understanding IS's governance strategy. The example of Abu Adam's incitement to violent attacks in Australia (mentioned in Chapters 1 and 5), and the west more broadly, shows how IS media tries to govern the conduct of a globally distant audience (*Inside the Caliphate #2*). A similar example can be drawn from Episode 6 of the *Inside the Caliphate* series. Preceding an incitement to violence similar to that of Episode 2, Abu Salih makes the following case:

> All praise be to Allah who gave us strength when we were oppressed and made us the uppermost iman **{faith}**. Know that we are an ummah, and when inflicted with losses in leaders, or territory, or when inflicted with wounds, we only rise and endure, rely on our Lord and His promise. And it is his soldiers that will overcome. We tread upon the path of the best witnesses for mankind. The sahabah and the sahabiya **{companions}**, who with their blood, established the correct example

and the true measure of submission and sacrifice. Yes! They are the true measures. So, I direct my message to the wounded and previously injured sons of the khilafah: rise and act upon your iman. Make Abdulla bin Zayd your example, who on the day of uhud [sic] was injured and the blood would not stop flowing'. The prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, did not say to him, 'Sit and rest my son', but He, in his mercy and kindness towards the believers said: 'Bandage your wounds!' And then ordered him with these words: 'Rise my son and strike the people!' So I say to you: Rise O impab(?) muwahhid, rise with one leg or no legs, rise from your sittin' and strike the kuffar. To those who are sitting with a wound with no excuse, or the excuse of a light injury, I unreservedly narrate what our dear prophet has said: 'Give your shield to the one who is fighting.' (Al-Hayat Media Centre 2017c)

The above is not concerned with specific practices pertaining to the body, dietary requirements, or daily rituals. Instead, it is connected to the preferred characteristics and features which animate the conduct of subjects. Discourses of determination, endurance, steadfastness, and sacrifice are deployed alongside references to important Qur'anic figures. As I will show in Chapter 5, these discourses are echoed and reverberate throughout tweets of supporters and members in the early days of the caliphate. In the opening scene preceding this speech, the speaker is seen attaching a prosthetic leg. The implication is that he has enacted hijrah to the caliphate (or, has perhaps received a prosthetic limb from the factory in Mosul – See Specimen W in Al-Tamimi 2015a). Regardless, the audience is invited to constitute the third part of a triangulation between Abu Salih, and Abdullah bin Zayd as examples, or more precisely, as those who one should measure themselves against. As a textual manifestation within the cultural technological landscape of digital media, episodes of *Inside the Caliphate* mime the governmental function of technologies like reality television. Unlike cultural technologies for Rose, however, in the case of the Islamic State, guidelines for living always have a connection to government, laws, and so on. This connection, however, is not to any formal process (in this case) such as that of a passport or birth certificate and associated conventional citizenship rights: instead, it is articulated to the qualities of good citizenship from afar: steadfastness, endurance, faith, all in spite of any physical injury.

The notion that media can function as a technology of citizenship is a point I will develop below. Ouellette and Hay's positioning of TV within the analytic of government in order to understand how it, as a technological form, 'governmentalizes by presenting individuals and populations as objects of assessment and intervention, and by soliciting their participation in the cultivation of particular habits, ethics, behaviors, and skills', is an important contribution here (2008, p. 39). In this case, I argue that Ouellette and Hay's claims regarding the governmental capacities of reality TV can tessellate to media produced by IS.

IS's official media products can be understood as a form of public media[10] whose audience is a globally mediated public, and who IS seeks to govern. IS media sought to formulate a globally deterritorialised public by explicating and delimiting its discourse and conduct. It attempted to achieve this by crafting specific media messages that have their own discourses, visual regimes, and which were articulable to the governmental initiatives enacted within the caliphate. Citizenship is a useful lens through which to comprehend the function of IS media as a cultural technology. Nolan's (2006) understanding of citizenship (above) is a suitable starting point, but the media under scrutiny in this thesis is largely directed outside the caliphate. IS's goal is for Sunni Muslims to realign their conduct and beliefs with that of IS; here, the most valued audience in many cases of IS media, though not all, are the global Sunni Muslim population on one hand, and the converted on the other. Though Nolan (2006) is concerned with the constitution of Australian citizenship as it pertains to Public Broadcasting, the subject external to the caliphate must be conceived in other terms. As I have said above, at one time, significant portions of IS media and media activity dealt with the performance of hijrah (migration – see footnote 9) to the caliphate and conducting oneself

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[10] Though, as El Damanhoury (2020) rightly notes, IS media does not fit neatly into normative models previously used to analyse Western media, or non-Western media for that matter. See MacQuail 2010; See also Thompson 2012.

in particular ways should they not be able to do so. In this case, IS seek to formulate what we can call deterritorialised citizenship.

Deterritorialised Citizenship

Deterritorialised citizenship is the mantle taken up when a member of a population adheres to the various informal norms of a mode of conduct while not necessarily occupying the geographical intensity within which that mode of conduct is dominantly adhered to. I use the term 'citizen' here rather than 'subject' to underscore IS as assemblage, to underscore distant subjects' relation to the caliphate and, thus, their formulation as deterritorialized IS citizens. My use of the term 'citizen' does not strictly adhere to the way in which others such as Toby Miller (2001; 2007) discuss cultural citizenship. This is because Miller's use of the term cultural citizenship is contingent on 'the positive acknowledgement of difference in and by the mainstream' (2001, p. 2) or 'freedom from prohibition' (2007, p. 73). These values are distinctly at odds with the imperatives of IS citizenship, deterritorialised or otherwise. Though the formulation of deterritorialised IS citizens is of course contingent on cultural conduct, in nevertheless hinges on a transcendental imperative to perform correct conduct rather than an opportunity to be compelled toward a particular way of being. Its specificity lies in its reliance on the entanglement of religion and state in the case of IS. Identities are taken up via subjective work on selves that religion entails: praying, fasting, dietary requirements, community membership and obligations, and in the case of IS, propagating, organising, and inciting violence. It acknowledges those practices that would not usually constitute citizenship in other polities and disregards them, such as a passport, location of birth, heredity, and so on. In other words, deterritorialised citizenship is constituted by one conducting oneself correctly; and it adheres to conventional understandings of governmentality in its relationship to liberal nation-states. Deterritorialised citizenship is constituted in a variety of different ways; one of these ways in via the negation of hijrah.

Throughout ongoing releases such as *Dabiq*, *Rumiyah*, and the *Inside the Caliphate* series, hijrah is positioned as an activity that jihad cannot be performed without. One's religious obligation is to perform hijrah, in the words of IS, from the lands of disbelief to the lands of Islam. It is one of the most important activities IS subjects must complete. While taking up the mantle of informal citizenship from afar is important to the posterity of the caliphate, IS's long term mission should the caliphate wane (as it has), and fulfilling one's duty to religion and jihad, reterritorialising oneself in the caliphate to fight, support state apparatuses, and participate in the mundanities of everyday life, remained an ideal task for IS's supporters. As I have previously noted, if one cannot perform hijrah for whatever reason, then they are encouraged to commit acts of violence in their home countries. These encouragements manifest in the 'Just Terror Tactics' of *Rumiyah* and *Inside the Caliphate* among others. In this case, the incitements to conducting oneself hinge on violence or migration, then violence. However, there is one instance in *Dabiq* in which subjects are given broad exceptions and the measure of correct conduct becomes propagation: 'if you cannot perform hijrah for whatever extraordinary reason, then try in your location to organise bay'āt (pledges of allegiance) to the Khalīfah Ibrāhīm' (*Dabiq* Issue 2, p. 3). The reader is encouraged to publicize these pledges, 'in the masājid, Islamic centres, and Islamic organisations', record them, and

> distribute them through all forms of media including the internet. It is necessary that bay'ah becomes so common to the average Muslim that he considers those holding back as grossly abnormal. This effort, inshā'allah, will encourage Islamic groups to abandon their partisanship and also announce their bay'ah to the Khalīfah Ibrāhīm. (*Dabiq* Issue 2, p. 3).

The propagation of pledges of allegiance becomes part of one's good conduct should they not be able to migrate. The point is to elicit enough pledges of allegiance that pledging allegiance is a normative act against which one strain of abnormality can be measured as a precedent to exclusion. Propagating allegiance as a political goal is an activity that extends the IS-assemblage. Those who pledge allegiance should commit hijrah, carry themselves to the

caliphate, continue to propagate, or commit violent acts. Moreover, the propagation of

pledges of allegiance are connected to the discourses used in the aforementioned *Inside the*

Caliphate video. Certainly, pledging allegiance is connected to the obligations of

steadfastness, faith, and sacrifice. The qualities of citizenship mentioned here are not specific

to the Islamic State or even Islam. However, they are mobilized here in relation to the

Islamism propagated by IS.

> Interestingly, an exception is made on the following page:
>
> Finally, if you cannot do any of the above for reasons extremely beyond your control, inshā'allah your intention and belief that the Islamic State is the Khilāfah for all Muslims will be sufficient to save you from the warning mentioned in the hadīth, "Whoever dies without having bound himself by a bay'ah, dies a death of jāhiliyyah" [Sahīh Muslim]. (*Dabiq* Issue 2, p. 4)

So, if one cannot perform hijrah, commit violent acts, or propagate bay'at, belief and

sincerity is enough. It should be noted that this example is the only concession of its kind in

Dabiq making it an exception to the rule of hijrah or violence. I highlight it here not because

of its seemingly contradictory nature, but instead because it reveals more constituents for the

'guidelines for living' noted above by Ouellette and Hay. Sincerity and intention, in addition

to endurance, faith, and determination, are qualities of good self-conduct that are encouraged

in IS media, and media is one way through which conduct is sought in order to constitute a

globally dislocated cohort of citizens.

　　With IS, we can thus consider external media output to constitute technologies of

citizenship. As above, we can follow Nolan's understanding of public service broadcasters as

technologies of citizenship 'where ideas of collective identity are articulated and deliberated'

(2006, p. 227). IS's media programme does not tessellate to common forms of public media

broadcasting in liberal democracies. However, it does represent a kind of state-based media

that functions in similar ways to public broadcasting's constitution of citizenship. IS media,

or at least external IS media, thus functions as a cultural technology of deterritorialised

citizenship. This lies in its capacity to not only incite performances of citizenship from afar, but also to designate who is and is not included within this rubric of citizenship. Here, we should note that the assertion of media governmentality, in the case of forming distant citizens, does not occur automatically: the dispositif does not completely mould its citizenry. Instead, it seeks to facilitate processes in which the citizenry mould themselves with the IS's template in mind. Simply put, citizens 'exercise governmental power as well as being subject to it' (Nolan 2006, p. 233). In this case, the governance of citizens should always be understood as the *attempt* to govern.

We can thus delineate two considerations of governing relevant to IS media: its pursuit of governing and the constitutions of deterritorialised citizens. For Dearman et al (2018), governing is both productive and heterogeneous. Firstly, 'if governing, as an exercise of power, is *productive*, it means that governing engenders capacities, identities, and new social relations and situations' (2018, p. 14). If the objective of much IS media is to govern subjects, then it is crucial to note that its governmental capacity, inasmuch as it is one part of a power relation, is productive. It provides subjects with new ways of being and opportunities for the intensification of previous ways of being in relation to how IS positions its version of Islam. As IS media relates to the governance activities of the caliphate, Pearson's (2018) work above shows how the social relations sought out in the caliphate, particularly between men and women, were often echoed in online social media. We can see IS media here as being a phenomenon which provides the opportunities mentioned by Dearman et al. Secondly, if governing as the use of power is '*heterogeneous*', then it mobilizes a significant set of tools: 'exercises and formatted routines, persuasive examples or models, architectural design and repeated advice' (Dearman et al 2018, pp. 14-15). The use of say, routines, harks back to IS's Islamism and the stake that this has in a global sense as well as for their own governance. Various practices such as praying, fasting, dressing in a particular way, speaking, and so on,

are routine for many Muslims. From IS's perspective, this brings these such subjects closer to IS's preferred subjectivity, in addition to other characteristics outlined in *Inside the Caliphate* and *Dabiq* discussed above. However, due to IS's Islamism, the routines discussed here become militarized. Rather than being part of cultural conduct of a great many people with both advantages and disadvantages, benign practices such as dietary requirements, speaking, and moving one's body are harnessed to IS's war. Though these mundane practices are not usually talked about in official IS media, they constitute the unsaid that is expected of subjects. When we come to the administration of the IS's territory itself, these practices begin to carry legal weight being that they are tantamount to worldly conduct in the pursuit of the soul's salvation. Such practices, nevertheless, are part of the constituent forces of deterritorialised citizenship. Officially produced IS media in its use of examples and models merely seeks to re-position them and bring them into proximity with violence.

From that which has been established in this chapter so far, what can thus be said about official IS media? Firstly, officially produced IS media is both an element of the group's dispositif and that which extends and holds together the group as an assemblage. As a discursive element of the group's dispositif, one function of IS media is to govern subjects and communicate to them particular norms and expectations against which they themselves can measure their conduct. As above, the example of Abu Salih functions similarly to Foucault's account of upward and downward continuities in that those who can govern themselves well can be expected to be able to govern others well (Foucault 2007, p. 94). The vast production of a range of media texts such as *Dabiq* and the *Inside the Caliphate* series I have discussed heretofore further seek to delimit the discourse and conduct of subjects. In terms of movement, IS media travels widely. As Kraidy (2017) notes, IS use images like projectiles, hurling them into the global western media circuitry. But supporters of the group were, at one time, crafty, quick, and resilient, downloading official IS media content before it

was censored on mainstream platforms and uploading it elsewhere, in addition to creating new accounts whenever they were banned (Fisher 2015). Finally, the various spaces of the internet also facilitated the spread of IS media, and hence, the delivery of content to a wide range of subjects and enemies.

Some such as Sara Monanci have argued that IS's media strategy utilizes a transmedia approach that operationalizes multiple media platforms with complimentary and repetitive messaging. She claims that synergistic storytelling, maintaining a congruent narrative across multiple platforms; world-making through the repeated use of aesthetic forms across platforms; and additive comprehension and engagement such as leaving gaps in narratives for readers to fill, are three primary constituent parts of IS's transmedia approach. In Monaci's analysis, the messages in *Dabiq* are augmented across platforms and coincide with the release of other online material such as videos, nasheeds, and hashtags (2017, p. 2845). Monaci importantly notes that 'each medium is chosen for its specific and aesthetic communicative features' in order to do what it does 'best', and to 'maximise the narrative elements' (2017, pp. 2845-2846). While a transmedia approach is useful for accounting for a campaign that utilizes a range of different media forms, it is only a first step towards a comprehensive analysis of the ideal function of IS media. A governmentality approach to IS media, rather, has the theoretical dexterity to acknowledge the transmedial structure of the IS mediascape, while looking further ahead to the stake it could have in terms of processes of subjectification, as well as its political consequences.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have attempted to theorise IS media. As stated, IS media can be thought of as the connective component between the group's assemblage and dispositif. Official IS media output is highly regulated by provincial departments as well as the Central Media Diwan, going through a number of drafting stages before it is released. The stringent

drafting process of official media content speaks to the attempted coherence of the group's governance strategy and the seriousness with which they approached their media campaign and territorial governance. IS were adept in their uptake of a range of media and technologies in order to further their goals in terms of online visibility, longevity, resilience, governance, and subject formation. Moreover, they also showed an astute awareness of security measures used to protect locations and internet access.

Outside my governmentality approach to IS media, I spoke to the theorisation of the IS assemblage explicated in the previous chapter via reference to the group's (and its supporters') mobilisation and organisation online. I showed how Fisher's observations regarding the media mujahideen align neatly with my ontological declaration of the IS assemblage. The logic of such an ontology, with regard to IS at least, is amplified when we consider the effectiveness of IS media governmentality. In other words, the fact that IS supporters organised themselves as in an emergent assemblage speaks to the efficacy of the group's legacy media on one hand, and subjects' good self-conduct on the other. IS's utilisation of online spaces shows that they have an implicit understanding of mediated spectacle societies governed by the logic of capital, as well as an understanding of the idealized internet as a smooth and striated space of information flows.

Although the IS Media Mujahideen were instrumental in spreading pro-IS content, for media that was directed outside the caliphate, the web as a platform was key. IS media was spread effectively as it was able to glide across the smooth(er) spaces of the internet such as archive.org, but its goal was always to latch itself onto the striated spaces of capital and surveillance such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. As the IS binding agent, the relative smoothness of the web is what allowed the IS assemblage to expand and subsequently reterritorialise around the globe.

In the latter parts of this chapter, I deployed a media governmentality approach to IS and introduced the notion of deterritorialised citizenship. Drawing mainly from media governmentality approaches (Ouellette & Hay 2008; Nolan 2006; Stauff 2010; Dearman et al. 2018), I discussed how IS media functions as both a cultural technology and a technology of citizenship that seeks to produce and govern its subjects. By analysing an excerpt from the *Inside the Caliphate* series, I showed the typical kinds of discourses that are employed to produce the conduct of global Muslims. Crucially, this is connected to deterritorialised citizenship that delineates membership to the global IS assemblage. The notion of deterritorialised citizenship is vital for understanding IS as a global assemblage composed of spatially dislocated subjects. IS, via media, attempt to direct these subjects toward good conduct. In short, what is at stake in IS media is the production of subjects and the conduct of conduct. To analogize IS media with public media in liberal democracies, we can say that IS media provides the infrastructure of a subjective limit for deterritorialised citizens for them to conduct themselves within. In the next chapter, I unpack the primary methodology of this thesis: dispositif analysis.

<u>Chapter 4: Dispositifs and dispositif analysis</u>

Following my theorisation of IS's use of media in the previous chapter, I now turn to

a theoretical discussion of dispositifs and a methodological discussion of dispositif analysis.

In the first section I flesh out dispositif as a concept by discussing the ways in which it has

been explained by scholars such as Foucault (1978), Agamben (2009), and Deleuze (1992;

2016). While there are reverberations between these scholars, more recent academic work,

mostly from urban planning literature, has sought to operationalize the concept of dispositif

as both an object of enquiry and tool for analysis (Bailey 2013; Hillier 2011; Pløger 2010;

Röhle 2005). Though I broadly introduced dispositif as a concept in Chapter 1, what comes

out of the present assessment is two renderings of the concept: dispositif as object, and

dispositif as method of analysis. In other words, scholars have both used the concept

dispositif as an object to be investigated, as well as a proposed method of analysis—this

thesis uses both understandings. In the course of this section, I bring these considerations into

conversation to formulate the primary lines along which a dispositif analysis might be

executed, the proposed methodology of which I discuss in the second section of this chapter.

There are agreements and points of contention between these thinkers that are important to

tease out before a well-thought, critical understanding of what dispositifs are and what they

can do can be expressed. These range from the relative broadness of Agamben's claims, to

the specific articulation of Deleuze's rendering of Foucault's dispositif as a stratified

assemblage (2016). Moreover, this section also necessitates a discussion regarding the

primary concerns and outcomes of dispositifs along the lines of power, knowledge and truth,

and processes of subjectification (Hillier 2011). Prior to the second section of this chapter, I

also explore the relationship between the discursive and the non-discursive, if such a

dichotomy can be ascertained, and subject/object relations within dispositifs. This discussion

largely draws from Phillips and Jørgensen's (2002) work on discourse analysis and discourse

theory. Here, I side with Laclau and Mouffe's repudiation of a duality between discursive and non-discursive practices in favour of what might be called pre-discursive, which is similar to their notion of a field of discursivity (Laclau and Mouffe 2014; Phillips and Jørgensen 2002, p. 27). Not only do these concerns aid in answering questions related to research methods, but they also contribute to the theoretical bedrock of this thesis and thus inform the pursuits of my dispositif analysis.

In the second section of this chapter, I propose a methodology for dispositif analysis. This methodology is informed by the first section of the chapter. Due to the scarcity of literature on the methodology of dispositif analysis, this section draws on two main sources: Jäger and Maier's (2009) chapter on dispositif analysis and Joannah Caborn's article 'On the Methodology of Dispositive Analysis' (2007). The aim of this section is to synthesize the perspectives on the dispositif as discussed by Foucault, Agamben, and Deleuze, in addition to those put forward in urban planning literature and mobilise them in the pursuit of a methodology of dispositif analysis. Further, it acknowledges that the three primary contours of a dispositif analysis are power, knowledge and truth, and subjectivity. As I have previously mentioned throughout this thesis, the proposed methodology of dispositif analysis as put forward by Jäger and Maier is a tripartite discourse analysis of texts, actions, and objects (Jäger and Maier 2009; Caborn 2007). In Jäger and Maier's and Caborn's interpretation, actions and objects are considered as non-discursive so must be put into language. Though I draw heavily from these two thinkers I reject their notion of the non-discursive and, following Laclau and Mouffe (2014), acknowledge that actions and objects are already in discourse. If they are not in a dominant discourse, they can be located in a field of discursivity and may be brought into a given dominant discourse. In other words, while some actions and objects are not currently in discourse, it does not mean that will not be: they may retain their potentiality. The actions and objects outside of the dominant discourse in the case

of the Islamic State are then pre-discursive in that they are excluded from the discourse currently, though they could be deployed at another point in time. By synthesising ideas from Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory and Jäger's more explicit methodology of *dispositif* analysis via a theorisation of dispositif influenced by a range of thinkers, I sketch out a proposed methodology of dispositif analysis which I deploy in the final chapters of the thesis.

Dispositifs

In the first chapter of this thesis, I introduced the idea that the dispositif would be a productive critical heuristic for investigating the Islamic State's media and its modes of governance. The dispositif is the connection between a 'heterogeneous ensemble' made up of 'discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical and moral and philanthropic propositions – in short, the said as much as the unsaid' (Foucault 1980, p. 194). They are deployed to respond to an urgent need and are useful for thinking through governmental strategies at the macro, meso, and micro levels. They have a materiality, and thus have a decidedly material function. An example of dispositif analysis according to Jäger and Maier (2009), though it was prior to the use of the term dispositif, is Foucault's *Discipline & Punish* (1995, *D&P* herein). Before delving further in the dispositif, it is worth briefly re-introducing it as it was discussed in Chapter 1.

Foucault is concerned with the nature of the connections between the elements of the 'heterogeneous ensemble' outlined above. Dispositifs have a unity found in the discursive resonance between their elements. A first step toward delineating the unity of a dispositif can be made by considering what the dispositif seeks to deal with or manage, or what Foucault calls its '*urgent need*' (1980, p. 94 emphasis in original). The Islamic State faced a number of urgent needs to which they had to respond. As a quasi-global organisation seeking to attain and striate territories, and one which sought to govern subjects both within its territory and

globally, it needed a vast strategy that sought to deal with a wide range of elements. As drawn attention to in Chapter 1, the underlying knowledge and discourses of the IS dispositif, those of anticolonialism and Islamism, necessarily inform the other elements of the dispositif: the various Diwan and state institutions such as schools and hospitals are governed according to IS's Islamism, and laws, administrative measures, regulatory decisions, morality, and philosophical positions are all bound up in the same discourse. Put differently, the Islamism of IS characterises their governance strategy in that it informs and produces the limits of what can be done and said via media on one hand, and administrative and legal measures on the other. Broadly, a dispositif is a range of elements operationalized towards a particular end in response to an urgent need. It is fair to call IS's urgent needs multiple: an apparent imminent apocalypse, the legacy of Western intervention in the Middle-East since the 18th century including the Sykes-Picot agreement, the War on Terror, Orientalism, and so on. Yet, on different terms, IS's urgent need is actually quite familiar and mundane: how should we govern our population so that our conduct is in line with our beliefs and so that we achieve salvation in the next world? To drive subjects in this direction, IS produced a vast range of media products and administrative measures. In this thesis, I deploy the term dispositif as my object of analysis and methodology, and dispositif analysis as research method. Before teasing this concept out further, I address Jäger and Maier's assertion that *Discipline and Punish* was an example of *dispositif* analysis.

In *D&P* Foucault tracks the development of penal reform and practice from the brutal punishments of pre-Enlightenment Europe to the contemporary discipline of the criminal's soul. To trace the ways in which penal practice changed over time, a huge number of texts were consulted ranging from newspaper accounts of punishments, daily schedules of prisons, ordinances, encyclopaedias, notes made by magistrates, treaties, and diaries. Foucault, drawing from Rusche and Kirschheimer (2003), sought to obey four primary rules for his

study: consider all possible effects of punishment (both productive and repressive); locate punishment as a technique within a larger field of power; acknowledge the commonalities of power technologies between penal law and the human sciences; try to uncover the extent to which the deployment of 'scientific' knowledge into legal practices is an effect of the way that the body is 'invested by power relations', or, the degree that humans are intervened on rather than the crime itself and how they become objects of knowledge (Foucault 1995, p. 24). The result was an outline of a punitive dispositif that adapted over time to various needs. For example, as the nature of crime changed in 18th century Europe due to a number of contingencies such as more austere police practices and laws, in addition to an increase in wealth and an overall increased standard of living, new punishments had to be meted out (Foucault 1995, p. 73). More specifically, the increase in, say, crimes against wealth in ports during the latter half of the 18th century called for new legislation that would punish and hopefully mitigate them. The will to power that such a punitive dispositif entailed had to respond to the new kinds of crimes that became possible with the coterminous rise of capitalism:

> Shift the object and change the scale. Define new tactics in order to reach a target that is now more subtle but also more widely spread in the social body. Find new techniques for adjusting punishment to it and for adapting its effects. Lay down new principles for regularizing, refining, universalizing the art of punishing. Homogenize its application. Reduce its economic and political cost by increasing its effectiveness and by multiplying its circuits. In short, constitute a new economy and a new technology of the power to punish. (Foucault 1995, p. 89)

The generalized logic mentioned here speaks to the adaptive nature of dispositifs as well as what kinds of urgencies call for the creation of new dispositifs. Ideally, dispositifs are as methodical as possible and it is in their careful deployment of techniques, language, action, and object, that their specific mode of power can be located.

There are two features of Foucault's analysis that are crucial to the present concerns of this chapter: the range and types of text addressed, and the sought effects of the power relations deployed. The wide range of texts included in Foucault's analysis speaks to the

heterogeneity of dispositifs as both analytical tool and object of analysis. Media stories in newspapers reveal how punishments were accounted for and communicated to the common consciousness during a time in which mass media transmitted homologous messages to large numbers of citizens; prison schedules constitute the pursued effect and method of a disciplinary power; ordinances and notes made by magistrates (whether they materialised or not) revealed the opinions of some members of the aristocracy; encyclopaedias showed the specific usage of words and, thus, their constitution of discursive statements; treaties told us about laws; and diaries communicated eye-witness accounts of punishments. To generalize Foucault's method of uncovering the effects of the power relations deployed, we can locate a social phenomenon such as, say, the conduct of conduct, and consider all its possible effects; locate it within a field of power (or contested power relations); acknowledge the techniques of power common between laws and administration on one hand and knowledge on the other; and try to uncover and consider the extent to which humans (and their souls) are already constitutive objects of knowledge according to the epistemological underpinning (*episteme*) of the dispositif, but concede that the process of their objectification is ongoing. These are the first steps towards constructing a method of dispositif analysis. The following parts of this section are an attempt to synthesise and subtract various perspectives on dispositif as analytical tool and object of enquiry.

Agamben

Giorgio Agamben has sought to explain the significance of the dispositif. For Agamben, a dispositif is a 'heterogeneous set' of 'linguistic and non-linguistic' elements 'under the same heading' (2009, pp. 2-3). It is decidedly material in its functions and always located within dynamic(s) of power (2009, p. 3). More specifically, a dispositif is located at the intersecting point between power relations and relations of knowledge. They respond to a

particular urgency at a historical conjuncture and seek to mitigate it. However, Agamben

broadens the scope of dispositifs:

> I shall call an apparatus [dispositif] literally anything that has in some way the capacity to capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behaviors. Opinions, or discourses of living beings. Not only, therefore, prisons, madhouses, the panopticon, schools, confession, factories, disciplines, juridical measures, and so forth (whose connection with power is in a certain sense evident), but also the pen, writing, literature, philosophy, agriculture, cigarettes, navigation, computers, cellular telephones and—why not—language itself. (Agamben 2009, p. 14)

Agamben's categorisation of dispositifs seems so broad as to lose almost all theoretical clout.

This comes across particularly in his proposition of a dual partition of living beings

(substances) and apparatuses (dispositifs), 'in which living beings are incessantly captured'

(2009, p. 13). However, he attempts to elide theoretical fragility by noting the primacy of the

dispositif as 'a machine that produces subjectifications, and only as such is it also a machine

of governance' (2009, p. 20). The plural 'subjectifications' is instructive here to the extent

that an individual can be a site for 'multiple processes of subjectification', much as there are

an enormous multitude of dispositifs in modernity (2009, p. 15).

What can be gleaned from Agamben's account of apparatuses (dispositifs)? So far, we

can concede that dispositifs are concerned with power, knowledge, and subjectivities, which

is the general theme we will find in urban planning literature. They have material functions

and concerns that are instituted via the deployment of specific knowledge(s) and are not

merely textual. It is the goal of dispositifs to yield particular kinds of subjects through a

swathe of techniques and practices ranging from the materialisation of texts through, say,

bureaucratic procedures and their outcomes, but also via the judiciary, and the modes of

lateral surveillance that the production of certain subjectivities imply. Dispositifs are social

machines and governmental machines (Agamben 2009, pp. 19-20). They set up the linguistic

and material conditions through which the government and production of subjectivities can

be ascertained. Dispositifs seek to produce subjects via both linguistic and non-linguistic

means. They are a heterogeneous conglomeration of elements deployed in response to a need

at a particular historical conjuncture and have an acute relation to governmentality. While Agamben's theorisation of dispositifs is a useful starting point, Deleuze has provided a more elaborate account of Foucault's concept. Though, his elaboration is very much Deleuze's Foucault.

Deleuze's Foucault

In the book chapter 'What is a dispositif?' Deleuze extracts Foucault's dispositif in his own framework. For Deleuze, dispositifs are 'a tangle, a multilinear ensemble. It is composed of lines, each having a different nature' (1992, p. 159). They are not homogenous; they are characterized by heterogeneity, as in Agamben (2009) and Foucault himself (1980). The lines they are composed of are both multiple and subject to change. Importantly, Deleuze notes that 'the three major aspects which Foucault successively distinguished, Knowledge, Power and Subjectivity are by no means given once and for all, but series of variables which supplant one another' (1992, p. 159). So here, as in Agamben, power, knowledge, and subjectivity are the three constituents with which dispositifs are concerned.

Dispositifs have 'curves of visibility and curves of enunciation' (Deleuze 1992, p. 160), or are concerned with the visible and the articulable for Foucault (Deleuze 1988, p. 32). That is, firstly, they structure visibilities: 'Each apparatus [dispositif] has its way of structuring light, the way in which it falls, blurs and disperses, distributing the visible and the invisible, giving birth to objects which are dependent on it for their existence, and causing them to disappear' (Deleuze 1992, p. 160). If something is visible, it can be seen, and in cases of social phenomena, often studied, managed, captured, and directed. Foucault showed that

> Prison, for its part, is concerned with whatever is visible: not only does it wish to display the crime and the criminal but in itself it constitutes a visibility, it is a system of light before being a figure of stone, and is defined by 'Panopticism': by a visual assemblage and a luminous environment (a central tower surrounded by cells) in which the warder can see all the detainees without the detainees being able to see either him or one another (Deleuze 1988, p. 32)

Dispositifs bring various subject/objects into visibility. Being that they are also produced by and concerned with the deployment of power and knowledge(s), and this is certainly so in the case of the prison, they must also seek to conduct, produce, and negate subjectivities and subjects, create the possibility for new subject/object relations as well as conditions that would allow their facilitation, and disrupt or dissolve existing relations which are not in its will. How does IS governance bring phenomena into visibility? How does it structure and blur the way light falls?

Here, we can take examples from both IS's media and governance as constituent parts of their dispositif. As discussed in Chapter 1, among the contours of power which emanate through the IS assemblage is a biopolitical power which seeks to exclude abnormality in its population. An understanding of IS's cultural-conduct based biopolitics is useful for comprehending and decoding the group's visual economy and the ways in which it is related to exclusionary governmental strategies that manifest along lines of knowledge, power, and subjectivity. In thinking through what the IS dispositif makes visible, or at least intends to, Pasi Väliaho's (2014) modulation of biopolitics and visual economy is instructive. His acknowledgement of the ideological and affective potentialities of images in relation to the circulation of power and visual economies is particularly useful for thinking through how the IS dispositif renders subjects and their relations visible. Here, 'economy' is construed as the interaction between the visible and the invisible (2014, pp. 6-7). IS's dispositif brings a huge range of subject/objects into its visibility and makes the previously excluded such as, say, Yazidis and Kurds, *more* visible in its exclusion and subordination of them. The visual economy produced by the IS dispositif can then be seen as one which decrees liveability on some and not on others. However, invisibility here does not necessarily mean exclusion. The invisibility the IS dispositif wills is its own failures. Put differently, the invisibility produced

by the IS dispositif is that which escapes its capture, which the dispositif consequently seeks to hide.

Curves of visibility are formulated via techniques of administration and media. As an example, consider the implementation of hudud punishments (Al-Tamimi 2015a, Specimen 1C) and their visual rendering in *Islamic State News* (Al-Hayat Media Centre 2014f) and *Uncovering an Enemy Within* (Al-Hayat Media Centre 2015f). The implementation of hudud punishments speaks to a variety of subjects to be excluded in various ways which I explore further in Chapter 7. The statement decrees whose lives are liveable in the Islamic State (or not) and has a resonance with other IS media and internal documents. Here, however, we should note three specific group identities: those who drink alcohol, spies, and polytheists (which can here be understood as apostasy from Islam). Those who have been caught drinking alcohol receive 80 lashes, while spies and polytheists are killed. Lashes for drinkers function in the normative disciplinary sense in that they are physical punishments on the body that intend to correct the conduct of the subject while simultaneously emphasising the '"monstrosity" of the criminal and his risk to the population' (Foucault 1980, p. 138). Spying and practising polytheism, or merely shirking or turning away from one's duties to Islam, the delineations of which dissolve in the example below, are so monstrous that the subject must be disposed of. The dispositif makes these subjects visible. In the second issue of *Islamic State News*, a crowd gathers to watch the lashing of someone discovered to be drinking alcohol. The crime is not rendered visible, but its visibility, by way of its witnessing, is. By prohibiting alcohol via an appeal to a religious ruling, IS make those who drink alcohol visible and thus abnormal to the new norm. The dispositif captures them and its disciplinary mechanisms seeks to conduct them. In *Uncovering an Enemy Within*, we witness the execution of two supposed Russian spies. After a confession, the men are shot execution-style on their knees by a child from IS's Lion Cubs. Again, the category of 'spy', with its

baggage of apostasy and/or polytheism, is rendered visible. In their act of confession, the spies are made known, and in this case, are disposable. Here, then, we have a resonance between the governmental dispositif that designates, and its medial constitution which not only makes visible, but also structures visibilities to the extent that it frames the conduct of the criminal, thus making him excludable. Though IS media brings preferred subjectivities into view to propagate them and regulate the (un)governable, it is also adept at showing enemies: subjects produced as waste.

Secondly, the articulable is the sayable or what can be said and counted as truthful at a particular historical conjuncture. What can be said is rendered primarily in statements [énoncés]. These discursive truths can be traced back to Deleuze's lines of enunciation:

> this is because énoncés are curves which distribute variables and because a science, at a given moment, or a literary genre, or a state of law, or a social movement, can be defined precisely by the regimes of enunciations to which they give rise. They are neither subjects nor objects, but regimes which must be defined from the point of view of the visible and from the point of view of that which can be enunciated, with the drifting, transformations and mutations which this will imply. (Deleuze 1992, p. 160)

Regimes of statements within dispositifs then delimit what can and cannot be said at a particular time. They compose the historical, and in the case of IS, context-specific discourses which can be strategically deployed in the name of a particular need. One of the regimes of statements in the Islamic State is derived from the rearrangement of sura from the Qur'an. At the outset of Specimen 1C, the following four verses are deployed before the aforementioned hudud table of crimes and punishments is shown and discussed:

> The Lord- Almighty and Exalted is He- has said: "For no, by your Lord, they will not believe until you judge the dispute between them and they find in themselves no discomfort from what you have judged and willingly submit." [Qur'an 4:65].
> The Exalted has also said: "Whoever does not judge by what God has sent down, they are the disbelievers." [Qur'an 5:44]
> The Exalted has also said: "So is it the ruling of the age of ignorance [before Islam] they desire? And who is better than God in judgement for a people certain in faith?" [Qur'an 5:50]
> The Exalted has also said: "That is the judgment of God between you: and God is all-knowing, all-wise" [Qur'an 60:10, though slight misquotation here as the words يحكم بينكم are missing before 'and God is all-knowing...']¹¹. (quoted in al-Tamimi, 2015)

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¹¹ The text within the brackets is a note on the translation by al-Tamimi and not part of IS's document.

The above statements alone are not sufficient to delineate the punishments. They function as an epistemic basis for punishments regarding those who drink alcohol, spies, and polytheists. There are numerous Qur'anic verses and hadith which refer to the prohibition of alcohol. For example, the verses used above and the punishment delivered (80 lashes) also have a specific connection with a hadith that states that in the last era of the Umar's caliphate, drunks were given forty lashes, and eighty if they caused a significant amount of trouble (Book of Frontiers, Hadith 1280). Here we must return to a consideration of knowledge. Knowledge is produced in the pursued link between the visible and the articulable: what can be seen and what can be said. But if a dispositif constructs visibilities, then its power is asymmetrical with those it makes visible and whom it seeks to govern, as are the subject/object relations it proposes and constructs: 'If knowledge consists of linking the visible and the articulable, power is its presupposed cause; but, conversely, power implies knowledge as the bifurcation or differentiation without which power would not become an act' (Deleuze 1992, p. 39). In the example above, knowledge regarding subjectivities in the Qur'an and hadith is deployed to place a limit on what can be said and done within the dispositif*'s* domain. Knowledge regarding drinkers delineates them as a political category with a legal function: they are a certain kind of subject who must be disciplined within the logic of the dispositif.

In addition to the visible and the articulable in Deleuze's explanation of Foucault's dispositif are lines of force. These can be established and assessed by returning to a consideration of the abstract machine which informs the arrangement and mobilasition of concrete assemblages: 'The diagram or abstract machine is the map of relations between forces' (Deleuze 1988, p. 36). In Chapter 1, I discussed the *Structure of the Caliphate* video as one of the abstract machines that reveals the hierarchasition and organisation of IS's concrete elements on a macro level. This example remains useful in the context of the cases mentioned above. For punishments to be administered, the Diwan of Hisbah and the Diwan

of Judgement and Grievances are necessary. They can process punishments and are, like their subjects, points through which power flows. For power to emanate further beyond the horizon of the local, the Diwan of Media are called upon to mediate knowledge regarding the event: 'they draw tangents, fill in the space between one line and another, acting as go-betweens between seeing and saying and vice versa, acting as arrows which continually cross between words and things' (Deleuze 1992, p. 160). At an official level, the Diwan of Media facilitate IS's incitement to discourse and is therefore crucial to the production and circulation of power, knowledge, and subjectivities.

Deleuze's final key claim is that 'Foucault discovered lines of subjectification' (1994, p. 160). Subjectification should be considered as processual, contingent, and split, in that it is never fixed or complete, because the subject's identity is multiple and pivots in different contexts (Phillips & Jørgensen 2002, p. 44). The dispositif brings subjectivities into being or permits them (Deleuze 1992, p. 161). Simply put, a process of subjectification 'is a process of individuation which bears on groups and on people, and is subtracted from the power relations which are established as constituting forms of knowledge' (Deleuze 1992, p. 161). In other words, one of the forces that produces subjects is discourse. The discussion above should, to some extent, make clear the lines of subjectification in the caliphate. The forthcoming analysis in Chapters 5, 6, and 7 will sketch out much clearer lines of subjectification, however. For now, we can remark that the disciplinary act of corporal punishment makes clear where the alcohol drinker has failed his expected conduct which is partially constitutive of his subjectivity. Violent acts as punishments thus seek to conduct the person's conduct as tantamount to his subjectivity. The production of subjectivities in the Islamic State were made in discourse, within both textual and practical work on the self: dietary requirements, prayer times, moral values, dress-codes, and subscribing to IS ideology.

There are two primary consequences for theorising dispositifs. Firstly, is that they allow us to relinquish universals. Lines in dispositifs are variable: they are processes 'of unification, totalisation, verification, objectivation, subjectification' (Deleuze 1992, p. 162). Dispositifs are composed of a range of heterogeneous elements; they are multiplicities that are coming into being. Certainly, they are kinds of assemblages undergoing constant change. The second consequence of theorising dispositifs, that is somewhat related to the negation of universals, is the 'change in orientation which turns one's interest away from the Eternal and towards the new' (1992, p. 163). Here, Deleuze accounts for the new not in terms of what is fashionable, but through creativity as it gives rise to the possibility of creating something truly 'new'. Importantly, he notes that dispositifs whose lines are sturdy and rigid have less proclivity towards creativity and its transformative potential (1992, p. 163). Nevertheless, he asserts that lines of subjectification are at the centre of truly new creative pursuits 'which are continually aborting, but then restarting, in a modified way, until the former apparatus is broken' (1992, p. 164). This feature is crucial for analysing the IS dispositif. IS's will was to produce a territory within which it was possible to conduct oneself in order with a very specific deployment of Islam at all levels of life. It was against previous iterations of governance in Iraq and Syria (and elsewhere) where it was concentrated. Syria and Iraq are countries with significant Muslim populations so daily conduct in the pursuit of salvation, rather than being truly new as such, was instead intensified in various ways. Simply put: 'the different lines of an apparatus [dispositif] divide into two groups: lines of stratification or sedimentation, and lines leading to the present day or creativity' (Deleuze 1992, p. 165). Herein lies the creativity of the IS dispositif. Within dispositifs, one must differentiate between the historical and the current: what one is and what one is becoming (Deleuze 1992, p. 164). In other words, one should consider what came before a dispositif and what the dispositif intersects with in the present in the production of something truly 'new'. Following

my discussion in the previous section regarding how dispositifs have been thought through by Foucault, Agamben, and Deleuze, I will now discuss how the concept of a dispositif has been mobilized as an object of analysis.

Mobilising the concept: dispositif as object

The concept of dispositif has been deployed in myriad ways. To explore education policy in the UK, Patrick Bailey has conceptualized a 'policy dispositif – a shifting material-discursive formation of policy with formative roots in historical reflections on "how to govern"' (Bailey 2013, p. 809). He understands the idea of a dispositif as a form of regulation that 'has the capacity to produce, regulate and govern education practices and practitioners' (2013, p. 809). Similar to Deleuze and Agamben, Bailey acknowledges three primary analytical axes of dispositifs: power, truth, and subjectivation, a point which I will return to shortly (2013, p. 810). For him, dispositifs are points through which power flows, truth-claims are produced and deployed, and subjects are made. The policy dispositif is further concerned with the conduct of conduct which, for Bailey, 'will always reflect the dominant political rationality' (2013, p. 809).

Bailey claims that Foucault differentiates between molar and micro-dispositifs. Molar dispositifs can be thought of as broader discursive and non-discursive elements part of, say, an education policy, whereas micro-dispositifs might be considered as the smaller, strategic components of a dispositif's mobilisation. For example, in western liberal democracies, within the macro or molar dispositif of jurisprudence are the micro-dispositifs of prisons, police, community programmes, counselling services, and so on. Micro-dispositifs might be considered as the smaller, strategic components of a macro-dispositif's mobilisation. But Bailey conceives of the policy dispositif as both 'formal legislation' and 'processes and outcomes' (2013, p. 813). It is composed of formal initiatives derived from a dominant authority, in addition to 'specific programmes, practices and institutions… alongside, for

example, practices of advocacy, sponsorship, strategic support and finance, which enable, endorse and shape such material and technical forms' (2013, p. 814). As above, the dispositif as conceived by Bailey does not depart much from Foucault, Agamben, and Deleuze: it remains constituted by a variety of material and immaterial elements.

Writing on contemporary urbanism, Pløger (2010) is primarily concerned with spatial dispositifs. His perspective is informed mostly by Deleuze's explanation of dispositifs. Though, his remarks on the importance of a dispositif's context are illuminating:

> Foucault indicates that the becoming of powerful dispositif ensembles ought to be analysed in their particular configurations, constellations and crossings, and we should outline their rationales in particular contexts of time and space. Doing dispositif analysis in this perspective becomes important, because this form of analysis looks for particulars, crossing singularities not universals, absent-presences—in other words the floating and contingent forces turning into strategies, power or struggles. (Pløger 2010, p. 146)

His claims regarding the specificities of time and space in relation to dispositifs tacitly harks back to Foucault's original claim that dispositifs respond to an urgent need (1980). Within the context of the visible and the articulable of a dispositif as machine directed towards certain ends, a dispositif analysis must then consider the contextual and highly specific strategies and practices it makes use of.

Pløger also links dispositifs back to governmentality, asserting that they are connected to ascertaining the conduct of conduct (2010, p. 150). This is because dispositifs are machines of capture: they seek to organise social relations through knowledge-truth production regarding the visible, by implementing concomitant power relations, and fostering normal subjectivities in addition to the production of those subjectivities themselves. Simply put, dispositifs are governmental machines that organise the conditions of power, knowledge, and subjectivity.

Here, we should pause to reflect on a cleavage in theories of the dispositif. As above, Bailey asserts that dispositifs are concerned with power, truth, and subjectivity. However, Deleuze (1980), Agamben (2009), and Röhle (2005) contend that dispositifs direct and are

directed through power, *knowledge*, and subjectivity. Contrarily, for Hillier, the 'three fundamental elements of experience' in dispositifs are power, 'a game of *truth or knowledge*', and subjectivisation/subjectification (which she differentiates) (2011, p. 513). To what extent, then, should we differentiate between truth and knowledge as they pertain to dispositifs? It seems that Bailey uses the term 'truth' as a shorthand for truth-claim which is derived from the knowledge produced prior-to and during the materialisation of a dispositif. That being said, while recognising that dispositifs are heterogeneous ensembles composed of a vast range of elements, we should conclude from the above perspectives that the main concerns of dispositifs are power relations, as they impact the capacity for one to act on another; knowledge, as it relates to the production of truth claims; and subjectivity, as it pertains to the formulation of individual subjects who come to be 'known' by the dispositif.

Dispositifs are not merely language—as I have underscored above, they have a materiality. Certainly, in Foucault's original assertion, they included the non-discursive where it stands for phenomena supposedly outside discourse. While both textual and material forces are at play in dispositifs, this relationship needs to be investigated so we can consider the usefulness of such a duality. This dichotomy is particularly worth scrutinising in the wake of Laclau and Mouffe's work on discourse theory where they reject the notion of non-discursive practices (2014), in Fairclough's (1995) and Fairclough and Chouliaraki's (1999) more Marxian approach where he and they stress the need to acknowledge the non-discursive as an analytical category, and in response to Jäger's (2009) claim that non-discursive practices should be put into discourse for examination when conducting a dispositif analysis.

The discursive and the non-discursive

A key issue for sketching out a mode of dispositif analysis is the relationship between the discursive and the non-discursive. What is the relationship between the two and is the relationship worth maintaining? Foucault differentiates between discursive and non-

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discursive practices in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. For instance, he draws attention to the

impact that disciplines like General Grammar (discourse) had on pedagogies (non-discourse)

or Analysis of Wealth (discourse) had on economics (non-discourse) (Foucault 1972, p. 68).

The latter, for example, affected 'the circulation of goods, monetary manipulations and their

effects, the system of protecting trade and manufactures, fluctuations in the quantity of metal

coined' (Foucault 1972, p. 68). But how can these practices be conceived of as non-

discursive? The 'non-discursive' practice both contains knowledge and carries it. They are

precisely the kinds of practices which serve to re-constitute the original discourse itself

(Analysis of Wealth). To call an action itself non-discursive is to rely on an understanding of

discourse that privileges discourse as more textual than material. Actions and objects, while

not textual, can be located within discourses to the extent that they are bound up in power

relations and can carry knowledge. They are informed by knowledge. If they are outside of

discourse, it does not mean that they cannot enter back into a specific discourse. Further, if

such an action or object cannot be located in a discourse, such as an affect, an interest, or a

desire (Foucault 1972, p. 69), then it is possible to say that it is not discursive *yet*. It is outside

the scope of this thesis to theorise the significance of affect to discourse, but a first starting

point would be to acknowledge that, as Phillips and Jørgensen note, sometimes discourse

analysts are faced with phenomena that a discourse analysis is not suited to (2002).

Fairclough (1995) concedes a similar view that discourse analysis must be supplemented by

social/cultural theory to address phenomena not accessible through discourse analysis

(specifically, his version of Critical Discourse Analysis). In this vein, the limits of Critical

Discourse Analysis (CDA) should be acknowledged as such and additional tools should be

sought. Regardless, the distinction of non/discursive practices is perhaps due to Foucault's

analysis of very specific, hierarchized, official discourses. Jäger claims this is due to

Foucault's inability to understand the mediation between subject and object, and the possibility of

> society and discourse as being brought about by work/activity and/or non-discursive practices. The discursive practices remain verbal for him, strictly separated from the non-discursive practices, and he adheres to the separation between intellectual activity and (non-intellectual) physical work (Jäger 2009, p. 42).

But Jäger also claims that Foucault understands the excessive nature of signs, that they cannot be wholly reduced to language, and that this is the irreducibility that Foucault would like to understand. This surplus is partly 'knowledge which still has to be articulated – into objects, knowledge about statistics, for example' (Jäger 2009, p. 42). Despite suggesting putting non-discursive elements into discourse in order to analyse them, Jäger's claims here seem to be more in line with my own inflections on Laclau and Mouffe's theory of discourse: that a turn to that which is not in discourse *yet* has the power to acknowledge the discursive nature of actions and objects. Below, I extend this discussion by considering Phillips and Jørgensen's insightful contributions to theories of the discursive and the non-discursive.

Writing on theories of discourse, Phillips and Jørgensen (2002) draw attention to the ways that the discursive/non-discursive relationship is conceived of by Laclau and Mouffe on one hand, and Fairclough on the other. Laclau and Mouffe reject the notion of non-discursive practices and note the importance of the materiality of discourse. In defence against the claim the everything is discursive for Laclau and Mouffe, Phillips and Jørgensen correctly assert that discourse analyses cannot address all phenomena in the world: outside of recent developments in discourse analysis such as multimodal discourse analysis, studies should focus on issues regarding what can be said in the social world, though this should not discount the materiality of discourse. In this case, natural phenomena and processes only need to be acknowledged to the extent that they affect discourse or are brought into it. Primarily, discourse analysis is concerned with the social. It remains worth mentioning, however, that discourses regarding natural phenomena can be brought into the social realm to

produce new power/knowledges in the name of conduct, coercion, and the production of subjects. In contradistinction to those who use the term 'non-discursive', it can be said that Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory instead acknowledges the pre-discursive, or what they call a field of discursivity (Phillips and Jørgensen 2002, p. 27). The field of discursivity is the 'reservoir for the 'surplus of meaning' produced by the articulatory practice' in another discourse but which becomes excluded due to the need for discourses to have a 'unity of meaning' (2002, p. 27). Simply put, it is that which is outside a dominant discourse. Yet, like natural phenomena, signs can be brought in from the field of discursivity in service of the specific discourse or in tension with it.

Unlike Laclau and Mouffe (2014), Fairclough (1995) and Fairclough and Chouliaraki (1999) retain the distinction between discourse and non-discourse. They are suspicious of the radical contingency of the social put forward by Laclau and Mouffe and call for a 'distinction between structure and contingency – what Laclau and Mouffe call "discourse"' (Chouliaraki & Fairclough 1999, p. 126). The argument put forward here is that discourse, for Chouliaraki and Fairclough, becomes equated with semiotics while Laclau and Mouffe equate discourse with contingency (Chouliaraki & Fairclough 1999, p. 126; Kolankiewicz 2012, p. 131). Chouliaraki and Fairclough understand discourse as language, images, and nonverbal forms of communication: 'The concept of discourse can be understood as a particular perspective on these various forms of semiosis – it sees them as moments of social practices in their articulation with other non-discursive moments' (Chouliaraki & Fairclough 1999, p. 38). Importantly, they also argue that not all forms of interaction ought to be considered as discursive:

> people can interact for instance by tidying a house together – but most interaction substantively and centrally involves discourse, and the generative, creative properties of interaction are very largely to do with properties of discourse. So it makes sense to focus on discourse to gain insights into social interaction (Chouliaraki & Fairclough 1999, p. 38).

The erasure of the distinction between discourse and non-discourse can be achieved here via a return to Jäger and Maier's claims that actions carry knowledge (2009, p. 59). The authors themselves note that their example, that of cleaning a house with others, has a relation to discourse. This is precisely the point at which dispositif analysis can intervene to make sense of the action: why are those people tidying a house together? Is the action located within a discourse of familial duty or friendship, or is it one of employment and thus located within relations of capital and necessity? Additionally, what kinds of objects are brought into this discourse? How does the practice itself include or exclude particular kinds of objects in order to facilitate the practice and thus perpetuate the discourse? One could rebuild the knowledge located within this practice in order to delineate the discourse(s) from whence it is located and discover the extent to which that discourse was sustained and perpetuated by the action. The above need not be thought of as the outright rejection of Fairclough and Chouliaraki's conceptualisation of discourse, for they themselves note that they agree with what much of Laclau and Mouffe have to say (2014). Instead, it ought to be thought of as a pivot which underscores the materiality of discourse to the extent that material actions and objects are already bound up in discourse.

The above does not mean that Laclau and Mouffe reduce the material world to language—their theory of discourse is concerned with meaning and the contested nature of meaning-making practices as they pertain to social struggle. Events and relations in the world cannot be imagined away, but the way they are made sense of is important: the structure of a discursive field has a bearing on whether an earthquake is made meaningful as a natural event or as transcendental intervention (Laclau & Mouffe 2014, p. 94). They prudently note the importance of the materiality of discourse: 'we will affirm the *material* character of every discursive structure' (2014, p. 94). This is an important differentiation from Fairclough's

uptake of discourse, though this is not to say he and Chouliaraki completely reduce discourse to text either.

Should the rejection of a distinction between the discursive and non-discursive necessarily mean an equivalence between what is distinguished as discursive and non-discursive in Fairclough's CDA? No. In light of Jäger's insights on dispositif analysis, we ought to acknowledge that an object or action (non-discursive in CDA) is already in discourse. A specific action or object might need (discursive) knowledge that informs it and gives it its meaning reconstructed, but this would become part of the dispositif analysis anyway as such a dispositif analysis would seek to understand particular discursive processes. In the case of IS, for example, we can think through how they sought to recode certain spaces and places, objects, and practices in order to facilitate an Islamic Caliphate within which the practical conditions for salvation were permissible, and outside which conduct was forbidden.

Following Chouliaraki (2002), Jørgensen and Phillips have useful advice regarding the delineation of discursive and non-discursive practices: they should be understood 'as an analytical distinction rather than an empirical one', being that 'as Laclau and Mouffe argue, it is difficult to point to the precise dividing line between the discursive and the non-discursive' (2002, p. 90). They use the example of the economy:

> should the economy be seen as a non-discursive system obeying its own logic, different from the logic of meaning-making, or should it rather be conceptualised as an infinite number of specific choices people make on the basis of meaning-ascription, together making up 'the economy'? In the second understanding, economy could be analysed as a discursive practice, whereas the first understanding would lead to a different kind of analysis of the economy as a non-discursive system. One problem is, therefore, where to differentiate between the discursive and the non-discursive, and another problem is how we, as researchers, could ever hope to analyse what is (at least partly) outside of discourse (Jørgensen and Phillipps 2002, p. 90).

The economy is a near perfect example to draw from in the context of dispositif analysis vis a vis the Islamic State, for the economy, or the practices that make it up and constitute it, are part of discourse in a dispositif analysis. This can be seen in, for example, the case of IS's

institution of the gold dinar as a discursive practice. The institution of the group's own currency is simultaneously a practice which seeks to reduce local horizons of meaning and an example of the group trying to differentiate itself from the taghut (false idol) global economy and the dominance of the US dollar (Al-Hayat Media Centre 2015c, p. 18; Moos 2018). The circulation of currency here becomes a symbolic social (discursive) practice that buttresses and differentially constitutes the caliphate; the circulation of this currency in particular is meaningful. We could consider the economy itself as non-discursive and therefore outside of discourse, but the phenomena that constitute it are discursive practices. Why? In the case of currency, the discursive practices which make up the economy are informed by and perpetuate Islamist power-knowledges.

A dispositif analysis which elides the discourse/non-discourse distinction can thus help to show how actions and objects remain (or are always-already) in discourse. From an analytical standpoint, it would also allow us to reconstruct the knowledge of the action/object in order to show how it is in discourse, and how it operates discursively (in CDA terms, whether or not it reproduces or disrupts existing discourses). For the purposes of this thesis, it can show us the formidability of governmental dispositifs and the power they can have when they are deployed as part of reterritorialisations by contemporary terrorist groups.

The above consideration of the economy draws from Laclau and Mouffe's claim that practices themselves are discursive. However, 'that does not mean that nothing but text and talk exist, but, on the contrary, that discourse itself is material and that entities such as the economy, the infrastructure and institutions are also parts of discourse' (Jørgensen and Phillips 2001, p. 19). This is precisely the point I am trying to make by synthesising Jäger's intervention with Laclau and Mouffe's rejection of the distinction, because it still allows us to separate our objects of analysis (texts, actions, objects) as best we can and consider their power/knowledge effects.

While Jäger argues that a dispositif analysis is a three-part discourse analysis of texts, actions, and objects, Laclau and Mouffe's development of Foucault's theory of discourse is needed to supplement such an analysis. Within this framework, actions and objects are discursive in their potential to hold, carry, and be informed by various knowledge(s). The whole step of putting 'non-discursive' practices into discourse, as discussed by Jäger, can be skipped in favour of a consideration regarding the knowledge that produces and animates the discursive practice itself. If 'knowledge also 'lives' and 'acts' in the actions of people and in the objects they produce based on knowledge' (Jäger 2009, p. 40), then they too can be considered discursive and there is little point in delineating non-discursive practices from discursive ones in many analyses. Drawing from the various understandings of dispositif as object discussed in this chapter, a more specific line of enquiry would address how actions and objects (in addition to texts) formulated within discourses participate in relations of power, subjectivity, and knowledge(s). Again, if actions require knowledge, and knowledge informs the meaning and (sometimes) function of objects, then the duality is unnecessary and one should instead turn to the pre-discursive or field of discursivity. Because texts are simple enough to conduct a discourse analysis of, we need to explain how actions and objects can be considered discursive within a particular assemblage and how they act in the name of a dispositif. We should ask: how does the discursive practice carry knowledge? What knowledge does it carry? For a practice to be discursive, it does not necessarily have to produce new knowledge: it can seek to participate in and solidify existing relations of power, knowledge, and subjectivity. Hence, the best way forward seems to be via Laclau and Mouffe's theory of discourse wherein the notion of non-discursive practices is rejected. I develop this discussion later in this chapter in relation to Jäger's uptake of non-discursive practices. Now, however, I turn to a more specific deliberation on the methodology of dispositif analysis.

The Methodology of dispositif analysis

As established above, dispositifs operate along the contours of power, knowledge, and subjectivity; they respond to certain needs at specific historical junctures; they are concerned with the conduct of conduct; they deploy and set parameters on the limits of truth; and they have specific material functions. In this section, I synthesize work by Jäger (2009) and Caborn (2007) with Deleuze's (2016) and Hillier's (2011) in order to outline a methodology of dispositif analysis.

Jäger's chapter from *Methods for Critical Discourse Analysis* (2009) is the most comprehensive outline for a methodology of dispositif analysis. He begins with the claim that the central features of critical discourse analysis based on Foucault's notion of discourse should focus on the following: what valid knowledge within a specific spatio-temporal context is comprised of; how it evolves; how it is passed forward; and what function it has in processes of subjectification in addition to directing the holistic advancement of society (Jäger 2009, p. 32). As I have stated elsewhere in the thesis, knowledge here includes both everyday knowledge (social knowledge) communicated through media and institutions, and specific knowledge derived from science and academic disciplines (2009, p. 33). In acknowledging the close relationship between power and knowledge, we should assert that discourses exercise power: 'they do this because they are institutionalized and regulated, because they are linked to action' (2009, p. 34). Discourse analysis thus assesses and critiques what can be said at a certain time and place – it considers the articulable. To criticize dominant discourses, their contradictions must be revealed, in addition to the ways of saying that they delimit, and the ways in which they constitute 'temporarily valid truths' (2009, p. 34).

We should not discount the importance of the visual when conducting a discourse analysis. Visual discourses can be seen to have an acute relationship with Väliaho's (2016)

notion of visual economies discussed earlier in the chapter. On Jäger's terms, he notes that what he calls collective symbolism is a useful means for linking discourses with each other. Collective symbolism can be considered as the 'repertoire of images [that] is available with which we visualize a complete picture of societal reality and/or the political landscape of society, and through which we interpret these and are provided with interpretations' (2009, p. 35). Alongside relations of power, knowledge, and subjectivity, collective symbolism within discourses, and discourses themselves, seek to construct particular realities by participating in processes of subjectification within social contexts: 'These active subjects conduct discursive and non-discursive practices' as they are woven into the discourses that make them and thus re-constitute and facilitate their circulation further (2009, p. 36). It is here that Jäger turns to a discussion of dispositifs.

When addressing dispositifs, Jäger draws attention to the flexibility of knowledge and objects within discourses. If knowledge changes within a discourse, then so can the formulation and use of objects. This was apparent within the Islamic State when the group used al-Baladi stadium as a prison. Organised football matches had all but disappeared in the caliphate and so the stadium provided an apposite format for a prison. Put differently, knowledge regarding the object at hand shifted and thus the object was re-coded and deployed for a new use. In the words of Jäger, 'the well-trodden 'floor of meaning' is withdrawn from beneath the feet of the object in question and/or modified by allocating one or several other meanings to it' (2009, p. 38). This is not to say that objects themselves lack a discursive constitution or do not contain knowledge: Knowledge goes into the production of objects, but their use can change and may be up to the users of the object (Latour 1987, p. 31). Acknowledging the episteme as the spoken and written forms of underlying knowledge of a specific epoch, Jäger, viz-a-viz Foucault, argues that the dispositif goes further and is 'the entire knowledge apparatus with which a goal is achieved' (2009, p. 40). Moreover, he

extends his version of Critical Discourse Analysis to construct a mode of 'dispositive analysis' (2009, p. 45) and sketches a terminology for such a task which I explicate below.

Jäger defines discourse strands, or themes, as 'thematically uniform discourse processes' that are both synchronic and diachronic (2009, p. 45). A synchronic cut through a discourse strand allows one to recognise what has been said and what it may be possible to say at a particular moment in time (past, present, or future) (2009, p. 45). Discourse strands are derived from the complex set of themes that arise in a society and are made up of discourse fragments, or texts. Jäger uses the term 'discourse fragments' rather than texts as texts can have more than one theme and, subsequently, more than one discourse fragment. Discourse fragments are texts or sections of texts which address specific themes: 'discourse fragments combine to constitute discourse strands' (2009, p. 45). Additionally, Jäger makes note of entanglements of discourse strands, which are references to other themes (discourse strands) within a discourse fragment (2009, p. 45). Jäger draws attention to the contingent context of discourses by outlining discursive events and discursive contexts: 'All events have discursive roots; in other words, they can be traced back to discursive constellations whose materialisations they represent' (2009, p. 46). Discursive events are the ones that are emphasized (politically) and which thus 'influence the direction and quality of the discourse strand to which they belong to a greater or lesser extent' (2009, p. 46).

Discourse planes are the locations from which discourses are spoken: 'science(s), politics, media, education, everyday life, business life, administration, and so on' (2009, p. 46). Discourse planes are related to other discourse planes. Jäger claims that scientific discourses or political discourses can be used on the media plane, for example, and rightly notes that everyday discourse can be repackaged in a 'populist form' — 'in this way, incidentally, the media regulate everyday thinking and exercise considerable influence on what is conductible and conducted politics' (2009, p. 47). In addition to discourse planes,

there are discourse positions. They are somewhat related to discourse planes as they are the 'ideological location of a person or a medium' (2009, p. 47). These can be uncovered via discourse analysis. An example of a discourse position Jäger points to is self-descriptions of media publications as, say, 'independent', which he argues should be considered with a degree of scepticism (2009, pp. 47-48).

Jäger subsequently outlines a process of investigation for a discourse analysis before inflecting additional constituent criteria for a dispositif analysis. The following preliminary steps are first outlined. One needs to consider the location at which a certain theme is put forward. A discourse strand will provide the material for a particular theme that is produced by a coherent ensemble of discourses. Several discourse planes can then be investigated, and one can focus on a specific plane. One can then pinpoint sub-themes related to larger themes. This can be achieved by searching for examples from discourse planes and examining how they interact with other discourse planes (2009, p. 49).

A more detailed outline of discourse analysis (as partially constituent of a dispositif analysis) is as follows. The first step is to establish the discourse plane being analysed. In the case of this analysis, the discourse planes are media, governance, and religion, which are interrelated. Their relevance to a discourse strand like *Dabiq* is its appeal to religious conduct in addition to its place as a media form. In such an analysis, one begins by examining one or more articles that are typical of the overall publication, allocating them to an overall theme in relation to the entire publication, and thus formulating a research question in relation to that theme. As an example, a question could be, to what extent does the media text concerned simultaneously seek to delimit and conduct the conduct of IS supporters?

Following this, a list of articles relevant to the specific theme being analysed can be produced. One then takes notes on the theme and acknowledges any relevant or peculiar details that are relevant, before a summary of the theme is produced. The theme is then

evaluated qualitatively with attention paid to the absence of themes in the publication that were present in previous years and, as I discuss below, the timing and/or frequency of a certain theme's relevance to an event. Any entanglements between thematic areas are taken note of in addition to the entanglements between other discourse strands (say, video media in the case of the Islamic State and, importantly, administrative documents). When the above steps have been taken, the discourse position in relation to the theme analysed can be established.

In the final set of steps, the material for the fine analysis of discourse fragments of a specific article or series of articles, typical of the text overall, is prepared. Here, steps in the analysis are more specific. The selection of 'typical' articles must be justified, the author noted, the cause of the article stated, and recognition as to which section of the text the article appears in. Features such as the graphic layout (pictures or graphs used) should be taken note of, in addition to headlines, headings, and subheadings. The article's structure and where discourse fragments (themes) overlap is important too. In the final stages of analysis, more important questions are addressed. It is here where the analyst considers both rhetoric and ideology. The main task at this stage of the analysis is to examine the kinds of arguments put forward and the stakes they have, the logic of the article, its implications, its vocabulary and style, and the idioms and clichés it uses. Crucially, this section of the analysis also considers the players (agents) discussed in the article, in addition to the use of collective symbolism in both language and visuals. Moreover, this is also the section of the analysis which considers the knowledge sources that inform the discourse of the article. Usually, this could be scientific knowledge, but in the case of IS, we can extend this to social knowledge derived from the Qur'an and hadith. This coincides with a consideration of the taken-for-granted ideas (ideology) that the article relies on, so it has a critical articulation with the discursive constitution of the article.

During the final stages of analysis, one should note any other 'striking issues' before being able to summarise the general characteristics of the text, its political standpoint, readership and circulation (if possible) and the general message of the article (Jäger 2009, p. 52). This process will go some way towards facilitating an understanding of the discourse strand investigated. The additional considerations pertaining to dispositif analysis articulated by Jäger are outlined below. Following this, I also re-elaborate points made by Caborn (2007) as well as my own inflections derived from the discussion above regarding the ways dispositifs have been conceptualized and deployed as both analytical tool and considered as objects of analysis.

Discourses are both the components of and the essential constituents of dispositifs (Jäger 2009, p. 53). To delineate dispositifs for analysis, Jäger proposes an analytical triangulation: one should analyse discursive practices, non-discursive practices (actions), and objects. Key to all of these components is knowledge. Within discourses, it is predominantly knowledge which is 'transported' (2009, p. 53). However, knowledge is also transported in non-discursive practices (actions), in addition to knowledge itself preceding those practices. Finally, 'the existence of manifestations ('objects') only survives through discursive and non-discursive practices' (2009, p. 53). A dispositif analysis, then, must consider knowledge in discursive practices, knowledge which undergirds non-discursive practices, and the 'reconstruction of the non-discursive practices which have led to the manifestations/materialisations and the knowledge contained therein' (2009, p. 54). Jäger asks us to remember here the different ways in which knowledge can be thought through, that is, in terms of affects and 'all aspects of the human consciousness' (2009, p. 55).

Caborn (2007) has rendered Jäger's proposed form of dispositif analysis into a workable methodology. Taking as her object the goals of discourse analysis, Caborn argues that a dispositive analysis consists of a tripartite discourse analysis of texts, actions, and objects. As

I have suggested above, discursive practices are simple enough; they can merely be considered by performing a discourse analysis that considers texts which inform the discursive practice (2007, p. 116). As far as IS are concerned, the ways the group has governed and conducted their mode of terror can be accounted for by considering discursive practices which their media assemblage is complicit in producing. The analysis of what have been called non-discursive practices, 'institutions, political events, economic practices and processes' (Foucault 1972, pp. 179-180), is slightly different. Caborn borrows Jäger's example of buying a bread roll from a baker (2007, p. 116), pointing out that such an action requires some social knowledge so that it can be carried out. She suggests that the person performing the action could be asked what they are doing 'so they can attribute meanings to their actions' (2007, p. 116). This should elicit an answer which puts into discourse the 'non-discursive' practice by establishing the social knowledge of said practice. In other words, a second discourse analysis is performed. Actions performed by Islamic State members are already in discourse, however. That is, due to widespread western hegemony, any action IS perform is always-already locked in a discursive net of terror-violence-Islam, though this does not mean that IS's own practices of meaning-making always breach the limits of this net. This is self-evident in the link between articulated actions and the messages which IS produce; it is reinforced through the brute fact of documentary in which the killing of subjects is mediated. However, considering 'institutions, political events, economic practices and process' within IS's dispositif of terror, we can begin to establish the link between the more formal components of government which are buttressed by discursive practices. The notion of a 'non-discursive' practice should fall away here.

The third part of a dispositif analysis, physical objects, is misleadingly simple to perform depending on the specific dispositif being addressed: 'there are no words printed or to be squeezed out of a house, a church, or a bicycle, by engaging it in conversation, or

inviting it for interview' (Caborn 2007, p. 116). As Caborn goes on to note, there are not often inherent meanings to objects, and even describing something as a 'pile of bricks' gives it a discursive denotation (2007, p. 116). Rather than analysing the objects themselves then, we can turn to a range of sources to delineate the discursive use of the object: we should analyse users of the object such as experts and 'statistics, maps, books about the object' (Caborn 2007, p. 116). Put differently, we should consider the paratexts of objects. This activity then brings us back to discourse analysis again and, importantly, shows that objects are already in discourse due to their simultaneous textual and material constitution. Following a tripartite discourse analysis outlined above, we should then consider the interconnectedness and meaning across the three categories, being that dispositif analysis examines the contours of power relations, knowledge and truth, and subjectivity:

> Dispositive analysis has a broader reach and an explicit intention of analysing not just texts, but actions and objects, and crucially the links between them and the power relations that these strategically linked texts, actions and objects create (Caborn 2007, p. 116).

The practices outlined in IS's Islamist power/knowledge thus account for its dispositif composed of 'architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions':

> Two further questions must hence be asked when conducting a dispositif analysis:
> How can the knowledge that underlies and accompanies the actions and/or non-discursive practices be reconstructed? How can we get at the manifestations/materialisations for the analysis of dispositives [sic] and how can we process them, so that we can establish the knowledge that underlies them? (Jäger 2009, p. 55)

The core of a dispositif analysis is a discourse analysis of texts and its relation to reconstructing knowledge in non-discursive actions and objects (2009, p. 56). For Jäger, these categories fall into the realm of the non-discursive and are put back into discourse in order to make sense of them. By adopting Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory, there is no need to put actions and objects back into discourse as they are not conceived of as non-discursive. If discourse is the limit of what can be truthfully said at a specific point in time, we can begin to think through similar parameters for actions and objects. Thus, one might consider what

kinds of actions are acceptable to enact at a specific time and place. Here, we can return to correct conduct which is one of the key concerns of IS. For instance, idolatry was not permissible in the Islamic State so a religious practice which includes the worship of idols as a social practice, such as in Shiism or Catholicism, was not possible without penalty. We can also consider, for example, what kinds of objects are able to exist within the confines of the power relations of the dispositif. Here, we can think back to IS's iconoclasm with regard to shrines, mosques, and churches in Mosul. The knowledge that informs Shia shrines and Mosques, or Catholic churches, is not concomitant with the knowledge of IS's dispositif; IS's deployment of specific knowledge directly addresses Shiism and Catholicism and disavows them. The action of worship, say, by allowing pictures of Muhammad in some practices of Shia Islam, or attending and praying in a church decorated with stain-glass images of holy figures is prohibited too, because it is coterminous with idolatry for IS, which is forbidden in their deployment of Islamism. By establishing the discursive limit of both the textual and the material, alongside the ideal subject of IS, the first steps towards a dispositif analysis can be made through an assessment of media and administrative documents. On one hand, while media addressed to those outside the caliphate has a range of goals depending on the time of its production and release (migration to the caliphate from 2014-2015 and globally deterritorialised terror attacks from 2016-2017), it is regardless concerned with the production of subjects. On the other hand, internal documents can give an insight into the ways in which subjects were conducted within the borders of the caliphate. In light of the above, a dispositif analysis should analyse the intersecting power relations, knowledge(s), and subjectivities produced by the deployment of a specific conglomeration of texts, actions, and objects, in the name of responding to a certain need at a social, historical, and political conjuncture.

Analysis

In this section, I sketch a picture of what a dispositif analysis looks like. The beginning of such an analysis begins from one of this thesis's leading research questions: How do contemporary terrorist groups such as Islamic State institute bureaucratic and media forms to govern subjects locally and incite terror globally? To investigate this question, we can conduct a dispositif analysis of *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* and administration documents. The discourse strand (theme) I will scrutinise is hijrah/emigration and I will perform a synchronic cut through it. *Dabiq*, among other things, houses much advice for how to be a 'good Muslim' which is informed by Islamist hermeneutics; coverage of military campaigns and punishments in the caliphate; and interviews with mujahideen of note. In terms of both overarching and capillary logics of power, *Dabiq* directed governance within a circuit of pastoral and biopolitical power in which subjects were seen as constituting the caliphate's local and global population should they seek to perform hijrah, and correct cultural conduct whether they were in the caliphate or not. A narratival logic can also be seen when comparing early issues of *Dabiq* with later issues.

I should note that discourse planes (the place from which a discourse speaks) and discourse positions are not worth delineating in any meaningful sense in this analysis. Discourse theorists write from a Western-centric perspective where key discourse planes often have much clearer delineations. In the caliphate, the nodal point of Islamism around which IS discourses formed organises discursive planes into a homogenous mass. The discourse position, or the ideological position of the group who have produced the discourse, merges into the category of discourse plane too. Because IS seek to strictly codify a wide range of practices as a way of life, their media and administrative outputs all take the ideological position of Islamism which has consequences for the place from which their discursive elements speak. The discourse planes become compressed so that publications like

Dabiq simultaneously address politics, religion, everyday life, education, economics, health, and self-care. In other words, IS seek to compress all aspects of life into one homogenous mass: the discourse plane of religion is the discourse plane of administration, business, personal lives, law, etc.. The same goes for discourse positions – it is ultimately useless to consider these in this analysis unless one is comparing media and governance to competing dispositifs.
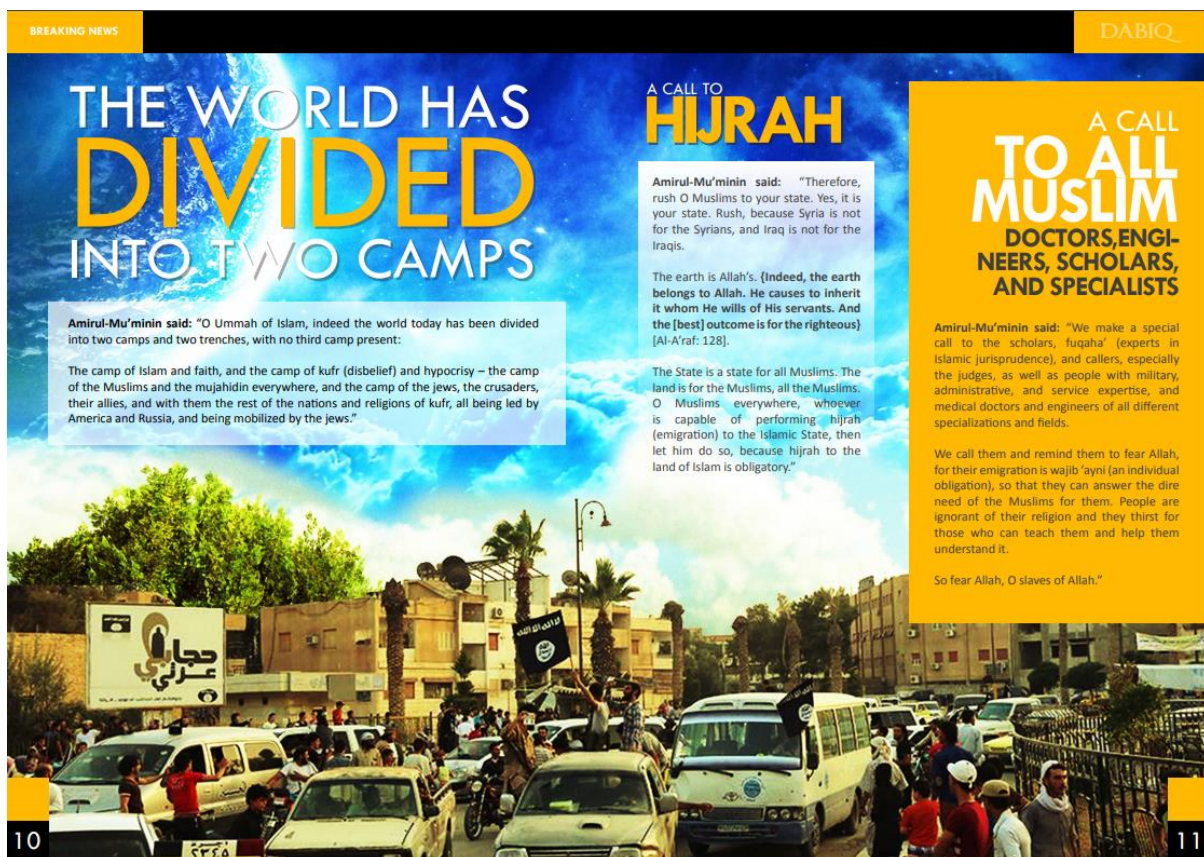
Figure 8 - Dabiq Issue 1, 2014, pp. 10-11

A call to hijrah is made at the outset of the first issue of *Dabiq* (2014). The tone is one of urgency and the metaphor of two opposing camps provides the basis for IS's worldview. The call uses a quote from Amirul-Mu'minin (the caliph): 'The camp of Islam and faith, and the camp of kufr (disbelief)', the latter being populated by Jews, crusaders and their allies, and more specifically America and Russia which are 'being mobilized by Jews' (*Dabiq* Issue 1, 2014, p. 9). Following this, another section of text under the title 'A Call to Hijrah' also

uses a quote from al-Baghdadi (the then caliph): 'Rush O Muslims to your state. Yes, it is

your state. Rush, because Syria is not for the Syrians and Iraq is not for the Iraqis' (*Dabiq*

Issue 1, 2014, p. 9). The author utilises a quote from the Qur'an declaring that the earth

belongs to God, and that the 'best outcome is for the righteous.' The discourse fragment ends

with the following:

> The State is a state for all Muslims. The land is for the Muslims, all the Muslims. O Muslims everywhere, whoever is capable of performing hijrah (emigration) to the Islamic State, then let him do so, because hijrah to the land of Islam is obligatory. (*Dabiq* Issue 1, 2014, p. 7)

On the same page, the call to hijrah continues but is specifically addressed towards particular

subjects—doctors, engineers, scholars, and specialists:

> We call them and remind them to fear Allah, for their emigration is wajib 'ayni (an individual obligation), so that they can answer the dire need of the Muslims for them. People are ignorant of their religion and they thirst for those who can teach them and help them understand it. So fear Allah, O slaves of Allah. (*Dabiq* Issue 1, 2014, p. 7)

Within the discourse strand of hijrah, the nodal point of Islamism facilitates the possibility of

statements that can be counted as truthful. IS's deployment of Islamism further constitutes a

discursive limit; the use of this Islamist discourse makes it possible to ordain the obligation of

hijrah on a global Muslim population. We should also note that the call to hijrah appears on a

title page called 'The World has Divided into Two Camps.' This is quite a usual rhetorical

strategy on the part of IS that echoes and inverts President Bush's famous line: 'You are with

us or you are with the terrorists' which IS leverage for the eradication of 'moderate Islam'

elsewhere in *Dabiq* (*Dabiq* Issue 2, 2014, p. 43).

Muslims are the subjects addressed in this discourse strand. The discourse strand has a

number of Muslim subjects in mind: on one hand, it addresses the ideal IS subject who

resides somewhere in the world and who may take up this call as part of their religious

obligation to build a state for Muslims. On the other hand, it addresses all Muslims, seeking

to produce them as 'good Muslims' in the vision of IS. In the context of the first issue of

Dabiq, the discourse strand of hijrah is deployed as an attempt to govern and produce a local

population. However, the discourse of hijrah has a variety of unsaid elements that make it articulable to the triumvirate of power, knowledge, and subjectivity.

What are the relations between subjectivity, knowledge, and power in the discourse of hijrah? A productive way to investigate these relations is by unpacking the onto-epistemic framework of the discourse fragment itself. The division of the world is a good starting point. By dividing the world into two, IS conceive of the world as made up of either Muslims (within the camp of Islam/faith) or non-Muslims (the camp of kufr/disbelief). But there are subcategories within each respective list of subjects. In the camp of faith, a specific plea is made to certain experts who are instrumental in any state-building exercise: doctors, engineers, scholars, and specialists, as well as experts on Islamic jurisprudence and administrative staff. In the camp of disbelief, subcategories refer to other religions and specific nations: Syrians, Iraqis, Americans, Russians, and Jews and Crusaders, respectively. Apart from the distinction between these two camps and relinquishing Iraqis and Syrians from their respective nation-states, not much more is said about the camp of disbelief, though is addressed throughout the magazine and virtually all other IS media. What is more important and interesting in this discourse fragment is how Muslim subjects are addressed. Though they are addressed as slaves and servants of God, they are entrusted as a chosen people who will inherit the earth. The 'dire need' of the Muslim relies on them (particularly if they have special skills). What will become clearer in my analysis, in this instance, is how the biopolitical production of culture sutures the individual to the population. By framing hijrah as an individual obligation, the discourse of hijrah seeks to conduct individual subjects in the name of the population: hijrah as constitutive of being a 'good Muslim', the culture of which is to work on oneself, more importantly ensures the posterity of the wider populace.

So, in this discourse fragment, we can quite clearly see how IS media as one component of the dispositif operates along the contours of power, knowledge, and

subjectivity. In order to produce a particular kind of subject which will strengthen the caliphate, IS deploy a biopolitical power whose undergirding knowledge is Islamism. The constitution of this subject is contingent on their conduct. To enact hijrah is part of one's good conduct and therefore part of the material formulation of their subjectivity (inasmuch as subjectivity ought to be thought past the way one sees oneself, one's individuality, and towards the way that one is addressed and therefore becomes subject *to*). The formulation of subjectivity via the practice of hijrah does not preclude one from articulating this practice as partially constitutive of one's subjectivity or identity, but my concern here is the discursive aspects of media and administration which seek to make subjects. The discourse of hijrah and its consequence for the construction of one's subjectivity pertains directly to what we might call IS's ideal subject of the 'good Muslim'. This is important to bear in mind as we consider how IS sought to produce a population that is made up of healthy and well-behaved citizens. It thus has a consequence for the biopolitical production of citizens that are healthy (in terms of their cultural practices, some of which incorporate bodily health and therefore population flexibility and longevity) and thus includable to governmentality, the conduct of conduct; in other words, if the subject is truly a good Muslim they will be governed well and govern themselves well.

So, the discourse of hijrah operates along the contours of subjectivity and power, but what about knowledge? If we accept the Foucauldian assertion that power and knowledge have a strong, close relationship, then where are we left in an analysis of the discourse of hijrah? Hijrah is an important piece of knowledge one will be aware of if they are a good Muslim. It has a historical significance to two major Muslim migrations[12] referenced in the

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[12]In the history of Islam, there were two major Muslim acts of hijrah (migration). The first was that of Muhammad's companions (sahabah) who fled persecution in Mecca to seek refuge in Abyssinia. The second hijrah refers to Muhammad's (and Abu Bakr's) migration to Medina to escape an increasingly aggressive Quraysh tribe in Mecca. The subtext of hijrah being an escape from persecution to a safe haven is not lost on IS and discourses of hijrah are subsequently deployed in the name of convincing would-be subjects to seek refuge in the Islamic State. Importantly, the second hijrah is seen by many as the beginning of Islam and marks the beginning of the Islamic calendar which IS adhere to (see Ali 1993, pp. 51-55; Mubārakfūrī et al. 2002, p. 75, pp. 127-136; See also Lings 2006, pp. 81-84, pp. 118-123).

Qur'an and Hadith. Knowledge of hijrah is part of the knowledge of a good Muslim. But the discourse of hijrah is not quite this simple. In the text quoted above, hijrah is framed as an obligation, as a part of state-building (a point which is emphasised later in this issue of *Dabiq*). As above, it is connected to good conduct and therefore one's salvation.

Above, I have shown what part of a dispositif analysis could look like, though it was relatively formal and methodical. The analysis above was the first part of a discourse analysis of a text and its related action and is therefore only part of a dispositif analysis which takes texts, actions, and objects as its analytic focal points. Not all aspects of a dispositif are so clear-cut and some improvisation may be required, particularly when bringing objects into the field of analysis. In light of the above, what does an analysis of objects look like? If we are to continue an analysis of the discourse strand of hijrah, then the discourse fragment discussed above is not suitable. Thus, to examine what kinds of objects are brought into the discourse of hijrah, we must make another synchronic cut into its discourse strand.

Throughout *Dabiq* and official IS media[13], there is a dearth of references to specific objects which are part of the discourse of hijrah. In this case, we should instead look to how objects are brought into the discourse of hijrah from the realm of the prediscursive. An example from later in the caliphate's life reveals the stake which objects and actions have in the discourse of hijrah when the act itself is put under suspension.

The more recent example of the second episode of *Inside the Caliphate* (2017) is worth returning to here: it is a useful point at which to make a synchronic cut through the discourse strand of hijrah and reveals the actions and objects which enter into this discourse when the act is unable to be carried out. The context of the previous discourse fragment from the first issue of *Dabiq* was the birth of the caliphate; in this instance, the context is the

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[13]This is not necessarily true of unofficial IS media, or IS media produced without the masthead of Al-Hayat media and instead produced by individual members.

waning of the caliphate. However, as a global terror assemblage, the following kinds of statements are not altogether alien to IS and can be found earlier in the caliphate's life. The *Inside the Caliphate* series offers a range of updates from within the various IS constituencies. The second episode, we are told, is based in Raqqah. Australian Mujahid Abu Adam speaks directly to the camera from a bombed-out building and provides the content for a paratextual formulation of global IS actions and objects:

> And if you are unable to make hijrah, then inflict terror upon the kufir, and punish them for their crimes against the Muslims… make the lands of the crusaders your battlefield… they are frontiers of war; the defenders of the cross have no covenant of safety, so kill them, wherever you find them! If you're a tradesman, use your nailgun and nail a kafir to the head, then crucify his body to the woodworks. If you're a truckdriver, ram their crowds until their streets run with their filthy blood. Or, pour petrol over their houses while they're asleep and engulf their houses with flames. That way, the message will be burnt into their memories. (Al-Hayat Media Centre 2017b)

This video addresses the bridge between the preferred acts of hijrah and terror via violence should one not be able to perform hijrah. Again, the more recent video signifies a desperation for good conduct by any means necessary rather than the more considered approach of fostering the population of the caliphate. The dispersion of the IS assemblage is underscored earlier in the video when Abu Adam suggests Australian Muslims in particular travel to fight in the Philippines if they cannot make it to Syria (2017). The text above and the plea to fight wherever is possible inform the actions which constitute IS's dispositif of terror. Where and when it is not practical to travel to Syria, one must conduct violent acts in their respective countries or through battles in closer proximity to their current location. There is nothing inherently violent or 'terroristic' to objects such as nailguns or trucks: they are mundane tools that become woven into the discourse of hijrah, subsequently becoming part of the global IS assemblage and its dispositif. *Inside the Caliphate* can then be seen to inform the conduct of the global IS population inasmuch as it gives meaning to IS's dispositif of terror, in the pursuit of producing subjectivities in line with IS's beliefs; in other words, texts such as this produce and are produced by IS's ideology. In the case of the *Inside the Caliphate* speech,

messaging that informs these kinds of actions seems to be more common later in the caliphate's life, though it was certainly present from as early as issue 2 of *Dabiq*. In this issue, if one is not able to perform hijrah, then one is encouraged to propagate pledges of allegiance to the caliphate, spread the word of IS however they can, and to treat any Muslim not in line with their views as 'abnormal' (*Dabiq* Issue 2, 2014, pp. 3-4). Conversely, the final issue (15) houses an opinion piece by a Finnish woman who performed hijrah. This piece instructs its audience to 'attack the Crusaders and their allies wherever you are' should you not be able to perform hijrah (*Dabiq* Issue 15, 2016, p. 39). So, the difference in these messages does not wholly reflect two conditions of the state assemblage: the pursuit of bolstering a local and global population of good Muslims on one hand, and attacking abnormal subjects should one not be able to go to the caliphate (though ultimately becoming a good Muslim anyway) on the other. Instead, they reflect a desperation on the part of IS to elicit their goals of population growth on one hand and global horror on the other. Regardless, both function as paratextual informers of the IS dispositif of terror. We should recall that terror is not merely violence, but is also subjective inculcation in order to propagate violence. During my research on English language IS media directed toward the West, there has always been incitements to violence littered throughout video, text, and social media. That being said, between 2014 and 2016, there certainly was more of a focus on coming to the caliphate rather than destroying bodies in foreign nations.

A dispositif analysis of the hijrah discourse strand can tell us a lot about how IS seeks to govern subjects from afar. The example in the *Inside the Caliphate* video shows how the smooth space of the internet itself facilitates the propagation of globally deterritorialised acts of terror. This becomes part of the conduct of a good Muslim and is constitutive of a culturally healthy subject.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I discussed my methodology and the theoretical claims that undergird it. Initially, I fleshed out the notion of dispositif and synthesized work done on the subject by scholars such as Foucault (1978), Agamben (2009), and Deleuze (1992; 2016). While I largely agree with Foucault's assertion that dispositifs are heterogeneous ensembles of a large range of objects, techniques, and practices (and are usually governmental in nature), Deleuze's development of the term provided a congruent framework for subsequent investigation. Importantly, I also used literature from both Education and Urban Planning to help me think through how a dispositif can be analysed and what the stakes of such an analysis might be (Bailey, 2013; Hillier, 2011; Pløger, 2010; Röhle, 2005). Though these thinkers take up the concept of dispositif somewhat differently at times, it is best thought through in this thesis, in Deleuze's language, as a kind of stratified assemblage (Deleuze, 2016 [1994]). Moreover, bringing this literature and these thinkers together helped me to formulate the primary lines along which a dispositif analysis might be conducted: power, knowledge or truth, and subjectivity.

Prior to this chapter's second section, I discussed the relationship between the discursive and the non-discursive. This is important as in Foucault's original discussion of the dispositif, he mentions that it includes non-discursive practices (1980, p. 195). However, discourse theory has developed since that time, and I drew from Laclau and Mouffe (1985) and Phillips and Jørgensen (2002) in order to repudiate the need for a consideration of non-discursive practices in this research project and in dispositif analysis more broadly. The work of Laclau and Mouffe in particular is an important intervention in the consideration of dispositifs and helped me to rethink the relation between the discursive and non-discursive which has both theoretical and methodological consequences.

In the second section of this chapter, I proposed a 'methodology' for dispositif analysis. To do this, I large drew from Jäger (2009) and Caborn (2007), in addition to my synthesis of other thinkers' work on dispositif and discourse theory discussed in the first section of the chapter. Through an in-depth discussion of Jäger's (2009) (and to some extent Caborn's (2007)) methodology of dispositif analysis, I highlighted that a dispositif analysis, while multifacted, should be concerned with power relations, knowledge and truth-claims, and subjectivity and processes of subjectification. In order to underscore its purpose, I used examples of what analyses might look like throughout the entire section. Although my proposed methodology draws heavily from Jäger's, it differs in my articulation of Laclau and Mouffe's (2014) rejection of non-discursive practices which I have included in the framework. Additionally, by adding their notion of a field of discursivity, or the pre-discursive, one is in a much better position to conduct a dispositif analysis which takes seriously the importance of texts, actions, and objects within dispositifs.

<u>**Chapter 5: Social Media Governance: IS in the digital conjuncture**</u>

Introduction

Following an explication of my methodology in the previous chapter, I now provide a critical examination of IS's use of social media. The main goals of this chapter are to provide an account of the context within which IS and its supporters took up the mantle of social media in order to spread their influence, recruit distant subjects, and govern a deterritorialised citizenry; to show how IS deployed social media as a technology of governance to conduct a range of subjects; and to begin exploring the discursive temporal continuity of IS online.

I endeavour to show how IS use social media to differentially govern a variety of audiences. As I have noted elsewhere in this thesis, medial specificity is crucial to the IS dispositif. This is not to say that there are not transmedial elements within IS's media use (see Monaci 2017) or that they cover over IS's specific use of a variety of media forms, but it is to assert the importance of each media form's discrete capabilities and characteristics. As discussed in this thesis, online magazines like *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*, while similar, have slightly different functions to IS videos which are endlessly circulable, consumable, insertable into the global media circuitry, and are able to participate in global networked affect (Kraidy 2017b) thereby increasing the reach of IS's influence.

In this chapter, I ask how IS responded to their conjuncture with their uptake of social media. That is, what is the unique context, constituted by histories, technologies, (geo)politics, and culture, that both produces IS and facilitates their territorialisations in Iraq and Syria as well as their global media spectacle? One of the ways that we can begin to think through such a context is through the idea of a conjuncture (Grossberg 1986; Hall & Massey 2010). To perform conjunctural analysis, or to even think conjuncturally, is to contextualise a given social formation. The primary question that enframes the concept of a conjuncture is

one that asks how the historical forces of culture, politics, economics, and technology give rise to a particular moment (Gilbert 2019, pp. 9-10). Simply put, the first section of this chapter contextualises and articulates specifically why social media is such a significant part of IS's media ecology.

The aggregate question posed in the current chapter concerns how IS responded to a particular conjuncture via their use of social media in the name of governance: how did IS seek to govern discrete groups via social media? An important part of this chapter is platform specificity as it relates to governance. Two concerns arise from this enquiry: which kinds of social media did IS use as part of their governance strategy and what is the relevance of their platform specificity to governing discrete audiences. Because IS are concerned with the self-governance of distant subjects, Julio de Castro's (2016) assertion that social networks are dispositives of neoliberal self-governance will guide me in this analysis.

Toward the end of this chapter, I analyse a snapshot of pro-IS Twitter accounts. This analysis investigates the ways in which pro-IS accounts functioned as technologies of governance in the early days of the caliphate. To use the language of dispositif analysis, this chapter houses synchronic cuts into the discursive articulation of IS media. Synchronic cuts into discourse strands allows one to understand the limits of discourse, or what can be said, at a specific moment in time (Jäger 2009, p. 45). By making synchronic cuts into IS social media in the early days of the caliphate (circa early-2015), including secondary analyses of IS social media throughout the caliphate's tenure, and attempting subsequent synchronic cuts in the latter days of the caliphate and beyond in the conclusion to this thesis, I will eventually show the diachronic continuity of IS discourse online. The changes in social media use in an official capacity are impacted by three primary influences: the pressure on social media companies like Twitter to censor pro-IS content, the group's own internal regulation of social media use by fighters, and IS's material losses in territory. Again, in the early days of the

caliphate, attention was focussed on the highly visible use of Twitter by the group and its

supporters (Winter 2015). More recently, however, and largely due to the pressure put on

social network companies, IS visibility on mainstream social networking sites (what were

termed in Chapter 3 as the striations of capital and surveillance) seems to have waned.

Instead, social media engagement (at least towards the West) is carried out via encrypted

services such as Telegram (after WhatsApp was purchased by Facebook). This shift reflects

the impact of two primary forces on the IS assemblage: internal administration which

regulated unofficial social media use, as seen in al-Tamimi's archive, and the material forces

of war that eroded the central coherence of the caliphate significantly, resulting in enormous

territorial losses at the end of 2018.

Before conducting this analysis, I wish to address the ethics of discussing, analysing,

and consequently reproducing the visual regime of IS online. To some degree, we reproduce

the visual regime of IS merely by discussing and analysing it. This is the unfortunate double-

bind of scholarly analysis: to ignore is to be complacent and to address is to reproduce.

However, some manovres can be made in order to critically situate the following analysis.

Firstly, the majority of Twitter accounts I discuss in this chapter have been banned. The only

way that they can now be accessed is via archive.org, and this is only if one is aware of the

precise handle and url they are seeking out. Secondly, there is the critique of the use of

images in the following analysis: could a description not suffice? Although this thesis is not

solely focussed on the violent spectacle that is IS media, readers must understand how crucial

the affective potentiality of violence is to IS. In other words, I reproduce the violent spectacle

of IS in order to communicate not just the viscerality of the IS media assemblage, but the

importance of this viscerality. Although the visual is so important to the processes of

subjectification IS sought to enact that a description of these images would not provide a

sufficient simulation of the image itself and its attendant affects, I have nevertheless elected to blur images of children (Figures 14, 15, and 16) in order to hide their identities.

IS in the digital conjuncture

Conjunctural analysis is a primary method of inquiry in cultural studies which asks 'what is going on right now'? It is a useful way of contextualising IS and their use of social media. Broadly, the primary question that enframes the current chapter concerns the context in which IS emerged and finds itself in, and within which it takes up social media as a technology of governance. To sketch out an answer to this question, we need to consider how the effects of history appear in the present (Hay, Hall, & Grossberg 2013, p. 21). That is, what are the cultural, political, economic, and technological forces that give rise to a particular moment and which contextualise the use of social media for IS (Gilbert 2019, pp. 9-10)? Because of the modulating, global, deterritorialised, unstable nature of IS, outlining the conjunctural forces within which its social media use was formulated is a monumental task. Short of providing an in-depth discussion of the global and historical forces which lead to IS and its use of social media, the following discussion is a sketch of the political, economic, cultural, and technological forces at play which provide IS with a context.

The most immediate political-economic force at work in the geographical context of the caliphate and its declaration is the Syrian Civil War. The Syrian Civil War is a complex conflict characterised by a range of groups fighting proxy battles and vying for different degrees of influence and power in the region. Following the murder of peaceful pro-democracy protestors in Deraa in 2011, as well as the imprisonment and torture of young men, protests erupted in Syria and the Middle-East which were responded to with aggressive military action on the part of the dictator Bashaar al-Assad. Since then, the primary forces involved have been Assad's regime forces and the Free Syrian Army (FSA), though a whole raft of others were involved including Hezbollah, Russia, and Iran (who supported Assad);

Britain, France, and the US, the latter of which backed the YPG and Kurdish forces against IS; Turkey, who has been aggressive towards Syria, IS and the Kurds; and of course, the Islamic State.

Though it does not account for the entire genealogy of the group, IS were operating within the context of the Syrian Civil War. So why use social media to spread its message and recruit subjects from afar? The more global context of ubiquitous media is a useful starting point. According to a 2015 report, in the same year, there were 3 billion active internet users, 2 billion social media users, over 3 billion mobile phone users, and 1.5 billion social media users who used applications on their mobile phones (Internet Society 2015). These numbers have since grown (Internet Society 2019). As Mark Deuze puts it, in the current conjuncture, we live in media rather than with media (2011). That is, media characterize our contemporary social ontology in the early 21st century. With such widespread connection and use, social media have become commonsensical to the point where the form itself embodies the same ubiquity and automaticity as ideology. In other words, social media have become an all-encompassing part of daily life to the point that disengagement from them evokes suspicion from others: to exist is to exist online.

By using social media, the group have access to an enormous audience of producers/prosumers (Ritzer and Jurgenson 2010), their messages can be spread and exchanged rapidly and easily, and the extra attention received by producing a terror spectacle on social media will net an even further reach. Additionally, we can say that the current global conjuncture is characterised by technological mediation facilitated by the widespread use and uptake of social media and social networks. It is precisely this aspect of our conjuncture that IS leverages to extend their influence and conduct subjects from afar. The structural capacities of the internet, including its partiality to speed and collaboration, help to facilitate the spread of IS online too.

Social Media, Social Networks, and Mediated Social Ontology

Crucial to the uptake of SNSs and social media within a conjuncture characterised by digital ubiquity is the various governmentalities that these conditions and technologies entail. Castro argues that social networks, in particular, are amenable to neoliberal forms of governmentality wherein subjects have the opportunity to represent their 'entrepreneurial self' (2016, p. 89). He goes on:

> they are themselves a microcosm of neoliberal society, representing, by dint of their design, a specific arena for the exercise of entrepreneurship. Networks establish among their members a market of attention and spur competition within that market (2016, p. 89).

If SNSs and social media are dispositifs of neoliberal governmentality in which the communication of selves is imperative and what the success of SNSs rely on, then they are likely to be malleable to other forms of self-governance. Neoliberal governmentality relies on the good self-conduct of the subject as an entrepreneur of themselves, the ability to be governed well, and, I would argue, the ability to function well as an example to others, thus formulating a lateral continuity across populations. The good self-conduct needed by articulations like IS is not that far away from the demands of neoliberal governance[14].

Dispositifs dispose their elements towards certain goals. SNSs and social media are brought into the IS dispositif to dispose subjects and knowledge towards particular ends. The prosumptive nature of social media means that if the dispositif is effective, prosumers will continue to both consume and generate content, eventually blurring the distinction itself. Further, in the case of IS, social media serve the 'concrete strategic function' Agamben discusses in his explanation of dispositifs (2009, p. 3). Following Agamben's lead, we can also say that dispositifs remain concerned with governance and subjectivity, so SNSs and

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[14] See also Damaj (2020) for a discussion of how IS leverage neoliberal ideas in their war against the west.

social media as technologies of governance brought into the dispositif have two main goals: to participate in the government of subjects, and to facilitate processes of subjectification. Social media is akin to being the connective tissue of deterritorialised IS supporters and members. It is one of the key components of the technological repertoire which bind the group together and help them to generate new connections. The cohort of technologies used by IS, as above, is a response to the conjunctural present which is embodied by a technologically mediated social ontology.

Within the context of a media-constituted social ontology, Theresa Sauter's (2014) work is crucial for thinking through the ways in which SNSs work as productive tools of self-governance or techniques of the self. Eliding both strong constructionist and technological determinist slants, she argues that the activity of self-writing's technologisation by SNSs work as 'an example of one practice through which people govern themselves and are governed through technologized mundane daily activities' (Sauter 2014, p. 824). Self-writing in the present is linked back to historical forms of self-writing such as Ancient Greek ethopoiesis, the Christian confessional, Romantic autobiography, and diary-writing in the context of both the Enlightenment and contemporary practices of Psychotherapy. Writing about oneself can function as a form of subjectification which Sauter argues Facebook enables in the form of status updates. On a SNS such as Facebook, status updates are visible to 'friends' and potentially the public depending on one's privacy settings. Sauter uses examples such as users admitting to unfilled tax returns and eating healthy food to show how navigating norms and their transgressions in view of others is tantamount to the management of self-conduct and selfhood online which is achieved through the self-writing of status updates (2014, p. 833). In the modern context, self-writing on SNSs

> still yields a means of navigating social norms, sometimes obeying and sometimes challenging them. It is a practice of governing conduct and shaping and re-shaping selves in the context of modern psychologised, publicly lived and techno-social hybrid western societies. (Sauter 2014, pp. 829-830).

Though we should always note that our online selves may not have a cohesive resemblance to our 'real' selves, the thrust here is that writing oneself into a mode of conduct online can function simultaneously as processes of subjectification and as self-conduct: put differently, Facebook status updates are one way in which people can 'fold in and unfold their subjectivities' (Sauter 2014, p. 826). I draw attention to Sauter's work here to buttress my theorisation of social media in this chapter and the thesis more broadly. Below, I argue that the logic of self-writing online as both self-conduct and a process of subjectification can be extended to include other forms of visible online activity.

The logic of online self-writing can be extended to encompass the subjectifying qualities of social media and social networking sites apart from Facebook. Murthy (2012) distinguishes between social networks and social media and although he notes that the two may not be mutually exclusive, it is a delineation worth investigating in the context of social media and SNSs relationship to processes of subjectification and self-conduct. This is because if SNS's are primarily geared towards the mediation of extant relationships and Twitter is concerned with developing new ones, then the uptake of SNSs and social media in concert by IS can be read as a technique which seeks to both extend and strengthen the IS assemblage.

Broadly, it can be said that Facebook is more often used to extend relationships from the offline space to the online space (Bouvier 2015; Murthy 2012), whereas Twitter users 'often consume media produced by people they have found of interest, leading to interactions with strangers and, albeit more rarely, celebrities' (Murthy 2012, p. 1061). However, SNS profiles ideally function as representations of one's self. In the case of Facebook, this normative orientation is relatively guarded at the time of writing; it is Facebook's demand that users use their 'authentic identities' (Facebook 2020). Though Twitter as social media functions differently to Facebook as a social network, at least in terms of lending itself more

toward interests and interactions with strangers, this does not mean that Twitter is not

concerned with the production of the self (Murthy 2012, p. 1062). An important linkage

between the two is their medial structures that allow for the articulation of subjectivities:

specifically, the status update in the case of Facebook, and the tweet in the case of Twitter.

This is an operative link between the two platforms. Both platforms feature open planes upon

which users can extrapolate events of significance and the banalities of everyday life. As

above, I argue that we can take the logic of the status update or tweet as part of a process of

self-production further, to claim that the repertoire of content one produces, consumes, and

interacts with on their profiles can function as a subjective representation of a self. Put

differently, the cohort of likes, follows, retweets, images, videos, bios, and profile pictures

work as a multimodal discursive articulation of identities on Twitter.

Social media, within the Web 2.0 environment, takes advantage of the structural

capacities of the internet. The possibilities of social media coincide with prosumership and

Foucault's dynamic of power. Melita Zajc's (2015) work is illuminating here. She has shown

how the prosumership of social media might allow for very efficient exertions of power:

> as a fusion of production and consumption, social media rely on individuals that produce by
> consuming and consume by producing. The use of social media does not require a particular
> configuration of the user's physical space; however, it depends completely on the activity of
> individual users. They are the ones who ensure content. The individual, required by the
> dispositive of social media, is active by default. (2015, p. 42).

A case study that illustrates this point is Tumblr blog PaladinOfJihad, and in particular, his

series on performing hijrah to the caliphate titled #DustyFeet. PaladinOfJihad is

demonstrative of IS's ideal use of social media which illustrates many of the theoretical

points I have made throughout this thesis. The #DustyFeet series is mainly concerned with

travelling to the caliphate. PaladinOfJihad outlines a series of steps one could consider taking

to avoid suspicion of family members and authorities if travelling from the West. However,

the blog itself is interesting for more than just its content and signification. As a piece of

social media produced by a supposed member of IS, the #DustyFeet series illustrates the prosumptive nature of social media albeit in the name of a larger cause. The production of content by the media consumer himself (who references IS media on his blog) reveals the automatic function of power as it pertains to IS: PaladinOfJihad is an example of a good Muslim who has been able to commit hijrah, which is rendered as a pious act echoing the historical hijrah; in other words, it is framed as the escape from a decadent and morally loose west in which Muslims are persecuted. Moreover, PaladinOfJihad is a subject who has gone out of his way to produce a blog that aimed to mitigate some of the primary concerns held by those also wanting to commit hijrah. In other words, he constitutes himself as the subject of lateral continuity by providing the most ideal example to others. Further: as an agent or personae in the IS assemblage, PaladinOfJihad facilitates lines of flight, allowing subjects to help strengthen and intensify the territorialisation of the caliphate. The knowledge object of the #DustyFeet series is thus an example of the automatic and ideal function of IS power to the extent that it is a knowledge object which participates in processes of subjectification, the stratification of the IS assemblage, and the territorialisation of the caliphate, all in the name of posterity.

Social media content is fleeting as it is and IS's use of social media and SNSs highlight the structural transience of the media themselves. The ephemerality of social media can make it difficult to study, particularly when the content that serves as the object of study usually breaches community guidelines and is thus no longer available. As discussed in my introduction, one method of gaining snapshots of IS Twitter accounts is by using the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine which allows one to view webpages that have been archived by other users and which may no longer be available on the web. The problem with this method is that one can only gain a cursory glance at the kind of content circulated by IS supporters on social media, not to mention one must know the exact username of a given account in order

to link to it. However, by searching the archive for, say, Twitter users whose accounts have been analysed by other researchers, we can begin to reach some conclusions regarding the discursive circulation of IS content on social media. For example, Jytte Klausen's (2015) influential article on IS houses the names of some significant Western fighter's Twitter accounts. These accounts provide insight into the kinds of content spread by IS fighters who had travelled to the caliphate before the internal crackdown on social media by IS officials (See Al-Tamimi Archive, Specimen 11Q). More importantly, the collection of content visible on some Twitter accounts reveals the extent to which digital selves are produced online. In some cases, the online self is materialised in actual conduct, that is, by representing one's own activities rather than those of others. Below, I make a synchronic cut into the discourses of IS-supporter accounts on Twitter.

IS's mainstream social media and social network use varied. Sometimes mainstream SNSs were used primarily to mediate violent acts. Klausen (2015) has drawn attention to the use of Twitter to spread violent imagery throughout 2014:

> By August, Twitter had served up stills from videos of ongoing beheadings, severed heads on fence posts, rows of crucified men hung on crosses on a platform in a dusty town like an image from a bad movie, and even a picture of a seven-year-old Australian boy holding a severed head offered to him by his father (Klausen 2015, p. 4).

The Twitter account innocuously named 'Salafi Jihadi', for example, shared videos of IS parading in Mosul, videos of tribes pledging allegiance, and IS entering new territories, all hosted on YouTube (web.archive.org 2014). These videos are no longer viewable as they have been removed from YouTube and are not archived. However, the fact that they have been removed does suggest association with IS or pro-IS accounts and thus veracity. The removal of a video is a useful indicator that the video was likely to be pro-IS and I have used this logic throughout my analysis.

IS content circulated on Twitter was not always spectacular; it was often mundane. In the case of the account @KhilafahAl, some tweets share the mood and register of ambiguous tweets or Facebook status updates that many will be familiar with, as seen in Figure 8. The account belongs to Keonna Thomas, a Philadelphian woman arrested in 2015 for planning to travel to join IS (Channel 4 News 2015b; Williams & Connor 2015). What is prevalent from the slither of information easily accessible is a mixture of western and IS discourses: in the same sentence/tweet, she refers to 'vibes' she picks up from people as well as 'munafiqeen & murtadeen' (hypocrites and apostates, respectively). From what we have seen so far in IS media, terms like murtadeen, to use the language of Laclau and Mouffe (2014), are nodal points around which discourses form.

Fatayat Al Khilafah @KhilafahAl · 9h

u watch how u moving theses days ppl u call family will sell u out if u stay in touch with fiqh ul waqqi u will see what im sayin is haqq

↩ ⇄ ★ 3 •••

Fatayat Al Khilafah @KhilafahAl · 9h

when i get a vibe about someone 90% of the time its always right may Allah protect the sincere muslims frm munafiqeen & murtadeen Ameen

↩ ⇄ ★ 2 •••

Figure 9 – Archived Tweet from @KhilafahAl available at
https://web.archive.org/web/20140915103129/https://twitter.com/KhilafahAl

In fact, terms like 'murtadeen' and 'murfaqin' are important points around which discourses are formed in both pro-IS social media accounts and official IS media; this is the same orientalist/occidentalist split IS sees as characterising the relationship between itself and

the West. In some ways, IS portray themselves as the cure to the ideology of tolerance and western liberal multiculturalism they see as pervasive. Take, for example, the report 'Clamping Down on Sexual Deviance' in Issue 7 of *Dabiq* (2015, pp. 42-43). In the report, IS link some characteristics of contemporary Western culture with the 1960s sexual revolution to explore the influence it has in the present. Some features of liberal multiculturalist tolerance such as gay marriage and educating against homophobia, which, for IS, are linked to shirk and therefore termed 'deeds of misguidance', partially characterise the culture which IS seek to provide a cure for. For example, there have been instances of IS persecuting and murdering gay men (Tharoor 2016). Usually, they are thrown off buildings, following in the footsteps of the companion Abu Bakr as-Siddiq, before being stoned to death. To mark out subjects as 'murtadeen' and 'murfaqin' is part of defining deviance through media and can also be seen elsewhere in video media, for example in the 2015 short film *And No Respite*. Most of the video's narrative is constructed through IS differentiating itself from the West: they are 'not a secular state whose soldiers fight for taghut legislators (Obama), liars (Bush), fornicators (Clinton), corporations, and for the freedoms of sodomites.' The delineation of abnormal subjectivities such as this is one of the many lines along which IS represent itself and the caliphate as an incubator for legitimate, sincere, and pious conduct both in spite of Western excess and in the pursuit of salvation.

The thread of IS providing the antidote to the excesses of Western culture is echoed in Baugut and Neumann's (2020) analysis of the role of online 'propaganda' during 'radicalisation'. In their analysis of the phases of 'radicalisation', subjects sometimes tend to engage with more overtly religious propaganda[15] 'that defined the Western lifestyle as the

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[15] I discuss the term 'overtly religious propaganda' in order to speak directly to Baugut and Neumann's article. However, I believe that we should be wary of the way in which they have thematized different kinds of propaganda. Their perspective in this article could be described as Western- or Eurocentric to the degree that they maintain an understanding of religion and politics as being located on separate planes. What is crucial to understand when it comes to IS is the collapse of those categories into an Islamist dispositif to the extent that their separation becomes unsustainable.

cause of the problem of human deprivation' (Baugut and Neumann 2020, p. 9). We should

pause to reflect on how subjects who have been previously 'radicalized' by IS and others

used media:

> Several interview participants thus reported that they were interested in speeches by Islamist preachers (Gendron, 2017) which taught Islamist rules for everyday life, for example how to pray the right way or what to eat while fasting. This type of religious propaganda met their perceived needs for guidance and orientation within their new community. Moreover, these needs were social in nature. Participants reported that they watched YouTube videos in groups and listened to preachers in mosques along with others (Baugut and Neumann 2020, p. 10).

Here, SNSs and social media are understood as mundane technologies which are able to

spread practical everyday knowledge of how to correctly conduct oneself.

The account @AbuHamzaDK (Pro-Mujahideen) is more curious than the last. The

description of the account reads 'News in English and Arabic, focus on Global Jihad, news in

Arabic and English' (web.archive.org 2016). Due to the sheer number of tweets and their

output (over 11 million at the beginning of July 2014), this is obviously a twitter bot which

were used frequently by IS supporters. A snapshot from 4 July 2014 provides a cross-section

of content similar to that found in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*. A few tweets around the time the

account was archived show relatively humdrum pictures of Tikrit under the control of the

Islamic State: we see traffic as usual though an IS flag and billboard populate the

background; a picture of an IS flag atop a building; two mujahideen fix an IS flag to a wall

while two more supervise; and what looks like council workers in red overalls and orange

reflector vests stand by a truck on the side of the road (web.archive.org 2016). These are the

kind of everyday, relatively boring pictures which are commonplace in both official IS media

as well as some social media. Quotidian accounts of 'business as usual' in the caliphate are

interspersed with other kinds of content, however. As seen below in Figure 10, Twitter

accounts also partook in the circulation of pictures of martyrs that resemble what Chouliaraki

and Kissas call 'sublime horrorism' where death in battle as grievable life functions to

commend martyrdom while simultaneously 'appropriates and inscribes this death into a

sectarian narrative of Islamic eschatology' (2018, p. 34).

Figure 10 - https://web.archive.org/web/20140915103129/https://twitter.com/KhilafahAl

Though the ubiquity of media might be constitutive of contemporary social ontologies in many parts of the (western) world, such ubiquity only goes some way towards accounting for the ideology of the current conjuncture. Regardless, IS's use of Twitter reveals the extent of a technologically mediated social ontology. I now turn to an analysis of my own corpus of pro-IS Twitter accounts.

Analytic Themes: A spectrum

In order to manage the significant amount of data in my sample of accounts, I coded tweets in relation to themes or discourse strands relevant to my research questions before conducting a close reading of them (see Table 1 below).

Table 1 - Tweet Coding Spectrum

Informational (power-knowledge)		Interpersonal/rhetorical (conduct/governance)
Military/War news • Victories • Bombings by coalition • War booty • Territory gains (entanglement with state-building) • Reports on terror attacks (usually entangled with martyrdom) Media Sharing • Sharing official media State-building • Services • Pledges of allegiance (bay'at) • Migration (hijrah)	Enemies • Content related to the West and other near enemies (i.e., Saudi Arabia, Yemen, etc.) • Addresses Shi'ites and other modes of Islam too - entangled with hermeneutics (possibly room for them or sub-theme like 'sincerity' or 'correct interpretation' though this probably comes under Hermeneutics) Martyrdom • Can include tributes to people who have died/been martyred Punishment Online Conduct • Practical advice for conducting oneself online • Reports of accounts that are in online war with IS (i.e. CTRLSec) • re/tweets of relevant accounts	Hermeneutics • Quotations from Qur'an/hadith (sometimes with commentary or an analogy) Advice/wisdom • Often entangled with hermeneutics - this theme is reserved for the kinds of tweets that are written in the register/style of the Qur'an/hadith

These discourse strands were organised on a spectrum with informational tweets at one end and interpersonal/rhetorical tweets at the other, though many tweets were multi-coded because they pertained to more than one discourse strand. Mapped onto these categories are

power-knowledge at the informational end and conduct/governance at the interpersonal/rhetorical end; this mapping is informed by the perceived goal of the content the types of tweets under each theme pertain to. Tweets considered *more* informational, or which have a power-knowledge function rather than a strict governmental function came under the themes of military/war news, official media sharing, and state-building. Themes relevant to conduct/governance primarily arrived under the very broad theme of hermeneutics, advice/wisdom, and personal conduct. I also included the sub-theme of quotations from hadith or Qur'an under the theme of hermeneutics. Located between these two ends of a spectrum are the themes of enemies, martyrdom, punishment, and online conduct. In most cases, tweets were coded at multiple themes at either end of the spectrum as well as with a theme in the middle. Occasionally, tweets were coded with themes at either end of the spectrum, though this only occurred with the hermeneutics and state-building themes. There is of course a case to be made that the hermeneutics theme may be too broad and that a particular hermeneutics informs all of the tweets in these accounts, as well as the content of both internal administrative documents and official media outputs. However, I made the point of making hermeneutics its own theme because not all tweets make specific reference to piety, religious conduct, or interpretation. During my analysis, I also took note of Twitter profile pictures and bios as they are discursively rich features which provide the first impression of an account and function like a heading or title page. The features of profile pictures subsequently became part of my analysis. The following sections represent the first part of a dispositif analysis which seeks to provide a critical account of how IS, its supporters, and its members conducted themselves online.

Broader trends

From the sample analysed, it is quite clear that the discourse of IS supporters and citizens online was very narrow and stable. The valid knowledge that is produced within this context and the way that it is passed forward does not change in any significant sense within the sample analysed. It should be noted, however, that many of these accounts were archived in early 2015 so there is potential for there to have been slight changes within the larger IS online ecology. The flexibility of what Fisher (2015) calls the Media Mujahideen arises as a problem here: these are the cohort of online IS supporters and citizens who constantly adapt and create new accounts when old ones are flagged and banned. The flexibility called for by the agents of the online IS battalion was why the theme 'online conduct' was included in the analysis. I discuss this in detail below, but as Pearson (2018) has noted, the banning of accounts did aid in producing a collective community affect around which supporters rallied. This is evident throughout the sample with numerous accounts including in their bios or first tweets variations on the sentence 'X account after the deletion'. Regardless, the narrow discourse of IS online is reflected in the themes used for analysis and, in particular, the discursive knots between these themes which I discuss below.

Across all accounts, most[16] tweets were concerned with the enemies of IS. The 'enemies' discourse strand was usually knotted with another strand such as military/war news, official media sharing, state-building, or online conduct. Enemies of IS include essentially all those who do not follow the group's exact creed, though it is important to note

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[16] Because of the way that the source material was processed as pdfs and coded via highlighting areas of the pdf rather than highlighting text, the quantitative aspect of the analysis is not as precise here. This means that multiple tweets were sometimes coded as a single instance of a reference to enemies or any other such theme. In this case, the 736 instances of references to enemies, while not being a precise indicator of the number of times enemies were referred to in my analysis, overshadows the number of times any other theme was used (e.g., the next closest two were hermeneutics at 590 times and military-war news at 439). I mention this to underscore that while some quantitative components of my analysis lack precision due to the way data had to be captured, processed, and analyzed, it does not mean that they are empirically irrelevant. Rather, the numbers used throughout the chapter are thus indicative rather than precise.

their marking out of enemies is a process of both biopolitical exclusion as well as a process of dis-identification which seeks to strengthen the personae of the IS assemblage.

Collective Symbolism

The stable discourse across the sample accounts was reflected in both imagery and text. That is, the visual discourse of IS online is characterised by a repertoire of visually similar images whose purpose is to solidify supporters' and citizens' common horizon of meaning and limit what it is possible to say and know. From the perspective of dispositif analysis the acknowledgement of features such as profile pictures as participating in visual regimes allows an understanding of the collective symbolism used by IS to make sense of themselves.

Proponent of the caliphate
Liked @ aa13576034

Wilayat Sinai)) - ((For there is no god but)) -
God)) - ((Muhammad is the Messenger of
- ((God

69 Photos and videos
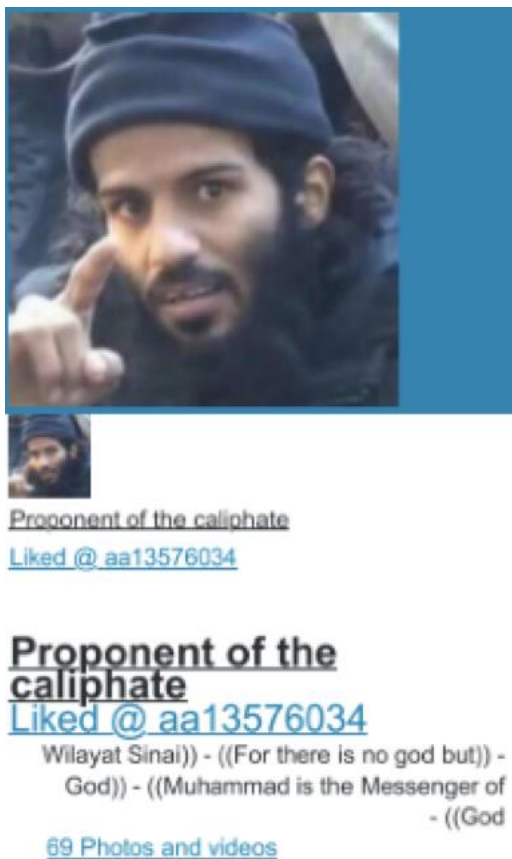
Figure 11 – Archived profile picture and bio of @aa13576034

Abu Bakr al-Shami
@ abo1995baker

My only goal is to strive in jihad to die for
the cause of God. I ask God to hurry with
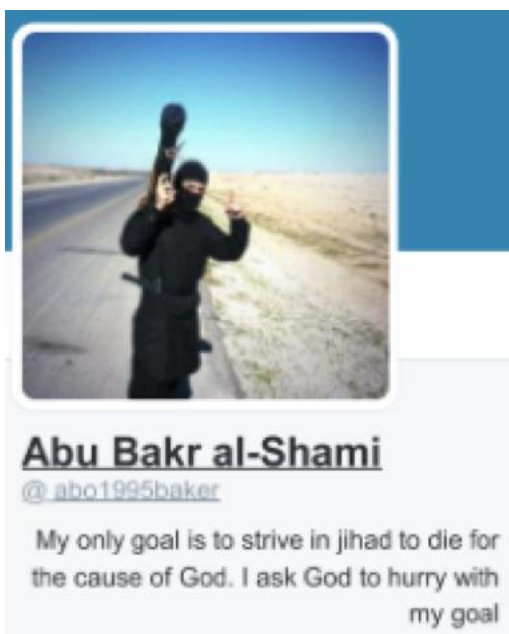my goal

Figure 12 – Archived profile picture and bio of @abo1995baker

The foundations of a relatively narrow, stable, visual discourse can be seen in the similar

profile pictures across the accounts analysed. IS supporters/members rely on a small

repertoire of expressions such as holding up a single finger (Fig. 11 and 12) and the use of

197

significant figureheads of the group (Fig. 13). Within the sample, there were 4 instances where users used images of children as their profile picture and 5 instances where followers of accounts analysed used images of children, usually young soldiers (cubs) (Fig. 14, 15, 16), martyrs, or deceased enemies in their profile pictures. Holding up a single finger is a common trope in official IS media as well as a relatively common feature of unofficial media. The single finger is meant to signify tawhid or oneness with God. In this case, the use of this trope can be read as the practice of good conduct as it shows one's authenticity which is an important feature of how IS supporters express themselves online. Using the single-finger as a sign of tawhid is both the practice of correct conduct as well as a signifier of group-belonging. Figure 12 is representative of a wide range of pro-IS Twitter profile pictures in its inclusion of a range of common signifiers that populate a great deal of IS media: a man in a black balaclava, a desert setting, the single finger for Tawhid, and a weapon.

Figure 13 - Archived profile picture and bio of @Abo_Al3bass

IS supporters on Twitter often include significant figures within or close to the group's mythos as the primary content of their profile pictures. The primary figures that are included here are the now deceased IS-leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi (Fig. 13); the founder of what eventually became IS, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi; and Osama bin Laden. Within IS lore,

al-Zarqawi is understood to be a martyr, so showing allegiance and respect to him by giving him visibility on one's Twitter profile picture is part of the good conduct of an IS supporter/member. bin Laden, despite having been killed before this iteration of IS, is a hero among a range of Islamist groups due to his involvement in the 9/11 terror attacks.
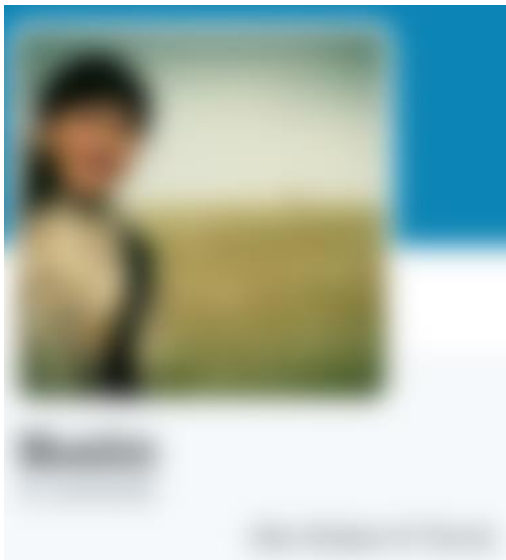
Figure 14 - Archived profile picture and bio of @sa44id55
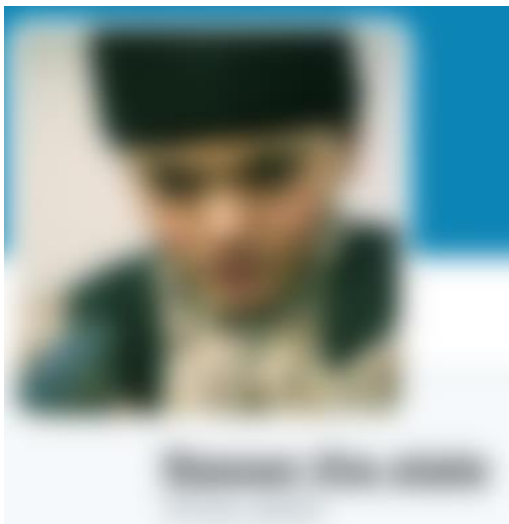
Figure 15 - Archived profile picture and bio of @lyas_dawla

As I mentioned above, a common trope of IS supporters' Twitter accounts is to include imagery from official IS media as their profile pictures. In figures 13 and 14, users

have taken screenshots from the video in which a young boy assassinates an alleged Russian spy. Young male mujahideen are called 'cubs' within the IS lexicon and there are a range of video and magazine features on them and their training. As seen below, at least one supporter/member had as their profile picture a toddler in a balaclava holding a gun. The point of including children in this way is likely to reinforce the pervasiveness of IS 'jihad' and indicate the posterity of the group. Importantly, it also connects with state-building efforts such as the military training of cubs which is shown in some tweets within the sample as well as within officially produced media.
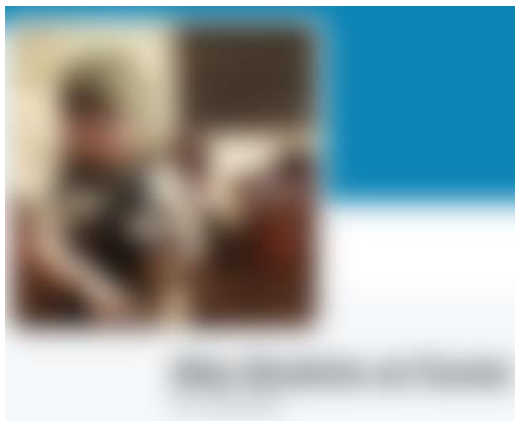
Figure 16 - Archived profile picture and bio of @mfbnbbh

Other kinds of profile pictures were relatively typical of what one would think constitutes the collective symbolism of IS: IS flags, deserts, soldiers, dead martyrs, and dead enemies.

Informational Discourses

One of the main accounts I wish to discuss is titled 'My mother's surgeon is pregnant' (@lahdatmnnor). This account is worth exploring in detail as the IA web crawl captured and preserved lots of its data. In fact, it captured more than any other account in the sample. This account can almost be seen as typical of what an IS supporter/member's account looks like. At the time of its archiving (24 Mar 2015) the account had 1614 followers, was following

605 accounts, and had tweeted 680 times. The profile picture below (Fig. 17) is the back of a soldier facing a tank: bullets are wrapped around his neck and the back of his head is obscured by a hood or balaclava. This account is focussed on content at the informational end of my coding spectrum so many of its re/tweets fall under the discourse strands of military/war news, official media sharing, and state-building.

Figure 17 - Archived profile picture and bio of @lahdatmnnor

As above, sharing military and war news was prominent in pro-IS discourse online. Figure 18 is a typical example which appears to use screenshots from official media, in line with IS's collective symbolism. It has an obvious informational function in that it provides its audience with information regarding a conflict. Within the context of the account itself, the tweet gains an interpersonal/rhetorical function as it is located within a range of pro-IS tweets and a network of pro-IS accounts. This is emphasised by the perspective apparent in the images: the photos are shot from the mujahideen's perspective with the flag in the foreground, from the point-of-view of a machine gunner, and from behind another gunner. We do not witness an approaching force; rather, we accompany the pictured mujahideen in battle. As I discuss below, hashtags here are used to index both a location as well as to thematise the tweet itself. Although not shown here, military-war news was also commonly

accompanied by the hashtag #urgent in the sample analysed.

Figure 18 - Archived tweet from @lahdatmnnor

Figure 19 - Archived tweet from @lahdatmnnor

158 of the 220 accounts in the sample included at least one instance of sharing IS legacy media. This occurs in a variety of ways. There is not necessarily a common formula used by everyone, but the most comprehensive posts are re/tweets of a YouTube link, a pastebin link, and some paratextual information such as a description of what the media object being shared is primarily concerned with. Interestingly, most instances of media sharing did not include a hermeneutical element (though some did). Instead, many of these posts are knotted with the discourse of online conduct and are accompanied by statements such as 'Watch before the deletion' (@sssjjj_47). This awareness of conduct online reveals the operative role played by the striations of capital and surveillance such as Twitter,

YouTube, Facebook, and so on, all of which were crucial for IS as much as they were debilitating when it came to their presence online.

Figures 17 and 18 are two further examples of official media sharing within the sample that are quite typical. On March 13ᵗʰ 2015, @lahdatmnnor shared a link to what appears to be a piece of official IS media where a mass execution takes place. As in many cases of official media sharing at this time, the user provides a YouTube link. It was actually more typical to see YouTube links to official media accompanied by a link to a pastebin-style website such as justpaste.it, sendvid.com, or even to archive.org itself. This occurs on March 14ᵗʰ but the video is no longer archived. The hashtags used in posts of official media sharing usually index a location or seek to thematise the post—in this case, it is likely that this piece of media was produced by the Media Office in the Fallujah Wilayat or at least concerns Fallujah or al-Anbar province. By hash tagging locations in such a way, the IS war machine seeks to create new territories. However, the gaps that are left by the IS war machine are filled by the state assemblage that seeks to encode its new localities.

As established, not all IS media is wholly concerned with the violent subtraction of life from bodies. Although Figure 18 houses violent imagery, much of the media shared online was concerned with state-building and legitimacy efforts. The discursive knot of state-building and official media sharing includes a vast range of topics and content. It includes spreading official media such as 'A message from the Land of Sinai' (@Aa13576034) as seen in Figure 20, pledges of allegiance as seen in Figure 21 (@AboJafarMagarbel), announcing territorial expansions, or even appointing a governor of a new territory as seen in Figure 22 (all below) (@mmmzz45). Discussing the appointment of a governor in a territory (Wilayat) has both an informational function and a rhetorical function, as the sharing of this information both seeks to inform its audience of a current event as much as it tries to legitimate the authority of IS.

Media Office @ WSINA1… · 5 j

 Caliphate #

State #

of SinaiVisible # messages from the land of Sinai

archive.org/details/Messag…

مرئي ⏵

رسائل
من أرض سيناء

المكتب الإعلامي
لولاية سيناء

سيناء

الحجم MB ٢٠٠ | المدة ١٢:٢٢ | الجودة HD

جمادى الأولى ١٤٣٦ هـ

10
0

43

See more photos and videos

Figure 20 - Archived tweet from @Aa13576034

Abu Jaafar Sifter @AboJafarMgarbel · 12 lis

The commander of the Military Council of Al-Qusayr pledges allegiance to the Islamic State with all of its factions in Qalamoun this morning, 11/12/2014

25
8

12
0

Show more photos and videos

Figure 21 – Archived tweet of @AboJafarMgarbel

Then the succession will be @ mmmz… · Dec 31
About 3 weeks after the death of the Tunisian governor, ISIS appoints a fb.me/6VQRXVGtK ... governor for the city of Deir Ezzor

Figure 22 – Archived tweet from @mmmzz45

This legitimacy is emphasised in other tweets, too. For example, in Figure 23 (below) we are shown a screenshot of a piece of official IS media in which Zakat (alms-giving) is being distributed (@Alresala1alres1) and in Figure 24 the potentially mundane but nonetheless crucial news of the opening of a bank using 'Islamic Currency' is shared (@yahyaisis1435). The implementation of the gold dinar is shared a few times in the sample

too (@fzoooo1ha1) as well as tweets regarding subjects to be included in education

(@abumusabsamarra).

Figure 23 – Archived tweet from @Alresala1alres1

Figure 24 – Archived tweet from @yahyaisis1435

Interpersonal/Rhetorical

Tweets on the informational end of the coding spectrum heavily overshadow that of the interpersonal/rhetorical end. Content at this end of the spectrum mostly comes under the discourse strands of advice/wisdom and personal conduct, usually with some kind of hermeneutic inflection, but not always. The other significant thematic here is not so much a theme but more a type of content: the automated posting of quotations from the Qur'an and hadith using bots.

The performance of authenticity online is crucial in interpersonal/rhetorical discourses. Although the intersection of hermeneutics with advice/wisdom often comes across as vague due to the inconsistency of translations, in some instances they may be very familiar to those already well-versed in Islamic knowledge and history. In this case, it is worth considering such tweets and their tangential relatives as instances of the performance of authenticity. Tweeting as a form of self-writing and unfolding one's subjectivity is thus achieved in many of the instances mentioned here but comes to be a purer part of correct conduct within the context of performing as a good Muslim. Figure 25 (below) is a typical example which errs towards the intersection of hermeneutics and authenticity more than it does to advice/wisdom. Though Figure 26 could either be from Max Ehrmann's Desiderata or a quote from a humble neoliberalist, it captures the intersection of hermeneutics, authenticity, and advice/wisdom prevalent in the cohort of tweets. But not all instances of the intentional spreading of wisdom have an explicit hermeneutic element. For example, in Figure 28, we are privy to another vague instance of feel-good pseudo-advice, the style of which is certainly not unique to that of an IS supporter/member. Regardless, it is vague enough to resonate with the authenticity of a good supporter/member of IS in its commitment to genuineness and care for one's companions.

Figure 25 – Archived tweet from @Doha_alshmare

Figure 26 – Archived tweet from @lyas_dawla

O son of Salloul and his dogs, we promise you, God willing, that you will not find someone to help your wounded people, nor who will kill you, so stay tuned.

Ibn Salloul and his dogs, you distribute the money of Muslims to unbelievers and apostates to the war of the religion of God.

Figure 27 - Archived tweet from @Diax_____45

Figure 27 is an example of a reference to enemies which relies on the figure of Ibn Salloul who in some understandings of Islam is thought to be a hypocrite (Lings 2006, p. 129). It is not enough to merely refer to enemies as dogs in this instance; rather, IS's enemies become locked in their discursive deployment of Islam through reference to a figure which requires at least some knowledge of Islam to understand.

Don't always ignore someone who cares about you because one day you will realize that you lost diamonds and you were busy collecting coal ..! Sing to everyone who convinces .. Poor everyone who covets ...
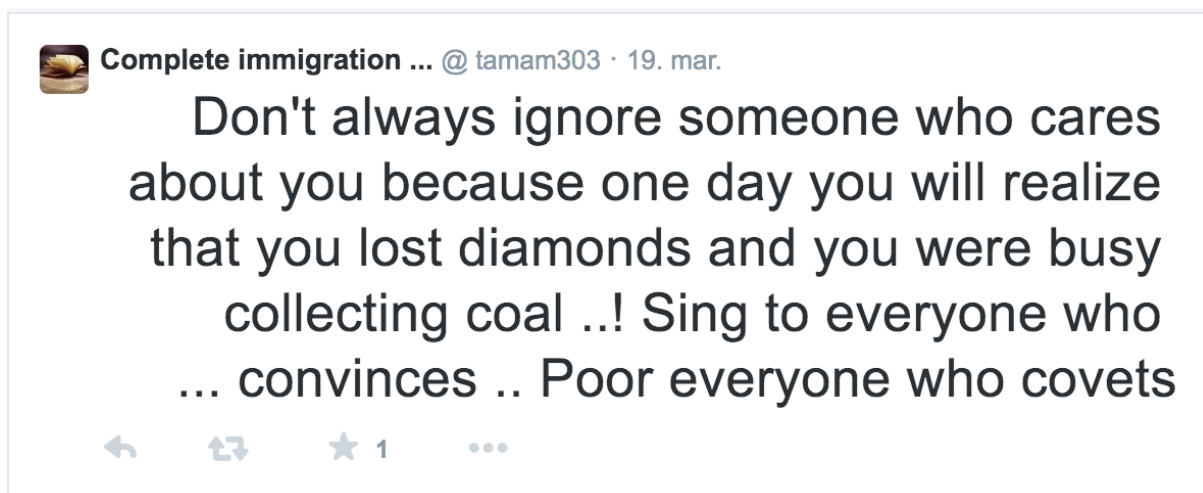
Figure 28 – Archived tweet from @tamam303

Us and them: regimes of exclusion

As I have discussed above, IS spend a significant amount of time talking about their enemies. In a broad sense, the relationship between IS and its adversaries manifests as a stark

binary between IS and not-IS. However, the specific delineation of enemies does have an acute relationship with the way that legislation was sketched out in the caliphate which has obvious consequences for IS discourses. By gaining a sense of who IS's enemies are, and why, we can discern the excludability of subjects within the caliphate, as well as gain an insight into why IS conduct terror attacks against particular groups. Of course, Jews, Christians, Rafidah (rejectionists), disbelievers, polytheists, and crusaders are mentioned throughout the sample, but IS's enemies are demarcated based on the sliding criteria of nation, history, and belief. Both near enemies such as Saudi Arabia, Kurdistan, Qatar, Iran, Alawites, Houthis, and Assad's forces are commonly referred to. The USA, Israel, and the west more generally are constant points of reference too which are called on to sketch the limits of includability in the caliphate and ideology of IS.

Martyrdom

Rest # Kairouani Retweeted

Khaled Adnani @ mhk1120081 · Jan 31

Martyrs are gone, O God, join us and accept them and accept us, O Lord
of the worlds

↩   ⟲ 20   ★ 13   •••   View more photos and videos

Figure 29 – Archived tweet from @sssjjj_47

The textual and visual discourse of martyrdom was referenced at least 81 times across

59 accounts in my sample of accounts and is an important discourse strand in the IS

dispositif. Tweets were often accompanied with a hermeneutic statement such as 'May God

accept him' and (usually) an image. The prevalence of martyrdom within IS's visual regime

suggests that visualising martyrdom is very important for IS. Tweets relating to martyrdom

take a range of forms. For example, as seen in Figure 29 a whole variety of alleged IS martyrs

are paid tribute to (@sssjjj_47). While the practice of mass celebration of martyrs was

relatively frequent, it was far more common to see users commemorating specific martyrs or

instances of martyrdom. A significant instance of this practice is seen in Figure 29 (below).

The image is of Amedy Coulibaly (known in IS as Abu Basir al-Ifriqi) who was one of the

perpetrators of the Paris terror attacks in early 2015. Though the links to these videos no

longer function (and were never archived), they are likely of his well-known pledge of allegiance to IS. Spreading these videos on Twitter helps to visualise and commemorate a martyr famous and revered by IS for his attacks against the West; sharing such content shows the extent to which individuals within the IS assemblage seek to extend it. The sharing of such content is a governance function as well as an example of the opportunities afforded by the medium itself: sharing pro-IS content is an example of downward and lateral continuities in that it shows the ability to be governed well by supporting the larger cause and functions as an example for other subjects to further share the same content. Importantly, the medium itself has the capability for the shared video to be endlessly circulated within the global media circuitry so that IS gain more attention and take up more space in the online spectacle. Such is the logic of the digital conjuncture.

Figure 30 – Archived retweet from @Oda123124Ahmad

Before moving on, it is worth thinking further about the aesthetics and visualisation of martyrs in my sample of accounts. The visual discourse of martyrdom accounts for some of the most violent and gory imagery within the sample, as seen in Figures 29 and 31. However, the corpses of martyrs are often shown to be smiling despite partially obliterated faces. This is as an example of what Chouliaraki and Kissas call sublime horrorism in which corpses become productive visual sites for the formation of IS subjectivities (2018, p. 19). Mediations such as this celebrate death in the name of Islam and produce the subject as grievable. The example discussed here applies to the visualisation of martyrdom on Twitter. In this case, jihadist subjectivity is generated not just on the body but on the face too. The glory of piety and martyrdom is inscribed in the smiles of dead men as the lateral continuity of IS subjectivity *par excellence*. By commemorating not just death, but specifically, martyrdom, in this way, IS members/supporters seek to codify death and bring it into the realm of conduct. In other words, death is no longer the limit of power (Foucault 1990, p. 138); rather, types of death are made intelligible within the IS dispositif to the extent that the right kind of death becomes part of correct conduct.

Figure 31 – Archived retweet from @mohajer_3

Online Conduct

The broad category of online conduct was referred to at least 387 times across 150 accounts. Online conduct here ranges from sharing accounts of other IS-supporters to instructing folks how to sign up to Twitter without a cell phone number. The majority of these tweets are simply the tagging of other pro-IS accounts in order to extend the visibility and awareness of the IS assemblage online. Some tweets which share accounts have a vague hermeneutic element via a reference to God, though the utility of only sharing an account name is that it can be done very quickly with minimal effort. As I have mentioned above, users often discuss the deletion of accounts too. Importantly, an awareness of efforts to report and delete pro-IS accounts is shown in a number of tweets, including a discussion of the group who compiled the list under analysis, CtrlSec (Fig. 32).

Figure 32 – Archived retweet from @Black123_321

A fascinating aspect of the online conduct discourse strand is the use of bots and apps. Twitter bots, when signed up to, automatically tweet for users. In the sample analysed, I found evidence of the use of batross.com (Fig. 33), knzmuslim.com (Fig. 34), qurani.tv (Fig. 35), as well as 3waji.com, du3a.org, and estigfar.com. These applications all describe themselves similarly and thus have comparable functions: batross.com 'is a charitable application that publishes supplications, supplications, sayings, wisdom, information and the virtues of the works mentioned in the year of our Prophet Muhammad, may God bless him and grant him peace' ('Good girdle', web.archive.org 2015)

Glory be to God, and with Your praise, I bear witness that there is no god but You, and I .will forgive you and I will repent to you

batross.com

O Allah, give me the pleasure of reverence, increase my submission to you, and accept my humiliation in prostration and bowing

batross.com

Figure 33 – Archived tweet from @ez_19999

knzmuslim.com is a 'Muslim treasure application' which provides a practical solution to

piety which can sometimes be disrupted by the distractions of everyday life:

> We always want to remember God, but Satan often forgot us or distracted us in the world. We also have someone who mentions God but does not know many dhikr and supplications. The goal of 'Muslim treasure' is to always remind us of God. He proposes to us some dhikr and supplications at different times in our busy day of life. ('Muslim Treasure Application', web.archive.org 2014b)

Oh God, I ask you good days, late worries knzmuslim.com and a reassuring heart
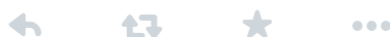
Figure 34 – Archived tweet from @mmw1435s2

Qurani.tv provides a similar service to batross and knzmuslim though seems to purely post quotations from the Qur'an. In its own words, 'It is a free application via Twitter through which you can send automatic and programmed tweets during the period that you specify... Subscribe now until the account tweet with your life and after your death' ('Athkar Application', web.archive.org 2015b).
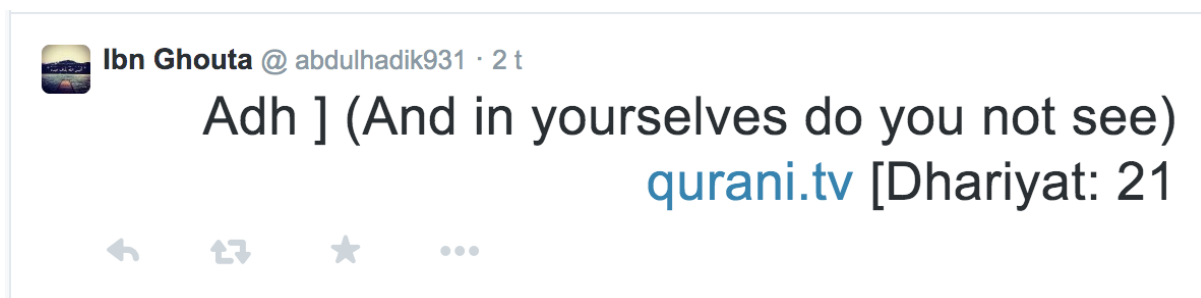
Figure 35 – Archived tweet from @abdulhadik931
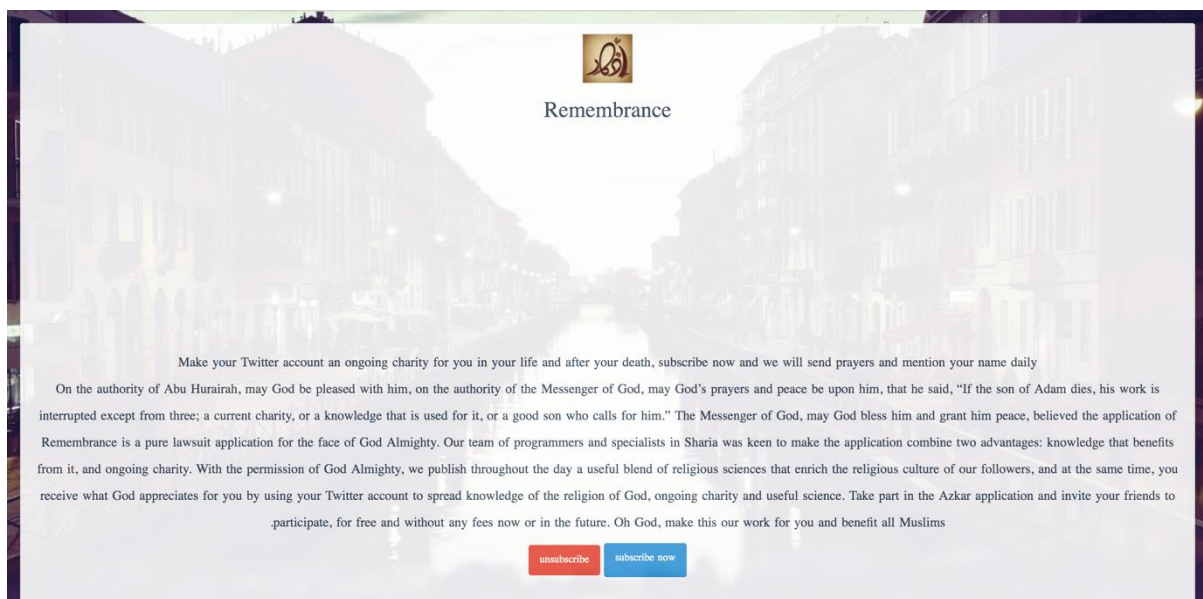
Figure 36 – Screenshot from https://web.archive.org/web/20150225094413/http://3waji.com/

3waji.com and Du3a.org provide essentially the same service and function as the applications mentioned above. These applications are an example of technology at the service of knowledge. They were used to spread wisdom and gain visibility: pro-IS content is most

effective when it experiences high degrees of visibility; that is, when it latches on to the striated spaces of capital and surveillance. As I have attempted to argue above, the content of a social media profile, which travels nomadically to a range of platforms and interfaces, works to extend the IS assemblage. Social media profiles can be thought of as digitized representations of personae in the IS assemblage; they bind it together yet function discursively within the logic of the IS dispositif. Additionally, the role of bots is important here and has two primary consequences. The first is a resonance between the demands of religious liturgy and its subjectifying function. Religious liturgy has a disciplinary function in that it seeks to shore up subjectivities through the repetitious uttering of scriptures, inculcating subjects into modes of conduct and regimes of truth in the process. However, the second consequence is that the role of liturgy as disciplinary practice and process of subjectification is handed over to the nonhuman. What is at play here, and what is most important, is an intersubjective relationship between the human and the non-human within the IS assemblage. Bots are used to extend the identities of subjects beyond power's limit: death (Foucault 1990, p. x). The purpose of liturgy here, beyond the process of subjectification which it implies, is the capacity of the bot to increase IS's visibility in the global media circuitry, as well as to adhere to an IS-subjectivity. Even in death, processes of subjectification are continued. The use of bots to spread knowledge and garner visibility is part of a variety of strategies to conduct subjects, in addition to being the performance of good conduct after one is deceased, is an example of the machinic extension of the IS assemblage.

Conclusion

As stated in Chapter 1, media is simultaneously a component of the dispositif and the element that binds and extends the IS assemblage. Within the online realm of the IS

assemblage, social media profiles functioned as sites in which individual identities, contrived from group subjectivities, were articulated. This is exemplified by the narrow, stable discourse in the early days of the caliphate (early 2015). The stable discourse(s) referenced here refer to both the textual and visual coherence of signs within the sample analysed. One of the contingencies of the digital conjuncture I have tried to underscore here is the need for presence, activity, and participation in and on social networks. Through the deployment of stable discourses, spectacular and abhorrent imagery, and alongside significant territorialisation in the Middle-East, IS certainly gained a lot of attention. But the content of the IS assemblage should in no way eclipse the context and forms it was privy to and took advantage of. The digital conjuncture provided an apt environment for the growth and spread of the IS assemblage. The pursued visibility of IS took place on mainstream social media platforms like Twitter. In other words, within our socially mediated ontology, the online striations of the internet which have become mundane for a great many of us, those intensifications of capital and surveillance, in some part work in the favour of IS to the extent that they act as explicit facilitators of visibility. Working in conjunction with the smooth*er* spaces of the internet such as pastebin sites and archive.org, IS had the benefit of an extremely suitable environment as they sought out their dream of an Islamic State.

In this chapter, I sought to provide a critical account of IS's use of Twitter in the early days of the caliphate. IS and its supporters made use of the digital conjuncture we find ourselves in, where to exist is to exist online via an interface. On one hand, the group took advantage of the ontic geographical conditions adjacent to the area in which they took hold, and on the other, they utilised our technological context in order to spread influence, gain visibility, and govern discrete audiences via everyday objects such as the mobile phone.

The synchronic cut I made into a sample of pro-IS Twitter accounts revealed a number of important details about the IS dispositif. IS have a strong sense of collective

symbolism. This is shown in the imagery that the media mujahideen deploy but comes across most apparently in profile pictures alongside twitter bios. The mostly coherent imagery across accounts is part of IS's identity-making practices and speaks to their strong sense of in-group identity produced in and by the IS dispositif. Moreover, the buttressing of IS's history and identity is achieved in the sublime horrorism of commemorating martyrs. Important to processes of identification and dis-identification (Weedon 2004, p. 7) is the discourse regarding enemies. IS supporters/members spend a lot of time thinking and talking about their enemies who are usually made sense of as dogs, disbelievers, polytheists, or some variation on one of these, all of which have a hermeneutic relationship to IS's discursive deployment of Islamism. Importantly, one of the ways in which IS supporters/members mark out enemies is by sharing official/legacy media and military/war news. The function here is multiple: spreading military war/news at one time would have had a practical element for those on the ground, but the importance of sharing military/war news is intensified when we understand that a discursive inflection which intersects with the discourses of hermeneutics and enemies is part of a range of processes which seek to formulate a common horizon of meaning for supporters and members.

Another crucial component of the online IS discourse is the performance of authenticity via appeals to advice/wisdom. As I have noted above, such performances occur in a number of ways ranging from instances of vague 'wisdom' to the automated sharing of sura and hadith. In fact, bots employed by IS, while not characterising an enormous number of tweets in this sample, present an interesting issue in relation to conduct and power. Bots are useful here for a number of reasons. For one, they bear some of the immaterial labour needed to extend the IS assemblage by flooding Twitter with advice, and quotes from the sura and hadith. There is something about the automaticity of bots, however, which seems to betray the authenticity of online performance sought out by IS supporters. That is, for all the

talk about authenticity and genuineness in legacy media such as *Dabiq*, the uptake of bots firstly strikes me as an empty shortcut to the performance of good conduct: conduct without content. Perhaps though, for IS, what becomes more important (at least in the online realm) is the media spectacle of their hermeneutics and its concomitant visibility.

IS's use of bots can be further considered, however. While bots do help to produce the media spectacle of IS, they also have other functions and effects such as their repetitiousness. That is, by mobilising the same and similar messages and repeating them over and over, the overall message of IS is strengthened: the semantic consistency of IS's discourse works to augment their message. Ideally, these homogenous messages seek to discipline subjects. So, while the deployment of bots symbolically appears to be conduct without content, we need to consider the effect here. As Foucault argues, we ought to think about the 'tactical productivity' of discourse: 'what reciprocal effects of power and knowledge they ensure' (1990, p. 102). In this case, and in line with assemblage-thinking which seeks out functions and effects, the more productive reading of bots is as amplifiers of discourse rather than as a contradictory element in the discursive performance of IS. Bots are here employed in quite a traditional sense: they are harnessed to do the tasks that humans are not good at, such as delivering consistent, repetitions, discursively homogenous messages, in addition to engorging IS's appearance to make them seem more organised, pious, and active online than they perhaps were.

At the time of writing, IS supporters continue to populate the online sphere, albeit with less media attention than previously. I return to this point in my conclusion by making later synchronic cuts into the IS Twittersphere in order to reveal the group's diachronically stable discourse. Regardless, IS's ongoing presence points to their constitution as an assemblage: more specifically, the rhizomatic components of the IS assemblage, rather than its state-building enterprises, are what continue to animate the group here (Kraidy 2017, p.

199). The globally dispersed Media Mujahideen continue to be relatively agile, quick, and flexible in their continuous creation of new accounts and consistent attempt to bring social media and social networks into the IS dispositif.

Chapter 6: Media Governmentality: An analysis of IS legacy media in English

Following my analysis of pro-IS Twitter accounts in the previous chapter, I now conduct an analysis of officially produced IS legacy media in English. In what follows, I analyse IS's primary English magazines directed toward the West, *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* (Rome), as well as a range of videos produced by Al-Hayat Media Centre.

Rather than emphasising platforms in this chapter, I focus on thematics in IS media derived from its logics, mediations, visualisations, and symbolics. In this case, I do not focus on platform specificity as much as in the previous chapter. However, this is in keeping with the methodology of dispositif analysis and the specific object of study at hand. In Chapter 4, I discussed Jäger and Maier's term 'discourse planes' as the locations from which discourses are spoken (2009, p. 46). This includes planes such as media, education, politics, science, and so on. However, during this discussion, I made the point that IS collapse all discourse planes into a universal Islamist hermeneutic. If the present plane of analysis is to be understood as the (legacy) media plane, then its attendant planes of politics, education, public conduct, and news are inherent in it. A focus on the thematics of IS media, in the interests of governmentality, allows me to zero in on the ways in which IS seek to govern its audiences and deterritorialised citizens. However, centring thematics rather than platforms does not concede that there is an 'experiential sameness across platforms' (Fisher & Randell-Moon 2014). In other words, I acknowledge that magazines have the capacity to reach audiences with, say, a degree of knowledge about Islam, while video media lends itself to spectacle and the infinite possibility of circulation. Further, a focus on thematics over medium specificity allows us to pinpoint precisely how IS made sense of and governs its subjects across its media apparatuses.

The following represents the second constituent part of my dispositif analysis. In line with the goals of dispositif analysis, I investigate the contours of power, knowledge (truth

claims), and subjectivity within IS's strategic deployment of a governmental rationality. That is, to use the words of Mitchell Dean, the analysis in this chapter is largely concerned with employing an analytics of government (2009). Dean's outline of government and governmentality is instructive here. Framed within an understanding of the conduct of conduct where 'conduct' encompasses both how one conducts oneself and how they are conducted, the notion of government acknowledges the possibility of human behaviour to be directed 'according to particular sets of norms and for a variety of ends' (Dean 2009, p. 18). To carry out an examination of government by analysing legacy media, I will be concerned with 'the means of calculation, both qualitative and quantitative, the type of governing authority or agency, the forms of knowledge, techniques and other means employed, the entity to be governed and how it is conceived, the ends sought and the outcomes and consequences' (Dean 2009, p. 18). Again, an analysis of a specific governmentality is an assessment of the contours of power, knowledge, and subjectivity in a given epoch or historical formation. Within the context of this study, a dispositif analysis is in many ways an analysis of IS's governmental rationality.

Questions pertaining to power, knowledge, and subjectivity can be approached by disassembling IS media from an analytics of government, or, governmentality, perspective, as I established in Chapter 3. Such a perspective does not solely rely on matters relating to issues such as citizenship, bureaucratic processes, and judicial and juridical processes. Importantly, and especially in the case of state assemblages which operate in the normative authoritarian mode as IS does, a governmentality perspective of a dispositif analysis such as this has the theoretical fluidity to acknowledge the pivotal role played by official media in techniques of power, the deployment of knowledge, and the production of subjectivities.

This chapter is divided into three main parts. Following an outline of *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*, I use Laclau and Mouffe's logic of equivalence (2014) to investigate how IS

delineates its enemies in its media apparatus. I examine how IS sought to produce a totality (Laclau and Mouffe 2014, p. 91) within which the meaning of particular signs was fixed. Specifically, I analyse the discussions in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* pertaining to IS's enemies such as Jews, kufr, lapsed Muslims, and so on, to understand how IS delineate their enemies and how this demarcation is crucial to the structuring of their discursive-material practices (Carpentier 2017). By fixing meaning to particular signs within its discourse, IS legitimated and illegitimated subjectivities within its territory, rendering the latter disposable.

In the second section, I analyse the pedagogies of terror outlined in the Just Terror Tactics section in *Rumiyah* to assess how distant subjects were instructed to carry out deterritorialised global terror attacks. Adhering to the goals of a dispositif analysis of examining texts, actions, and objects, this section focuses on how objects are brought into IS discourse. Importantly, I also focus on the precise instructions regarding how to conduct oneself when executing a terror attack.

In the third and final section of this chapter, I assess the mediation of what I am broadly terming 'state processes.' To adhere to the concerns of my research questions, I focus on the mediation of police and economies of punishment, the re-coding of public spaces in the interests of delimiting subjectivities, and the discursive construction and symbolics of economic exchanges in the interests of state-building.

An introduction to Dabiq and Rumiyah

Between June 2014 and July 2016, *Dabiq* was IS's primary English language magazine. According to its authors, *Dabiq* was a follow-up to an early iteration of English IS media, *Islamic State Report*, and was produced in response to comments made about the latter. The authors also claim in the first issue that the magazine is dedicated to issues pertaining to 'tawhid, manhaj, hijrah, jihad, and jama'ah', but would also house 'photo reports, current events, and informative articles on matters related to the Islamic State'

(*Dabiq* Issue 1, 2014, p. 5). I explain the significance of these concepts below. For now, however, it can be said that these concepts are crucial to *Dabiq* and IS media more broadly. Importantly, these concepts inform how I thematize portions of the magazine for analysis.

      Dabiq is a magazine that provided a 'journalistic' function, that is, both informational and rhetorical, to the extent that it supplied readers with information on current events ranging from recent military victories to the repairing of infrastructure. Though, as one can imagine, the editorial stance of *Dabiq* is much closer to public relations than it is the ideal liberal-pluralist function of journalism that is meant to hold state and capital to account. *Dabiq* has a relatively consistent array of sections (see Ingram 2018) with quite typical functions and its structure is for the most part uniform, though it is subject to change depending on discursive events in and around the caliphate. Every issue has a theme or a primary central concern such as hijrah or shariah in particular localities. It is usually composed of a foreword that addresses the theme of the issue which is often distinguishable in its title; it has a Report section that broadly covers current events like military conquests, hisbah services within the caliphate, or liberated towns; sometimes it houses biographies of martyrs or features on women's issues; there is usually a 'Wisdom' section of a page or two: it is composed of an image and a quote from the hadith that is related to the overarching theme of the issue (these are very similar to advertisements in print magazines); it always has at least one feature article that is related to the main theme of a given issue and this is the longest section of the magazine which is usually split into subheadings (Colas 2017, p. 177). There are two more sections that are worth mentioning but, because of their nature, will take a backseat in my analysis. These are the 'In the Words of the Enemy' section which is a briefly contextualised quotation of something a Western leader has said about IS such as Obama or someone from the RAND corporation and the occasional section supposedly written by John Cantlie, a British journalist held hostage by IS for some time.

Dabiq lives up to its early claims of providing content on issues related to tawhid, manhaj, hijrah, jihad and jama'ah: 'These terms refer to Islamic monotheism, correct understanding of the religion, migration, armed struggle and the collectivity of believers respectively' (Mahood and Rane 2017, p. 21). These concepts are useful frames for analysing *Dabiq* as they have the advantage of providing us with an emic perspective to approach IS media (Darling 2016; see also Pike 1967). An emic perspective, as opposed to an etic perspective, allows an 'insider's view of a phenomenon' (Darling 2016, p. 3). As such, an attempt at an emic perspective garnered through the use of concepts *Dabiq* centres its content on is relevant to the goals of this study which seeks to understand the epistemology and governance strategy of IS. While an emic or outsider's perspective can go some way to understanding the phenomenon of IS governmentality, an emic perspective helps us to understand governmentality from IS's perspective. Importantly, an emic perspective allows for critical articulations with my goals of examining the contours of power, knowledge claims, and subjectivity in the name of governance. As I will show, these important principles are echoed in the discourse of IS online as well as in the administrative rule of the caliphate.

Rumiyah, the follow-up to *Dabiq*, functions similarly though with a slight shift in focus. As Abdelrahim (2017, p. 63) noted, it was created after the territorial loss of the town Dabiq in October of 2016: *Dabiq* was named due to the significance of the town Dabiq: in Islamic eschatology, it plays a key role in the Muslim Malahim—an event is akin to the apocalypse in other religions. A cursory glance suggests that *Rumiyah* is largely a continuation of *Dabiq* which is seen in its concentration on the issues of tawhid, manhaj, hijrah, jihad and jama'ah, though what seems more prominent in the case of *Rumiyah* is that it is more focussed on the promulgation of deterritorialised terror attacks and, to some extent, similar to outputs like the Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula-produced *Inspire*, as scholars such as Colas (2017) and Abdelrahim (2019) have asserted. Additionally, Colas notes that

Graeme Wood (2015) has claimed that the more inward focus of *Dabiq* could be a strategy to direct Western military responses away from the caliphate but claims that this hypothesis should be reconsidered after high profile terror attacks such as that of Paris, Brussels, and others. While incitement to terror attacks around the globe does not take as much precedence in *Dabiq* as it does *Rumiyah* and some other video outputs, it is and always has been part of *Dabiq*'s discourse from the outset of the magazine where folks were encouraged to conduct terror attacks if they could not perform hijrah.

      Rumiyah's format is mostly consistent over its thirteen issues. It is usually composed of a foreword, an articles section, and a news section. The articles section houses interviews, articles on hermeneutics and correct interpretation (jama'ah), and advice. The 'News' section is usually populated by coverage of current events which often means military operations in the form of battles or terrorist attacks. From issue five, we sometimes see the more specific sections titled 'Interview' and 'Sisters.' The 'Sisters' section is obviously concerned with women's issues. A unique development from *Dabiq* to *Rumiyah* is the formation of the Just Terror Tactics section which also features in some video media. I discuss this section in detail below, but preliminarily, it is one of the markers which help to shift the focus (without excluding concerns with the internal machinations of the state itself) of *Rumiyah* towards globally deterritorialised terror attacks and how to perform them. The 'Just Terror' section is a very obvious example of terrorist pedagogy where IS seek to intensify its production of subjects who are ready to conduct terror attacks by explicitly educating them how to do so. Colas's assertion that *Dabiq* ought to be considered as an 'ideological training tool for its readers' due to its high volume of hermeneutic materials, can be applied to *Rumiyah* as well (2017, p. 179).

Source Access

The source materials for this portion of my analysis were collected from Aaron Zelin's jihadology.net. Zelin is a terrorism scholar who describes his website as 'A clearinghouse for jihadi primary source material, original analysis, and translation service' (jihadology.net 2020). This website is the most sophisticated online archive of official Islamic State media that I am aware of. To collect source material for my analysis, I conducted a search of the magazines '*Dabiq*' and '*Rumiyah*' which I downloaded in late 2018. For video media, I searched the site for all media produced by Al-Hayat Media Centre, downloaded it, and continue to keep it on an external hard drive. I downloaded all video media produced by Al-Hayat media that was available in late 2018, and I have periodically conducted searches since then to keep track of any new media outputs of which there were few.

A logic of equivalence: the delineation of enemies

An understanding of how enemies are delineated in IS media is essential to an understanding of the governmental role played by the group's legacy media. Laclau and Mouffe's (2014) discourse theory and its attendant key terms are useful in such an analysis as they show us how discourse functions with regard to power, knowledge, and truth claims in the name of directing subjects toward particular ends. A useful starting point is the delineation of enemies on religious grounds through the use of the term, logic of equivalence (Phillips and Jørgensen 2002, pp. 44-45).

Laclau and Mouffe's logic of equivalence (and difference) reveals how discourse may structure the legitimation or illegitimation of particular subjects. As will be made clear, from both diachronic and synchronic standpoints, IS seek to produce totalities (Laclau and Mouffe 2014, p. 105). That is, IS media attempts to fix meaning within its discourse so that other

meanings become impossible: due to their arrangement of elements within their discourse(s), each sign becomes fixed in relation to other signs (Carpentier 2019, p. 157). I focus here on the logic of equivalence but hark back to this discussion in Chapter 7 where I establish how a logic of difference manifests in administrative rule. Put simply, the logic of equivalence can be thought of as the cancellation of difference (with regard to identity) within a social categorisation (Phillips and Jørgensen 2002, pp. 44-45). That is, difference is disappeared and a binary is established.

The discursive construction of enemies throughout *Dabiq* gestures toward the construction of enemies as illegitimate and, in a biopolitical sense, worthy of regulation or exclusion. Consider the example of the construction of Jews in *Dabiq*. In Issue 1 (2014, p. 10), Jews are on the list of excludable identities now that the world has 'divided into two camps.' They are the 'barbaric' and marked out to be killed (*Dabiq* Issue 2, 2014, p. 4); mentioned alongside a range of other non-Islamic worshippers (*Dabiq* Issue 2, 2014, p. 6); the allies of Kurds at war against the Muslims (*Dabiq* Issue 2, 2014); worthy of mention alongside crusaders (*Dabiq* Issue 5, 2015, p. 13, but this is common throughout IS media); stereotypically 'sneaky' (*Dabiq* Issue 6, 2015, p. 9); associated with apostasy (*Dabiq* Issue 7, 2014, p. 28); disapproving, along with Christians, of Muslims (*Dabiq* Issue 7, 2015, p. 62); proponents of democracy (*Dabiq* Issue 7, 2015, p. 70); dependent on Muslims to be relieved of humiliation, backed up with Qur'anic verses (*Dabiq* Issue 9, 2015, pp. 17-18); allies with Kurdish disbelievers (*Dabiq* Issue 10, 2015, p. 34); masters of Al-Saud alongside Christians (*Dabiq* Issue 13, 2016, p. 8); and corrupt, along with Christians (*Dabiq* Issue 15, 2016, p. 48). Alongside almost all of these references, Jews are mentioned in close proximity to other disbelievers or 'kafir'. The use of the term kafir is crucial to understand the way IS discursively constructs its enemies through a logic of equivalence wherein a stark binary distinguishes between includable IS Muslims and excludable Others.

A consideration of the use of the term kufr (kufir, kafir) in *Dabiq* reveals how IS use logics of equivalence to structure discourse. Very broadly, a kufr is someone who is not a Muslim. The term encompasses a range of enemies previously discussed: Christians and Jews (The People of the Book), but also insincere Muslims, lapsed Muslims, Shi'a, atheists, and those who follow other faiths. Within the context of Salafism and an Islamic State, or, what Ingram, Whiteside, and Winter (2020) describe as IS's blend of Salafism, jihadism, and takfir, the term kufr accrues a social, political, and 'legal' meaning. Although this term would seem to merely be an informal term used to demarcate enemies, it has very real consequences within the caliphate with regard to inclusion in the polity, and outside the caliphate as a marker of proximal risk to biopolitical extermination. This has a number of consequences for the social renderability of subjects in relation to the Islamic State. As far as media is concerned, a logic of equivalence is what is primarily at play in the identification of enemies in *Dabiq*, though this logic is not necessarily sustained in administrative rule as I will show in the following chapter. What is immediately paramount, however, is how the discursive construction of kufr in IS media positions subjects as disposable or in need of regulation. Part of the performance of IS subjectivity is a willingness to take part in the regulation or liquidation of such abnormalities either within the caliphate or abroad.

Enemies are not just identified within the context of IS's conjuncture; like almost all of IS's posturing, their construction of enemies is epistemologically qualified through recourse to Qur'anic verses or surah. This can be seen in Issue 9 of *Dabiq* in the article 'Conspiracy Theory Shirk' (2015j). The crux of the article is that conspiracy theories about the Islamic State (and related entities) can function as excuses to avoid jihad. One example is the conspiracy that the September 11 terror attacks were an 'inside job' conducted by kaffir in order to justify aggression towards Muslims. Claims such as this are almost blasphemous for IS as 9/11 is mythologised as part of the glorious recent history of jihad—Osama bin

Laden is referred to as 'Sheikh' numerous times in IS media. The conspiracies concerned are not limited to 9/11 'truthers', however:

> One of the worst aspects of these theories is that they require no evidence, just foolish "deductions." And worse yet, many of these conspiracy claimants are themselves involved in real kāfir conspiracies! You see the Iraqi Sahwah fighting alongside the Iraqi army – openly backed by Iran – while claiming that the mujāhidīn are agents of Iran! You see Sahwah factions openly handing over territory to the Nusayrī regime, while claiming the mujāhidīn cooperate with the Nusayrī regime! You see the different Sawhah factions openly and publically meeting with Qatar, Turkey, Āl Salūl, and the Americans and discussing their plans for cooperation against the Islamic State, while claiming that the muhājirīn and ansār are allies and agents of foreign states! You see the Syrian National Coalition considering meetings in Geneva with the Nusayrī regime, while claiming that the Islamic State strives to serve regime interests! (*Dabiq* Issue 9, 2015, p. 16).

In short, the 'conspiracies' at hand are a series of its enemies' contradictions. As has been established, hypocrisy is important in IS discourse, especially within the context of their hermeneutics. A good portion of the rest of this article is dedicated to the deployment of these hermeneutics, to understand the inconsistencies of IS's enemies, and references verses from the Qur'an and hadith to substantiate their claims (Ahamed 2005). On page 17, the collective Kuffar are enemies of each other despite appearing united (Al-Hashr: 14 - this is concerned with banishment and exile); Kuffar have ill intent toward one another (Al-Baqarah: 113); the allies of the Kuffar are not reliable enough to carry out orders (Al-Hashr: 11-12); various distinctions of Christians and Jews hate each other (Al-Ma'idah: 14; 64); Jews and Christians hate each other (Al-Imran: 19; Ash-Shura: 14); and finally, we see a potential hatred of Jews more than Christians due to the former's treatment of Jesus and Mary (Al-Imran: 55). The identification of enemies, then, is not arbitrary nor is it located only in the recent present. The identification and epistemological qualification of enemies in IS media is achieved through recourse to their own specific Islamist hermeneutics. To put it in the language of Laclau and Mouffe, the nodal point of Islam(ism), which organises discourse, leverages master signifiers like kufr, Christian, Jew, and so on, and arranges these identities via a logic of equivalence, which is a logic of exclusion in this case, to pursue the myth of the caliphate (Phillips and

Jørgensen 2002, p. 50; Laclau and Mouffe 2014, p. 98). This process of arrangement has a number of consequences. Certainly, it provides its audience with a pedagogy of exclusion in that it tells us who ought to be regulated or excluded in the Islamic state-assemblage. This series of identifications is part of IS's field of discursivity that is brought into its discourse for both the quiet and loud justification of its targeting of far enemies. What this example does not tell us yet, however, is precisely how those enemies ought to be regulated or excluded. Though we see a glimpse of the regulatory potential of IS Muslims to correct the faith of their enemies, an assessment of IS's terror pedagogy will reveal more of the group's dispositif and how the group sought to conduct its subjects from afar.

Just Terror Tactics: pedagogy and deterritorialised acts of terror

The 'Just Terror Tactics' section in *Rumiyah* is a 4-part series of articles in Issues 2, 3, 5, and 9. These articles function as guides on how to conduct terror attacks in the west. The title 'Just Terror' has two primary but related functions. In the first of the series (*Rumiyah* Issue 2, 2016, pp. 12-13), a footnote explains that the authors use 'just' as an adjective for 'justice' rather than rendering deterritorialised terror attacks in the West as 'lone wolf' attacks. The unsaid intention but resultant effect of naming the section and action as 'just terror' is that IS differentiate their understanding of terror attacks in the West: IS's deterritorialised citizenry commit terror attacks as acts of justice towards the violent and oppressive West. They are not 'lone wolves', they have pledged allegiance to the caliphate. Plus, IS prefer the iconology of lions to wolves anyway.

The 'Just Terror Tactics' sections in *Rumiyah* have a number of functions and consequences for the IS dispositif. Firstly, they directly educate deterritorialised IS citizens on how to perform terror attacks. Not only do these articles discuss the specifics of what kind of gear is needed for an attack, suitable sites for the attack, and the purpose of the attack (to

strike varying degrees of terror into the hearts of the victims and the West in general), they also discuss how one conducts oneself during an attack, how they can symbolise the attack, and locate particular kinds of attacks within religious discourse. With regard to dispositif analysis, this means that particular objects are brought into the realm of the IS dispositif and their specifics take on new dimensions of meaning. In Part 1, which is focussed on knife attacks, the authors specify the precise kinds of knife one needs to perform an attack in the West: fixed blades with guards are preferable to folding knives or knives with a lockback feature as they can take more force without risk to the user (*Rumiyah* Issue 2, 2016, p. 13). Readers are encouraged to attack smaller crowds to attain a higher number of kills or even target individuals:

> For example, the target could be a drunken kafir on a quiet road returning home from a night out, or the average kafir working his night shift, or someone walking alone in a public park or rural forested area, or someone by himself in an alley close to a night club or another place of debauchery, or even someone out for a walk in a quiet neighborhood [sic]. One should consider canals, riversides, and beaches. (*Rumiyah* Issue 2, 2016, p. 13)

The importance of victims' anatomies is noted too, as is the technique for certain kinds of killing: soldiers should target major organs or vulnerable areas such as the armpit, groin, or neck, and bare areas of skin should be sought out in particular if the victim is wearing leather or denim. The head should be avoided due to its sturdiness and the possibility for the skull to break the knife. Beheadings, though in line with pious conduct, should not be carried out due to the apparent specificity of technique and time needed to perform such an action: the goal is to cause as much terror as possible by killing as many as possible rather than the precise performance of brutality itself. Though a beheading is in line with the encouragement to strike the disbelievers at their necks, 'simply cutting the throat, just as one would slaughter a sheep, is sufficient' (*Rumiyah* Issue 2, 2016, p. 13). Yet, IS do acknowledge the importance of the spectacle of terror and encourage perpetrators to take responsibility for the attack with direct reference to IS:

> Lest the operation be mistaken for one of the many random acts of violence that plague the West, it is essential to leave some kind of evidence or insignia identifying the motive and allegiance to the Khalifah, even if it is something as simple as a note pinned or attached to the victim's body, or a final testament if the operation will be of a nature where the expected outcome is one's shahadah. (*Rumiyah* Issue 2, 2016, p. 13)

Part 1 of 'Just Terror Tactics' ends with religious justification and the implicit evocation of 'propaganda by the deed' where such attacks encourage more attacks in the west and represent the 'harshness' the mujahideen wish the west to find in them (*Rumiyah* Issue 2, 2016, p. 13). Though the focus is on the religious legitimation of wielding and using a knife, there is a brief mention that the companions of the prophet would have been familiar with the use of knives. The authors do address the notion that the idea of stabbing someone makes most people very squeamish, a symptom of modernisation where men no longer commonly slaughter enemies or fight in wars. More specifically, and perhaps more importantly, is the way that the use of knives is briefly framed: a knife had been used in the killing of Ka'b Ibn al-Ashraf which was ordered by Muhammad (*Rumiyah* Issue 2, 2016, p. 12).

The specific instructions in this pedagogy of terror reveal the mutually constitutive relationship between discourse and materiality (Hardy and Thomas 2019). More specifically, the 'Just Terror Tactics' section of *Rumiyah* reveals the importance of what Nico Carpentier calls the discursive-material knot in the IS assemblage: 'The discursive-material knot is a nonhierarchical ontology that theorizes the knotted interactions of the discursive and the material as restless and contingent, sometimes incessantly changing shapes and sometimes deeply sedimented' (2019, p. 160). Pedagogies of terror (in *Rumiyah*) are rendered legible by the mutually constitutive role played by discourse as it brings objects and bodies into its realm from its discursive reservoir: to conduct a terror attack in this way is to materialise the discourse of IS but at the same time the material attack is discursively constituted by *Rumiyah*. Knives are not objects into which no discourse is put, but their relationality to

bodies and the specificity of their anatomies within the IS dispositif acknowledges the spectacle of terror sought out by IS.

Moreover, the religious justification for using a knife exemplifies the power of IS's master signifiers. As in the delineation of enemies above, the nodal point of Islamism which calls on knowledge objects like the Qur'an and hadith for its qualification, organises the discourse of IS and its media. In this case, IS place themselves in the historical echo of Muhammad's orders, thereby locating themselves within the holy actions of the prophet. Here, however, the discourse-organising function of Islamism has a very material consequence in that it works to further frame and justify the use of knives; recourse to Islamic scripture helps to solidify the deed itself as pious conduct.

The subsequent parts of the Just Terror Tactics series follow a similar outline but differentiate their choices of weapons and tactics accordingly. The focus of Part 2 is the weaponisation of vehicles which has been a popular terror tactic globally. Here, we see how the specificity of objects are brought into the realm and logic of the IS dispositif to the extent that they become articulated to its governmentality. This article highlights the potentiality of everyday objects to be reappropriated as instruments of terror. The utility of vehicles is that they do not arouse the same suspicion as a knife, gun, or gas container. Much like the previous article on knife attacks, the authors specify which vehicles should be sought out and which should be avoided: heavy, fast, double-wheeled, raised chassis, steel-framed trucks are preferable for allowing maximum amounts of destruction and death; doubled wheels allow 'victims less of a chance to escape being crushed by the vehicle's tyres' and a raised chassis and bumper allows one to drive over footpaths and barriers. Vehicles to avoid include small cars, SUVs, slow vehicles, and trucks with an articulation feature which can result in the vehicle being jacknifed (*Rumiyah* Issue 3, 2016, p. 11). Appropriate targets are precisely what one would imagine: relatively populated areas such as markets, festivals, rallies,

parades, and so on, in order to achieve the highest kill count possible. The preparation for an attack also includes attaining secondary weapons if possible. However, this lesson in terror goes further than the previous article on knife attacks and outlines how one should conduct oneself during a terror attack. In terms of personal conduct, we can see the manifestation of sincerity in one's piety which is a strong current of thought throughout IS media. Of note here is the encouragement to not only remember Allah and one's sincerity, but the repetition of liturgy during the attack:

> One of the prerequisites of a successful operation is the remembrance of Allah and the sincerity of intending the attack solely to please Him. To achieve this, one should keep the dhikr of Allah on one's tongue and repeat du'a for His assistance and acceptance. For this particular attack, one should not forget the supplication of mounting a vehicle, which is to say, "Sub·ḥā·nal·la·dhī sakh·kha·ra la·nā hā·dhā wa mā kun·nā la·hū muq·ri·nīn, wa in·nā i·lā rab·bi·nā la·mun·qa·li·būn," and which means, "Exalted is Allah, who subdued this for us, and we otherwise could not have subdued it; and we indeed shall return to our Lord" (Az-Zukhruf 13-14). (*Rumiyah* Issue 3, 2016, p. 12)

This example represents the ideal reach of IS's governmentality. It is not enough to perform such an attack and throw pamphlets stating 'The Islamic State Will Remain!' during its execution, the attacker must also remember his piety and express it as such. In other words, IS seek to produce subjects whose conduct which dictates and informs their inclusion in the IS assemblage is carried out until the very end.

Part 3 of Just Terror tactics, focussed on arson attacks, has a stronger hermeneutic element than the other parts of the series. After detailing the significance of fire attacks throughout history, listing some recent terror attacks, and providing instructions on how to make napalm and Molotov cocktails, the authors discuss the rules around fire according to religion in a footnote. Fire is permissible to use to punish prisoners only if they have perpetrated the burning of Muslims (this is likely why it was permissible to burn the Jordanian Pilot Muath al-Kassasbeh in the video *The Healing of the Believers' Chests*). It is also permissible to use fire in both warfare and reconnaissance operations as Muhammad 'burned down the date palm trees of Bani an-Nadir while besieging them, causing widespread

fire thereby (Reported by al-Bukhari from Ibn 'Umar)' (*Rumiyah* Issue 5 2017, p. 9). In the

opinion of the authors, scholarly consensus sees fire as acceptable as the 'collateral' deaths of

the enemies' women and children (*Rumiyah* Issue 5, 2017, p. 9). The epistemological

justification for conducting war in a particular way is crucial here; it harks back to my claims

above that IS qualify all discursive actions through the nodal points of Qur'an, hadith, and

'scholarly consensus'. Much like the use of the word 'kufr' discussed in the previous section

legitimises the treatment of particular subjects by bringing them into the realm of the

religious, the reference to not only the Qur'an but scholarly consensus is a technique that

ensures the authors and their audience's conduct are in line with appropriate conduct.

The fourth and final part of the Just Terror tactics series is relatively unremarkable

compared to the others. Focussed on hostage-taking, this article makes clear that the point of

taking hostages is not to negotiate with kufr, but to cause as much carnage and death as

possible with shahid (martyrdom) being the ultimate goal. It encourages readers to take

advantage of lapse gun control in the US too. The taking of hostages as part of IS's spectacle

of terror subjectifies the IS subject into a mode of deterritorialised citizenship. As Bathia &

Pathak-Shelat argue, 'the formation of a religious subject is, therefore, contingent on both

practices of government and the practices of self' (2019, p. 31). The pedagogy of terror

prevalent in Just Terror tactics is the attempt to produce subjects at the intersection of

practices of government and of the self: by participating in IS's global spectacle of terror,

deterritorialised subject-citizens adhere to the ideal conduct of IS's governmentality and,

within the epistemology of IS's Islamism, simultaneously work on themselves in the pursuit

of salvation.

In this section, I have focussed on the delineation of enemies, the ways in which terror

attacks ought to be conducted, and the ways in which objects are epistemologically qualified

and brought into IS discourse. However, to flesh out the resonance between relations interior

and exterior to the machinations of the caliphate, I now turn to a discussion of the mediation of state processes.

Mediating the State

Below, I discuss the recurring section in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* titled 'Islamic State Reports.' In *Dabiq*, this section focuses on state practices (in a broad sense) until Issue 9, and military operations thereafter. The Reports section in *Rumiyah*, on the other hand, focuses almost solely on military efforts. I emphasise the 'Islamic State Reports' section in the first 9 Issues of *Dabiq* to show the ways in which the Islamic State established itself and its processes; in other words, I ask how IS mediate processes crucial to the establishment and smooth running of the caliphate. Below, I concentrate on three primary areas: the re-coding of public spaces in the interests of delimiting subjectivities, the mediation of policing (specifically, hisbah) and economies of punishment, and the discursive construction and symbolics of economic exchanges in the interests of state-building.

Re-coding spaces

A recurring element in *Dabiq* and some video media is the (re)coding of public spaces. This is an example of the territorialising capacity of the IS dispositif. The abstract machine of Islamism seeks to facilitate certain relations between things in the IS assemblage. The following examples highlight the relationship between the abstract machine of Islamism (elements which inform the relation between things) and the concrete assemblage (material elements) and, specifically, how the former seeks to fold the latter into itself. In 'Islamic State Reports' from Issue 2 of *Dabiq*, we see a report 'On the destruction of Shirk in Wilayat Ninawa' (2014). The report covers the destruction of the Al-Qubba Husseiniya Mosque in Mosul, the grave of the girl in Mosul, the shrine and tomb of Ahmed Ar-Rifar, and the Husayniyyat Jawwad temple (*Dabiq* Issue 2, 2014, pp. 14-17). The concept of shirk is

addressed constantly throughout IS media and can be practically understood as shirking one's

religious duties and commitment to Islam and Allah. In particular, shirk is at odds with

Tawhid (oneness with God) and can manifest in practices such as idolatry, or, the

worshipping of objects other than God. Interestingly, the concept of shirk seems to function

as an empty signifier in IS discourse: Military technology (*Rumiyah* Issue 3, 2016, p. 33),

'Precious metals and jewels' - the idols of Indians (*Rumiyah* Issue 3, 2016, p. 36),

Nationalism and democracy (*Dabiq* Issue 1, 2014, p. 8; Issue 8, p. 6; Issue 10, p. 3),

Maslahah (basis of law) (*Rumiyah* Issue 1, 2016, p. 15), Pre-Islamic Arabian deities (*Dabiq*

Issue 10, 2015, p. 28), Free speech (*Dabiq* Issue 9, 2015, p. 3), and religious jewellery (*Dabiq*

Issue 15, 2015, p. 64) are among the many material and immaterial forms which count as

idolatry for IS. Here, however, shirk is connected to the misdirected worship of objects in the

material world[17]: in this case, the destruction occurred against Shi'a shrines, graves, and

temples.

The erasure of objects of worship is crucial to the territorialising forces of the IS

dispositif and its territorial assemblage. The removal of sites of worship is an

acknowledgement that spaces are one of the contextual processes which facilitate or block

modes of being. Lawrence Grossberg's (2013) work on context as it relates to territory is

useful here. Grossberg uses assemblage theory to establish a triumvirate of concepts to think

about space and modes of being: milieu(s) (location), territory (place), and region

(ontological epoch). Milieus are akin to concrete assemblages (Nail 2017, p. x) in that they

refer to the material elements and relations between them in a particular space (Grossberg

2013, p. 36), and territories, like an abstract machine or diagram, are the 'resonance or

rhythm that articulates, coordinates or communicates across milieus'—they are what hold

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[17] The word commonly used for this is 'dunya' which refers to earthly affairs in the material world.

together physical elements (Grossberg 2013, p. 36). Importantly, territories or places are constituted by the possibilities of ways of being, the delimitation of subjectivities, and degrees of agency (Grossberg 2013, p. 37). Though these concepts are intertwined, the most important in the case of coding of public spaces to (de)limit ways of being within the caliphate is 'region' or ontological epoch. Regions are ontological constructions which we can consider by asking: what are the possible ways of being, in terms of the performance and everyday lived experience of subjectivity, in a particular time and place? In what ways are such modes of being facilitated or blocked in this ontological epoch?

If spaces needed to live one's subjectivity are erased, then that subjectivity becomes less possible in a territory. The structuring of certain sites of worship as shirk reveals the ways in which the IS dispositif seeks to shift both the material and immaterial coordinates of conduct. An Islamist hermeneutics which IS deploy via jurisprudence and the subsequent production of everyday conduct accounts for the milieu of 'material and discursive assemblage of political, economic, social and cultural practices, structure and events' (2013, p. 37). The milieu IS have sought to produce does not exist alone; its boundaries lean on and spill onto the cultural environments that previously informed the multitudinous geographies of Iraq and Syria. Their territory or place, 'the context of lived reality' (2013, p. 37), enframes the shift of the use of objects and their attendant modes of being:

> It is an expressive and affective contextuality – marked by densities, distances and speeds – of access and agency, security and danger, mobility and networks, and assemblage of practices, discourses, experiences and affects. (Grossberg 2013, p. 137)

In other words, the cultural, physical, and subjective boundaries of IS's territory is drastically unstable. However, this relational conception of space can facilitate an understanding of the use of objects and thus account for the instability of the inherent meaning of physical objects. This has consequences for the region as an ontological construction. That is, region in this sense is less concerned with a physical location than it is with those possible forms of being

in the world (Grossberg 2013, p. 38). In this case, it sets out the 'contingent conditions of possibility of milieus and territories, locations and places' (2013, p. 38). By erasing locations through recourse to territorial relationality and thus performing a detachment cut of the coding of public space, IS seek to eliminate Shiite enactments of Islam. We are perfectly aware that other forms of Islam such as Shi'ism are excludable in IS discourse, but the example of the erasure of sites of worship in a very material sense highlights the utility of a dispositif analysis of IS media and governmentality: the strategy of the group is to ensure that everything is in its right place, in every sense of the word, especially if that means the annihilation of bodies and buildings of worship.

Visualising police: economies of crime and punishment

The mediation of police supports the coding of public spaces by delineating correct forms and incorrect forms of conduct, and through the regulation and disposal of unassimilable subjectivities. The mediation of policing practices can be seen in coverage of the hisbah. Roughly translating to 'enjoining the good and forbidding evil', hisbah is manifested in the Islamic State via the deployment of religious or moral police. Additionally, hisbah is also outlined as a concept in IS media.

The activities of the institution of the hisbah are occasionally mediated throughout *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* which is where we also find its theorisation. In Issue 10 of *Dabiq*, for example, hisbah is mentioned in an article on Tawhid and the duty one has to one's parents (*Dabiq* Issue 10, 2015, pp. 14-17). Rather than discussing hisbah as policing practice, the authors quote the Hanbali scholar Abdul Abbās Ibn Qudāmah's to establish a typology of punishments meted out for misconduct:

> informing the ignorant person, admonishing with kind speech, harshness and cursing (by saying "O jāhil" or "O fool"), prevention with force in relation to the tools of the sin not the sinner himself (by pouring out the alcohol, destroying the musical instruments, etc.), and threatening to beat the sinner and actually beating him (which can only be done by those with authority over the sinner) (*Dabiq* Issue 10, 2015, p. 17).

However, a few months prior, in Issue 3 of *Dabiq*, some of the activities of the hisbah (mainly as a concept) were visualised: we see a picture of a 'Qur'an school', distribution of Da'wah (summoning to Islam) related materials (pamphlets), Pledges of allegiance, the burning of cigarettes, group repentance of Sahwah soldiers, and men crowded at a Da'wah kiosk. Here, hisbah is mediated in a more general sense rather than as policing as we see in the video, *The Best Ummah*. The governmental function of these examples is clear. Framed within Islam in a holistic sense, these pictures precisely demarcate examples of good conduct within the caliphate as it pertains to forbidden objects and activities (e.g., cigarettes and smoking), as well as preferable activities (i.e., modes of worship). Similar discussions of hisbah appear in *Dabiq* Issue 13 and *Rumiyah* Issue 5, though with some reference to the actual activities of the hisbah as an institution. In Issue 13 of *Dabiq*, hisbah activities are drawn attention to in an interview with the IS Wali of Khurasan where most of the concerns outlined in Issue 3 are (i.e., the destruction of hāram substances). Here, attention is drawn to the context of Afghanistan and the hisbah presents themselves as the solution to the Taliban's lenience on the opium trade. The same occurs in an interview with the Amir of hisbah in Sinai in *Rumiyah* Issue 5:

> Allah has blessed us and facilitated for us here in the Hisbah Centre to combat many manifestations of corruption, among the most important of which is the smuggling of cigarettes, marijuana, opiates, and other substances. Likewise, we have prohibited the people from committing open sins and wrongs, such as women not wearing proper hijab, men allowing their clothing to fall below their ankles, and the free intermingling of men and women, as well as smoking, music, and satellite dishes, [which are used for broadcasting sinful programs]. Our main focus, however, is to wage war against the manifestations of shirk and bid'ah, including Sufism, sorcery, soothsaying, and grave-worship. (*Rumiyah* Issue 5, 2017, p. 12)

Though this outline of the activities of the hisbah comes at a relatively late stage in the history of IS's English-language magazine output, it nevertheless underscores the vast range of policing activities undertaken by the group and executed in various territories.

The most significant example of the mediation of hisbah, in terms of actual policing activities, is the video *The Best Ummah* (Al-Hayat Media Centre 2014g). This video pre-dates the declaration of the caliphate by a month, however it is worth discussing due to its focus on the function of hisbah in the caliphate. *The Best Ummah* is primarily composed of scenes in which the hisbah are in the midst of policing, giving us a glimpse into how they interceded into everyday aspects of daily life. Scattered from the outset of this footage are voice overs which connect the actions of hisbah back to hermeneutical concerns. Throughout, we see the hisbah round up folks for Friday prayer; confiscate haram prophets; remove Shi'ite landmarks; advise shopkeepers on what is acceptable to display in public; and preach to young men about brotherhood and mutual support. An early scene provides a picture of the pre-caliphate as an area within which the disciplinary power of the hisbah is already in full effect: as a member of the hisbah walks through an empty market with the goal of rounding citizens up for Friday prayer and closing shops, he remarks that the citizens do not even need to be told about Friday prayer which is evidenced by the deserted market. The hisbah are not shown to be violently confiscating goods or dishing out punishments for moral violations at all throughout the segment; rather, the hisbah present themselves as teachers and allies of the citizenry who work together towards establishing the rule of Allah. The allyship between hisbah and citizens is evidenced not just in the shots of hisbah conversing with, shaking hands with, and hugging citizens, but also through the way in which violations are dealt with: a hisbah member tells a shopkeeper to display something inside his shop only which is met with a smile, agreement, and a pious praise at the end of their exchange. The second shopkeeper that is addressed responds similarly. In the second case, the violation is in reference to a mannequin on public display and the hisbah do threaten to cut its head off, though this seems to be in jest. It is during this interaction that the reciprocity between citizen and police is made more apparent: the hisbah states that 'If we are fixing things in the streets

and you put this in front you will make us tired without a result. But if you (the shop owners) helped us the work will be like this. You fix the inside and we fix the outside {they shake hands}.' Interactions like this (which could certainly be false) go beyond the disciplinary logic of correcting behaviour by intervening on it directly. We ought to remember here that due to the video's pre-caliphate status, the video as such is part of IS's re-territorialising process in the establishment of its state assemblage. Short of merely functioning as a rhetorical tool, by appealing to the citizenry as being part of the same fight against indecency, IS seek to draw in the agents of their assemblage. In other words, this video makes us privy to the insidious function of automatic power where the objective is for subjects to govern themselves. The eye of the hisbah remains and the sovereign force of bodily punishment does not hesitate to intervene should it need to.

Further along in *The Best Ummah*, a member of the hisbah implores to a small gathering of mostly young men that IS are their allies: 'We want to be your brothers and you want to be our brothers we will be inshallah just like the immigrants and the supporters.' We ought to remember here that this pre-caliphate video is set during the time that IS are taking control and beginning to govern many areas so even though the caliphate has not been officially declared yet, it is certainly beginning to materialise. What is interesting about this scene is not the reiteration of soft power over the violence of sovereign power, but what comes next: offscreen, an apparently older man responds to the IS member:

Citizen: Yes Sheikh preaching is important.

Hisbah: Inshallah-

Citizen: We were corrupted. These people are not corrupt, they have been corrupted. The disobedience was easy for them and worship was hard. But today thanks to God the worship became easy and the disobedience became hard-

Hisbah: Thanks to God-

Citizen: This is God's grace. I am from Aleppo and I hear your speech focus on the preaching especially the young guys… May Allah rise up a new generation who is better than us-

Hisbah: Inshallah.

The citizen replies using the same register and rhetoric that characterises most IS media. Of course, there is the possibility that the man was a plant and that the video was staged, however, this is not important seeing as the point of the video as knowledge object is to provide a pedagogy of conduct for current and future citizens. This is shown not just by the gathering of boys and men who watch and listen in silence and awe, but in the fact of the video's production. The message is clear: while it is good to follow the instructions of the hisbah without being told, it might be better to absorb their rhetoric and parrot it back to them.

What is evidenced in *The Best Ummah* is the pursued goal of governmentality in which subjects are encouraged to intervene on their own conduct. While elements of disciplinary power are certainly at play, they function as precursors to the preferred automatic functioning of power. To conclude this chapter, I now turn to a consideration of how economic exchange was brought into the IS discourse.

Legitimacy and the symbolics of economic exchange

As stated in Chapter 4, within my rendering of dispositif analysis, economic exchanges are understood as discursive practices. Exchanges themselves, alongside a range of techniques previously discussed, function both materially and symbolically to prop up and simultaneously legitimize IS epistemology and hegemony. The implementation of currency is first discussed in an Islamic State Report from Issue 5 of *Dabiq* (2014, pp. 18-19). The goal of circulating the caliphate's own currency is to segregate the ummah from a corrupt global financial system. In IS's worldview, gold and silver carry an inherent value which is contrasted by worthless banknotes which are merely pieces of paper. Importantly, the minting of the caliphate's own currency echoes a practice of coin circulation in the time of the Umayyad Caliphate conducted in response to the circulation of Persian and Roman coins.

These coins had their own symbolics different from that of the Persians and the Romans,

something which comes across in IS's minting of their own coins:

> The images used are representative of the guidance that the Muslims have attained from the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam). They include an image of seven stalks of wheat, symbolizing the blessings of sadaqah, a spear and shield, symbolizing the Muslim's provisions from jihad, and date palm trees, symbolizing the Muslim's deep-rooted faith, firm patience, and fruitful deeds. (*Dabiq* Issue 3, 2014, p. 18)

IS's deployment of its own coinage is an example of the group attempting to separate itself

from the taghut (disbelieving) West, its histories, and its attendant practices. Such issues are

addressed more meaningfully in Issue 6 of *Dabiq* in 'Meltdown', supposedly written by John

Cantlie. This article gives a broad outline of the monetary history of the US since World War

II and focusses on the Bretton Woods agreement and its dissolution. It critiques the

dominance of the US dollar and petrodollars which are meaningless compared to inherently

valuable materials such as gold and silver. In the same breath, 'Cantlie' praises the market

worth of gold and the ingenuity of the Islamic State and its decision to mint its own currency

in today's 'turbulent markets' (*Dabiq* Issue 6, 2015, p. 59). And with the coming end of the

American dollar as China and Russia begin to 'de-dollarize' the petrol industry, it is just a

matter of time before the reign of the US dollar is over. In short, gold is the only escape from

the control banks and governments have over the direction of currencies for Cantlie/IS.

If the message regarding the sanctity of the Islamic State's currency over banknotes

was unclear, it is made even more stark in *Inside the Caliphate* #1 (2017). As in other state-

related processes, this iteration of the *Inside the Caliphate* series visually renders economic

exchanges in the caliphate (it should be noted that the footage is staged; this is not

documentary-style footage). People willingly and happily exchange their newly minted coins

for goods in a food market while shopkeepers reject US dollars. It is here where we also see

the values for certain food items in weight visualized on screen though it is unclear if these

were the true prices set by the caliphate. Finally, it is made abundantly clear that the new

monetary system applies to all forms of exchange including contracts, wages, services, as well as any work carried out by the state itself, though it is unclear what this might entail.

The implementation of currency in the Islamic State is an important aspect of the IS dispositif to direct conduct at every level of life. Symbolising coins with iconography is a deliberate attempt to direct discourse by bringing particular signs into the repertoire of images and icons that citizens and IS themselves draw on to make sense of the world. Encoding currency in the Islamic State is akin to a banal form of nationalism (Billig 1995) that wishes to make itself known. The implementation of currency harks back to a historical means of differentiating the caliphate from Crusaders and Persians, is a means of symbolising IS's segregation from corrupt taghut banking, a way of sanctifying the inherent value placed upon gold and silver by Allah, and when articulated to an Islamic banking system, simultaneously becomes part of meaning-making practices and the conduct of good Muslims.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have provided an analysis of key thematics in *Dabiq*, *Rumiyah*, and the videos *The Best Ummah* and the *Inside the Caliphate* series. I sought to understand the ways in which IS instituted bureaucratic and media forms to govern subjects locally and incite terror globally through an analysis of the aforementioned media texts. Attempting an emic perspective by considering frames IS themselves use to describe their online magazines, my analysis made clear that IS govern subjects in a variety of ways in line with a governmental logic derived from Islamist hermeneutics.

In the first section, I showed how IS used a logic of equivalence in *Dabiq* which collapses difference between their vast range of enemies. By legitimising and illegitimating certain subjects, IS locate their enemies within a totality by fixing meaning to these subjects. IS use Islamism as a nodal point in order to arrange identities, erase their difference, and

produce them as excludable subjects. The logic of exclusion here is not unique to *Dabiq* and is, rather, discursively articulated across IS media and administration practices. In particular, the production of 'kufr' identities marks out those who ought to be regulated, corrected, or excluded. A crucial observation in this section was how IS use recourse to some parts of the Qur'an and hadith to epistemologically substantiate their claims, therefore gaining perceived legitimacy for both them and their audience. This is a common practice in both IS's media and administrative processes which I draw attention to again in Chapter 7.

I followed this by conducting an analysis of the 'Just Terror Tactics' section in *Rumiyah*. I examined the specifics of IS's pedagogy of terror where the precise conduct of terror attacks was laid out including the appropriate objects to use, sites, the correct means of self-conduct during the attack, and the mediation of the attack itself. Though the ethic of terror attacks was largely to cause as much harm and damage as possible, IS simultaneously acknowledge the importance of the spectacle of terror. Throughout this section, I drew attention to the relationship between discourse and materiality, the discursive-material knot (Carpentier 2019). Such an observation is vital for understanding the dialectical relationship between semiosis and materiality, and the ways in which discursive reservoirs or, a field of discursivity, is brought into the IS dispositif. This part of my analysis harks back to my observations in the first section of this chapter where I underscored the importance of Islamism as a key nodal point around which discourses form in the IS totality.

My analysis of 'Just Terror Tactics' in *Rumiyah* also showed how IS seek to conduct not just the lives, but also the deaths of their subjects. This is apparent in the magazine's plea to repeat religious liturgy and retain one's sincerity during a terror attack. In the previous chapter, I mentioned how social media bots could intervene to continue one's good conduct after their death; here, IS produce the final version of their subjects during their last moments and in advance of their martyrdom and subsequent salvation.

In the final sections of this chapter, I showed how IS sought to delimit the possibility of abnormal subjectivities within the caliphate by re-coding public spaces via the destruction of symbolic objects, the mediation of the hisbah, and the symbolics of economic exchange in the caliphate. The IS dispositif takes into account *all* aspects of life: this group understands the importance of symbolics and how the regulation of public spaces, via the destruction of cultural objects, blocks and permits certain subjectivities. Processes of re-coding are buttressed by police practices in the caliphate and their mediation. The video *The Best Ummah* shows a relatively disciplined population, even before the actual declaration of the caliphate. The effectiveness of IS's governance, however abhorrent, is shown in the (apparent) willingness of subjects to parrot IS's message back to them.

The variety of objects examined in this section speaks to the diverse range of phenomena that a dispositif analysis is equipped to address. By considering the importance of objects and how they are coded in public spaces, alongside policing, we can begin to understand IS governmentality's intervention at all levels of life. IS's minting of their own currency and the apparent implementation of Islamic economics shows, again, IS's understanding of the importance of mundane symbolics in the constitution of identities. In other words, the deployment of the group's own currency, complete with the attendant symbolics, works as a process of identification and governance that intends to solidify the in-group identity of the Islamic State by distancing themselves from global western dominance. Legacy media for IS, then, is a means of intervening in the life of the population by delineating acceptable enemies, providing a pedagogy of global terror conduct, encoding public spaces, mediating police practices, and symbolising economic practices.

Chapter 7: Biopolitical configurations in the Islamic State's administrative apparatus

Following my analysis of IS legacy media and pro-IS social media in the previous two chapters, I now examine the resonance between IS legacy media and its internal administration and 'legal' practices. In the first section of this chapter, I analyse a range of IS internal administration documents archived by Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi (2015a, 2015b, 2016a, 2016b) and IS-produced media texts such as *Islamic State News* (Al-Hayat Media Centre 2014a, 2014b), *Uncovering an Enemy Within* (Al-Hayat Media Centre 2015a)*, A Message Signed with Blood to the Nation of the Cross* (Al-Hayat Media Centre 2015b), *The Religion of Unbelief is One* (Al-Hayat Media Centre 2016a), *Dabiq* (Al-Hayat Media Centre 2014c, 2014d), and *Health Services in The Islamic State – Wilāyat al-Raqqah* (Wilayat al-Raqqah Media Office 2015). I analyse both media and administrative documents together in this Chapter because this thesis is concerned with the resonance between IS media and administrative processes. In other words, this chapter shows how the biopolitical force of the caliphate's state apparatus is mediated in official outputs. Building on my previous analyses, I provide an outline of some salient features of IS's biopolitical dispositif, focussing on the following: a general taxonomy of inclusion and exclusion, a pamphlet on the guidelines for the treatment of sabiya (sex slaves), the affirmative function of healthcare, and the regulation of space in the caliphate. To reinforce my claims, I also draw attention to the ways in which discourses of inclusion and exclusion operate in IS education documents. By acknowledging a guideline for 4th Grade Lessons in Religious Morals and Ethics, I show how the contours of power, knowledge, and subjectivity are interwoven in the production of subjects with the posterity of the caliphate in mind.

What is significant about these particular cases is that they put into rule the mediated forms of biopolitical violence that circulate in IS's visual economy of social media and legacy media. That is, these affirmations, subtractions, and inclusive exclusions are prevalent

in both IS media and material governance. To buttress the critique of legislative components of biopolitics in the Islamic State, I connect the administrative categories of excludable subjects with instances of these subjects' punishment and exclusion across IS media texts. I locate IS's governmentality within the biopolitical logic of fostering, regulating, and excluding, the three primary coordinates within which the rationality of life and death is located, and which inform this iteration of contemporary biopolitics' will to extend the lives of the conductable. The objective of biopolitics is to regulate, foster, and exclude certain lives in the name of the population, though it should be noted that these logics are mutually constitutive rather than exclusive. That is, particular techniques implemented via legislation and the material regulation of conduct will often regularize the population by excluding aleatory bodies in order to foster a social body which adheres to a biological norm.

As I noted in Chapter 1, two primary sources inform the basis of many comprehensions of biopolitics, the intersection of biology and politics. These are Foucault's final lecture from the now translated *Society Must be Defended* (2003) and the final chapter from *The History of Sexuality: Vol. I* titled 'Right of Death and Power over Life' (1978). Accumulative to disciplinary power, biopower takes the population as its object, configuring it via a regime of inclusion and exclusion informed by the distinction of liveable and unliveable bodies. It articulates statistical measures, insurance, medical dispositifs and so on to the extension of the population's life (2003, p. 244), and takes as its logic the notion that the health and lives of those pertaining to various norms of conduct can be produced by excluding an abnormal other. For Foucault, biopower is 'primarily a way of introducing a break into the domain of life that is under power's control: the break between what must live and what must die' (2003, p. 254).

One task of this chapter is to contribute to understandings of biopolitics/biopower which I discuss in this thesis's conclusion. Throughout this chapter, however, I offer a

meditation on various perspectives on biopower/biopolitics as a means of conceptualising the IS dispositif and its governmental rationality. This is informed by the various ways Foucault's (1978, 2003) biopolitics has been thought through by the likes of Agamben (1998), Hardt and Negri (2000), Rose (2001), and Rabinow and Rose (2006). In order to frame the importance of media and the visual in IS's biopolitical configuration as a constituent component of their regime of exclusion, I also discuss Pasi Väliaho's (2014) theorisation of biopolitics and visual economy. It is Väliaho's work that provides an invaluable link for considering the role of imagery in IS's biopolitical economy of power and the extent to which IS-produced media renders visible disposable subjects. Biopolitical expression found in the caliphate is located between Foucault's (re)introduction of the term, parts of Agamben's use of the Greek terms *bios* and *zoe* as they pertain to the figure of *homo sacer*, and to some extent, Rabinow and Rose's and considerations of biopower. The congregation of the work of these primary thinkers allows a deliberation of biopolitics which acknowledges how highly coded cultural practices produce the vitality of subjects. Put differently, the biopolitical in the Islamic State acts at the level of culture (Blencowe 2012) in its will to touch and shape life in its myriad capacities. The extent to which one's life will be fostered or not is contingent on their subject position which manifests in cultural conduct.

This is not to say that the biological is not at stake: biopolitics in the Islamic State seems to act on a space between what Agamben would call bare life (*zoe*) and political or qualified life (*bios*) (1998). In the caliphate, subjects are produced as bare life when cultural misconduct occurs. The maintenance of *bios* could only be achieved via adherence to local laws and legislation which, for the most part, produced a space within which the management of the self was fundamental to life in the caliphate. IS's governmentality and its intersection with a brand of Islamist hermeneutics seek to produce a culture with certain sets of rules for conduct that cannot avoid practices in which subjects care for themselves, as well as one

whose dynamic of power is animated by official intervention in the regulation of liveable

bodies and transcendent souls. I do not seek to overstate the implicit role of culture in

biopolitics here. Instead, I look to highlight its importance in this context to show how social

categorisation and exclusion in the Islamic State operates along the contours of cultural

conduct which dictate life's potential. In what follows, I argue that IS deployed a

configuration of biopolitics from which power emanated along a number of lines to extend

the IS assemblage, foster the population, and intervene on the bodies of the excludable.

Exclusion and relations of exception

To highlight how IS sought to cultivate the population of the caliphate and global IS-

Muslim diaspora, I draft the biopolitical exigencies of IS by outlining a range of exclusionary

practices in the caliphate. An examination of the axes along which death is formulated in the

Islamic State is one way of approaching such a taxonomy of exclusion; administration

documents archived by al-Tamimi alongside IS videos and text-based media provide the

material for this analysis. The thanatopolitical (Murray 2006, p. 195) components of the IS

administration should be delineated outright within the biopolitical paradigm of the Islamic

State as a mode of inoculation that protects its social body. Death in the caliphate is

formulated in a variety of ways. For example, as well as serving as a primary mode of

currency in IS's visual economy, spectacularized forms of death such as beheadings,

drownings, burnings (Chouliaraki and Kissas 2018) and so on adhere to common sense

manifestations of death: literal death. However, Foucault's final lecture from *Society Must Be*

Defended provides us with a working definition of biopolitical death as exclusion to the point

of death, which we can consider as a mode of social death (2003, pp. 239-264). Death in the

Islamic State then is both social and literal. Much like the crime/punishment taxonomies I

describe below, a consideration of the mode(s) of biopolitics deployed in the caliphate reveals

a catalogue of the kinds of subjects who might be excluded, as well as *how* they might be excluded.

What is addressed below does not exhaust the variety of administrative and legislative capacities of the IS dispositif. Throughout the writing of this thesis, I have primarily drawn from al-Tamimi's archive of IS documents. In June of 2020, the George Washington Program on Extremism, in collaboration with the *New York Times*, began an archive of internal IS documents. Many of these documents were mundane, though they reveal the reach and comprehensiveness of IS's administrative assemblage. They include housing request forms, rental contracts, receipts, furniture request forms, illegal occupation memos, identification forms, prison release forms, and letters from citizens requesting more amperage to their houses. An overwhelming number of these documents are concerned with real estate and its state centralisation in the caliphate, for which al-Tamimi has provided analysis (2020). It is these documents which are the most relevant to the biopolitics of the caliphate. Though this archive is very partial, the focus IS placed on real estate indicates a concern for the life of the (conductable) population as much as it reveals the exclusionary logic of Islamic State governmentality. While IS provide housing for its population, this is leveraged by excluding the unconductable. For example, a rent payment table shows that payments were for homes allegedly taken from Shi'a and leased to other people (al-Tamimi 2020, p. 13). Additionally, a memo on illegal occupation of houses sent to the police suggests that there may have been punishments for 'concealing' the homes of Christians by squatting in them. Al-Tamimi believes that this document may be in reference to Christians who had fled—as far as the caliphate is concerned, the house belongs to them and not the squatter (2020, p. 11). In the caliphate, care for the population via housing is leveraged via the exclusion of deviant subjects. However, the control and deployment of housing was not IS's only strategy.

Social and corporeal death are incorporated into IS's bureaucratic apparatus and address a variety of subjects who must be killed or disciplined via hudud punishments (Al-Tamimi 2015a, Specimen 1C). The list of crimes and punishments in the 'Statement of hudud'[18] (Table 2) directly states which lives are excludable in the Islamic State and resonates with both IS's media and other internal documents. That is, the list tabulates what Joseph Pugliese calls a biopolitical caesura in that it splits and hierarchizes specified forms of life into the governable living, and ungovernable waste (2013). Blasphemers, adulterers (Muhsan[19] only), homosexuals, spies, apostates, murderers, and murderous thieves are killed outright for misconduct to reduce the risk of contamination to the cultural health of the species body or populace. In the previous chapter, I drew attention to IS's logic of equivalence when it comes to the delineation of enemies throughout much of IS media. However, the logic of equivalence in IS media is not consistent with a logic of difference in IS administrative processes (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002, pp. 44-45). Though Jørgensen and Phillips note that neither logic is necessarily preferable, the specificity of identity locates IS discourse firmly within their brand of Islamist hermeneutics. In short, throughout IS media and administration, the group discursively negotiate between a logic of equivalence and a logic of difference: while the former is summoned in the name of rhetoric and ideological posturing, the latter is employed to qualitatively locate subjects as worthy of intervention. Interestingly, punishments for those still deemed conductable are in line with the kind of culture IS sought to produce.[20] For example, unmarried adulterers, thieves, and ironically, those who terrorize people, are met with an array of differing punishments. Lashes and banishment for the adulterer are quite simply disciplinary mechanisms perpetrated against the

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[18] This document is from al-Tamimi's archive and was allegedly used in the Aleppo province.
[19] Muhsan is someone who has consummated their marriage and is therefore susceptible to execution should they adulterate.
[20] Note that IS reason all their activities through pleas to the Qur'an and Hadith. These formulate the underpinning of biopower instituted by the group. In all the documents mentioned in this article and almost all documents in al-Tamimi's archive, a plea to religious reasoning is present.

body and designed to correct the ailment of the subject, to punish them into submission and to emphasize the '"monstrosity" of the criminal and his risk to the population' (Foucault 1990, p. 138). This is much the same for drinkers and slanderers. The removal of thieves' extremities is a curious example of limiting life's capacity while simultaneously seeking to subjectify the perpetrator into a preferred mode of living: the everyday actions of the subject are limited and he/she is discouraged from stealing again, and perhaps not even able to. The thief is not killed in a literal sense, though they are corporeally restricted. The subsequent social positioning of the thief is ambivalent here: it remains unclear whether the thief will be praised for abandoning their sinful ways and becoming more faithful, or whether they will be seen as a potential contamination by fellow members of the populace.

Table 2 – Statement of Hudud

Blasphemy against God: Almighty and Exalted is He	Death
Blasphemy against the Messenger [PBUH]	Death even if he repents
Blasphemy against the religion	Death
Adultery	1. Stoning to death for the chaste [muhsan] 2. 100 lashes & banishment for a year for the unchaste
Homosexuality	Death for the penetrator and receiver
Theft	Cutting off the hand
Drinking wine [alcohol]	80 lashes
Calumny	80 lashes
Spying for the interests of the disbelievers	Death
Apostasy from Islam	Death
Highway criminality	1. Killing and taking wealth: death and crucifixion 2. Killing: death 3. Taking wealth: Cut off the right hand and left foot 4. Terrorizing the people: banishment from the land

As I have shown throughout this thesis, biopolitical modes of punishment, rehabilitation, and exclusion are also mediated across IS's media apparatus. In some cases, punishments for abnormal subjects in the Statement of Hudud are represented in IS media, visually locating delinquency in a biopolitical register. Such punishments are represented with varying degrees of intensity. As an example, the second issue of a publication titled *Islamic State News* houses imagery of a crowd gathering for the implementation of hudud for drinking alcohol though the actual punishment is not shown (Issue 2, 2014). Mediated punishment continues in Issue 3 with a hand-lopping for a thief and crowds surrounding three blind-folded men pre-execution, one of whom is supposedly there for spying (Issue 3, 2014). Rather than showing the hand-lopping itself, we are presented with a handless, bandaged arm and a sanitising caption: 'Hadd implemented under the supervision of trained doctors' (Issue 3, 2014). More viscerally, the January 2015 video *Uncovering an Enemy Within* (Al-Hayat Media Centre 2015h) produced by IS's English-language wing, Al-Hayat Media Centre, shows the actual execution of two spies. Following a confession from two men supposedly spying for the Russian Government, the men are placed on their knees and a child from IS's Lion Cubs shoots them both in the back of the head. It is worth recalling here that images of these children were used as profile pictures in at least two Twitter accounts in Chapter 5, though they were circulated more widely within the IS Twittersphere. Videos like *The Religion of Unbelief is One* (Al-Hayat Media Centre 2016b) address apostates and polytheists directly: following a polemic against Russia, the United States, and Turkey, we are presented with a sequence of images of these subjects' deaths, rendering legible who it is permissible to exclude and sometimes in what manner.

Images of execution identify lives that are not worthy of living: the visual manifestation of disciplinary regularisation and the sovereign removal of life is an example of biopolitical visual economies of inclusion and exclusion which mobilize the ideological and

affective capacities of imagery Väliaho mentions in his discussion of biopolitics and visual

economy (2014). These visual expressions of death show not just the extent to which the

biopolitics of IS's administration and governance is communicated globally via their media

apparatus, but also the ways in which a general excludability is administered 'legally' and

made permissible for IS's subjects.

Temporal banishment and permanent banishment for unwedded adultery and

terrorising the people, respectfully, remain ambivalent in IS's biopolitical regime. The notion

of an inclusive exclusion or the 'ban' is pertinent to those violent punishments too. That is,

with regard to violent forms of exclusion at least, or what Chouliaraki and Kissas have

identified in IS media as part of the group's thanatopolitical spectacle (2018), Agamben's

work on biopolitics and forms of public and sacred life is illuminating. As a part of life within

the caliphate's administrative apparatus, banned subjects (whether they are violently

punished or banished) occupy an uncertain position in that they are simultaneously included

by way of their exclusion:

> He who has been banned is not, in fact, simply set outside the law and made indifferent to it but rather abandoned by it, that is, exposed and threatened on the threshold in which life and law, outside and inside, become indistinguishable. It is literally not possible to say whether the one who has been banned is outside or inside the juridical order (Agamben 1998, p. 29).

Yet, the excludable subject in the caliphate—they who cannot be rehabilitated or cured—are

rendered disposable and disposed of accordingly. To ban a subjectivity in the caliphate is to

exclude them, though they can never truly be excluded as they are always included in their

own exclusion. In the pastorate of the Islamic State, the excluded subject or the subject of

biopower can never fully be excluded because they remain under the pastorship of both God

(Allah) and the lesser sovereignty of IS (Foucault 2007, p. 123). The religious, and therefore

the transcendental soul are always at stake in the Islamic State because daily life and bodily

conduct have a consequence for that soul. Certainly, the function of temporary exile has a

disciplinary use in which the subject has time to reflect on their misconduct and must repent

if they wish to re-enter the city. However, the permanent banishment has a similar function to the way in which Agamben discusses the figure of *homo sacer*. In other words, the banished subject is an 'inclusive exclusion' (1998, p. 6) to the extent that they are simultaneously inside and outside the state assemblage, they are rendered as bare life via their exclusion though they cannot escape politicisation.

Good Muslims: qualities and practices

Though relations of exclusion are formulated differentially across IS media and administrative processes, their existence and force imply some kind of ideal subject: IS's good Muslim. One document which exemplifies this model subjectivity is a 4th Grade Religious Morals and Ethics Textbook. This education textbook houses lesson guidelines for teachers of 4th grade students. I draw attention to this document in particular not just because it is one of the few education documents in English that is available, but because if we extrapolate and scale the significance of the textbook outwards, we can assess how the contours of power, knowledge, and subjectivity are rendered at a number of different levels throughout the caliphate and thus have a relation to emanations of biopower. An educational textbook on morals and ethics is a potentially crucial part of the IS dispositif as it addresses multiple elements of the dispositif concept originally outlined by Foucault. Further, it acts as a means for implementing such elements via an institution in an educational capacity (power-knowledge/discourse) in the name of subjectification, and thus, in pursuit of the caliphate's posterity. The following analysis considers two main factors in religious morals and ethics education which coagulate with biopolitics/biopower: inclusive discourses which formulate the mould of a 'good Muslim', and the exclusive designation of hypocrites. As I have gone to some lengths to describe in this thesis, there are a number of exclusive delineations in the IS dispositif. However, I focus on hypocrisy here as it is the most prevalent designation of an enemy in this document and is commonly referenced throughout IS media.

As above, I have made references to IS's formulation of a good Muslim, as one who adheres to the correct conduct of IS's Islamism, throughout this thesis. The Religious Morals and Ethics Lesson plan for 4th Grade students in the caliphate is important as it specifically delineates some of the characteristics of a 'good Muslim' over the course of its lessons. A good Muslim accepts invitations from his brother to feasts; is honest with his brother if he seeks advice; says 'May God have mercy on you' when his brother prays or mentions God; visits his ill friends, participates in his funeral, burial, and prayers if he dies; is humble and not covetous; respects his neighbour and helps them if they need it; does not harm his neighbours and is considerate towards them: is not noisy, does not throw stones at their houses, does not hit their kids; does not talk behind people's backs or stir gossip (tale-bearing); if he is with two other people, he does not talk secretly and exclude the third; he does not frighten or hurt other Muslims; and he is kind to his brothers and does not insult them.

In addition to IS's demarcation of a good Muslim, their 4th grade education programme houses an entire lesson on the characteristics of hypocrites. The lesson distinguishes their specific quality: hypocrites in the caliphate speak falsehoods, betray others' trust, are treacherous, break promises, partake in immoral conduct, and curse during disagreements. It is clear that the qualities of hypocritical subjects are essentially the inverse of those of a good Muslim. As discussed in Chapters 5 and 6, the theme of sincerity is of utmost importance to IS and its subjects, so it makes sense the hypocrites are one of the group's enemies. However, the purpose of propagating lessons on correct qualities and practices of good Muslims against that of hypocrites is a regularising strategy aimed at producing correct cultural conduct at an early age so that the cultural biopolitics of the caliphate's posterity are secured. If subjects includable within the polity are educated on the specific characteristics of the excludable, such as hypocrites, then they are better equipped to

identify and participate in the exclusion of undesirables. The designation of hypocrisy, apparent in any practice of Islam different to that of the Islamic State, is translatable to apostasy which, in the caliphate, as above, is a legal category liable to be charged with death. With regard to biopolitics proper, this is an example of instrumentalising the capacities of the population so that they both work on themselves and correctly internalize the qualities of a good Muslim, carrying out the correct practices, but also, that they are educated on what conduct is unacceptable and who ought to be excluded (Foucault 1990, p. 137).

The biopolitics of inclusion/exclusion is meted out in the mundane, everyday level of education. In other words, the negotiation of inclusion and exclusion within the biopolitical dispositif is carried out discursively in that Islamist knowledge is leveraged via education to propagate the exclusion of abnormal subjects. This knowledge, alongside and through the IS state assemblage, foments good Muslims to participate in subsequent practices of exclusion; at its peak, the designation of a hypocrite results in an execution meaning subjects are further disciplined. Should this execution be public, the trophied body is brought into the rhythm of the public space, serving as a reminder to anyone who might fall out of line. The dichotomy of inclusion and exclusion within education textbooks thus has a relation to wider state processes that seek to regulate the population. I now turn to a more brutal dynamic of regularisation in the caliphate: the inclusive exclusion of sabiya.

Slavery as inclusive exclusion

An exaggerated example of those who are included by way of their exclusion is the case of sabaya: sex slaves. As Hussein Solomon (2016) has noted, IS have articulated their reasoning for the institution of sex slavery in *Dabiq*. This was addressed in the magazine as early as Issue 4 (2014, pp. 14-17). Al-Tamimi has also translated a pamphlet on slavery produced by IS's Fatwa Issuing and Research Department (2015a). The complex of inclusion

by way of exclusion does not hold for all subjects that we might consider to be excluded. For example, in the pamphlet mentioned above, the adoption of a sabaya is framed as an act of inclusion into Islam:

> So when the Muslims make captives of the women of the disbelievers at war and enslave them, we have therefore brought these women out from their environment tainted with shirk [idolatry] to a new authentic environment far removed from all the influences of shirk and decadence … And with what they see from the glory of Islam, they will eventually have recourse to Islam voluntarily or out of obligation. And thus one of them becomes closer to Islam than disbelief, and so it will be gradually, until they enter into Islam. (Fatwa Issuing and Research Department, trans. by al-Tamimi, 2015b)

From IS's perspective, slavery is an institution which seeks to include disbelieving female subjects within its pastorate. In this case, it is an act of inoculation against abnormal subjectivities (or their potential cultivation): by habilitating a sabaya into correct cultural conduct, they can be included firstly in the community of the caliphate, and ultimately into transcendental salvation. However, the sabaya subject is, nevertheless, an example of the inclusion by way of exclusion: their restricted rights and subordinated position in the caliphate produced through intrapersonal relationships obscures previous ways of being, to the extent that their cultivation as a 'good Muslim' is administered in the most unequal dynamic of power.

More broadly, the pamphlet itself reveals IS's recourse to a regime of inclusion and exclusion with regard to its abnormal subjectivities: should they refuse to pay jizya,[21] 'they become killed, taken prisoner or driven out' (Fatwa Issuing and Research Department, as quoted by al-Tamimi, 2015b). These solutions are located within the biopolitical nexus of fostering, regulating, and excluding. The removal of life from the body has an affirmative function as much as a negative one in that it reduces the contamination risk of dissidence to

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21 *Jizya* is a kind of tax non-Muslims (Christians, Jews, etc) were expected to pay in historical caliphates. When paid, non-Muslims would come under the category of *dhimmi* or 'protected communities' wherein the said group would be able to practice their religion—usually under some restrictions—and reside in the caliphate, albeit with limited privileges (Bowering et al. 2013, pp. 342-343).

the population; prisoners are regulated subjects who might be habilitated into 'good Muslim-ness' or otherwise killed; those driven out merely drop out of the periphery and remain an external threat.

Practices of 'captivity and enslavement' (Fatwa Issuing and Research Department, as quoted by al-Tamimi, 2015b) have another biopolitical function: the extension of the population via the augmentation of the birth-rate. The eighth note in the pamphlet attests to this:

> There is no doubt that increasing numbers is strength for the Muslims, and the fact that the concubine slave girls may give birth is not an ugly or condemnable matter. For Ibrahim—peace be upon him—took Hajer (may God be pleased with her) as a concubine and from her was born Ismail, peace be upon him. (Fatwa Issuing and Research Department, as quoted by al-Tamimi, 2015b)

Following this note are a few mentions of various historical enslavements which serve to legitimise IS's practices of slavery. However, what is more prescient here is the biopolitical practice of an inclusive-exclusion that is articulated to IS's hermeneutics and the growth of the population. The inclusion of sabaya into the biopolitics of IS is complicit in the caliphate's affirmative function: by disavowing the subject position of the sabaya (usually Yazidi[22] girls and women) and incorporating it into the biopolitics of the state assemblage, the group seek to simultaneously extend its population, adhere to hermeneutics, and perpetuate the conditions for the posterity of the caliphate. The pamphlet then is not only a guideline for a specific excluded subject, it also provides the gendered rationale of one facet of daily conduct and the extension of life-in-general.

The inclusive exclusion of sabiya can be further considered against the formulation of the ideal IS woman. The most instructive rendering of the ideal IS Muslim woman can be found in Umm Samayyah's series of articles in issues 8-12 of *Dabiq* titled 'From Our Sisters'

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[22] Yazidis are a religious sect in Northern Iraq and Syria who have been historically persecuted by both Christians and Muslims. In 2014, IS were responsible for the genocide and enslavement of thousands of Yazidis because of their beliefs (see Yazda 2016).

and 'To Our Sisters', and which are differentially subtitled according to their topic. While the Issue 8 article focuses on the obligation of hijrah as belonging to both men and women, Issue 9 echoes the binary sentiment of IS by contrasting the prostitutes of the West with the slave girls in the caliphate as ordained by Allah and therefore permitted. Issue 10 is addressed towards the personal obligation of women to leave their disbelieving husbands. However, I wish to focus on the articles from Issues 11 and 12 since they more directly address the construction of the ideal IS Muslim woman.

'A Jihad without Fighting' from Issue 11 presents us with an economy of womanhood that is ideal for IS: women are primarily wives and mothers. After following the usual article format in *Dabiq* of citing a number of sura and hadith, Umm Sayyad argues that wives should not complain when their husbands perform duties such as going to battle: it is all in the name of the greatness of God and jihad. Even though we find a feigned egalitarian attitude towards men and women in her other articles, it is clear here that women play a submissive and supportive role in the caliphate. It is the role of women to produce men and send them out into battle (*Dabiq* Issue 11, 2015, p. 41). Qualities such as steadfastness and a sturdy faith, as throughout IS media, are prevalent here, and the examples of women with imprisoned husbands is used as one of the highest examples of a commitment to both religion and one's spouse. The above formulation of wifedom is fortified by a subsequent discussion on motherhood. Umm Sayyad outlines the features of a mother as nurturing, patient, good, and knowledgeable (*Dabiq* Issue 11, 2015, p. 44).

> So have you understood, my Muslim sister, the enormity of the responsibility that you carry? O sister in religion, indeed, I see the Ummah of ours as a body made of many parts, but the part that works most towards and is most effective in raising a Muslim generation is the part of the nurturing mother. (*Dabiq* Issue 11, 2015, p. 33)

The attainment of knowledge is crucial here and she notes that IS has provided 'institutions and courses on the entirety of the Shari'ah sciences' (*Dabiq* Issue 11, 2015, p. 44). As Sayyad notes, 'first comes knowledge, then the weapon. The danger of a weapon without knowledge

is great, and very rarely does it get things right' (*Dabiq* Issue 11, 2015, p. 45). Knowledge is

so crucial because not only do the women of the caliphate need to extend the population and

produce soldiers, they also need to raise subjects who conduct themselves correctly, and who

are therefore knowledgeable enough to do so:

> My Muslim sister, indeed you are a mujāhidah, and if the weapon of the men is the assault rifle and the explosive belt, then know that the weapon of the women is good behavior [sic] and knowledge. Because you will enter fierce battles between truth and falsehood. Therefore, either it is them with a corrupted generation in terms of creed and methodology – I'm referring to the enemies of our religion – or it is you with a generation that sees honor [sic] in the pages of the Qur'ān and the muzzle of a rifle. Because of this let your motivation be the motivation of an Ummah, and so that you see in the eyes of all of your lion cubs a deeply knowledgeable scholar and a conquering leader. (*Dabiq* Issue 11, 2015, pp. 44-45)

It is clear that regardless of whether a woman is enslaved (in a formal sense) or not, the

biopolitics of gender in the caliphate are geared towards instrumentalising the anatomy of the

female body: women, as child-bearers, are mobilized in the name of the caliphate's posterity.

The IS dispositif, and specifically, the discourse on women, seeks to augment the birth-rate,

one of biopower's originary considerations.

   The management of cultural conduct related to IS's biopolitics as it pertains to women

can be found in the article 'Two, Three, or Four' from Issue 12 which is concerned with

polygamy. Here, Umm Samayyah cites scriptures regarding marrying two, or three or four

orphan girls if one can be just towards them. If one cannot be just then they ought to marry

one of their slaves (one that 'the right hand possesses') (*Dabiq* Issue 11, 2015, p. 19).

Additionally, she reasons out the need for polygamy as a way of managing the needy and

vulnerable:

> Indeed, the legislation of polygyny contains many wisdoms. Amongst them is that women are greater in number than men, who face many dangers and hardships in their lives, such as war, hazardous work, and disasters. Likewise, young men tend to prefer virgins and abstain from marrying widows and divorcees, so who then would look after this group of women? (*Dabiq* Issue 11, 2015, p. 20)

Polygamy then, where the husband has multiple wives, is understood as a pastoral technology

and mode of care within which male dominance and preference is mitigated. Further along in

the article, the use of polygamy as a way of managing men's uncontainable insatiability is emphasised:

> Also from the wisdoms of polygyny is that the woman, by her nature, has her life interrupted by phases in which she is unable to fulfil the rights of her husband, as is the case with menstruation, childbirth, and postpartum bleeding. So during such phases he can find in his other wives what should prevent him from falling into forbidden or suspicious matters. But, by Allah, if there were no virtue in polygyny other than the fact that it's a prophetic Sunnah from the best of mankind, we would have sufficed with that as a proof with which we would deafen the ears of the stubborn opponents. (*Dabiq* Issue 11, 2015, p. 20)

Not only is the woman's body brought into the logic of the biopolitical dispositif in the name of increasing the population, but it is also used differently as a technique to manage the conduct of the male population. In short, the enslavement of women in the caliphate was leveraged on mobilising their anatomies in the name of the caliphate's posterity.

Healthcare

Prior to my discussion on gender and slavery in the caliphate, I mainly focussed on the general logic of exclusion in the Islamic State as it relates to education and violent regulation; I have privileged a view of the general excludability of a range of subjects and my focus has been on a pursued culture rather than the management of life through medical institutions. It is important to remember that undergirding all the infrastructure and services IS have instituted is the pursuit of territorial governance, however. In this case, 'traditional' components of biopower manifest variously in the caliphate and are present throughout documents available in al-Tamimi's archive. There are advertisements for hospitals which provide birth-related services for childbirth and premature babies (al-Tamimi 2015a, Specimen 1S, Specimen A), prohibitions on tobacco (al-Tamimi 2016a, Specimen 13X), guidelines for the conduct of pharmacies (al-Tamimi 2016a, Specimen 15E), water conservation measures (al-Tamimi 2016a, Specimen 14C), and sanitation regulations (al-Tamimi 2015a, Specimen 8E and 10U). Birth certificates were administered (al-Tamimi 2015a, Specimen O) and lists of wounded (al-Tamimi 2016a, Specimen 13A) and slain

personnel were recorded (al-Tamimi 2016b, Specimens 24 M, N; al-Tamimi 2017, 40Q, R; 42K, L, M). As Hakan Mehmetcik and Ali Murat Kurşun (2018) have noted, though it is clear from the archives mentioned in this chapter, healthcare is part of a range of social infrastructure deployed as part of IS's quest for quasi-statehood. Putting aside the ineffectiveness or lack of quality of healthcare in the caliphate as noted by Carolyn Ho (2015), the deployment of medical institutions should be seriously considered alongside the violent edge of biopolitics in the caliphate delineated above: such institutions are inextricable from any territorial governmentality.

We are aware of the thanatopolitical means of exclusion in the case of IS — they are adept at killing. However, healthcare as an affirmative function of biopolitics ought to be considered alongside exclusionary practices as it is one of the primary ways in which the health of the population as organism is established. The first issue of *Dabiq* called for the hijrah of doctors and other medical personnel (2014, p. 11) and a report titled 'Healthcare in the Khilafah' featured in Issue 9 (2016). In the latter, the biopolitical visual economy functions affirmatively in terms of productivity more so than waste: we are presented with doctors at work, one of which is almost certainly Tareq Kamleh, an Australian doctor who travelled to the caliphate and delivered a testimony to IS's healthcare in the video *Health Services in The Islamic State – Wilāyat al-Raqqah* (Wilayat al-Raqqah Media Office 2015). Alongside proclamations of the caliphate's healthcare and the call for its support via the emigration of doctors, videos such as this house images of productivity including surgeries and caring for infants. The actual efficacy of healthcare matters less than the image of its life-giving potential that the group attempt to portray. Further, IS's visual economy cannot thus be reduced to images of death: its concern is with productivity too. Thus, extending the caliphate's capability for the extension of life is what remains paramount here.

Healthcare in the caliphate was mentioned on social media, though its efficacy may have been overstated. M. Shemesh (2016) has discussed a blog titled 'Khilafah Medics' set up by IS sympathizers which featured testimonies from doctors in the caliphate in an effort to reinforce IS's medical apparatus. An ultimatum for local medical professionals who had fled the caliphate to return to it was also administered in May of 2015 (al-Tamimi 2015a, Specimen 5I). More benign techniques such as vaccinations were ordered in the caliphate (Shemesh 2016), though al-Tamimi has noted that the vaccination system used by IS bore zero difference to that of the Syrian regime (2015a, Specimen 1M). As Specimen W (al-Tamimi 2015a) claims, we also see the declaration of a factory for synthetic body parts. However, it is prudent to note that medical services in the caliphate were not available to everyone, nor were they as efficient as they could have been. As Ho (2015) notes, medical care in the caliphate was free for soldiers though many citizens had to pay. At $80USD for a caesarean, lines of exclusion informed by the limits of personal capital are already drawn. In fact, as Michlig et al. (2019) found in their ethnographic study of health workers in Mosul under IS, prices for civilians actually increased while care for fighters remained free. They were also told that the constant presence of hisbah in hospitals to ensure healthcare was carried out in accordance with the correct hermeneutics (e.g., gender separation) ended up hindering the provision of care rather than helping it. In one case, two female healthcare workers had to evade the hisbah so they could provide treatment to a male patient that would save his life (Michlig et al. 2019, p. 1420). Nevertheless, it remains unclear who had access to the more benign facets of healthcare such as vaccinations. Following IS's logic that the institution of slavery seeks to include the enslaved subject into the pastorate, it would follow that children of sabaya would have access to vaccinations. The affirmative biopolitical function is here a hard pill to swallow seeing as the extension of life is seen as at odds with IS's brutal reduction of subordinated groups.

Despite the inefficacy of IS's health apparatus (see Ho 2015), the arrangement of such a range of services can be located within the biopolitics of the group. As Carmel Davis has claimed, 'The Islamic State imposes a harsh, Salafist order that seeks to replicate the one Muhammad and his early followers established in disordered Arabia' (2017, p. 191). While there is some truth to this claim, a hijacking of Islam in the name of sovereignty and statehood does not holistically account for IS's bureaucracy and administrative practices. An analysis of the biopolitical management IS sought to institute, alongside a consideration of their deployment of Islamism, is more sufficient. The simultaneity of a biopolitical visual economy of exclusion and disposability should not be ignored either, for it makes visible the administrative rule put into place by IS.

The Regulation of Space

Biopower in the caliphate was not limited to violent exclusion and regulation. As is characteristic of IS's dispositif, issues pertaining to space and the regulation of movement were also addressed. As an example, a near-equivalency of the biopolitical in Deleuze, that of societies of control (1992), is gestured towards within the Islamic State. This gesture can be framed within Deleuze's reference to Guatarri's imagining of a closely controlled city:

> Felix Guattari has imagined a city where one would be able to leave one's apartment, one's street, one's neighbourhood, thanks to one's (dividual) electronic card that raises a barrier; but the card could just as easily be rejected on a given day or between certain hours; what counts is not the barrier but the computer that tracks each person's position—licit or illicit—and effects a universal modulation. (Deleuze 1992, p. 7)

Harking back again to both Lazzarato's and Nealon's claims that we should avoid the misreading that techniques of power emerge sequentially and function discretely, it is clear that the caliphate inheres in both aspects of disciplinary societies and control societies as outlined above. Specimens M (al-Tamimi 2015a) and 14I (al-Tamimi 2016a) in al-Tamimi's archive show the extent to which analogue parallels were deployed via travel permits, exemptions, and IDs in the caliphate to capture and delimit the movement of bodies between

territories. We can speculate on a number of reasons the delineation of bodies within restricted areas might be articulated to a biopolitics of security. Some of these are relatively benign. For instance, it is in the best interests of the IS administration that citizens are kept out of warzones or areas that are privy to drone and other aerial strikes. As a technique of securitisation, restricting access to zones of insurgency is a simple attempt at ensuring the extension of the lives of individuals, and therefore the social body. Penning citizens within specific zones (and wilayat or provinces on a larger scale) would also assist in accounting for the correct amount of resources needed in terms of food, medicine, security, and so on. In other words, regulating movement between spaces can be read as a biopolitical move which accounts (quantitatively) for the number of provisions needed to sustain the vitality of the population. If one of the necessary conditions for being a 'good Muslim' is the will to remain in the caliphate, then these subjects who traverse borders do not fulfil this subjective criterion: they must be regulated, rehabilitated, or excluded.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have shown the resonant biopolitical force between IS's administrative strategy and the group's media apparatus. In particular, I have attempted to provide an analysis of IS's mode of biopower by considering the biopolitics of housing, education, policing, legacy media, slavery, gendered bodies, and space. This examination of biopolitics shows the extent to which the IS dispositif is geared towards the conduct of all levels of life.

Firstly, I showed how the provision of housing by a centralized state apparatus is delivered according to social categorisation. The limiting of access to housing according to one's social categorisation is a technique of exclusion that lays waste to excludable, unconductable subjects. Importantly, it is in line with the biopolitical logic of the IS dispositif which cares for the population and extends the life of the species-body by excluding

abnormal others. I further elaborated on the biopolitical logic of the IS dispositif by examining an administrative delineation of crimes and punishments according to their severity. These disciplinary measures were deployed in an attempt to produce a culturally healthy population of good Muslims. Though located within the wider biopolitical logic of the caliphate, these are disciplinary measures taken against bodies that produce inclusive exclusions where subjects are rendered ambivalently within the caliphate's polity.

I bolstered this discussion by considering how mediating the regulation of life reveals the resonance between the biopolitical logic of the IS dispositif and the governmental logic of the group's media apparatus. The exclusive practices drawn attention to in IS administration are, to some extent, mediated in *Islamic State News*, *Uncovering an Enemy Within,* and *The Religion of Unbelief is One.* That state practices visualised in media are crucial as it reveals the resonance between administrative and media practices this thesis seeks to draw out while, simultaneously, showing the coherence of the IS dispositif.

Crucial to any analysis of a biopolitical formation is both an assessment of the pursued subject, as well as those whose lives are disposable. This chapter housed such an assessment in its analysis of education practices. My analysis of a 4th grade Religious Morals and Ethics textbook for a boys' primary school revealed the delineations against which excludable subjects are measured. By educating young students on what constitutes a 'good Muslim', IS seek to produce productive, self-managing subjects for posterity who will be able to run the caliphate, and have a solid idea of what kind of conduct is excludable. This exercise in education is an attempt to solidify the self-management of subjects as early as possible in their lives. One of the primary forms of excludable conduct is hypocrisy which, as I noted, is prevalent throughout IS media. In short, the use of morals and ethics lessons which firmly delineate acceptable conduct in the caliphate is a strategy for shoring up the ongoing

good conduct of IS Muslims, while making sure the characteristics of deviants are well known.

Towards the end of this chapter, I discussed IS biopower as it pertains to women, healthcare, and public spaces. Importantly, I showed how the institution of sabaya is used to produce abnormal subjects as IS subjects on one hand, and deployed to extend the IS assemblage on the other. That is, by enslaving women, IS increase their own population of correctly performing Muslims while simultaneously leveraging the biology of women's bodies to increase the population of the caliphate. Enslaved women are inclusive exclusions in that while being second-class citizens to some degree, they are nevertheless included in the polity. I also showed how, in IS media, some space is dedicated to the production of performative gender roles (wife, mother). The correct enactment of these roles is crucial to the conduct of good Muslims in the Islamic State and is inherently connected to their sincerity towards God — Umm Sayyad even goes so far as to encourage women to leave their disbelieving husbands.

As I have argued previously, the Islamic State deployed a cultural biopolitics which 'places the soul at stake in the conduct of the body' (Rarm 2018, p. 3). This occurs at the level of both internal administration and media directed outside the caliphate. Practices that care for and seek to extend the population's life such as spatial controls and healthcare, function alongside the implementation of violent, disciplinary, and oppressive practices which attempt to produce a way of life in the caliphate. The biopolitical logic of the Islamic State, in caring for a population of good Muslims, nevertheless produces both social and literal forms of death.

At its most simple, the IS dispositif creates an economy that produces the general excludability of bodies, beliefs, ways of being, and subjectivities via the logic of fostering, regulating, and excluding. Such an economy operates not just via official legislation and

media, but through social media too wherein supporters mimic the discourses of IS proper. My analysis in this chapter has addressed some of the primary techniques of biopower in the IS administration and which are reflected in the group's media apparatus. This biopower is informed by a call to Islamist hermeneutics which shape its general logic of inclusion and exclusion, though it also offers guidelines for *how* to include/exclude specific subjects, such as in the case of sabaya. As I have sought to show, biopolitical power in the caliphate is expressed at the level of administration and sometimes subsequently mirrored in IS's visual economy of production and excludability. In this instance, the double-function of officially ordaining excludable subjects in legislation and producing this kind of exclusion visually is tantamount to biopower in the caliphate. On the other hand, biopower's affirmative function arrives most presciently in the form of various education and healthcare measures, though they themselves are leveraged on processes of exclusion.

Conclusion

This thesis provided a critical assessment of the group known as the Islamic State from a Media and Cultural Studies perspective. It sought to understand the governing strategies of a terrorist group in their governmental nascency as they attempted to direct subjects both far and near in the pursuit of a particular way of life. Rather than writing IS off as just a terrorist group, I acknowledged the extent to which they sought to deploy processes that resembled nation-states and analysed their governmentality. This demarcation harks back to Foucault's early formulation of governmentality where he differentiates between the state and the art of government (1991). Here, however, IS's art of government lies somewhere between the principles of the state and the art of governmentality in that the caliphate was governed according to both 'divine laws or the principles of wisdom and prudence', as well as 'the principles of its rationality in that which constitutes the specific reality of the state' (Foucault 1991, p. 97). The specific formulation of the caliphate necessitates an understanding of governmentality which synthesises Foucault's delineation of state and governmentality and renders it as a mode of governmentality which intends to shape the conduct of both local and global subjects.

Drawing mainly from the radical thought of Foucault, and Deleuze and Guattari, I conceptualized IS in terms of their epistemic qualities which necessarily infer power relations, as well as their (social) ontological arrangement as a somewhat amorphous entity characteristic of organisations in the digital conjuncture. This conceptualisation harks back to my original formulation of IS as an assemblage. We ought to return to this conceptualisation via Foucault's formulation of governmentality to understand what IS really *is*, for we cannot wholly take them at their word and accept them as a state, at least in the Westphalian sense. IS positioned themselves as an anti-colonial movement which sees borders as profane; such an understanding is incongruent with the Westphalian notion of statehood. IS may not be a

state, but they certainly deployed many governmental processes consonant with that of contemporary (neo)liberal nation states; their dispositif included various governmental hiererchies and bureaucratic processes administered over territories, though these had informal limits rather than borders in the strict sense. In other words, IS positioned themselves as the governmental sovererign over various regions without adhering to the criteria of 'state' in the strict sense.

In his lecture on governmentality, Foucault discusses two formulations of government in relation to sovereignty. The first draws from Guillaume de la Perriere who understands government as the 'right disposition of things'; the second draws from Machiavelli who argues that power (sovereignty) is directed towards people, things, and territory (1991, p. 93). These formulations of sovereignty are useful to return to in order to conceptualise IS's 'statehood', for lack of a better word. By deploying these understandings of government, sovereignty, and state, via Deleuze and Guattari, we can understand IS as an assemblage with governmental potentialities. IS sought to dispose people and things toward particular ends and many times this occurred within territories that they controlled. Again, while IS didn't have borders in the strict sense, they enforced a sovereignty over territories with virtual and actual relations (DeLanda 2005)**.** That is, in addition to addressing the aspects of modern liberal nation-states that IS resemble (governmental hiererachy, departments, social services), we need to acknowledge the transient territoriality of IS in that they sought to control spaces merely by taking up room in them. IS is much more amorphous than the static form of state. In short, they ought to be understood as an assemblage with governing potentialities that interacts with other assemblages. This thesis, then, acknowledges IS as not just a state assemblage who attempts to govern within a particular territory, but also as a deterritorialised assemblage of global actors. IS's governmentality, whose animating mode of power is biopower, is the realisation of both the genealogy of Salafi and Wahhabi Islam and the legacy

of Western imperialism. However, the structural force that really gives rise to IS is the social and technological moment of the digital conjuncture.

The global techno-ideology which was realised in the decade prior to IS and which has since intensified, provided the group with the precise platform(s) it needed to develop its capabilities as a state assemblage which governs both far and near, and thus constituted it as a ruling entity which global citizens could travel to. IS, like any other organisation, harnessed digital media technologies to gain visibility, regulate deterritorialised citizens, and foment the caliphate's growth. Their implicit understanding of both media spectacles and spectacle societies is obvious. Yet, they also showed an astute awareness of how to direct everyday conduct needed for transcendental salvation via media. IS drove subjects toward such conduct via both legacy media and social media. By mobilising the thought of Foucault and Deleuze and Guattari, I unpacked the governmental and media strategy of IS focusing on the ways in which the group's discursive techniques are complicit in the production of subjects both locally and globally.

To capture the complex arrangement of IS, I conceptualised them as an assemblage. Assemblage-thinking allows us to think about IS over time and on the move—as their intensities shift, the group is eroded, and territories are de- and re-stratified; thinking about IS as an assemblage can help us to simplify the complexity of the group. Theorising IS as an assemblage relates to both their globally dislocated nature via digital interfaces, as well as to the material intensities of the group in Iraq and Syria. So, while thinking IS as an assemblage helps us to understand them as being at least partly constitutive of a state assemblage, they are also a territorial assemblage, a war machine, and a global cohort of spatially disjointed actors. In short, thinking IS as an assemblage simultaneously allows an understanding of the group as a physically extant congregation on one hand, and a physically removed but no less coherent cohort of actors on the other.

Yet, just as crucial here was the notion of a dispositif. By using Foucault's dispositif as a critical heuristic to investigate and analyse the media and governmental strategies of IS, I was able to understand the governmentality of the group, the knowledge systems that underpin their governance, and the discursive continuity across both administrative and media documents. In other words, I was able to address research questions laid out in this thesis's introduction:

- How do contemporary terrorist groups such as Islamic State institute bureaucratic and media forms to govern subjects locally and incite terror globally?

- How congruent are IS media discourses with IS's governmental strategies, deployment of cultural policy, juridical strategies, and judicial decisions?

- How do Islamic State's regimes of exclusion operate?

- What are the discursive stakes of biopolitical imagery and how does such knowledge dictate cultural and political exclusion?

As noted in my introduction, these questions were addressed differentially throughout the thesis and I discuss my response to them throughout the rest of this section. It is clear that IS deployed what appeared to be a sophisticated, highly bureaucratised administrative apparatus to ensure the correct conduct of the caliphate's population. The totality sought out by IS in media correlates strongly with the group's biopolitical regime in which abnormal subjects are regulated or excluded in order to foster the (cultural) health of the social body. The materialisation of IS's biopolitical discourse thus occurs at the governmental level where subjects are managed, in media where discursive and visual regimes educate the audience on who is includable within the polity, and in global terror attacks where deterritorialised citizens manage threats to the ummah. In short, the heuristic of the dispositif helped me to pose and answer my research questions.

This thesis also showed how IS's discourse and modes of governance were prevalent in theirs and their supports' social media activity. My analysis of IS and its supporters on Twitter during the early days of the caliphate yielded a number of observations. It is clear that IS used digital platforms opportunistically. Being that the group operated under conditions in which digital platforms are the animating structure of being, it makes complete sense for IS to use social media and SNSs to garner attention, attract recruits, and govern subjects from afar. As I noted, IS also took advantage of the structural capacities of the internet. In other words, the media mujahideen (Fisher 2015) both maintained a presence on mainstream social media, the striations of capital and surveillance, and remained mobile by saving official media before it was banned on pastebin style sites, before finally re-uploading it on freshly created Twitter accounts. However, my analysis showed that social media accounts were productive sites for sharing information, identity production, solidifying collective symbolism, and reinforcing regimes of exclusion. This chapter also discussed the ways in which IS supporters seek to perform their authentic selves online. This is important as authenticity and sincerity are some of the defining factors of a good IS Muslim that are called on throughout legacy media. More broadly, the discourses used by IS supporters online have a lateral articulation to the discourses of official IS legacy media which I show throughout my analysis. Overall, these observations emphasize IS's strong in-group identity, the discourses of which have changed little between 2015 and 2021—I will return to this point below.

I have shown that there is a strong congruence between IS media discourse and its governmental strategies. As shown across Chapters 6 and 7, IS deploy a logic of equivalence to delineate enemies in media and a logic of difference to mark out enemies in their biopolitical administrative processes. IS media structures its enemies within a pedagogy of exclusion by telling its audience who ought to be regulated or excluded, and how this should occur. As discussed in Chapter 7, IS also produced a typology of exclusion for delinquents

and non-conforming identities within the caliphate. When not characterised by a disciplinary will to correct the conduct of the subject or exclude them beyond the polity, these exclusionary techniques were articulated merely as murder. Like all epistemic qualifications for an action within the IS dispositif, though, such techniques were reasoned through recourse to various sura and hadith, locating them within the holy conduct of IS and therefore legitimising them. This logic is in line with the overarching mode of Islamist biopolitics prevalent in the IS dispositif.

The congruence between IS media discourse and the group's governmental strategy does not apply to all aspects of the IS dispositif, however: the mundane reality of everyday life in the form of, say, morals and ethics lessons, housing applications, furniture, or rental agreements, is not reflected in media. Regardless, the point of highlighting the biopolitical logic of the IS dispositif is to show how state processes and the everyday reality of lived cultural conduct are baked into the same discourse as the violent means of exclusion: the biopolitics of the IS dispositif simultaneously manifests as murder and care within the IS assemblage. Moreover, the discursive continuity across both IS legislation and media might go some way towards explaining the discursive harmony with its online supporters.

As above, a crucial consideration of this thesis was the discursive-material relations in the IS assemblage. My analysis of this relationship arose through a consideration of the symbolics of public space and the deployment of currency. I showed how part of IS's biopolitical mode of governance such as the re-coding of public spaces occurs via the destruction of objects like the grave of the girl in Mosul, the shrine and tomb of Ahmed Ar-Rifar and the Husayniyyat Jawwad temple. This is a direct acknowledgement of the importance material objects can have in the constitution of practices of subjectification and identity formation. Discursive practices related to objects are crucial to IS as they are equitable with practices of shirk; to guard against such practices, spaces must be re-coded

through the destruction of sites and objects or worship. By blocking the formation of abnormal subjectivities via the destruction of objects, IS pursue the ideal automatic function of power that was constructed in *The Best Ummah*.

The utility of dispositif analysis

A key contribution of this thesis was the development of dispositif analysis. My intervention was to leverage Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory by acknowledging non-discursive practices in my analysis. Such an intervention foregrounds the important relationship between materiality and processes of semiosis that can get lost in other modes of discourse analysis. Further, a methodological intervention like this is perfectly suited to the object of study. IS attempted to construct a caliphate with strict rules for daily conduct in order to provide the conditions within which transcendental salvation was possible. This included an awareness of the symbolics of economic practices and objects. In this case, an analysis that focussed too much on the textual rather than the material would have lacked depth.

While dispositif analysis is an amenable mode of analysis for analysing an entity such as IS, its utility is not limited to such novel articulations. To make this point, we could consider a project as far from this one as possible such as, say, the political economy of bottled water in New Zealand. A dispositif analysis seeking to investigate how bottled water companies operate in New Zealand has the theoretical clout to investigate the texts, actions, and objects which facilitate the process by which water came to be bottled and sold in New Zealand. This analysis could bring to bear a variety of questions on the ethics and legality of water bottling in New Zealand and could seek answers to the following questions: what are the knowledges which regulate (drinking) water? What existing environmental conditions brought about the necessity for bottled water? Who produced these knowledges and whose interests do they serve? How did it come to be that a public resource could be syphoned and

sold for private profit? What kinds of laws and administrative measures facilitate the water dispositif in New Zealand? How are the discourses on water access and regulation mediated on a national level? What responsibility do (governmental) institutions at the local, regional, and central level have to their publics when it comes to what will become an increasingly scarce resource in the future? Though these questions only scratch the surface of such a project, they gesture towards the kinds of large-scale investigations dispositif analysis is suited to. A simultaneous consideration of such a wide range of elements and the relations between them can allow us to understand the logic of a dispositif and the ways in which it could be redirected or mitigated should it be harmful.

Biopolitics in the caliphate

A theoretical task of this thesis was to argue for a context specific, multitudinous conception of biopower/biopolitics. Biopower is aggregate and has the potential to intersect and work alongside other forms of power in the name of producing subjects such as in the case of the pastoral power exercised in the construction of the ideal good Muslim, and the ideal IS Muslim woman discussed in Chapter 7. The biopolitical's murderous and caring functions operate in the name of subjectivities that are formed through techniques on and of the self. The outright murderous function of biopower manifests in the violent removal of life in the caliphate (and abroad), yet its function is to care for the populace and its posterity by removing threats to the species body. By delineating a series of norms against which 'good' or (culturally) 'healthy' Muslims can be measured, IS attempted to form their social body. Biopower in the caliphate directed a diverse range of elements by operating symbolically and pedagogically through the visual economy of media, materially through the destruction and encoding of spaces, as well as at the level of cultural practice. The resonance between administration and media tactics, informed by recourse to Islamist hermeneutics, is stark and

ranges from macro-concerns that delineate excludable subjectivities, to micro-concerns that teach exactly how to exclude or intervene on subjects.

In my final chapter, I analysed the deployment of biopower in the administrative processes of the Islamic State and within its media assemblage. However, this analysis acknowledged that biopolitics has been understood and thought of in myriad ways. With reference to the terms, I used 'biopolitics' and 'biopower' interchangeably following Foucault (1990, 2003). However, this chapter was the place I tried to think through a multitudinous conception of biopower/biopolitics. My concerns were in response to the following: that if the wide range of objects of study such as biometrics, neoliberalism, and the mediation of the War on Terror can be considered biopolitical, then where else does this kind of power lie? Where does it operate and who deploys it? How does it function? In this case, and certainly in the specific case of IS, I did not deem it appropriate to differentiate between biopower and biopolitics, as Hardt and Negri have done previously (2000). Their uptake of biopower as a 'power over' and biopolitics as a mode of resistance or 'power to' as Réal Fillion puts it (2005, pp. 65-66), is less appropriate in the caliphate due to the overt violence of power relations there. It would seem that the difficulty here lies in the violence of the group in that resistance is often met with slaughter, which begs the question of whether there is any agency in the pursuit of conduct if it is precluded by death. However, this consideration is misguided. Instead, we should acknowledge that the conduct of conduct is directed precisely towards the possibility of resistance. Put differently, the deployment of specific techniques of power can be read as a response to the possibility of resistance that is productive in itself. The automatic functioning of power is still present here and I do not seek to argue for a conception of power which is unidirectional: practices on and of the self in the caliphate still relied on disciplined subjects and it is the consequence for misconduct which facilitates power's automatic function here.

Biopower need not be considered as a discrete form of power. That is, just as the biopolitical does not eclipse disciplinary techniques of power in liberal nation-states, nor does it do so in the caliphate. Maurizio Lazzarato is right to note that we are mistaken to consider power dynamics as successive and differentiated '*dispositifs*, because the biopolitical *dispositif* does not replace sovereignty, it displaces its function and renders the "problem of its foundation even more acute"' (2002, p. 104). Rather than viewing IS' power as an original manifestation of sovereignty, it would be sensible to understand power in the Islamic State as a triangulation of 'sovereignty-discipline-government' (Foucault as cited in Lazzarato 2002, p. 104). As I have shown in this thesis, the Islamic State did not seek to govern merely via the soft biopolitical means of self-management and improvement, education, dietary, sexual, and health regulation: what produced the media spectacle of IS (and what was underscored in their own media assemblage) was the implementation of violent methods on the body (Chouliaraki and Kissas 2018; see also Kraidy 2018 and Giroux 2014). These media spectacles materialized in a series of ways and their sovereignty-governmental-disciplinary function had a critical articulation with IS's own Islamist hermeneutics, manifesting in practices such as the implementation of the hudud, and the deployment of IS's understanding of Sharia. In other words, the sovereign right to kill (Foucault 1990, p. 135) is programmed directly into this biopolitical paradigm informed by a taxonomy of exclusion that delineates multiplicitous ways of killing and excluding.

Crucial to the discourse of biopolitics are delineations of norms which organise individuals and groups within the social body in terms of their value and function within and for it as 'a way of fragmenting the field of the biological that power controls' (Foucault 2003, p. 254). The sets of norms found in the caliphate, in terms of what constitutes a good or healthy Muslim, are produced and lived up to at both the level of government and individual. That is, while IS institute specific laws with regard to dress, economic exchanges, food,

prayer times, and education, the contingency of their effectiveness rests on the cultural conduct of the populace at the individual level with the population at stake. We should recognize biopolitics in the caliphate as a series of techniques of power which discursivize 'art[s] of existence' (Foucault 1990, p. 10). The force of the biopolitical in the Islamic State is composed not merely of techniques of the self in which one sets limits of conduct in order to 'transform' oneself (1990, pp. 10-11), but also includes techniques *on* the self (selves) or techniques which seek to render selves legible within the discursive limits of the polity. Such techniques seek to produce, by both hard and soft means, permissible modes of subjectivity within the caliphate.

Practices on the self are realised via institutions of punishment that directly intervene on the body, such as in the case of policing by the hisbah or the implementation of Sharia courses, to name two examples. Certainly, the institution of slavery, as well as 'lesser' forms of punishment that lets one live also constitute techniques directly on selves to the extent that they attempt to produce and mark out possible and preferred ways of being. These kinds of techniques manifest to produce arts of existence and are themselves partially constitutive of arts of existence. However, owing to the tumultuous context of violence and war that the caliphate was located within and sought to perpetuate, we might also think through and extend Foucault's understanding of biopower with relation to war:

> Wars are no longer waged in the name of a sovereign who must be defended; they are waged on behalf of the existence of everyone; entire populations are mobilized for the purpose of wholesale slaughter in the name of life necessity: massacres have become vital. (Foucault 1990, p. 137)

The war of IS is necessarily fought in the name of a sovereign, though it remains biopolitical. The terrorist (especially the terrorist who governs) does not wage a war on behalf of the existence of everyone, yet, for the biopolitical apparatus to function within the caliphate and abroad, citizens and admirers of IS must be mobilized; for the fluidity of power to flow through the IS cohort, all members must be mobilized. Despite this, while IS have deployed a

biopolitics informed by an Islamist hermeneutics, we should not unproblematically make the

assertion that 'entire populations are mobilized for the purpose of wholesale slaughter in the

name of life necessity'. The war waged by IS is in the name of particular ways of being or

arts of existence and is a pursuit to normalize certain modes of conduct that act on the body to

facilitate the possibility of the soul's salvation. Put differently, the biopolitics of the Islamic

State acts on the body and seeks to foster lives via inoculation through the death of abnormal

others.

The biopolitical logic of the IS dispositif acknowledges a vast range of elements. As

governmental strategy, this logic seeks to direct and limit cultural practices. Moreover, the

discourses, subjectivities, and knowledges of this dispositif inform the range of exclusive

strategies that aim to foster the IS social body through regimes of inoculation against

abnormal Others in the name of the population's health. As noted, Väliaho's articulation of

biopolitics to visual economy provides us with a fundamental link for theorising the

biopolitical capacity of IS media. For Väliaho (2014) images have both ideological and

affective capacities. He underscores the important relationship between the circulation of

power and visual economies:

> Ours is a world where power is instituted and claims wide-ranging authority through the
> production and circulation of images. It is managed within specific visual economies where
> pictures and screens feed the imaginations that both bind us to the object world and forge
> social relations. (Väliaho 2014, p. 6)

The power of the visual within biopolitical regimes cannot be overstated. If we follow

Väliaho's understanding of 'economy' as the relations between the visible and the invisible in

terms of what matters representationally, or the capacity for visual imagery to incite and

produce meanings and affects (2014, pp. 6-7), then biopolitical visual economies have the

capacity to extend and limit life's potential. In other words, as Allen Meek argues: 'media

images function on economies of production and consumption that define individuals and

groups in terms of social, political, and biological inclusion and exclusion, health and

sickness, productivity and waste' (2016, p. 31). Imagery has the capability to decree some lives of worth living (or not) and thus participates in a visual economy. This is certainly true in the case of IS, for IS-produced media is biopolitical partly because it produces the disposability of certain bodies and subjects within its visual economy. Here, biopower emanates within the state assemblage via governmental practices and outside the caliphate through media (though media plays an important role inside the caliphate too). While I have discussed the link between IS's mediation and legislation above, it is worth recalling another example here. Consider the widely circulated and discussed IS-produced video, *A Message Signed with Blood to the Nation of the Cross* (Al-Hayat Media Centre 2015m), in which 21 Christians are beheaded on a Libyan beach. By visually representing the deaths of those who have refused to convert to Islam, IS produce the lives of the unconductable as disposable. That is, unconductable subjects who are biopolitically abnormal are produced as bare life and are thus disposable in IS's visual economy. Again, it is crucial to note the relation of biopolitics to visual economies which produce subjects as worthy of life or not. In the Islamic State, disposability manifests both visually in the group's media apparatus and 'legally' in its administration.

In the caliphate itself, this kind of power mobilized towards life, species, race, operated along two poles: one on the disciplined body and one on the body of the population (Foucault 1990, pp. 138-139). The former is concerned with the docility of the body, its physical limits, and its flexibility to be integrated within specific systems: this anatomo-politics is concerned with the body's optimization (Foucault 1990, pp. 138-139). Interestingly, the ethos of the anatomo-politics of the body in the caliphate is articulated to not only the conduct of war, but also an Islamist hermeneutics. The latter pole is focussed on the body of the population: 'the body imbued with the mechanics of life and serving as the basis of the biological processes: propagation, births and mortality, the level of health, life

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expectancy and longevity' (Foucault 1990, p. 139). In this case, the biopolitics in the Islamic State pursues all aspects of life. However, following Agamben (1998), we can also say that biopolitics in the Islamic State produces a similar indistinction between *zoe* and *bios* he accounts for in modernity. The distortion produced by IS biopolitics thus reveals contradictions in the group's own discourse: the removal of life from any subject as a potentiality exists as a rule, though it can function in both the affirmative mode which seeks to force and foster life, or the negative mode that seeks to subtract risks to the population. Moreover, in the maintenance of qualified life, bare and disposable lives are produced. Though the citizenry, as individual subjects, may assume that they cannot be killed with impunity should their conduct adhere to the appropriate limits of qualified life, the exception and volatility in the Islamic State does not guarantee such a rule.

In the interests of theoretical specificity, it is worth noting the other ways scholars have taken up the concept of biopower, for it has not been thought through cohesively. Varying types of biopolitics from the Nazi regime as focussed on by the likes of Agamben (1998), and more presciently, Rose (2001), and Rabinow and Rose's (2006) conventional uptake of biopower attest to this claim. What I want to propose is a typology of biopolitics rather than a conception that is monolithic. Echoing Rabinow and Rose's suspicion of a singular biopolitics (2006, p. 203), I ask the following questions: if contemporary health campaigns, wearable medico-fitness technologies, the Nazi regime, racial sciences, biometrics, genomic medicine, security apparatuses, and colonialism can all be described as biopolitical, then do they all belong to the same mode of biopolitics? To what extent do the life sciences then mark social life at the intersection of vitality and politics? Moreover, how are the everyday mundanities of qualified, political, or social life affected by a will to extend subjects' biological and cultural vitality through a regime of inoculation via exclusion, disciplinary measures, rehabilitation procedures, education reform, infrastructure refinement,

movement restrictions, and so on? Put differently, the analysis of biopolitics put forward here represents a step towards the search for this kind of power outside of biopower's conjuncture with neoliberal modes of governance (though not so outside them that they bear no semblance). That is, it differentiates itself from previous scholarship through its unique object of study and conception of biopower in the Islamic State.

Again, biopolitics and biopower, have been thought through in myriad ways. For example, Rose's platform of research, as it has pertained to biopolitics, represents an investigation that is most in line with Foucault's project to the extent that he takes as his object of study the deployment of biopolitics in modern nation-states. Rose rightly understands contemporary biopolitics as risk politics in which molecular politics are inextricably tied to the life sciences (2001). Further, Rose sees a shift in biopolitics from a conception that saw it seek to

> classify, identify, and eliminate or constrain those individuals bearing a defective constitution, or to promote the reproduction of those whose biological characteristics are most desirable, in the name of the overall fitness of the population, nation or race' to one that 'consists in a variety of strategies that try to identify, treat, manage or administer those individuals, groups, or localities where risk is seen to be high. (Rose 2001, pp. 6-7)

Rose's conception of biopolitics is at the level of the molecular and considers how life sciences might intervene to repair the body and extend the lives of subjects. As stated above, I argue that this conception of biopower is most in line with Foucault's project inasmuch as it is concerned with the management of life in liberal nation-states.

Rabinow and Rose's (2006) conceptualization of biopower is also a loyal advancement of Foucault's thesis and is composed of three primary elements as a bare minimum. Firstly, it requires discourses regarding the life of human beings and expert knowledge and knowers to constitute these discourses. Although elements of biology may be prevalent in these discourses, 'they may hybridize biological and demographic or even sociological styles of thought' (Rabinow and Rose 2006, p. 197). Secondly, biopower must

include specific modes of regularizing the population in the name of the extension of its life (which can operate along lines of social categorization – race, ethnicity, gender, and religion for Rabinow and Rose). Thirdly and finally, biopower must include 'practices of the self': Modes of subjectification through which individuals are brought to work on themselves, under certain forms of authority, in relation to truth discourses … in the name of their own life or health, that of their family or some other collectivity, or indeed in the name of the population as a whole (Rabinow and Rose 2006, pp. 197-198).

In other words, practices of the self might be thought of as individuals' work on their own health and bodies according to particular discourses regarding human life. These constituents of modern biopower offer up a useful diagram for examining specific modalities of biopolitics in the present which operate through race, reproduction, and genomic medicine. Pertinently, on reproduction, Rabinow and Rose note the complex process of change biopolitics is going through and argue that it 'operates according to a logics of vitality, not mortality: while it has its circuits of exclusion, letting die is not making die' (2006, p. 211). Theirs is a positive biopolitics focussed on the extension and addition of life in the name of populations, rather than its subtraction that is somewhat at odds with Nazi biopolitics which, for them, 'was a complex mix of the politics of life and the politics of death' (2006, p. 201). Furthermore, Rabinow and Rose's position that sovereign power is separate from biopower is antithetical to Agamben's view that they are inseparable. Again, they note that making die is not an equivalency of 'letting die' (Rabinow and Rose 2006, p. 211). However, in doing so, we return to Lazzarato's claim that to linearly sequence Foucault's modes of power is a mistake—we should think of technologies of power as aggregate. Further, as Jeffrey Nealon claims, 'to say that a particular mode of power is dominant at any given historical juncture is not, then, to say that no other modes exist or are in usage' (2008, p. 28). Rather, they 'exist in a lateral or parallel relation with the other modes, no longer in the dominant position from

which its preferred practices could organize, canalize, and distribute the effects of the other modes of power' (2006, p. 28). In this case, a range of power techniques are present in every epoch but some intensify and reverberate more than others. As I have sought to show throughout this thesis, a consideration of multiple techniques and their logics should be acknowledged in order to assess the complex ways in which regimes of social, political, and cultural organization are formulated.

For Rabinow and Rose, Agamben's (1998) transcription of biopolitics calls for more nuance than the reduction of power 'to the ability to take the life of another' (2006, p. 200). Yet, they obscure their own suspicion of a singular biopower through this critique. While their account of power is useful for an analysis of contemporary and seemingly benign biopolitical technologies, Agamben's union of sovereignty and biopolitics is cognizant of the murderous function of administrations such as that of IS. In fact, Agamben's realignment of sovereignty and biopower is quintessential to more overtly violent forms of biopolitics and it is this revision that is most present in the caliphate. This is because for Agamben, 'the production of bare life is the originary activity of sovereignty' (1998, p. 82). The production of bare life, as a biopolitical imperative, is an inextricable part of both rule and the mediation of rule in the caliphate. The production of bare life in IS-produced media parallels the reduction of life that is put into rule via administration. The extent to which the state brings bare life into its domain is the connection which brings sovereignty and the biopolitical together. As Vijay Devadas has claimed, drawing from Agamben, biopower might be thought through as a

> reconsideration of the constitution of sovereign power—because sovereign power recognises that it is dealing with populations rather than individuals, it also recognises that it cannot sustain its power by disciplining (to take life and let live). (2013, pp. 12-13)

Such a binding thus informs my analysis of biopolitics in the Islamic State. However, implicit in my analysis is Rabinow and Rose's account of modes of subjectification 'through which

individuals are brought to work on themselves' (2006, p. 198). This should not obscure the ways in which IS itself work on the population through various rehabilitation centres and police practices. The population's self-governance is essential to the production of subjectivities within the caliphate and is certainly mobilized in the triality of fostering, regulating, and excluding. Simultaneously, the deployment of media messaging by IS has similar goals: it operates through a pedagogy of exclusion which educates audiences who to kill (exclude), and how one might kill them. In short, IS-produced media seeks to regulate the conduct of its local and global population through a visual economy which visibly disposes of unconductable subjects.

Biopower in the Islamic State thus bears a number of specificities. For one, it undermines the existence of the biopolitical as a purely Western phenomenon by locating it as a productive modality of power geared toward the conduct of (cultural) conduct. Importantly, biopower in the Islamic State operates on a number of planes which dispositif analysis is equipped to address and uncover. The range of planes IS biopolitics operates across such as gender, education, healthcare, public space, and media, is a crucial component of the IS dispositif. By working across these planes, biopolitical power in the caliphate sought to produce the population as a healthy social body in terms of expanding life as such, but also by producing correct *ways* of life. Biopower thus emanates through both the Islamic State's administrative and media assemblages in order to foment practices inside the caliphate, and outside the caliphate, but nevertheless, always in its name and in the name of its posterity.

Resilience

My analysis focussed on social media during the caliphate's nascency and legacy media between June 2014 (the declaration of the caliphate) and December 2018. Since huge territorial losses in 2018, official media output in English has waned — the last video

produced by al-Hayat came out in July 2020 titled *And Incite the Believers*. A more interesting development, in terms of legacy media, is the magazine *Voice of Hind*. This is a publication in English directed towards an Indian audience probably seeking to take advantage of pro-Muslim anti-Modi sentiment stoked by the Indian Prime Minister's anti-Muslim laws. Publications in Arabic, however, have kept somewhat consistent with the *Al-Naba Newspaper* still being produced at the time of writing this conclusion. A search of IS-produced media on jihadology.net also reveals that the occasional video and nasheed are still being produced. The story of IS supporters online, however, is slightly different.

As I noted in Chapter 5, the CtrlSec Twitter account(s) are still very active in highlighting 'extremist' and pro-IS accounts, suggesting the ongoing resilience of the media mujahideen (Fisher 2015). Interestingly, IS supporters' online discourse has not changed much over time. In fact, a preliminary look at the CtrlSec (2020) Twitter account towards the end of 2020 and beginning of 2021, where IS accounts are still being reported every few minutes, strengthens previous claims made in this thesis. I looked at the 10 most recently reported accounts on the CtrlSec twitter on 11 December 2020 to assess the diachronic strength of IS discourse online. Some of the previous issues I faced re-emerged. For example, CtrlSec's commitment to reporting and banning 'extremist' accounts rather than just IS accounts mean that the accounts featured on their page do not necessarily belong to IS supporters. For example, @hakhakikatsinan (2020) seems to be a religious conservative, conspiracy theorist, and anti-feminist, discourses of which are all articulable with IS, but there is little to indicate direct support for the group. The same can be said of @ugurozturk67 (2020) who is a pro-Sharia, anti-sect, conservative Muslim — again, these discourse fragments are all manifest throughout IS discourse, but there is no direct support of IS within this account's 12 tweets. @mrseyisa's (2020) only significant tweet is a vague quote from a sura regarding good/bad men and women; others such as @husumet35 (2020) are more vague

in that they are broadly pro-Sharia but use #metoo, use the term 'nusayri' and are also possibly against women using Twitter (the medium of text can make irony difficult to identify, however); those like @Bave_Hamza (2020) share homophobic content, are pro-Sharia, and anti-US, though the account still houses an anti-IS retweet; as well, there is @004umeesh (2020) which houses a retweet of a report of a recent IS attack though with no framing, there is no clear indicator of whether or not they are merely reporting on the event or celebrating it: like the accounts mentioned above, there are other discourses within this profile that are articulable to IS discourse such as the criticism of idolatry and a firm delineation between piety and disbelief, though no explicit support of IS.

Simultaneously, we do see more explicitly pro-IS accounts which resemble the same and similar forms to those in my sample. For example, @6TR8O1 (2020) (which was suspended within an hour of my accessing it) shared a direct link to the *Al-Naba Newspaper* on archive.org, in addition to screenshots of other IS media in Arabic. This account resembles a great many in my sample that simply consisted of a broadly pro-IS picture and caption, but only housed a couple of tweets spreading IS legacy media. The quick suspension of pro-IS Twitter accounts suggests that CtrlSec is having some impact on IS online and that Twitter's regulatory apparatus has become more efficient, and perhaps even that the former has had an impact on the latter. Despite this, online supporters continue to circulate official IS content online. An examination of the first page of accounts on CtrlSec one month later on 8 January 2021 revealed the continuing presence of the media mujahideen. The accounts @oqjrvjiMiDVOR6o (2021) and @UJ7WcVbVrhTnEup (2021) both shared links to justpaste.it sites with official Islamic State news items in Arabic, as did the accounts @DYTGqViiB15rTnW (2021), @pL3QNNHH8ICjIZn (2021), and @skzdeSfnDogkaxU (2021). The seemingly random jumble of letters and numbers in each of these accounts' names, as well as the fact that they share the same content, suggests that they are

automatically generated accounts mobilised to spread the word of IS as quickly and as far as possible.

IS continue to produce media and maintain a presence online, but their capacity to do so seems to have been weakened due to territorial losses over the past few years. The 'heyday' of the IS media spectacle was between 2014-2016 and certainly seems to be behind us, at least in the West. On the other hand, IS still maintain a presence in Middle-Eastern countries, Afghanistan most recently and notably, and continue to experience global, deterritorialized support from around the globe. While a global pandemic has certainly directed news media away from IS, the group retain a presence which seems to be characterised more by media output in Arabic-speaking territories than in attacks and media directed to the West. In other words, they may be down, but they are not out.

The Mediatisation of Terrorism

This thesis has sought to understand the governmental strategy of IS as it pertains to the local and global conduct of the caliphate's citizens, the way in which the group's media apparatus facilitates and regulates conduct, and the regulatory force of internal administration and law. That being said, IS are part of a wider process of what we can call the mediatisation of terrorism.

By the 'mediatisation of terrorism', I do not only mean terrorism's increased dependence on media. Nor does my use of the term draw from all of Alicja Stańco-Wawrzyńska's claims regarding the mediation of terrorism in American television news media, though the extent to which terrorist attacks as media spectacles compete for attention with other media spectacles, as well as the potential celebrification of terrorists are important observations (2017). Mediatisation is a contested term which some researchers often use quite casually and sometimes falsely as a synonym for 'mediation'. However, scholars such

as Hjarvard (2008) Strömback (2008), and Hepp, Hjarvard and Lundby (2015), among others, use the term much more deliberately. Strömback, with regard to the mediatisation of politics, for example, cites four phases of mediatisation where mass media are the most important source of information and channel of communication between societal institutions (the citizenry, government, political interest groups, and so on), the media are governed according to their own logic rather than a political logic, the intensification of the first phase, and the adoption and internalization of a media logic by actors in societies (2008, pp. 236-240). Others like Hjarvard see the mediatisation of society as a stage in which society becomes dependent on media and their logic or where media become their own social institution (2008, p. 113). Hepp, Hjarvard, and Lundby continue this line of thinking by acknowledging the breadth of processes of the mediatisation of society, as well as the specificity needed when calling on the concept (2015). We can even broaden the definition of mediatisation by thinking about it as the extent to which individuals come to relate to the world through media, which obviously has some stark consequences for the conduct of terrorism.

I use the phrase, the mediatisation of terrorism, to refer to the increasing extent to which acts of terror are mediated by terrorists themselves. This is certainly the case of the Islamic State whose sophisticated media apparatus and online engagement ought to be clear by now. Groups like the Islamic State have, in part, paved the way for the wielding of mainstream social media and social networking sites on the part of terrorists in order to recruit and garner visibility in the global media circuitry. When it comes to the conduct of terror, ideologies melt away and techniques of mediation are wielded similarly across different subjectivities. That contemporary terrorism relies on media is well-trodden ground, but the advent of live-streaming technologies, a capacity not utilised (to my knowledge) by the Islamic State, ought to be read as the intensification of mediatised practices of terrorism. While the uptake of digital social platforms is part of the mediatisation of terrorism, the live-

streamed terror attack is the emphatic attempt to bring distant targets into the realm of fear. The most notable intersection of live-streaming and terrorism is the 2019 Christchurch terror attack in which 51 Muslims were killed and 49 were injured during Friday prayer.

The context and logics of the digital conjuncture I have tried to sketch throughout this thesis are perfectly articulable with the mediatisation of terrorism. Within the context of ubiquitous digital media and the extent to which we live through media, or what Deuze (2011) calls a media life, which coincides with Yar's (2012) will to representation that characterises the celebrity logic of our socially mediated ontology, it is a wonder that more terror attacks have not been live-streamed by their perpetrators. The society of the spectacle, rendered through the media logic of terror becomes realised through the entrepreneurial imperative to conduct terror in new and alarming ways: knowledge of the event is not enough and the perpetrator seeks to bring his (it's always a 'he') audience not just into the scene of horror, but into his own being. As I have underscored again and again, the spectacle of IS's terror campaign was alarming in both its apparent quality of media output, as well as the sophisticated planning, drafting, and regulation of its media programme. The organization and quality of IS media output, within the context of digital ubiquity, provokes other groups with oppositional ideologies to adapt and initiate new techniques in the conduct of terror.

The Islamic State is not merely a terrorist entity in the lay sense. IS are an assemblage composed of a vast range of material and immaterial elements which intensified in various geographical contingencies, sometimes deterritorializing as quickly as they territorialized. The caliphate is an example of how such an assemblage can govern given the opportunity within a particular conjuncture. The historical force of Western imperialism in the Middle-East, coupled with a genealogy of Islamist hermeneutics, and located within a social ontology characterised by the digital conjuncture provided a fertile ground for the territorialization of

the caliphate. At the time of writing, IS appear to be on a broken back foot. Having lost most of their territory and with many members now awaiting their fate in camps in Syria and Iraq, the next concern of governments around the world is what to do with their citizens who went to fight for IS. At the same time, pro-IS Twitter accounts continue to be flagged and banned though their numbers seem to be declining. Given an opportunity, it is likely that IS will eventually reappear in some form via the stable territorialization of an opportune geography, and it is certain that they will maintain a presence online and via global deterritorialized terror attacks. Should the former occur, we can be sure that the logic of the biopolitical will be called on in the pursuit of a robust social body; when the latter occurs, we can only wait and see how it is mediated.

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