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**Jihadi Dreams Are Made of This:
Culture and Ideology in the Reels of Islamic State's
Propaganda Machine**

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Τα Υλικά των Ονείρων των Τζιχαντιστών:
Ιδεολογία και Κουλτούρα στα Γρανάζια της
Προπαγάνδας του Ισλαμικού Κράτους (IS)

Μαρία Γιάνναρου

Κόρινθος, Ιούνιος 2019

*In loving memory of my mentor, Philip M Taylor
Who taught me how (not) to think*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am bored. Too easily I am afraid, especially when innovation and creativity are denied access to the research analytical toolkits and the content of the research is well...Boring. Luckily enough, two years ago, an amazingly bold and refreshingly witty book fell into my hands. The title was "Jihadi Culture" and it was the brainchild of the senior research fellow at the Norwegian Defense Research Establishment (FFI) and adjunct professor of political science at the University of Oslo, Thomas Hegghammer. My mind was haunted from the richness and the multidimensionality of this new empirical domain he was advocating and hence I decided to engage with it actively. This dissertation is inspired by his ideas and for that I am grateful.

And since gratefulness popped up, I have not enough words to thank the leading expert in the field of dreams and Emeritus Reader in the Durham University, Iain R Edgar. Beside his enormous contribution to the field, I am indebted for his resourceful advices and the time he devoted to me and my eccentric questions.

Of course, nothing of the above could have been materialized if it wasn't for Aaron Zelin's site, Jihadology, which back then in spring of 2019, granted free access to jihadi primary sources. Today, even if I somehow managed to set a hand on the strictly required for the dissertation sources, I could never get the required comprehensive overview of the thoroughgoing activities in the Islamic State's propaganda domain. On a similar note, I would like to thank JM Berger for making available a trove of FBI 9/11 documents, without which valuable contextual insights would have been lost.

Next to the line, comes the Head of PSIR Department and Associate Professor, Nikolaos Tzifakis, to whom I am indebted for his discrete support and insightful guidance, whenever it was required. Finally, I am genuinely moved by the contribution of Dr Marina Eleftheriadou, who in an extreme limited and pressing amount of time has provided me with valuable advice concerning the organization and presentation of my data.

Jihadi Dreams Are Made of This: Culture and Ideology in the Reels of Islamic State's Propaganda Machine

Keywords: Dreams, Jihadi Culture, Ideology, Islamic State, Propaganda

Abstract

Dreams command great respect in Islam and as research has shown they have also been instrumental in jihadi contexts. The purpose of this dissertation is to contribute to the better understanding of jihadi culture by providing a comprehensive description of the top-down use of dreams' accounts by the Islamic State. Using data from Islamic State's Anglophone publications and from a large collection of secondary sources I peel gradually the dream-related cultural and ideological content with the objective to describe and assess jihadi dreams' dynamics for legitimacy and affect-driven decision-making. Along these lines, the repertoire of Islamic State's dream operations appears to be quite rich, making the adoption of doctrinal information an easier task and providing instigators for the justification of (violent) actions and conversion, the defamation of the opponents and inspirational guidance.

Τα Υλικά των Ονείρων των Τζιχαντιστών: Ιδεολογία και Κουλτούρα στα Γρανάζια της Προπαγάνδας του Ισλαμικού Κράτους (IS)

Σημαντικοί Όροι: Όνειρα, Τζιχαντιστική Κουλτούρα, Ιδεολογία, Ισλαμικό Κράτος (IS), Προπαγάνδα

Περίληψη

Τα όνειρα χαίρουν μεγάλου σεβασμού στο Ισλάμ και όπως έχει καταδείξει η έρευνα έχουν διαδραματίσει κεφαλαιώδη ρόλο σε τζιχαντιστικά περιβάλλοντα. Σκοπός αυτής της διπλωματικής εργασίας είναι να συνεισφέρει στην βαθύτερη κατανόηση της τζιχαντιστικής κουλτούρας με μια εμβριθή περιγραφή της, εκ της κορυφής προς τη βάση, χρήσης των ονειρικών αφηγήσεων από το Ισλαμικό Κράτος. Χρησιμοποιώντας δεδομένα από τις αγγλόφωνες εκδόσεις του Ισλαμικού Κράτους και από μία μεγάλη συλλογή δευτερογενών ερευνητικών πηγών διεισδύω σταδιακά στο συνδεδεμένο με τα όνειρα πολιτισμικό και ιδεολογικό υλικό με στόχο την περιγραφή και αποτίμηση της δυναμικής των τζιχαντιστικών ονείρων αναφορικά με τη νομιμοποίηση και τη δια του θυμικού λήψη αποφάσεων. Μέσα σε αυτό το πλαίσιο, παρουσιάζεται από το Ισλαμικό Κράτος ένα αρκετά πλούσιο εύρος δράσεων των ονείρων, γεγονός που καθιστά ευκολότερο τον ενστερνισμό και την αφομοίωση της δογματικής πληροφορίας ενώ παρέχει παράλληλα ωθητικούς και ελκτικούς παράγοντες για την αιτιολόγηση (βίαιων) ενεργημάτων και προσηλυτιστικών προσχωρήσεων, την αποδομητική διαβολή των αντιπάλων και την θεόπνευστη καθοδήγηση.

ΥΠΕΥΘΥΝΗ ΔΗΛΩΣΗ

Με την παρούσα δήλωση:

1. Δηλώνω ρητά και ανεπιφύλακτα ότι η διπλωματική εργασία που σας καταθέτω αποτελεί προϊόν δικής μου πνευματικής προσπάθειας, δεν παραβιάζει τα δικαιώματα τρίτων μερών και ακολουθεί τα διεθνώς αναγνωρισμένα πρότυπα επιστημονικής συγγραφής, τηρώντας πιστά την ακαδημαϊκή δεοντολογία.
2. Οι απόψεις που εκφράζονται αποτελούν αποκλειστικά ευθύνη του/ης συγγραφέα/ως και ο/η επιβλέπων/ουσα, οι εξεταστές, το Τμήμα και το Πανεπιστήμιο Πελοποννήσου δεν υιοθετούν κατ' ανάγκη τις εκφραζόμενες απόψεις ούτε φέρουν οποιαδήποτε ευθύνη για τυχόν λάθη και παραλείψεις.

Η δηλούσα

Μαρία Γιάνναρου

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INTRODUCTION

Without the psychic processes of dreaming, human group life could not have evolved or been maintained.

—Murray L. Wax, *Western Rationality and the Angel of Dreams*

1.1 Outline and Research Questions

Al-Wisal TV, Madani Channel and Iqraa TV are some indicatively selected Arabic religious channels, with dream interpretation shows nested in their daily programs. The popularity of these shows has its roots in the high status that dreams enjoy in Islam. Along these lines, previous research has shown that dreams carry considerable weight in jihadi circles, too (Edgar, 2004b; 2006a; 2007; 2008; 2015; 2016; Edgar& Looijer 2017). The purpose of this dissertation is to provide a comprehensive description of the top-down use of dreams' accounts by the Islamic State.

But why dreams matter to Islamic State's jihadis to the point that they include dream accounts in their Anglophone propaganda arms? To answer this question, we have to take into consideration first and foremost, as Edgar (2004b; 2006a; 2007; 2008; 2016) suggests the fundamental role that dreams play in Islam, in toto. Thereafter, in an effort to enhance our understanding of the why¹, we will try to limit our ignorance of the how and what, by setting the following research questions:

- RQ1: What is encompassed in Islamic dream tradition and how it communicates and interacts with the content of jihadi dreams?
- RQ2: How affect interacts with the information conveyed by jihadi dreams?
- RQ3: How Islamic State instrumentalizes the information conveyed by jihadi dreams?

Dream accounts are used, systemized and validated as data, whose primary sources are chiefly comprised by Islamic State's edited English-language magazines, Dabiq and Rumiya, and three chapters are employed as a means to address the abovementioned research questions. The first chapter provides the scaffolding for dreams in Islam. It starts with the integration of dreams in the pertinent contexts of

¹ A thought consistent with and inspired from Goodall's epigram, addressed to the ethnographic researcher "find out why by figuring out how" (2000, p.128).

sociality, culture and ideology while it proceeds with an analysis of the typology of dreams in Islamic tradition. The end comes with an assessment on dreams' persuasive power as it is expressed in their dynamics for legitimacy and in affect-driven decision-making. It has to be noted that this chapter and the last one, are footnote-laden, aiming at consolidating a wide span of cultural-relevant analytical tools, which are dispersed among different contexts and are of critical importance to the understanding of the underlying meanings of Islamic State's culture.

The second chapter explains how and why everything is written, the way they are. It begins with a comprehensive analysis of the research design, which entails the philosophy of science that informs the research strategy, the theoretical foundations of dream analysis, the methods employed and an overview of the origins and content of data. Finally, the unit is completed by an extensive analysis of the methodological limitations and the lacunae inherent in the subject of this dissertation.

The third chapter, in essence, embodies the empirical findings of the dissertation. It is organized in four units. The first one provides an outlook on the repertoire of Islamic State's dream operations. The second analyses how Islamic State's instrumentalizes deception and defamation entailed in conveyed-by-dreams information and the third focuses on the potency of dreams to act as moments of awakening and steer a person's decision making to certain directions. The last unit dissects two unofficial dream records which in turn focus, *inter alia*, on affect-driven decision-making.

In toto, the contribution of dreams to the evolution of collective life should not sound as a burlesque act. Dreams have operated as the affect-tube, which by informing group-members about the feelings of each other, bolstered the cohesion of the in-group, maximizing thusly their chances for survival (Wax, 2004). Based upon this premise, dreams and their narrative accounts are assessed herein as communicative events, integrated in dynamic socio-cultural schemes (Tedlock, 1987). Along these lines, if a dream account is felt and seems like real to the dreamer, no matter how farfetched or preposterous it may appear to the researcher, it is taken into consideration.

After all, dreams allow people to hijack in their sleep any persona, identity or role they wish, thereby actuating an adaptive behavioral mechanism (Wax, 1999). The latter, by dint of deciphering the mediated informational content, simplifies dreamers'

and dreamers groups' hardships, dilemmas and interpersonal intricacies by maximizing thus the chances of survival for both the group and the individual. The kind of the world, physical, spiritual, in this life or in afterlife, this survival has an edge on, is another story.

1.2 Concepts and Definitions

Islamic State: The militant Islamist group, and bygone unilaterally declared proto-state that follows an extra conservative, apocalyptic and uncompromising doctrine of Islam.

Jihadi: Used both as an adjective and as a noun. In general, there is no consensus on its use. Herein it connotes the batch of militant Sunni Islamists under the umbrella of Al Qaeda and Islamic State.

Propaganda: Any deliberate communicative endeavor to persuade people to think and behave in a certain way that promotes the interests of the source (Taylor, 2008).

Affect: I follow Munezero et al. (2014, p.2) and define as affect the sum of the "positive and negative evaluations of an object, behavior, or idea with intensity and activity dimensions".

Emotion: I follow LeDoux (2002) and define as emotion "the process by which the brain determines or computes the value of a stimulus".

Feelings: The aftereffect of emotions systemized within previous subjective experiences and codified.

Narratives: The integrated network of verbal and non verbal communicative assemblages, designed to promote the cognitive and aesthetic features that benefit the source.

CHAPTER 1

ISLAMIC DREAMS SCAFFOLDING: LITERATURE REVIEW

1.2 *Dreams in Context*

A special dialectical relation between the dream and the dreamer shapes the content-specific information-processing mechanisms and thence the content of dreams, per se (Hodgson, 1974). In this context, the respective frameworks of sociality, culture and ideology are deemed necessary for grasping the full content of dreams.

Along these lines, sociality could be described as a toolkit of behavioral strategies which, by virtue of affect, elicits corresponding social responses (Damasio, 2018). In this frame of reference², dreams could be portrayed as sociality's hidden orchestra³, playing the rhythms of culture's symphony. By broadening the scope of Linton's definition (1936, p.288 op. cited in Kroeber & Kluckhohn,1952) culture is being used herein in order to describe " the nexus of ideas, conditioned emotional responses, patterns of habitual behavior and their respective material byproducts, as determined by the way of life of a particular group of people, at a particular time".

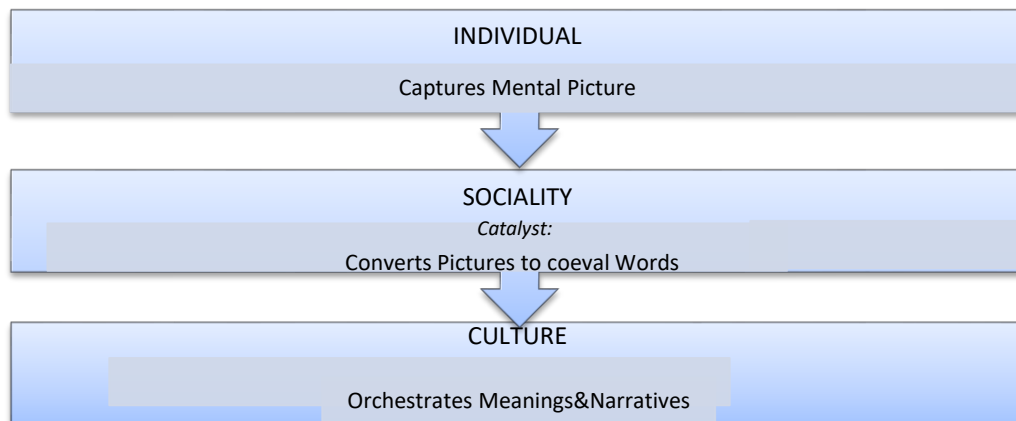
To put it in a less verbalistic wording, dreams epigrammatically are deeply integrated to their respective cultural milieus and act as signposts of each culture's⁴ social architecture. Schematically, the abovementioned interactions are described as follows:

² The synergetic bond of behaviors and dreams is illustrated by Evans-Pritchard (1937, p.384, op. cited in Edgar 2002) who illustrates the abovementioned relation by stating that the "memory of dream images may influence subsequent behaviours and subsequent happenings may intrude upon the memory of dream images so that they conform to one another. "

³ This analogy has been a paraphrase of Pessoa's respective one with soul. On that note, dreams, especially in Islamic contexts, provide a roadmap to each "culture's soul". In Pessoa's words (2001, p.310):

"My soul is a hidden orchestra, but I do not know what instruments- strings and harps, timbales and drums- strum and bang inside me. I only know myself as a symphony."

⁴On the interplays between dreams and culture, see further Ewing, K.P. 1990. The dream of spiritual initiation and the organization of self representations among Pakistani Sufis. *American Ethnologist*. 17(1), pp.56-74; Rappaport, R.A. 2010. *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.



Ergo, the narrated accounts and interpretations of dreams require historical and localized contextualization⁵ in order to be properly comprehended (Rupprecht 1993; Shulman& Stroumsa 1999) . In this regard, the differences between the perceptions of dream interpretation in Western and Islamic discourses is quite telling: in the former, it equals with introspection (Lamoreaux, 2002) or sheer superstition(Kruger, 1992) whereas in the latter, it holds the status of divination⁶ founded on the ultimate knowledge mediated by the Hereafter (Sviri, 1999). This knowledge is passed to the dreamer by the agency of dream, and gets mutated by the art of interpretation (ta‘bīr)⁷ to themed meaning.

⁵ Ibn Sīrīn, the institutor of the Muslim tradition of dream interpretation, in his treatise, specifies social and cultural awareness as a sine qua non for the sound interpretation of dreams. In his own words, as translated and adapted by al-Akili (1992, pp. XXI-XXII):

Dream Interpretation requires a concise knowledge that must be based on the fundamentals of one's religion, inner spiritual values, and moral and cultural traditions.[...] The meanings of dreams also differ in values. For instance, if a devout worshiper sees himself wearing a soldier's uniform in a dream, it means invalidation of his worship, while if a non-fighting soldier sees that, it means going to war, and victory. As for the rest of people, it means a dispute, an argument, and corruption. *A dream interpreter must also be considerate of other social customs and religious norms.* [...]For example, if a Muslim woman sees herself committing adultery inside a mosque in a dream, it means gaining bad reputation, while if a Hindu woman sees that dream, it means rising in station of nearness to her lord, for in Hinduism they consider sexual intercourse an act of worship.

⁶ Dream divination and her interpretation in early Islamic literature held the status of a science; a shar‘ī discipline, endorsed by the prophets and professed by the ulema. See for instance, Lamoreaux, J. 1996. SOME NOTES ON THE DREAM MANUAL OF AL-DĀRĪ. *Rivista Degli Studi Orientali*. **70**(1/2), pp.49; Lamoreaux, J.C., 2002. *The Early Muslim Tradition of Dream Interpretation*. New York: State University of New York Press, pp. 115-134; Bland, N. 1856.

On the Muhammedan Science of Tābīr, or Interpretation of Dreams. *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*. **16**,p.122.

⁷ As Lamoreaux (2002, p. 86, 204) maintains the etymological root of ta‘bīr, ‘‘ ‘abbara ‘‘, connotes the transition from one side to another. Correspondingly, it signifies the conversion of the dream from an amorphous visual portrayal to a repository of concrete meaning. On a related note, ‘abbara is also linked with the lemma ‘‘exegesis’’ by dint of its synonyms ‘‘ta‘wīl’’ and ‘‘tafsīr’’.

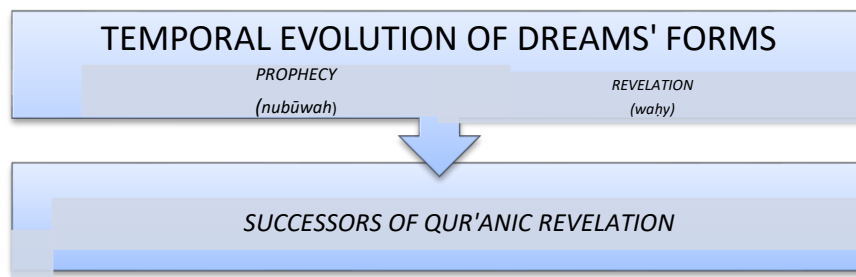
But not all dreams indiscriminately are to be the subject of interpretation. Just the ones that are classified as ru'yā. Deriving from a root that means ‘to see’, ru'yā dreams are ingrained with the meaning of a true dream (Lamoreaux, 2002) from divine provenance, and they are roughly translated as waking⁸ or dream vision. As stated in Sufi literature (Green, 2003) the waking vision is instilled with high order meaning and duly classified as superior to the dream one, on the grounds of the Prophetic paradigm. Namely, the temporal axis of dream and waking visions in Prophet's life, as delineated from the preparatory phase of his intense dreams to Jabrā'il's apparition.

Another relational and temporal axial bond is being established between prophecy and true/good dreams in a series of prophetic traditions. For starters, in the Qur'an it is stated that ‘*Those who believe and fear God for them is good tidings(al-bushrā) in the present life and in the world to come*’(10.64) whereupon the Prophet (Kister 1972a, Lamoreaux, 2002; Edgar 2016) identified as good tidings ,the good/true dreams that people have while asleep⁹. And one day before he died he went to the mosque whereon he pronounced the end of prophecy¹⁰, and he stated further that ‘*there remain only bearers of good tidings, good dreams which a man sees or which are shown to him in sleep*’(Kister 1972a, Lamoreaux, 2002; Edgar 2016). Along these lines, the temporal evolution of the relation between dreams and prophecy would be delineated in schematic form, as follows:

⁸ According to al- Suyūfī , a waking vision gets classified as a subtype of ‘karamat’ (miracle) and it is suggestive of spiritual enlightenment. See further al- Suyūfī, J. 2017. *Healing after Loss: Consoling the Bereaved*, (transl. Jameer Rashad). Toronto, Ontario: Wasila Press.

⁹ For references to primary sources, see Kister, M.J.,1972a. The interpretation of dreams : An unknown manuscript of Ibn Qutayba's ‘Ibarat al-Ru'ya. *Israel Oriental Studies*. 4, p. 70; Lamoreaux, J.C., 2002. *The Early Muslim Tradition of Dream Interpretation*. New York: State University of New York Press, pp. 110, 209.

¹⁰ For references to primary sources, see Kister, M.J.,1972a. The interpretation of dreams : An unknown manuscript of Ibn Qutayba's ‘Ibarat al-Ru'ya. *Israel Oriental Studies*. 4, p. 70-71; Lamoreaux, J.C., 2002. *The Early Muslim Tradition of Dream Interpretation*. New York: State University of New York Press, p. 84. For variants on the relation between dream and prophecy, see also Kinberg, L. 1994. *Ibn Abi al-Dunyā, Morality in the Guise of Dreams: A critical edition of Kitāb al-Manām with Introduction*. New York: Leiden, pp. 35-36; Sviri, S. 1999. Dreaming Analyzed and Recorded: Dreams in the World of Medieval Islam. In: D. Shulman, & G.C. Stroumsa, eds. *Dream Cultures. Explorations in the Comparative Histories of Dreaming*. New York: Oxford University Press, p. 252.



1.2 Typologies of Dreams

Dreams, as certified carriers of high order meaning¹¹, have undergone several attempts, during centuries, in order to be systemized and catalogued in a manner accommodating the essentials of local cultural idiosyncrasies. In Islamic ontology the world that we reside in, and our hampered, by default, sensory mechanisms bound the limits of our perception. Dreaming, thusly, gives access to a perceptual locus free of external hindrance¹² and catalyzes the constructed linear temporalities of present, past and future(al-Zamakhsharī op. cited in Smith,1980). Dead people reveal the future to the living ones, cajole the existential concerns of the latter by getting them down to brass tacks of the Hereafter and indulge in a mutual exchange of information (Smith, 1980; Kinberg 1986; Lamoreaux 2002).

Dreams' typologies operated in the collective level, as quasi stereopticons of the dominant powers' cultural imperatives¹³, dictating the (non) veracity of certain categories of information, inter alia. Hence, according to their origin, namely whether

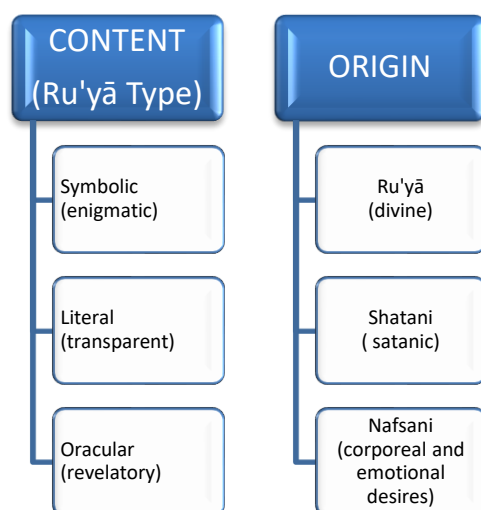
¹¹ Rappaport (1999, p. 70-74) described 'high order meaning' as a root and branch immersion of self with the other, in the basis of identity or any sort of manufactured singleness. Consonantly, participation and metaphor were determined as the getaways to high order meaning. In order to grasp high order meaning, hence, one has to engage with something bigger than herself, whereas the metaphor is used as a sort of cognitive deciphering device which bridges her already known word with the magnanimity of the unknown ones and merges them in a state of co- being.

¹² As Ibn Sīrīn (Kinberg, 1986) allegedly put it : "Whatever the deceased tells you in sleep is true, for he stays in the world of truth". Along similar lines, Ibn Arabī (Knysh, 2012) maintains that the Prophet stated ' ' People are asleep, and when they die, they awake''. That being the case, the only chance an alive person has to leap at the truth (and stay alive) is to have ru'yā dreams. On this scheme see Knysh, D. 2012. Dreams and Visions in Islamic Societies: An Introduction. In: D.Knysh, & Ö. Felek, eds. *Dreams and Visions in Islamic Societies*. New York: Suni Press, pp. 1, 10.

For a discussion of the association between dreams, truth and imagination, see Hughes,A. 2002. Imagining the Divine: Ghazali on Imagination, Dreams, and Dreaming. *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*. 70(1), pp.33–53.

¹³ An illustrative example is epitomized in the case of al-Sha'rānī 's dream accounts. As Katz (1997, p.8) maintains, therein lies an in depth demonstration of the tactics used by Sufis with the objective to manufacture tailored approaches to dream interpretations; a custom-made interpretative modus operandi crafted to serve their own interests.

they occurred by dint of God, Satan or somatic agents, dreams were categorized respectively as ru'yā, shatani and nafsani¹⁴. Only the first, the ru'yā ones, were certified as bearers of truth and thence they were further classified, commensurate with their content, as symbolic, literal(Kinberg, 1993,1994; Reynolds, 2001) and oracular(Lamoreaux, 2002). The truth in symbolic dreams is coded, therefore their content does not identify with their meaning and they require interpretation. Literal dreams on the other hand display their truth in a straightforward, unembellished manner which does not require mediators in order to be understood. That's also the case with the oracular dreams. The content revealed, usually by a deity or a (deceased) person, is apprehended tout de suite¹⁵.



Bland (1856, p. 127) makes a reference to a wide category of sound, veridical dreams, of inspirational, revelatory and cautionary gist, and categorizes them as ‘ahkām’ dreams¹⁶. These are true, divinely-sourced dreams wherein angel Gabriel, like a placid

¹⁴ As stated in a tradition of one of the Prophet’s Companions, Abdallāh ibn Mas‘ūd, the abovementioned distinction of dreams has been made by the Prophet, per se. For bibliographical details and references to primary sources, see Bland, N. 1856. On the Muhammedan Science of Tābīr, or Interpretation of Dreams. . [online] *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*. **16**, p. 127. Available at: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25228676> [Accessed 26 March 2019].

¹⁵ Lamoreaux (2002, p.85, 204) cites two traditions which articulate that the Prophet’s primary revelations occurred while he was dreaming. The first is attributed to Prophet’s wife, ‘Ā’ishah and it purports that ‘The Messenger of God’s first experience of revelation (waḥy) took place in a true dream’. In the second it is proclaimed that Gabriel appeared for the first time to the Prophet while the latter was asleep and as soon as he woke up, Gabriel was gone. Both are mediated by Ṭabarī in Ta’rīkh. For references to primary sources, see Lamoreaux, J.C., 2002. *The Early Muslim Tradition of Dream Interpretation*. New York: State University of New York Press, p. 204.

¹⁶ Ahkām, the plural of ḥukm, is a word which connotes God’s will and accordingly authority, sound judgment and rules (Esposito, 2003). This was largely an outcome of the instrumentalization of the

and sweet-natured Prometheus, reveals bits and bytes from the ultimate truth to the dreamer. To this end, in a quasi cognitive perceptual rehabilitation process, specific contents of the Preserved Tablet of Faith ¹⁷(al-lawḥ al maḥfūz) are mirrored and mediated by Gabriel in a compatible mode to the dreamer's perceptive mechanisms. The abovementioned Preserved Tablet is the heavenly book which entails the divine decrees about all past, present and future events¹⁸ and as such is concomitantly the source of all revelatory occurrences, truthful dreams included (Schimmel, 1994).

Confused and jumbled (aḍghāth al- aḥlām) dreams, conversely, occur due to whether corporeal or psychological agents. Along these lines, Ibn Qutayba assort as aḍghāth dreams, the ones whose content has been manufactured by attitudinal and conceptual idiosyncrasies (Kister, 1972a) or conditioned by the four humors¹⁹. The ḥulm (pl. aḥlām) dream is usually attributed to the yearnings and fixations of the soul (nafs) which may (or not) be also inspired by Satan²⁰. Along these lines, a certain food eaten

word, by the Kharijites in the first century of Islam, when they declared that they recognize and comply only with the ḥukm of God. On the grounds of this, labeling a specific type of dreams with such a regulating-charged term bolsters even further the credibility and the normative power of the information, dreams carry, and ergo their impact upon decision making processes.

¹⁷ According to a tradition cited by Kister(1983, p.354) ‘nine thousand years before things were created God created the Light of Muhammad.[...] This Light turned around the Power (qudrah) and praised Him. [...] Then, from this Light God created ten things: the Throne, the Pen, the Tablet, the Moon, the Sun, the Stars, the Angels, the Light of the Believers, the Chair and Muhammad. ‘

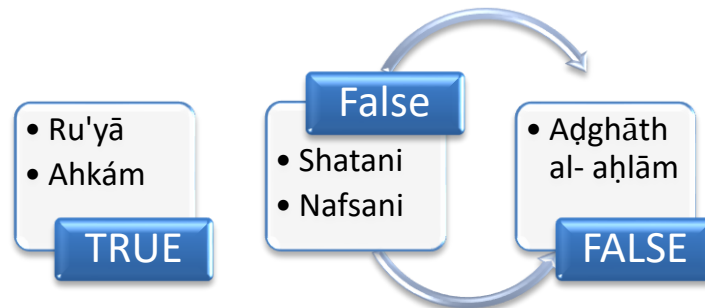
¹⁸ The Preserved Tablet of Faith shall be touched only by angels (Kister, 2008) whereas there is a quasi allocation of responsibilities and distribution of competencies between the angels. In the words of Ibn ‘Abbās, as cited by Kister(1979b, p.28) ‘the copying from the Preserved Tablet commences on laylat al-barā’a and is completed on laylat al-qadr, when the list of sustenances [sic] is handed over to the angel Mīka’īl, the list of earthquakes, lightning and wars to Jibrīl, and the list of deeds (a ‘māl) to the angel Ismā’īl who is in charge of lower Heaven and is an angel of very high rank’.

For bibliographical details and references to primary sources, see Kister, M.J. 2008. Lā Yamassuhu illā l-muṭaḥharūn...Notes on the Interpretations of a Qur’ānic Phrase. *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*. **34**, pp.310-311; Kister, M.J.1979b. ‘Sha’bān is my month’... *A Study of an Early Tradition*. *Studia orientalia memoriae D.H.Baneth dedicate*. Jerusalem: The Magnes Press & Institute of Asian and African Studies, **63-70**, p.28.

¹⁹ The system of humors is a Hippocratic conceptualization of the basic fluids of the body, namely black bile, yellow bile, blood and phlegm which were described as the essential constituents of human nature and accordingly of man's sensory mechanisms. According to Hippocrates, (Oberhelman,1987; Holowchak, 2001;Greenbaum, 2014) dreaming provided signs symptomatic of the dreamer's health condition. These assumptions engendered a quasi cognitive dissonance to medieval Muslim physicians, as Lamoreaux (2002, p.28) argues, since from the one hand, the religion of Islam embraces dream interpretation but the vast majority of post Hippocratic physicians perceived dreams solely as a byproduct of physiological conditioning.

²⁰Fahd (2012) maintains that in Islamic tradition ḥ-l-m conveys the meaning of satanic influence in a dream ; an assertion which is based upon an Ibn Qataybah tradition(Fahd,1999), according to which ‘the ru’yā comes from God and the ḥulm from Satan’. Alternatively, el Aswad(2010, p.443) highlights the connection with the cognate word istiḥlām, which also has as a root, the ḥ-l-m, and it signifies the

late at night or an obsessive passion could initiate a mosaic of dreams, hallucinatory illusions and intense nightmares (kabus), which all qualify as aḥlām dreams (Gouda, 1991; Fahd, 1999).



The abovementioned classification of dreams has a common denominator: the non intentionality of the dreamer. But there is a process, *istikharah*, whose stated objective is the a la carte divination, and it is pursued when a critical decision has to be made.²¹ On this account, special customary routines are being performed, along with intense meditating and praying before sleep whereas the answers are mediated in the format of Ru'yā dreams to the diviner (*Edgar & Henig, 2010; Edgar, 2011*).²² Overall, the typology of Islamic dreams is a multifaceted endeavor to instill certainty in uncertainty and order to chaos in a semiotic manner that accommodates certain collective emotional requirements.

1.3 Dreams and Legitimacy

1.3.1 Frameworks of Legitimacy

When the what of common values, norms and beliefs, their content namely, acts as a criterion for actions taking place within the social nexus, the wheels of legitimacy are set into motion (Parsons 1960; Weber 1968; Dowling & Pfeffer, 1975; Meyer & Scott, 1983; DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). Legitimacy, respectively, could be described as a socially coercive force which acts as an enabler of desired effects on behavior

sexual ting occurring during dreams, suggesting thusly the organic interconnection of ḥulm dream with the physical and emotional desires.

²¹ As Gonzalez-Vazquez (2018) points out *istikhara* is also used to bring the blessings (*barzaka*) in occasions as weddings, economic affairs and pilgrimage (*ziyārah*) and offer cure.

²² As Aydar posits (op.cited in Edgar & Henig, 2010; Edgar,2011) Prophet Muhammad not only instructed the essentials of *istikhara* to his companions but he also recommended it as a decision making strategy.

(French & Raven, 1959; Ford & Johnson, 1998). In turn, people's compliance is assessed as a measurement unit of legitimacy's net change power over attitudes. Rightfulness and justice, the how of control exertion, constitute accordingly the principal resources of *legitimacy* (Paternoster et al, 1997; Tyler, 2006; Levi et al., 2009).

A sine qua non of legitimacy is adaptation. Its operability is change-bound and context-dependent upon time, space and the prevailing configurations of interests (Clark, 1956; Downs, 1967; Perrow, 1970; Dowling & Pfeffer, 1975; Bell, 2002). Proportionally, legitimacy, this quasi ticket to authorized ruling power, has three main offshoots: the normative, the legal, and the empirical (Risse& Stollenwerk, 2018). The first two are essentially spinoffs of socialization's workings; they form the code of the 'right to rule' (Gilley 2009) with their foundational basis either being a configuration of ethical norms²³ (normative) or on the legal framework²⁴ (legal). Conversely to the hybridized character of the former, empirical legitimacy has a sheer bottom up focus. Hence, it can be defined as the citizens' engagement in submissiveness to a given monopoly of force (Levi & Sacks, 2009; Risse& Stollenwerk, 2018).

In a militant context, legitimacy serves as a protean currency of decision-making logistics; it maintains the supply lines of emotions and cognition while disrupting those of the enemy. A critical operational resource, as Suchman (1995) maintains, invaluable for any sort of 21st century warfare. Respectively, the identification and mapping out of legitimizing sources authorizes access to the nuts and bolts of decision-making process, especially when the actors are non state groups²⁵ engaging

²³ For a discussion on the interaction of normative legitimacy and public sphere, see Fraser, N. 2007. Special Section: Transnational Public Sphere: Transnationalizing the Public Sphere: On the Legitimacy and Efficacy of Public Opinion in a Post-Westphalian World. *Theory, Culture & Society*. **24**(4), pp. 7–30. On political realism and normative legitimacy, see Erman, E. & Möller, N. 2015. Political Legitimacy in the Real Normative World: The Priority of Morality and the Autonomy of the Political. *British Journal of Political Science*. **45**(1), pp. 215–233.

²⁴ On the interaction of legal legitimacy and people's attitudes, see Tyler, T. R., & Jackson, J. 2013. Popular Legitimacy and the Exercise of Legal Authority: Motivating Compliance, Cooperation, and Engagement. *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*. **20**(1), pp.78-95. On legal legitimacy in the context of exigent circumstances, see Fatovic, C., & Kleinerman, B., eds. *Extra-Legal Power and Legitimacy: Perspectives on Prerogative*. New York: Oxford University Press.

²⁵ The groups, which are devoid of formal legal personality and whose membership's charts are attributable to identity features, are described hereinabove as non state groups. On non state groups and their ensuing claims for legitimacy, see Kingsbury, B. 1992. Claims by Non-State Groups in International Law. *Cornell International Law Journal*. **25** (3), Article 1. Available at: <http://scholarship.law.cornell.edu/cilj/vol25/iss3/1> (Accessed: March 30, 2019).

in limited statehood²⁶ areas. Subsequently, the absence of fully consolidated, institutionalized governance is counterbalanced by capitalizing on hearts and minds' authorization while avoiding the costs of coercive, kinetic action.

In the case of IS, religion is employed as both a fundamental source of legitimacy, per se, and as a signaling²⁷ device (Kinney, Davis, & Zhang, 2018). The legitimating linchpin of Islamic State's existential architecture is illustrated in the first issue of Dabiq (p.27), as follows:

“And upon them is to understand that The Islamic State – on account of what Allah has blessed it with of victory, consolidation and establishing the religion – is regarded as an unquestionable imamah. As such, anyone who rebels against its authority inside its territory is considered a renegade, and it is permissible to fight him after establishing the hujjah [proof] against him (i.e. clarifying his error to him with proof)”.

The word imamah, imamate in English, connotes a holder of political and religious authority both in the Shi'a and in the Sunni Muslim tradition (Gleave, 2004; The Oxford Dictionary of Islam, 2018). The Islamic State, accordingly, is self-presented as an undisputed leader, siphoning off god's approbation by dint of its deeds. In other words, IS operational gains are framed as a numinous proof signifying god's endorsement. Following the Wahhabi doctrinal modus operandi, whereupon whoever refused to follow god's irrefutable reason would be declared as unbeliever, Islamic State precedes in declaring anyone who does not accept its authority as an apostate and therefore admissible to be killed.²⁸

The legitimating kernel of Islamic State's dogma lies to an identity-based claim: the alleged top down direct relation to Muhammad's bloodline (qarābah)²⁹ and the

²⁶ Limited statehood, herein, is assessed as the restricted competence of a commanding force to rule effectively either in spatial or in qualitative terms, as in the case of narrow administrative bounds. See further Risse, T., Borzel, T.A., & Draude, A. eds. 2018. *The Oxford Handbook of Governance and Limited Statehood*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; Risse, T. ed. 2013. *Governance without a state? Policies and politics in areas of limited statehood*. New York: Columbia University Press.

²⁷ Any deliberate, performative use of a trait, which is meant to promote the interests of the signaler-operator, is described herein as signal. See further on signaling theory Gambetta, D.2009. Signaling. In: P. Hedstörn, & Bearman, P., eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Analytical Sociology*. New York: Oxford University Press. On signaling and the tactics of recruitment, see Hegghammer, T. 2013. The recruiter's dilemma: Signalling and rebel recruitment tactics. *Journal of Peace Research*.50(1), pp. 3–16.

²⁸ On an historical outline of the doctrinal content of Wahhabism and semantic references on the content of hujjah, see Al-Fahad, A.H., 2004. Commentary .From Exclusivism to Accommodation: Doctrinal and Legal Evolution of Wahhabism. *New York University Law Review*. 79(2), pp. 485-519.

²⁹ The tautochronous dissemination of the first Caliph's, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's, lineage credentials, with the announcement of his leadership highlight the propagandistic focus on establishing a fleshly, inter alia, tie-up with the Prophet. Interestingly enough, qarā^{bah}, was a Shiite brainchild

ensuing realization of apocalyptic³⁰ scriptures by means of the bottom up reestablishment of the caliphate, according to Prophetic Methodology (McCants, 2014, 2016). Following the lead of the Abbasid dynasty (Fahd, 1966; Lassner, 1986; Gutas, 1998) Islamic State integrated apocalyptic and divinatory³¹ tenets in its normative authoritative core, spilling it over the domain of empirical legitimacy via assorted cultural practices and propagandistic gimmicks.

1.3.2 Legitimizing Pivots in the Islamic Dream

Apocalypse means revelation and so do (insinuate) dreams in Islam. It is this revelatory quality bore by dreams that can be projected essentially into any guiding requirement a faithful Muslim has. Islam, after all, was promulgated as the aftereffect of Prophet Muhammad's dreams and visions while the Qur'an is perceived essentially as a revelatory text³² (Arbery 2008). A continuation of Abrahamic tradition by conclusive means (Lovat & Moghadam, 2018), dreams in Islam ground their legitimacy mechanics on a temporal fusion of present with the mythical past³³, the

whose objective was to suggest a source of legitimacy able to establish Ali's rule. It failed. See further Sharon, M. 2012. The Development of the Debate Around the Legitimacy of Authority in Early Islam. In: F.M. Donner, ed. *The Articulation of Early Islamic State Structures*. London: Routledge, pp. 15-36. On Baghdadi's alleged kinship with the Prophet, see Alkaff, S. 2014. Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, the Imposter. *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses*. 6(10) , pp. 4-7.

³⁰ The agonizing anticipation of a conclusive battle in which the truly virtuous will crush a global despot and the world order will be reestablished, the apocalyptic thinking namely, infuses the historical evolution of mankind, since its very beginning. Interestingly enough, research shows that Islamic State's English language propaganda's motifs are by far more apocalypse ridden compared to the respective Arabic ones. See further Boutz, J., Benninger, H., & Lancaster, A. 2018. Exploiting the Prophet's Authority: How Islamic State Propaganda Uses Hadith Quotation to Assert Legitimacy. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2018.1431363> (Assessed 13 April 2019).

³¹ Magic in all of its shades is forbidden by the Qur'an(5:92). This prohibition does not apply to dreams, divination and visions though. Characteristically, as von Grunebaum (2008) posits the Qur'an provides an interpretation code for the decipherment of dreams whereas there are also scant references about dreaming in the locus of the Quranic text, per se. For the full content of the relevant suras, see Lamoreaux, J.C., 2002. *The Early Muslim Tradition of Dream Interpretation*. New York: State University of New York Press. For references on dreams of Muhammad and earlier prophets in the Qur'anic text, see Kinberg, L. 2001. Dreams and Sleep. In: J.D. McAuliffe, ed. *Encyclopedia of the Qu'ran*. Vol. 1. Leiden: Brill, pp. 546-553.

³² People's reception of the revelatory nature of the Qur'an is exemplified in the following lament for the loss of Muhammad allegedly (Kister 2008) incepted by Abū Bakr:

*We lost the Revelation when you left us:
And the Word of God left us (as well)
Except that what you left for us in the past,
transmitted from generation to generation in the noble
sheets.*

³³ The rhetorical strategy of evocating proleptical, abiding frames as a means of engineering audience's perceptions of events dates back to Aeschylus, Euripides and Sophocles. The ancient Greek tragedians employed dreams and prophecies in their narrative techniques as authoritative beacons of the celestial

time of the Prophet. Hence, a joint venture reality is being spawned wherein the most salient touchstone of Islamic legitimacy, the Prophet himself and his companions (Shahabah), conjoins the divine plan with the current stage action (Edgar, 2016; Edgar & Looijer, 2017; Boutz, Benninger & Lancaster, 2018). The end result is the spillover of normative and empirical legitimacy by means of omnipresent agents of prophetic wisdom. As the Prophet, per se, has put it in his last days: ‘‘Prophecy has passed and there remain only bearers of good tidings, good dreams which a man sees or which are shown to him in sleep’’³⁴.

The conceptualization of (Ru’yā) dreams as the continuation of prophecy is further bolstered by two widely circulated ḥadīths. The first posits that dreams constitute ‘‘the one of the forty six parts of prophecy (Kister 1972a; Kinberg 1993 Lamoreaux 2002; Edgar 2006, 2011)’’³⁵. The second one is a characteristic example of the temporal fusion by virtue of which later Muslim societies are imbued with the prophetic authority, since it equalizes the actual presence of the Prophet with his appearance in a dream³⁶. Dreams, as mergers of past, present and future, are infused

plans. See further Goward, B. 2009. *Telling tragedy : Narrative Technique in Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides*. London: Duckworth.

³⁴ For references to primary sources, see Kister, M.J., 1972a. The interpretation of dreams : An unknown manuscript of Ibn Qutayba’s ‘‘Ibarat al-Ru’ya. *Israel Oriental Studies*. **4**, pp. 70-71; Kinberg, L. 1993. Literal Dreams and Prophetic Ḥadīths in Classical Islam- A Comparison of Two Ways of Legitimation. *Der Islam*. **70**, pp. 283; Lamoreaux, J.C., 2002. *The Early Muslim Tradition of Dream Interpretation*. New York: State University of New York Press, p. 110.

³⁵ As Edgar (2006a) points out, Muhammad was 40 years old when he experienced a prophetic trance period, mainly consisted of dreams and visions, which lasted for six months. The beginning of revelation was featured in this six- month period which inaugurated subsequently Prophethood for a period of 23 years. The fraction 1/46 contextualizes the abovementioned six- month period in the prophethood 23-year frame of reference.

On references to primary sources of the relevant ḥadīth, see Kister, M.J., 1972a. The interpretation of dreams : An unknown manuscript of Ibn Qutayba’s ‘‘Ibarat al-Ru’ya. *Israel Oriental Studies*. **4**, p. 71.

³⁶ ‘‘Whoever has seen me in a dream has seen me in truth, for Satan cannot imitate me in a dream’’. For variants and references, see Kinberg L. 2008. Qur’ān and Ḥadīth: A Struggle for Supremacy as Reflected in Dream Narratives. In: L. Marlow, ed. *Dreaming across Boundaries: The Interpretation of Dreams in Islamic Lands*. Boston, Massachusetts: Ilex Foundation, p. 27; Kinberg, L. 1993. Literal Dreams and Prophetic Ḥadīths in Classical Islam- A Comparison of Two Ways of Legitimation. *Der Islam*. **70**, p. 285.

It has to be noted, though, that there were prophylactic provisions with regards to the alleged dreams of the Prophet (Edgar, 2006b, 2016). The dreamer must have get a glimpse of the Prophet’s full body portrait while under no circumstances a dream was ru’yā, if it subscribed to etiquettes against the spirit of the Qur’an and the Ḥadīths. There is also a recorded dream (Lamoreaux, 2008:86-87) which, in a rather meta mode, further legitimizes the abovementioned ḥadīth :

‘‘Messenger of God, may I ask you a question? He said: Yes. I said: I know that I’m now asleep and that this is a dream. Hishām b. Ḥassān reported from Muḥammad b. Sīrīn, who reported from Abū Hurayra, that you once said: ‘‘Whoever has seen me in a dream has seen me in a waking state, for Satan does not imitate me.’’ Is this an authentic saying? Did you really say this? Is there anything wrong with its chain of transmitters? And to this Muhammad replied, in a manner as laconic as it is definitive:

with the seed of orthodoxy which propagates and grants thereupon authorization to social savoir faire codes, routines and rituals (Frenkel, 2008). Hence, dreams are licensed by scripture to operate as breeders of new social attitudes and conducts, if necessary.

The Prophetic *modus vivendi*, in regard to Muhammad's enchantment and attentiveness to dreams, has also been used as a legitimating pillar (Kinberg, 1993). Prophet Muhammad, besides his own dreams, had a particular concern about his companions³⁷ ones, too (Fahd, 1959). He is said to have started his days asking his comrades in arms about their dreams³⁸ and when none was brought up it was perceived as a sign of either sin or negligence of proper cultural practices³⁹. Dream sharing thusly acquired a character of public social performance; a spectacle meant to forge and foreground specific identity features and emotional states. By sharing, accordingly, the same habits with the Prophet and having a bearing on his qualities, the temporal fusion mechanics of legitimacy were being activated and some sparkles of prophetic wisdom were claimed subtly.

A series of protection clauses in the Islamic tradition corpus were mustered up in an attempt to safeguard, *ab intra*, the Prophetic authority. Thusly, lies in the name of Prophet, deliberate or not, were punished with eternal damnation in the hereafter (Kister, 1972b; Kinberg, 1993, 2008; Lamoreaux, 2002). Respectively, a Sisyphean task

“Yes, I said that.

³⁷ A relevant hadith cited by Bukhārī (Hermansen, 2001) states “When the companions of the Messenger of God [Muhammad] saw dreams while he was still alive they would tell him of their dreams and he, for his part, would interpret them as God willed”.

³⁸ For bibliographical details and references to primary sources, see Kinberg L. 1993. *Literal Dreams and Prophetic Ḥadīṡs in Classical Islam- A Comparison of Two Ways of Legitimation. Der Islam. 70*, p. 284.

³⁹ Characteristically, at one point the Prophet was asking his companions about their dreams and none had any because they had not cut and cleaned properly their nails, as Kister (1979a, p.65) points out:

“The Prophet used to ask [his Companions] about their dreams, and they would respond. Then [when] they [once] came he asked them several times but none of them gave him any information (about his dreams - K.); then the Prophet noticed that their nails had lengthened and that dirt had penetrated them. “How will you see (dreams) or be shown (dreams) while this (i.e., the dirt) is underneath your nails,” asked the Prophet.”

At another instance (1979a, p. 67) the revelation to the Prophet has stopped and angel Jibrīl pointed out as root cause the disregard of the proper cleansing:

“the reason was that the believers were careless in paring their nails, trimming their moustaches, cleansing their teeth (with a *siwak*) and cleaning their finger-joints.”

For references to primary sources, see further Kister, M.J. 1979a. *Pare Your Nails: A Study of an Early Tradition. Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society Columbia University (Bravmann Memorial Volume). 11*, pp. 63-70.

was reserved for those who lied about their dreams; two corns of barley had to be tied in a knot, or joined, on Doomsday⁴⁰.

The abovementioned scriptural yokes into truth were of limited scope; they applied only to the what, the content of dreams. The contextualization and instrumentalization of dreams, inclusive of their dissemination pathways, was beyond the sacred jurisdiction. Hence, in the Safavid era, for example, the appeal to dreams served to set up social order and the respective behavioral canon (Quinn,2008) whereas in the Mamluk period, dreams were used as censorship vehicles for heterodox views, due to their resonance with authenticity and the sacred past (Frenkel, 2008).

2.4 Dreams and Decision Making

People do not dream objects in abstracto; they dream narratives (Lamoreaux, 2002) shaped by their culture, ideology and the respective social expectations. Narratives bear paramount persuasive power which rests on their potency of transportation (Green & Brock, 2000), namely the soaking up of the self into the story, and on the intensity of affect elicited (Clare & Schnall, 2005). Accordingly, affective feedbacks, conditioned in turn by culture, ideology and sociality, influence information processing, judgments and decision-making.

In this setting, ideology is defined⁴¹, herein, as the medley between doctrine and aesthetics (Hegghammer, 2017) that either challenges or bolsters the normative and empirical legitimacy of the status quo and its established practices. In descriptive terms, it is embodied (Geuss, 2010) in relatively homogenized yet rather floating sets of discursive (ideas, conventions, notions) and non discursive elements (customary routines, micro-practices of social conduct, attitudes).

⁴⁰ For an extensive overview of references to primary sources on the relevant hadiths, see Kister, M.J.,1972a. The interpretation of dreams : An unknown manuscript of Ibn Qutayba's "Ibarat al-Ru'ya. *Israel Oriental Studies*. 4, p.74. Kinberg,L.1993. Literal Dreams and Prophetic Hadīths in Classical Islam- A Comparison of Two Ways of Legitimation. *Der Islam*. 70, pp. 286-287. By the same token, according to Mittermeier (2011, p.74) the Prophet has designated as the worst lie, the lie concerning a dream. See further Mittermaier, A. 2011. *Dreams that matter : Egyptian Landscapes of the Imagination*. Berkeley: University Of California Press, p.74.

⁴¹ For an extensive overview regarding the literature about ideology, see Hamilton, M. B. (1987). The Elements of the Concept of Ideology. *Political Studies*. 35(1), pp. 18–38.

The conception of doctrine, as a quasi normative enchiridion of primary conceptualizations supplied by language (Hegghammer 2017a), instead of being subsumed by the corpus of ideology, has almost embodied ideology in its own cluster. The employment of aesthetics in this context, recalibrates the descriptive equilibrium of ideology, by adding affect and emotions (Crone, 2014) to its strictly rational cognitive content. Aesthetics, namely the network formed by sense perceptions and their experienced meanings (Berleant, 2010), extends the cognitive spectrum to the aware, sensing body. The ensuing result is the facilitation of a quasi synaesthetic⁴² reconstruction of peoples' somatic perceptions, affect and feelings.

As Damasio argues (2018, pp.15-17), feelings, along with being a coefficient of cultural processes, provide also powerful motives to people's engagement with problems or concerns perceived as such⁴³. In tandem, they have the potency to act as gauge meters of the (un)successful dealing with issues at stake. Hence feelings provide and synchronously reconstruct information about the importance and the personal relevance of a stimulus (Clore, 2008). From the other side, affect, the motherboard of experienced feelings, synchronously provides and reconstructs information for judgments by operating as a mental shortcut for the appeal of stimuli (Monin, 2003; Slovic et al., 2007).

Characteristically, it is noted (Clore et al.,2001) that under the influence of positive affect, the procession of top-down doctrinal information, gets consolidated in a more intense modus operandi. Hence, positive affect operates as both a valuable resource of persuasive power and a cue to adhesion to the established , security-signaling convictions, stereotypes and primed knowledge; namely to the main sources of the abovementioned cognitive information. Conversely, in the case of sheer sensory input, that is data-driven information, negative affection operates as clue for insecurity

⁴² Synaesthesia's ancient Greek root (syn+aesthesia) connotes a union of the senses, which is a pretty indicative description of an alternative way of perception and categorization of sensory experiences. In the words of Rich & Mattingley (2002, p.43) the term synaesthesia outlines " an unusual mixing of the senses in which physical stimuli elicit perceptions in more than one sensory modality".

⁴³ He goes as far as to suggest (2018, p.176) that the "development of moral codes, justice systems, and political governance [...] are closely related to the development of religious beliefs in connection to feelings". See further Damasio, A.R. 2018. *The STRANGE ORDER of THINGS : Life, Feeling, and the Making of cultures*. New York: Pantheon Books.

(Schwarz, 1990), necessitating thusly a sharper processing of external environment's data.

The most illustrative example of positive affect's influence, over the modus operandi of dreams, comes from Prophetic tradition. Back in 624 CE, Prophet Muhammad had his first major victory⁴⁴ in the battle of Badr. A milestone for the history and Islam's establishment, the battle is explicitly referenced in Qur'an and its outcome is attributed to divine intervention⁴⁵. According to tradition, Muhammad's army was severely outnumbered by Meccan forces and one day before the engagement he saw in his sleep that the opponents were nothing but a small squad (8:43)

‘Remember, O Muhammad], when Allah showed them to you in your dream as few; and if He had shown them to you as many, you [believers] would have lost courage and would have disputed in the matter [of whether to fight], but Allah saved [you from that]. Indeed, He is Knowing of that within the breasts’.

In another occasion, Muhammad's companions were severely disheartened and the Prophet prayed to God, seeking for guidance. The result was a dream in which, according to the Qur'an (8:11-12), God replied as follows:

You [Muhammad] were overcome by sleep, a token of His [Allah's] protection. He sent down water from the sky to cleanse you and to purify you of Satan's filth, to strengthen your hearts and to steady your footsteps. Allah revealed His will to the angels, saying: 'I shall be with you. Give courage to the believers. I shall cast terror into the hearts of the infidels. Strike off their heads, maim them in every limb.

The common denominator in both dreams is their motivational emotional influence which spillovers from the Prophet to his companions. Specifically, Prophetic dreams operate as esprit de corps⁴⁶ boosters, where God appears to strategize, per se and

⁴⁴ The Qur'an was conceived in an era marked by gory battles and raging bloodshed. The ensuing result was a great deal of military ethics-themed content. The following verse, as cited by Omar (2004, p. 157), is one of the most emblematic cases:

‘Once the sacred months have passed, you may kill the idolaters when you encounter them, and take them [captive], and besiege them, and prepare for them each ambush. But if they repent and establish worship and pay the poor-due, then leave their way free. Lo! God is Forgiving, Merciful. (9:5)’.

⁴⁵ As Faizer (2004, p. 481-482) points out, the Qur'an cites three key moments in Prophet's life, when God's intervention was direct: the splitting of the moon (*The Hour [of Judgment] is nigh, and the moon is cleft asunder, 54:1*); Miraj and Isra (*Holy is He Who carried His servant by night from the Holy Mosque (in Makkah) to the farther Mosque [in Jerusalem] whose surroundings We have blessed that We might show him some of Our Signs[...], 17:1*); the battle of Badr (*For sure Allah helped you at Badr when you were utterly weak. Beware, then, of Allah; perhaps you will be thankful. And recall when you said to the believers: 'Will it not suffice you that your Lord will aid you by sending down three thousand angels, 3:123-124*).

⁴⁶ Esprit de corps is a high order conception, as Manning (1994, p. 5) notes, which connotes honor and loyalty to an organization and its merit whereas along with cohesion it acts as coefficient of constancy in effective combat performance.

thence sanctify, what currently would qualify as Information Operations⁴⁷. In a weird twist of military ethics, deception tactics, which usually have as stated objective to sap the morale of the adversary, are also colored with positive affect (Bulkeley, 2002) even when employed against the very army of Islam.

⁴⁷ The Headquarters of the American Army (2018, p. ix) define as Information Operations ‘‘ the integrated employment, during military operations, of information-related capabilities in concert with other lines of operation to influence, disrupt, corrupt, or usurp the decision making of adversaries and potential adversaries while protecting our own’’.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter is devoted to the dissection of the overarching strategy followed, to assess descriptively the three research questions, which explain why dreams matter to Islamic State's jihadis. I begin by delineating the epistemology and the philosophical premises that inform this dissertation. I then outline the theoretical foundations of dream analysis and the different methods employed to assess my three research questions. Lastly, I describe the data used in this thesis and I close up by specifying the methodological limitations.

2.1 Research Design

2.1.1 Philosophy of Science

This dissertation is informed by the transactional and subjective epistemology of constructivism. The basic idea behind it is that individuals' experiences engender the construction of subjective meanings stemming from particular sets of things or objects (Crotty, 1998; Neuman, 2009; Schwandt, 2014). Accordingly, what matters is not the proclamation of an absolute truth and her verification, but rather the description of complex phenomena and dynamic processes embedded in specific spatial, temporal and socio-cultural contexts. In this framework, patterns of meanings are being (de)constructed, interpreted and contextualized in idiographic explanatory schemes by dint of inductive reasoning.

A basic philosophical assumption of constructivism is that the perceiver and the perception are organically intertwined; the subjective perceiver is the sole source of (her) reality (Guba, 1990). Proportionally, the relativist ontology of constructivism maintains that there is not one objective truth; instead there is a multitude of levels and classes of informed constructions that sometimes are amalgamated into a consensus (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2000).

2.1.2 Theoretical Framework of Dream Analysis Methods

Paradoxical as it may sound, in this dissertation dreams are used, systemized and validated as data. Transpersonal research methods, a relatively new branch of qualitative research, are used for the analysis of spiritual and metamorphic features of human experience (Anderson & Braun, 1998; Raab, 2013). The study of dreams is integral part of this greater discipline.

The communicative theory of dreaming (Tedlock, 1987) perceives dreams and their narrative accounts as communicative events, integrated in dynamic socio-cultural schemes. On account of this, dream data analysis requires an attentive exploration of the socio-cultural, meaning- producing mechanisms and relations, in both the individual and the collective level, as they morph in certain local contexts. In this way, the importance and the meaning of the dream will be closer to both what the dreamers actually believe and think about particular issues, and to what they want others to believe.

The truth is that we can neither immerse into another person's head and get a thorough glimpse of her thoughts nor know directly the exact content of their dreams. However, we can assess the 'what' of the mediated dream records, and map out the 'how' of their instrumentalization. As Lévy-Bruhl (1938) argues, what actually matters to the analysis of a dream are the affective resonances of experiences and not their feasibility. Along these lines, if a dream account is felt and seems like real to the dreamer, no matter how farfetched or preposterous it may appear to the researcher, it must be taken into consideration.

After all, what is analyzed is not the dream per se but its account by the dreamer (Lacan, 1956; Crapanzano, 1975). In this context, the jumbling of established meanings enables the engenderment of new meanings and affects. In the rather graphic words of Obeyesekere (1990, p. 66), "the world of ghosts and spirits is as real as that of markets, though real in different qualitative ways as can be ethnographically described". Essentially, reality in the context of qualitative research is engaged with the perceptions of truths and not their pronouncement as such (Winter, 2000).

On a separate note, from an evolutionary perspective, dreams have operated as the affect-tube, which by informing group-members about the feelings of each other, bolstered the cohesion of the in-group, maximizing thusly their chances for survival (Wax, 2004). This is why it is essential for the content analysis corpus of dreams' records to include affect in its parameters, especially when we study dreams in spatial and cultural contexts typified by insecurity and struggle for survival.

But how is dream-induced affect transmitted to the non dreamers? Aside the narrative techniques and the cultural engineering that might be skillfully employed, dream sharing initiates a triadic interaction (Crapanzano, 1994). The dreamer narrates her story, which usually is tension-laden, and this act elicits an emotional response to the receiver(s), that is usually positively- charged. The reason this happens is that the reels of identification mechanisms are set into motion, and henceforward the dream account acts as a shortcut to discharge tension and give order to chaos. In the event of face-to-face interaction, the receiver's positive affect fosters a counter-emotional response to the dream narrator, whereas in the case of written interlocution the counter-response has usually been integrated in the text, beforehand.

2.1.3 Methods

By large this dissertation follows the methodological approach suggested by Edgar (1995, 2016). That being the case, a combination of ethnography, content and source-critical analysis is employed, through a hermeneutical and dialectical process, with the objective to answer the three following research questions:

- RQ1: What is encompassed in Islamic dream tradition and how it communicates and interacts with the content of jihadi dreams?
- RQ2: How affect interacts with the information conveyed by jihadi dreams?
- RQ3: How Islamic State instrumentalizes the information conveyed by jihadi dreams?

Specifically to answer the first research question (RQ1) I have conducted an extensive review on secondary, historic, social, religious sources in order to understand and describe comprehensively how dreams are integrated in the pertinent contexts of sociality, culture and ideology. Then, I employed secondary sources in order to

evaluate the content of the existing dream codifications and conclude with the ones which would maximize the interpretative utility of the Islamic dream typologies. The second part of the first research question, which deals with the interaction of Islamic tradition and jihadi dreams was approached, at a theoretical level, by evaluating and assessing dreams' persuasive power, in the context of the development of the legitimating and the affect-driven decision-making.

A rigorous ethnographic and content analysis of both primary and secondary sources was selected, aiming at answering the second and the third research questions as well as to the empirical dimension of the second part of the first research question. Content analysis, combined with a hermeneutical and dialectical process, has been conducted for the distillation of social, religious and motivational information from the primary sources, focusing on the functions of affect, *inter alia*. Finally, dream accounts were analyzed following a specific codification of interpretative themes, suggested by Edgar (2019, interpersonal communication):

1. How dream account is communicated
2. Etic⁴⁸ Interpretation and Context
3. Integration to Dream Typology and Interpretation Theory
4. Responses of dreamers and others to the dream

2.1.4 Data

This dissertation is grounded on mediated dream accounts and a voluminous cluster of written primary and secondary sources. The mediated dream accounts analyzed were broadcasted by the two official English-language magazines of Islamic State, Dabiq and Rumiya. To bore further in the communicative commands of dreams in Islamic State's *mise en scène*, two anecdotal dream records are also examined.

Specifically, the case selection of Dabiq and Rumiya magazines was done because both of them reach out to non-Arab speaking audiences⁴⁹; the basic pool, namely, for

⁴⁸Etic Interpretation is an approach used to describe cultural behavior from the angle of the researcher in rather consensual constructs (Morris et al., 1999). See further Morris, M.W., Leung, K., Ames, D. and Lickel, B. (1999). Views from Inside and Outside: Integrating Emic and Etic Insights about Culture and Justice Judgment. *Academy of Management Review*. **24**(4), pp.781–796.

the Caliphate's Western foreign fighters⁵⁰ and the Western home-grown IS inspired plots and attacks⁵¹ agents. In this frame of reference, Islamic State's top down approach to the instrumentalization of dream accounts provides a useful empirical canon for better understanding its strategy.

On a similar line, the selection of the non official propagated dream accounts has been made, in the 'Random Extremist' case, in order to assess whether the bottom-up and top-down dream-dissemination contexts, follow the same modus operandi, or not; whereas the second case, the 'Old Imam's dream', was chosen with the ambition to provide a litmus test for the Islamic State's perception of dreams' potency.

Of course, none of these could have been realized if it wasn't for the free access to primary sources, which Aaron Zelin so generously granted, via his site Jihadology. On a similar note J.M. Bergen's laborious endeavor, made possible the access to a pact of FBI reports without which valuable, contextual knowledge would not be accessible.

⁴⁹ For a detailed discussion on Dabiq's target audiences, see Colas, B. (2016). What Does Dabiq Do? ISIS Hermeneutics and Organizational Fractures within Dabiq Magazine. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*. **40**(3), pp. 173-190. For the communicative techniques of persuasion employed by Rumiya, see Lakomy, M. (2018). "One of the Two Good Outcomes": Turning Defeats into Victories in the Islamic State's Flagship Magazine Rumiya. *Terrorism and Political Violence*. [internet]. Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09546553.2018.1506335> (Assessed 13 May 2019).

⁵⁰ The definition of 'foreign fighters', herein, follows the Academy of International Law and Human Rights conceptualization "individuals who leave their country of origin or habitual residence to join a non-state armed group in an armed conflict abroad and who are primarily motivated by ideology, religion and/or kinship". See further Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, (2014). *Academy Briefing No. 7: Foreign Fighters Under International Law*, p.7. Available at: <https://www.genevacademy.ch/docs/publications/Briefings%20and%20In%20breifs/Foreign%20Fighters%20Under%20International%20Law%20Briefing%20no7.pdf> (Assessed 13 May 2019).

On Western foreign fighters, see Gurski, P. (2017). *Western Foreign Fighters : The Threat to Homeland and International Security*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield. On the motives of foreign fighters, see Pokalova, M. (2018) Driving Factors behind Foreign Fighters in Syria and Iraq. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*. [internet] Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1057610X.2018.1427842> (Assessed 13 May 2019). For a discussion on the evolution of transnational war volunteering, see Hegghammer, T. (2010/2011) The Rise of Muslim Foreign Fighters: Islam and the Globalization of Jihad. *International Security* . **35**(3), pp. 53–94.

⁵¹ See further Hegghammer, T. & Nesser, P. (2015). Assessing the Islamic State's Commitment to Attacking the West. *Perspectives on Terrorism*. **(9)**4. [internet] Available at: <http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/440> (Assessed 3 May 2019). On the impact of Islamic State on jihadi attacks in Europe, see Nasser, P., Stenersen, A. & Oftedal, E. (2016). Jihadi Terrorism in Europe: The IS-Effect. *Perspectives on Terrorism*. **10**(6), pp. 3-24.

2.2 Methodological Limitations and Lacunae

2.2.1 Access

In classic ethnographic research, the hiatus between what was actually seen and its metamorphosis to a narrated story sets limits on the descriptive validity of the dream. On a related note, there is no such thing such a certificate of dream actuality, a factor which sows further doubts, about whether the dream analyzed is a dream indeed or a sheer engineered machination.

However, the research questions of the present study are focused on the communicative dimension of dreams and the ways their content is instrumentalized by the Islamic State. Consequently, the overall integrity of the dream accounts is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

2.2.2. Socio-Cultural Interpretation Shortages

Dream analysis and interpretation requires the decipherment of a sequence of intra-omosed phases. The most important stage of metaphrasis, the initiator format of meaning, assigns the recalled visual mental images to the cognitive and affective feedback stemming from the socio-cultural background of the dreamer. The result of this could be a veiled reshuffling of the established meanings and nuanced connotations; composing thusly a meta-text perceptible only to the members of the in-group and to those with a profound knowledge of its inner architecture. This meta-text might directly contradict and invalidate any interpretive endeavor of outsiders, which are not familiarized in depth with the socio-cultural tenets of the in-group. The rather extensive corpus of prejudiced and fairly superficial literature on the Islamic way of life is not of great help either.

In the case of the Islamic State, which has developed a subculture based on the parent-Islamic, and on an amalgamation of militant jihadi cultural practices and products, things become even more complicated. A non-directly related with dreams, but still illustrative example, is the difference in the affective and cognitive feedbacks of weeping in jihadi and non jihadi circles (Hegghammer, 2017a; 2018). Islamic State's militants consider crying, a sign of pioussness which as such commands respect and

connotes prowess in battle. In most militant contexts, though, crying would be considered a sign of weakness especially, when attributed to the leader of the group⁵².

Along these lines, the dream interpretation Islamic toolkit hides some more additional traps for the analyst. For starters, the status of the interpreter matters; only Prophet Muhammad is perceived as an infallible interpreter. In other cases, seniority, piousness, social status, religious education, and even the relation to the dreamer play an important role in evaluating the credibility of the interpretation. Secondly, the status of the dreamer is also pretty important to the interpretation of the dream. Religion, gender, phases of menstrual cycle, seniority, dress code, piousness and income are some of the criteria⁵³ applied in order to assess the (non) receptiveness of the dreamer to divine guidance. Hence, an informed dream analysis requires the identification, systemization and categorization of a rather Daedalian network of characteristics, attributes, personal routine details and relationships that if missed, could convey false data.

Conclusively, beside the cases of extensive in-field research, it is extremely difficult to conceive in toto and analyze in depth the full spectrum of indirect cues in the available dream texts. The fact that the dream data selected in this dissertation have as target audience a non homogenous and not particular Islam-literate part of population makes their analysis, with regards to the socio-cultural lapses, a bit less complicated.

2.2.3 Group Dynamics

Within and between groups, a dynamic influential network of processes and actions unfolds, having been co-constructed by, and synchronously co-constructing the group's perceptions (Forsyth, 2014). This nexus of constant interactions moulds in turn the modus operandi employed by group members in order to exchange, receive, process and remember information. The fluidity of this whole process and the scanty

⁵² In most Western ears, the fact that the declared by Al-Qaeda "Emir of Al Qaeda in the Country of Two Rivers", 'Abū Muṣ'ab az-Zarqāwī, was known both as the Slaughterer (al-dhabbāh) and "He who weeps a lot" (al-bakkā') would be probably heard as a DSM type of psychological disorder; not studded with particularly positive affective resonances. See further Hegghammer, T. (2018). Jihadi Weeping. In: S. Schmidtke, ed. *Studying the Near and Middle East at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, 1935-2018*. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, pp. 505-514.

⁵³ Sijstānī has drafted the most exhaustive list on the status of dreamers, according to Lamoreaux (2002, p. 83). He prioritized, inter alia, the dreams of prayer leaders, judges, jurists and religious scholars among Muslims; the dreams of veiled women over the unveiled ones and the elderly ones over the young.

registration of the abovementioned transformations, due to the difficulty of 24/7 in-field research, poses further limits to the full grasp of cognitive and affective feedbacks.

2.2.4 Personal Limitations

This dissertation has been authored by a researcher that has never come in personal contact with jihadis; has never lived in a predominantly Muslim cultural setting and does not even speak Arabic. The language of the primary sources that have been used is English and their content is meant to target ‘Westerners’ but still the lack of on-field experience does not allow a full immersion into the researched cultural product. In consideration of the abovementioned shortages, the research to a certain extent bears the marks of an ivory tower endeavor.

CHAPTER 3

Analysis

3.1 Repertoire of Islamic State’s Dream Operations

The main idea underlying the research methodology of this dissertation is the attempt to enhance our understanding of the whys by limiting our ignorance of the what and how. This is achieved herein by applying a multidisciplinary, qualitative interpretative framework for dream analysis to the contents of 15 issues of Dabiq, 13 issues of Rumiyah and to two anecdotal dream accounts. In this context, the use of dream imagery is systemized and categorized by examining how it operates with regard to decision-making and affective feedbacks.

Table 1: Dream Operations and Affective Feedback

Dream OPS	Dabiq	Rumiyah
	<i>Decision-Making</i>	
Mobilization	5	2
Inspiration	5	2
Intimidation	-	1
Recruitment	2	1
Guidance	5	1
Legitimizing/ Authoritative	5	2
	<i>Affect</i>	
Positive	6	2
Negative	1	1
DREAMS	7	2
EMAXINED		

Source: Giannarou, 2019

As evident by Table 1 findings, Islamic State’s top-down recorded dream accounts employ the instrumentality of engendering positive affective feedbacks which, as explained in the second chapter, is a potent resource of persuasive power. In this regard, the adoption of doctrinal information becomes an easier task, as affection triggers a chain of stimuli-reactions instigated by security-signaling beliefs and respective socio-cultural knowledge. The immersion to the optics propagated by Islamic State opens the way to both consolidation procedures of legitimacy and to the overall endorsement of what Ingram (2015; 2016a; 2016b) identifies ‘‘competitive system of meaning’’; the prism which refracts the in-group’s perspective into the full monty, namely.

An illustrative example is being set by the most cited dream in Islamic State's English-language publications. As a matter of fact, it is the first dream mentioned in Dabiq magazine and the only dream cited by Rumiya⁵⁴.

"When the Prophet (sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam) migrated to Madīnah, At-Tufayl Ibn 'Amr Ad-Dawsī (radiyallāhu 'anh) migrated to the Prophet, and along with At-Tufayl migrated a man of his tribe. They later disliked residence in Madīnah [because of disease and fatigue caused by its climate]. The man fell sick and lost patience. So he took hold of a wide arrowhead and cut off his finger-joints. The blood gushed forth from his hands, until he died. At-Tufayl Ibn 'Amr then saw him in a dream. His appearance was good but he was covering his hands. At-Tufayl said to him, 'What did your Lord do with you?' He replied, 'Allah granted me forgiveness because of my hijrah to His Prophet.' At-Tufayl said, 'Why do I see you covering your hands?' He replied, 'I was told, 'We will not mend what you have damaged.' At-Tufayl narrated this dream to Allah's Messenger (sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam). Then Allah's Messenger prayed, 'O Allah, forgive him also for his two hands.'"

The abovementioned dream was cited in the third issue of Dabiq magazine, which was circulated one month after the Coalition forces begun engaging in Iraq and Syria. Hence, we have a temporal context which implies increased operational requirements begging for new recruits, in order for the new declared Caliphate to get consolidated and continue "lasting and expanding". Along these lines, the whole Dabiq issue is devoted to Hijrah⁵⁵, namely the immigration of faithful Muslims to the land of the Islamic State's declared Caliphate.

Interestingly enough, the reported dream account is preceded by a ḥadīth which emphatically argues about the forgiveness of believers' sins⁵⁶. According to it, hijrah to the Caliphate would act as a quasi plenary indulgence, which would wipe out all sorts of past, present and future punishment of sins. Both the recorded dream and the preceding ḥadīth, belong to Kutub al-Sittah, a canonical ḥadīth collection highly acclaimed by Sunni Muslims, also called the ṣiḥāḥ, which means sound, strong ḥadīths (Maqdisi, 1993). Consecutively, as Edgar (2015, p.77) points out, the dream

⁵⁴ The version that is cited here is the one that is included in a Dabiq's article, titled 'Hijrah from Hypocrisy to Sincerity. (Dabiq 3, page 24). For an overview on the whole corpus of dreams cited in Islamic State's English-language publications, see Annex.

⁵⁵ As Faizer (2004, p. 299) points out the word 'hijrah' is used to describe two different yet closely interrelated states. The first one denotes the Prophet's immigration to Yathrib whereas the second one has been used to signify the "the breaking off ties", disengaging the era of ignorance (jahilyya) from the era of knowledge.

⁵⁶ The whole ḥadīth goes as follows (Dabiq 3, p.23)

'Amr Ibn Al-'As (radiyallāhu 'anh) said "When Allah instilled the love of Islam in my heart, I came to the Prophet (sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam) and said, 'Stretch out your right hand so that I may pledge allegiance to you.' He stretched out his right hand; then I withdrew my hand. The Prophet said, 'What has happened to you, O 'Amr?' I replied, 'I want stipulate a condition.' He asked, 'What condition do you want to stipulate?' I said, 'That I be forgiven.' The Prophet responded, 'Are you not aware that Islam wipes out all previous sins? And that hijrah wipes out all previous sins? And that hajj wipes out all previous sins?'"

holds great authoritative value, which is further increased via the appearance and the conversation with a dead co-tribesman of a Prophet's companion.

As we have seen in the second chapter, in Ru'yā literal dreams the words of the dead operate as quasi gauges, which measure the impact of deeds in this life by citing the circumstances in the next (Kinberg, 1986; 1994; 2008). They also carry a special authoritative weight, which as such can be projected into the whole gamut of dream operations. It has to be noted though, that even in the case of the same dream imagery and content, the abovementioned spectrum can be either widened or abridged depending on its temporal and narrative context. For instance, as evident by the data provided in Tables 1, 2 and 3, even though we have the same dream's imagery, sources and emotional valence, the dream operations differ.

The abovementioned tables, in general, aspire to map out the dimensions of the dreams which actuate the persuasive dynamics of the latter. They are comprised of four categories. The first column contextualizes the dream narrative with the article in which it is cited. It needs to be mentioned parenthetically, here, that Figure A2, in Annex, ministers a quasi tactical contextualization, by juxtaposing the issue dates of Dabiq and Rumiya, along with the key events in the battlefield.

The second column indicates the source of the dream narrative, which does not always identify with the narrator of the dream. It is of cardinal importance for the dream's legitimating and motivational potency, to know where the dreams come from. The third column, describes the dominant dream imagery as perceived by myself, in the context of etic interpretation. As with the case of dream's sources, Qur'an, the Prophet, his companions and respectful figures in Islamic history buttress up further the Islamic State's doctrinal premise of the close relationship with the Prophet and the Golden Age of Islam. Column four relates the dream narratives to the subjective feelings and attitudes they elicit, that is their emotional valence.

TABLE 2: DABIQ DREAM CONTENT ANALYSIS

Article's Title (Issue)	Dream's Source	Dream's Imagery	Dream's Emotional Valence
<i>A Call to Hijrah</i> (3)	Sahih Muslim	Dead Companion in Paradise	Supportive Contact & Approval
<i>From Hypocrisy to Apostasy: The Extinction of the Grayzone</i> (7)	Qur'an	Battle in Badr	Supportive Contact & Power
<i>The Rafidah from Ibn Saba' to the Dajjal</i> (13)	Shayāṭīn	Plots of the Dajjāl	Deception
<i>The Murtadd Brotherhood</i> (14)	Khālid al-Bakrāwī (suicide bomber)	Prophet and the dreamer in battlefield	Supportive Contact, Power & Approval
	Khālid al-Bakrāwī	Floating in the Sacred Cosmos	Supportive Contact, Power and Approval
	Khālid al-Bakrāwī	Battle on a Boat, Death & Deliverance	Supportive Contact, Power, Approval & Rescue
<i>Break the Cross</i> (15)	Ali Dirie (foreign fighter)	Hur	Supportive Contact
Dreams Analyzed	7		

Source: Giannarou, 2019

TABLE 3: RUMIYAH CONTENT ANALYSIS

Issue's Title	Dream's Source	Dream's Imagery	Dream's Emotional Valence
<i>Hijra does not stop as long as the Kuffar are fought</i> (4)	Sahih Muslim	Dead Companion	Supportive Contact & Approval
<i>Among the Believers are Men: Shaykh Abu Sulayman Ash-Shami</i> (8)	Al- Hakim	Dead Companion	Supportive Contact & Approval
Dreams Analyzed	2		

Source: Giannarou, 2019

Referenced by an article titled “Being blessed with Health and Tested with Illness”, in the 8th issue of Rumiyaḥ, the above-analyzed dream witnesses a meteoric change in the repertoire of its operations. While the authoritative/legitimizing element remain stable, guidance and intimidation becomes the primary coordinate system; inspiration and motivation are re-determined accordingly, to the point that even the affective feedback changes from positive to negative. Since the specific publication was issued on 4 April 2017, when the Caliphate has already started to be pounded by the coalition forces and Russia, the health, the good shape and the adamant devotion of the existing fighters to the Islamic State ideology was of cardinal importance. In this

sense, it does not come as surprise that the emphasis is being placed in the irrevocability of decisions⁵⁷ and not in forgiveness. What is noted, in essence, is that the diapason of dream operations instrumentalities dramatically changes through the agency of pivoting the same dream imagery to different motivational and inspirational dimensions.

3.2 Wicked Pivots of Dream Operations: Deception and Defamation

In the 8th issue of Dabiq, published on 12 February 2015, a blueprint of recommendations and guidance for leaders is featured, inter alia; Abū Hamzah al-Muhājir, the successor of 'Abū Muṣ'ab az-Zarqāwī in the leadership of Al-Qa'ida in Iraq (AQI), is his alleged author. Following the Prophetic example⁵⁸, at first, he exhorts leaders to perform istikharah⁵⁹, the ritual practice which bestows divine guidance, in order to make their decision-making calculus infallible⁶⁰. He keeps up with Prophetic tradition and two pages later, in a section regarding the morale of soldiers, he makes reference to the dream Prophet saw before the battle in Badr (Dabiq 6, p.13):

Allah (ta'ālā) says,n{(And remember) when Allah showed them to you in your dream as few; and if He had shown them to you as many, you would have lost courage and would have disputed in the matter [of whether to fight]} [Al-Anfāl: 43].

As we have seen in the second chapter, disinformation and deception tactics were not only authorized for use against the believers, but they were also imbued with positive

⁵⁷ The following extract (Rumiyah 8, p.31), which acts as a concluding remark, sets the context for the emic interpretation of the dream:

Therefore, contemplate what was said to him: "I will not repair what you have corrupted of yourself," for this body is not to be ruined except in pursuit of Allah's pleasure and in maintaining obedience to Him, not due to the whims of the soul and its pleasures and impulses.

⁵⁸ The Prophet not only performed istikharah himself, but he had also taught and recommended its systematic use to his companions. Hence, Aydar (2009, p.127) maintains that istikharah is a Sunnah action and must be performed and integrated in each and every decision making calculus. As Bukhari (Islamic Finder, 2019) puts it in the Book of Salat (1162)

'*Narrated Jabir bin `Abdullah: The Prophet (PBYH) used to teach us the way of doing Istikharah in all matters as he taught us the Sūrahs of the Qur'an. He said, If anyone of you thinks of doing any job he should offer a two rak'at prayer other than the compulsory ones[...]*'.

⁵⁹ Istikharah can be performed either by inferable daytime guidance or by dream interpretation, see further Aydar, H. (2009). *Istikhara and Dreams: Learning about the future through Dreaming*. In: K. Bulkeley, K. Adams and P. Davis, eds. *Dreaming in Christianity and Islam: Culture, Conflict and Creativity*. New York: Rutgers; Edgar, I.R., & D.Henig. (2010). 'Istikhara : The Guidance and Practice of Islamic Dream Incubation through Ethnographic Comparison. *History and Anthropology*. 21 (3), pp. 251-262; Edgar, I.R. (2015). *The Dream in Islam : from Qur'anic Tradition to Jihadist Inspiration*. Oxford: Berghahn, pp. 42-53.

⁶⁰ The extract (Dabiq,7, pp. 10) which sets the relevant context, goes as follows: 'And as was reported, 'One who seeks consultation will have no regret, and one who prays istikharah will not go wrong'.'

affect. In other words, in the name of moral boosting objectives, leaders' subjectivity became a military ethics drill and emotion became the needle in the compass of credibility. It has to be noted though, that in principle the dissemination of deliberately false information, with regard to the content of dreams, is indeed prohibited and punished with great severity in the Hereafter, according to the Islamic tradition corpus⁶¹.

These scriptural yokes, however, according to the context of the abovementioned guidelines, could be neutralized in case of moral boosting desiderata. Of course, the respective authorization for the weaponization of dream-themed content would be justifiable only in the context of a top-down strategic orchestration, and it would not apply dully to individual cases. But still, the door to an a la carte manipulation of dreams has opened with the highest-rankings compliments.

On a slightly different note, in the 13th issue of Dabiq, which was published on 19 January 2016, we witness the appearance of an orchestrated character assassination⁶² attempt of the Shi'a⁶³. At its apogee of demonization and just before the concluding remarks, a dehumanizing campaign targeting the Shi'i Mahdi unfolds, and within this frame of reference the following dream imagery is being mustered in:

Despite these reports all being fabrications, the Rāfidah strive to follow what the lies dictate, as they consider them the greatest pillar of their religion[...]Were they the plots of the Dajjāl conveyed to the Rāfidah through his network of shayātīn? Were they revealed to the Rāfidah by the shayātīn as dreams? Allah knows best.

⁶¹ For bibliographical details and references to primary sources, see section 1.3, p. 14-17.

⁶² Influenced by the works of Icks & Shiraev, Mathews and Samoilenko, character assassination is specified herein as the deliberate, systematic, unabating attempt to squeeze out the reputation and the credibility of a person, institution or social group. See further Mathews, N. (1996). *Francis Bacon: The history of a character assassination*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press; Icks, M., & Shiraev, E.B. (2014). *Character assassination throughout the ages*. Palgrave Macmillan; Samoilenko, S.A., Icks, M., Shiraev, E., Keohane, J. (2016). Character Assassination. In: A.V.Ledeneva & International Board University College London School of Slavonic and East European Studies. *The Global Encyclopedia of Informality*. [internet] Available at: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ssees/research/funded-research-projects/global-informality-project> [Assessed 15 May 2019].

⁶³ The raison d'être of Islamic State's animosity towards the Shi'a, which sets the corresponding interpretative context, is epitomized by Ibn Taymiyyah and az-Zarqāwī, respectively, in the two following extracts (Dabiq 13, p.44):

"Ibn Taymiyyah said, 'Because they[the Shi'a] consider the Muslims to have worse kufr than the Jews and Christians, they take the enemies of the religion as their close allies, those whose enmity everyone knows of, like the Jews, Christians, and pagans. They have enmity towards the awliyā' of Allah who are the best people of the religion and the leaders of the pious'. [...] "Every intelligent individual should reflect upon the episodes of evil, fitnah, and corruption in his era and before that. He will find the majority of these episodes are from the Rāfidah. You will find them to be the worst of people in making fitnah and evil" [Minhāj as-Sunnah]."

"Shaykh az-Zarqāwī said, "By recalling historical experiences, testimonies of past eras, signs of current events, and the experiences we live today, we will understand truly the meaning of {They are the enemy, so beware of them. May Allah destroy them; how are they deluded?}[Al-Munāfiqūn: 4](sic). Throughout history, they have been a pang in the throats of the Muslims, a dagger in their backs, the rat that destroyed the dam, and the bridge over which the enemies of the Ummah pass.

Even though the extract cited, does not include a dream per se, it includes a socio-culturally, compelling dream narrative with a rather stirring dream imagery; therefore, it is codified and analyzed as the rest of the dreams in Tables 4 and 5. But how this idiosyncratic dream reference work? The short answer is by hinging on moral disengagement and delegitimizing practices, namely by blaming the victim in order to justify illegal behaviors against them, reduce them to a lesser and degenerated status and portray them as an existential threat against the sacred values and traditions of Islam.

In this setting, the entire Shi'a belief system is being derogated to nothing but a satanic engineered brainchild. As we have seen in the second chapter satanic dreams are deceitful and false and must not be taken into consideration by the dreamer. Of course, there is no literal or symbolic content to be interpreted in this case, but there is an associative one, which creates a strong, negative affective feedback by an ipse dixit putting of Satan in the epicenter of Shi'ite quiddity. The wheels of restructuring social cognition with regards to the "satanic Shi'a" have been set into motion, powered inter alia by dream's glossary and its respective normative precepts. And as Bell (2002, p.339) stipulated a change in the what of words leads to a change to the how of deeds.

Table 4 illustrates further the dynamics of dream imagery. In all the dream accounts of the believers, among the actors present are whether the Prophet, the voice of God, paradisaical creatures or a highly respected figure of the Islamic State; a pictorial amalgamation of justifying and legitimating signs and cues, is being fostered, namely. Exactly the opposite happens in the case of the number one enemy of Islamic State, which surprisingly is not the Western infidels, but the Shi'a Muslims. Satan, the most anti-sacred character is being employed, in a purely conjectural and rather ad hominem argument, aiming at delegitimizing the dogmas of Shi'a faith.

Table 4: Actors in Dream Imagery I

Dabiq Issues	ACTOR A	ACTOR B	ACTOR C	SUM of ACTORS
A Call to Hijra	Prophet's Companion	Sinner	Prophet Muhammadd	3
From Hypocrisy to Apostasy: The Extinction of the Grayzone The Rafidah from Ibn Saba' to the Dajjal	Prophet's Army	Enemy's Army	—	2
	Rāfidah	Šayṭāni Network	—	2
The Murtadd Brotherhood	Khālīd al-Bakrāwī	Enemies	Prophet Muhammad	3
The Murtadd Brotherhood	Khālīd al-Bakrāwī		Ethereal Voice	2
	Khālīd al-Bakrāwī	3Turkish Hostages	Al- 'Adnānī	7
	Abū Sulaymān	Brother/Comrade		
Break the Cross	Abul-Muthanna as-Sumali (Ali Dirie)	Hur	—	2

Table 5: Actors in Dream Imagery II

Rumiyah Issues	Actor A	Actor B	Actor C	Comments
Hijra does not stop as long as the Kuffar are fought (4)	At-Tufayl Ibn 'Amr ad-Dawsi (Prophet's Companion)	Man from Banu Daws Tribe	Prophet	
The Prohibition of Spoiling the Body (8)	At-Tufayl Ibn 'Amr ad-Dawsi (Prophet's Companion)	Man from Banu Daws Tribe	Prophet	Different Source Same Content

3.3 Dreams of Change: Conversion, Justification, Inspiration and Martyrdom

The perception of divine commandment grants, via ru'yā dreams, is an important chapter in the playbook of the Islamic militant discourse with regard to the

authorization of jihad, the ensuing active engagement with violent action and martyrdom operations. In a principally sentimental culture as the jihadi one, (Hegghammer, 2017a; 2018) where the concept of reward is a staple in decision-making, the prospect of theistic communion by dint of dreams metamorphoses the latter, into incredibly potent munitions of authorization and legitimacy. Hence, from Abū Muṣ‘ab az-Zarqāwī dream of a skydiving sword with jihad engraved on her blade,⁶⁴ to the below- analyzed dream accounts, militant jihadis appear to change their modus vivendi in order to follow God’s will.

The 14th issue of Dabiq was published on 13 April 2016, less than a month from the Brussels bombings, and it opened with a section devoted to what it called “the knights of shahādah⁶⁵ in Belgium”, roughly translated to “the knights of true faith in Belgium”. The eulogy of the second one, started with the following dream (Dabiq 14, p. 6), which is identified as “life changing”:

“A man of strong character, a natural leader, Khālid was guided while in prison after having a vivid, life-changing dream. He saw that he was alongside the Prophet fighting the disbelievers. Narrating his dream, he said, “It was a vision. After hearing the last verse of al-Fath recited in a loud voice, I saw the Prophet on a horse in battle, a distance away. The vision took me beyond the battlefield. I saw myself as an archer shooting arrows at the enemy. I would shoot, take cover, and then shoot again.” He narrated other details of the dream and said, “I then woke up, back in my prison cell.”

For starters, this dream was seen while Khālid al-Bakrāwī, the dreamer, was in prison. As research has already suggested (Edgar & de Looijer, 2017; Koet 2009) in times of pressure and distress, dreams in Islam, as lodestars of divine information, tend to have a deeper impact. The same condition applies to imprisoned jihadis, perhaps because while incarcerated, they are starved both from information, and from hope for a way out. Under these circumstances, a reassurance that they are not alone, God is still on

⁶⁴ Edgar (2016, p. 71) supports that it was az-Zarqāwī sister who dreamt of the sword, which had also engraved on the opposite side of the blade the following “ God will never abandon you and will never forget you.” On the other hand, Gettleman (New York Times, 2014) argues that according to az-Zarqāwī’s brother-in-law, Saleh al-Hami, it was az-Zarqāwī, himself who had the dream. See further Gettleman, J.(2004). THE REACH OF WAR: A PROFILE IN TERROR; Zarqawi’s Journey: From Dropout to Prisoner to an Insurgent Leader in Iraq. *New York Times* [online]. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2004/07/13/world/reach-war-profile-terror-zarqawi-s-journey-dropout-prisoner-insurgent-leader.html>. [Assessed in 12 May 2019.]

⁶⁵ Shahādah is the declaration of Muslim faith to the oneness of God “ There is no god but God, and Muhammad is His Messenger” and as such connotes the submission of the believer to the will of God. As Ajayem & Hedayat-Diba (1994) argue, combined with the opening phrase of the call to prayer “Allahu Akbar”(God is the Greatest), aside from being a spring of motivation and inspiration, it operates as a spell for empowerment for the believer who feels protected by the omnipresent will of God.

their side and a better, everlasting world is waiting for them, acquires even greater importance⁶⁶.

Interestingly enough, the prelude which sets the context of the dream and will be therefore scrutinized, is auditory: a stark and powerful voice reciting the 29th verse of sūrah 48, which was revealed to the Prophet after the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah⁶⁷. A milestone on the evolution of Islam, the Treaty got the Islamic State in Medina recognized, while it opened in tandem the road for legal relations with other tribes⁶⁸. The foregoing verse starts with the acknowledgement that Muhammad is the Messenger of God; proceeds with an ode to believers' adamant faith; enounces that God employs them to enrage the disbelievers and closes with promises of forgiveness and rewards.

The opening line of the verse which states explicitly that Muhammad is the Messenger of God, foreshadows the appearance of the Prophet in the dream, and the conveying of a message to al-Bakrāwī, who might be a sinner in jail but as a believer he will not only have the chance to have his sins wiped out, but he may also be entitled to rewards. Another adumbrating cue for the content of the Prophetic message is the enragement of disbelievers provoked by the acts of faith that are committed by the pious believers. Finally, the whole sūrah al-Fath is devoted to a triumph of Islam, worth of being emulated. Hence, the temporal fusion of present with the mythical past mechanics, one of Islamic State's pet projects as we have seen in the second chapter, is being employed once more. In this context, the dream could be portrayed as a revelation of God's will, which will bestow triumph to the Caliphate.

Having consolidated a positive emotional affect and having already identified the dream as a ru'yā vision, al-Bakrāwī embarks in the dream imagery per se, by picturing the Prophet fighting in a horse, while later on, following the Prophetic

⁶⁶ Edgar and Looijer (2017, p. 147) also suggest that introspection and soul searching are facilitated, due to the inherent limitations of incarceration's living conditions.

⁶⁷ The content of the verse (Sūrah Al-Fath [48], 2016) goes as follows:
Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; and those with him are forceful against the disbelievers, merciful among themselves. You see them bowing and prostrating [in prayer], seeking bounty from Allah and [His] pleasure. Their mark is on their faces from the trace of prostration. That is their description in the Torah. And their description in the Gospel is as a plant which produces its offshoots and strengthens them so they grow firm and stand upon their stalks, delighting the sowers - so that Allah may enrage by them the disbelievers. Allah has promised those who believe and do righteous deeds among them forgiveness and a great reward.

⁶⁸ On the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah, see the fourth chapter in Bsoul, L.A (2008). *International Treaties in Islam : Practice in the Light of Islamic International Law according to Orthodox Schools*. Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America.

paradigm, he is himself transferred in the battlefield, where he is stormingly raking with arrows the enemy, until he wakes up back in his cell. A strong, symbolic dream content which prompts the dreamer to make a drastic change in his life: to fight in the name of God.

As we have seen in chapter two, any dream where the Prophet appears cannot be false, since Satan cannot copy the image of the Prophet. Accordingly, the guidance provided in such dreams has the status of a quasi divine order and for this reason; a pious Muslim will not easily ignore them. At this point, it is important to point out that al-Bakrāwī, as a Belgian national of Moroccan descent, is possible to have had a different understanding of Islam and its practices from the Islamic State's editor-in-chief, due to his Euro-Mediterranean socio-cultural scaffolding. That would possibly also explain why the author of the article decides to omit parts of a Ru'yā dream's content by characterizing them "details"⁶⁹.

After al-Bakrāwī got out of prison, he indulged in a dissemination campaign aiming at persuading young Belgians to move to the Caliphate and along with his older brother, Ibrāhīm, were among the providers of logistics support to the November 2015 Paris terrorist attacks, according to Dabiq. The abovementioned dream appears to have been the catalyst in his engagement with the Islamic State. But that is not the only case, where a dream appears to have been instrumental to jihadi decision-making processes. Through years, various militant Islamists have claimed that they were inspired and motivated by ru'yā dreams to indulge (or not) in certain actions (Edgar, 2004b, 2008, 2015, 2016; Edgar & Looijer, 2017).

Al-Bakrāwī's eulogy is continued with the dream that as the author argues "motivated him to carry out an istishhādī operation" (Dabiq [14], p. 7).

"The second dream was three months ago. It was a vision that took place from fajr until dhuhr. I arose to a high place, as if I was in space, surrounded by stars; but the sky was like the blue of night." He then heard a voice in the dream telling him that he was created only to worship Allah and ordering him to fight for His cause and make His word supreme. He then woke up."

Here we deal with a literal dream, again self-identified as a ru'yā vision. Amidst a floating journey in the skies, al-Bakrāwī has an auditory encounter through which is conveyed the explicit command to engage in a deeds and words struggle in

⁶⁹ The familiar to the editors-in-chief issues of space do not seem to be the case here. Both the importance of the dream per se and the fundamental dream interpretation precepts command a meticulous attention to the contents of the dream that outweigh practical technicalities.

furtherance of God's will. As a matter of fact, it is stressed that the sole reason for his existence is to worship God, which may be consonant with Islam's backbone, namely the submission to God's will, but combined with the specification of the ad hoc commandment in the dream, betokens commitment and death.

Dreams of stars are very common in Islamic dream imagery as Lamoreaux (2002, p.146) asserts but here stars act mainly as inklings about God's latency. What is really intriguing is the timing of the dream. Al-Bakrāwī describes it as starting before the sunrise and ending round about the zenith of sun in the sky. In Islamic tradition sleeping early in the day is a flag for ignorance⁷⁰ (Bahammam & Gozal, 2012) ; on the other hand, lingering visions are also attributed to Prophet Muhammad and hence act as a virtue signal. Judging by the sequence of Al-Bakrāwī's dreams along with the course of his life choices as shaped by a chain of successive decisions, he is presented in his eulogy as a prolific dreamer and inspired-by-dreams doer, in the likes of the Prophet and Mullah Omar⁷¹.

‘Abū Walīd then narrated a third dream: ‘‘I had a vision that also took place from fajr until dhuhr, but ended at night. I saw myself on a boat along with Abū Sulaymān and another brother. Each of us had a Turkish soldier as a hostage. I had a pistol and Abū Sulaymān had a belt. I told him to give me his belt, as I would feel better having it. So he gave me the belt and I gave him my pistol. I then quickly advanced with the Turkish hostage in order to close in on other soldiers, two of whom were in front of us. I detonated my belt, killing the soldiers. My head then descended to the ground. One of the brothers working on the operation and Shaykh al-‘Adnānī took my head and said, ‘Check to see if he is smiling or not.’ I then saw my soul and those of the three soldiers. All of a sudden, the soldiers’ souls burned and vanished and, suddenly, the banner of Islam – represented in the dream by the flag of the Islamic State – came out of the earth and was shining brightly. My soul then became full of light.’ He then heard a voice in the dream telling him that he had achieved deliverance. Abū Walīd continued, ‘‘I prostrated quickly and repeatedly pronounced the takbīr. I then awoke to find my heart beating fast, and I was taking quick breaths.’’

Al-Bakrāwī's eulogy ends with his last dream; a rather graphic and adventurous portrayal of his impending death. By using the weapon of choice of suicide bombers, that is the (suicide) belt; he kills all the enemy soldiers and achieves deliverance. The back then chief propagandist and the second-in-command on the Islamic State, Abu Muhammad al-Adnani, justifies Al-Bakrāwī's martyrdom, by corroborating that God granted him an entrance which pleased him in line with the respective Qur'anic verse⁷², while in tandem a second, enveloped process of justification is being unfold:

⁷⁰ According to the relevant ḥadīth (op. cited in Bahammam & Gozal, 2012):
Sleeping early in the day betrays ignorance, in the middle of the day is right, and at the end of the day is stupid"
(Fath Al-Bari)

⁷¹ On a comprehensive analysis on Mullah Omar's dreams, see Edgar, I.R. (2006a) The 'true dream' in contemporary Islamic/Jihadist dreamwork: A case study of the dreams of Taliban leader Mullah Omar. *Contemporary South Asia*. 5(3), pp. 263-272; Edgar, I.R. (2016). *The Dream in Islam : from Qur'anic Tradition to Jihadist Inspiration*. Oxford: Berghahn, pp. 79-94.

⁷² The content of the verse (sūrah 22 verse 59) goes as follows:

the Islamic State's legitimization. In this regard, the banner of Islam is being identified with Islamic State's flag, which full of light and glory springs from earth, while the enemy souls of disbelievers find a residence in Fire, as the Qur'an⁷³ states.

Beyond the glorious light streaming through Bakrawi's soul, his deliverance appropriation, which was immanently acknowledged, was separately announced by auditory means, a voice, perhaps to stress the difference between the rewards awaiting the blessed deed of martyrdom and the sinful action of suicide. After all, the specific dream content is not only meant to be shared with a specific interlocutor, but with the entirety of English-speaking sympathizers of the Islamic State.

Al-Bakrāwī's dream series appear to act as piousness signaling imbuing thusly with positive affect the readers who come across its content. Interestingly enough, his dreams seem also to elicit really strong emotional responses to himself, as the deducible by his responses data show; increase in his heart and breath rate; increase in his adrenaline secretion and the loss of the sense of time.

All in all, Al-Bakrāwī's dreams, whether the result of a post facto rationalization⁷⁴ or the brainchildren of subconscious processes or alternatively the contrivance of an almighty engineer (human or not), appear to act as decision making instigators as well as quasi soothing ointments and motivating agents towards proselytizing and engagement with violent action. It has to be mentioned, though, that despite his abovementioned, professed steadfastness, Al-Bakrāwī wrote in his suicide note that the ever-lasting eternity scares him while he acknowledged being "stressed out" and overridden by a constant feeling of "unsafety" (DeMorgen, 2016).

The last issue of Dabiq, published on 15 June 2016, accommodates a Canadian foreign fighter's dream, featuring the most common martyrdom pattern that is the houri⁷⁵. According to the Qur'anic sūrah ar-Raḥmān, the houri are the fair, beautiful,

'He will surely cause them [those who migrate in the cause of Allah and are then slain or die] to enter an entrance with which they will be pleased, and indeed, Allah is Knowing and Forbearing'.

⁷³ The content of the verse (sūrah 47 verse 12) goes as follows:

'Indeed, Allah will admit those who have believed and done righteous deeds to gardens beneath which rivers flow, but those who disbelieve enjoy themselves and eat as grazing livestock eat, and the Fire will be a residence for them.'

⁷⁴ Hegghammer (2017b, p. 193) states that his dream-themed data show a prevailing post-facto rationalization pattern.

⁷⁵ Suggestive of the dominant role that Hourī played in martyrdom literature is that one of the architects of martyrdom hagiography literature, Shaykh 'Abdallah 'Azzam, named one of his two

full-breasted with eyes like pearls, virgin women residing in the Gardens of Paradise, and as stated in a strong ḥadīth from the Book on Virtues of Jihad⁷⁶, each martyr is entitled to 72 of them. Their role since the era of the pious ancestors, the Salaf, is to provide dutiful Muslims with ironclad faith and endurance so as to abide by God's will (Abu Zayd al-Qatari op.cit. in Cook, 2017)

Abul-Muthanna as-Sumali (Ali Dirie) was a man of great character and worship. [...] Several weeks later, he had a dream in which the Hur (the maidens of Paradise) gave him glad tidings of martyrdom on a specific date (one which I have forgotten). A week before his martyrdom, several of our friends decided to go shopping for new military attire. He told them he wouldn't be going with them, because he was expecting martyrdom soon, and narrated to them his dream. When that day arrived, it happened that all Islamic State soldiers were placed on alert due to sudden advances of the Nusayri army and their Rafidi allies on the frontlines near Kafar Hamrah (in the northern Aleppo countryside). Abul-Muthanna rushed to battle and advanced in the direction of the enemy, fighting, until he was severely wounded, bleeding until he surrendered his soul to his Lord.

Ali Dirie's dream is the only case where we have a dream cited in a footnote. Featured in an Islamic utopian-themed article the dream operates as a soft power enclave not only for the dreamer but for the whole Caliphate. It is a veridical, oracular dream which by foreboding an image of Paradise, the Houri, signals an imminent death. The perception of imminent death's reception becomes pretty evident by the changes in Dirie's conceptual framework for priority setting, as manifested in his denial to go for shopping one week prior to his death being convinced that he was about to die.

Interestingly enough, Ali Dirie, besides being a foreign fighter and martyr, does not get a eulogy column on his own; but still he is portrayed as a to-be emulated jihadi prototype. A dutiful and devout believer who, despite the hardships and time passing by, did neither succumb to Western values and temptations nor yielded to punitive hindrance and amidst all he took the time to diligently take heed of his mushraf⁷⁷. Thusly, by means of an idiosyncratic commission by omission communicative gimmick, Dirie's portrait underlines the dominant narrative of the article; the miscellaneous God's signs to His creatures in the Islamic utopia of the Caliphate. His

books on martyrs' biographies 'Ushshaq al-hur', which means "Lovers of the Fair Black-Eyed Women". See further Hatina, M. (2014). *Martyrdom in Modern Islam : Piety, Power, and Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

⁷⁶ The content of the ḥadīth goes as follows:

"The Messenger of Allah said: "There are six things with Allah for the martyr. He is forgiven with the first flow of blood (he suffers), he is shown his place in Paradise, he is protected from punishment in the grave, secured from the greatest terror, the crown of dignity is placed upon his head - and its gems are better than the world and what is in it - he is married to seventy two wives along Al-Huril-'Ayn of Paradise, and he may intercede for seventy of his close relatives."

[Abu 'Eisa said:] This Hadith is Hasan Sahih.

See further Sunnah.com. (2019). *Hadith - The Book on Virtues of Jihad - Jami` at-Tirmidhi - Sunnah.com - Sayings and Teachings of Prophet Muhammad* (□□□ □□ □□ □□ □□□□).

[online] Available at: <https://sunnah.com/tirmidhi/22/46> [Accessed 3 May 2019].

⁷⁷ A physical copy of the revelation to the Prophet; a codex of the Qur'an. For an informed debate on the early discourse about the material Qur'an, see Zadeh, T. (2009). Touching and Ingesting: Early Debates over the Material Qur'an. *Journal of the American Oriental Society*. 129(3), pp. 443-466.

dream, amidst photos of starry dawns, sunsets and cute cats cuddled up to jihadi arms, is another milepost of God's greatness, constant support and mercy, as being reflected in the Caliphate's landscape, animals and people. Conclusively, for one more time, through the positive affect engendered by a dream, parallel procedures of individual and collective legitimization are being engineered.

3.4 Anecdotal Dream Accounts

3.4.1 Lady Al Qaeda, Aafia Siddiqui, (Random Extremist, 2013)

Dr Aafia Siddiqui, a highly educated neuroscientist of Pakistani origin, with links to the principal architect of the 9/11 attacks, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed⁷⁸, is currently an inmate in an American federal prison⁷⁹. Widely known as Lady al Qaeda⁸⁰, she has been the subject matter in a series of attempted bargains on behalf of the Taliban, al-Qaeda and the Islamic State (Harris 2014; Jacobs 2014). A dexterous propagandist of deeds and words, since her early adulthood (Baitees, 2014; UpClosed, 2019), she held the line behind bars, too.⁸¹ In the following extract, which was taken from the jihadi-

⁷⁸ For a thorough analysis of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed's implication in the 9/11 attacks, see New York Times, (2019). Khalid Shaikh Mohammed - The Guantánamo Docket. [online] Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/projects/guantanamo/detainees/10024-khalid-shaikh-mohammed> [Accessed 24 Mar. 2019].

⁷⁹ The reason for her incarceration is her alleged attack against US Military members and FBI personnel, prior to her interrogation in Afghanistan. For a complete outlook of her life and actions, see UpClosed, n.d.(2010). *Aafia Siddiqui Bio. UpClosed*. Available at: <https://upclosed.com/people/aafia-siddiqui> (Accessed 24 May 2019); McCoy, T. (2014). 'Lady al-Qaeda': The American-educated PhD the Islamic State desperately wants freed, *The Washington Post*, 28 August. Available at: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2014/08/28/lady-al-qaeda-the-american-educated-doctor-the-islamic-state-desperately-wants-freed/?utm_term=.ae54ebe68f89 (Accessed 24 May 2019); Scroggins, D. (2012). *Wanted Women: Faith, Lies, and the War on Terror: The Lives of Ayaan Hirsi Ali and Aafia Siddiqui*. New York: Harper Collins Publications.

⁸⁰ Journalists did not spare on monikers. Dr Siddiqui was also dubbed the 'Mata Hari of al-Qaeda', the 'Grey Lady of Bagram', the 'al-Qaeda Mom' while for many Muslims she gradually became a signifier of America's malpractices; an emblematic status was attributed to her which, inter alia, increased her currency, as a valuable asset to jihadi propaganda. For more information on Siddiqui's life and the ways her actions were perceived, see Walsh, D. (2009). The mystery of Dr Aafia Siddiqui. *The Guardian*. [Online]. [Assessed 24 March 2019]. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/nov/24/aafia-siddiqui-al-qaeda>

⁸¹ Dr Siddiqui has been diagnosed with delusional disorder of the paranoid type and depression (Kucharsky, 2009). Interestingly enough, during her psychiatric and psychological assessments, she mentioned several times that she had brief *visions* of her children, of a dog eating from her son's plate and of a man placed outside her cell. The evaluators registered them as hypnogenic phenomena, namely brief visual anomalies, which are typical symptoms of depression and sleep deprivation. During Ramadan, she was reported to cry periodically, clean her room quite thoroughly, and struggle to

friendly blog The RandomExtremist, Dr Siddiqui appears to make an attempt to console her mother's existential angst by means of her dreams⁸².

Aafia's mother spoke to her on the phone in Ramadan of 2011, saying, "I find the oppressive situation that you are in unbearable." Aafia replied, "I see the Messenger of Allah (salAllahu 'alaihi wa sallaam) in my dreams EVERY night. On one instant, he said to me, "Tell your mother not to grieve, as that which Allah has in store for her in the Hereafter, is better..." In another dream the Messenger of Allah (salAllahu 'alaihi wa sallaam) took Aafia to meet his blessed wife 'Aisha (RadiAllaahu anha) and said, "Meet our daughter, Aafia". [A Random Extremist, 2013]

The abovementioned dreams, due to the regular appearances⁸³ of the Prophet, are classified as ru'yā. A taxonomy, which as we saw in the second chapter, grants axiomatically authenticity⁸⁴ and a special edification standing to dream content.

read the Qur'an while tautochronously her appetite has been showing signs of improvement. Leaving aside the psychiatric lens and focusing on the ancillary context of religiosity, the aforementioned actions could also be interpreted as virtue and piousness signaling. A hypothesis consonant with her allegation that she was cleaning for the "Good Angels", who would get her to the Hereafter. The world of Angels, according to Islamic cosmology, is approachable via the heart and reveals the truth by utilizing embodied images, namely dreams and visions (Hughes, 2002). Thusly, her passionate engagement in a series of personalized canonical rituals and her visions resonate with her religious and cultural beliefs whereas they seem to offer to her emotional rewards that are also projected to a physiological level. For a comprehensive outlook of Siddiqui's psychological assessment, see Kucharsky, T. (2009) FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATION NAME: AAFIA SIDDIQUI CRIMINAL NUMBER 08 Cr 826(RMB). Available at: <http://intelfiles.egoplex.com/2009-07-01-Siddiqui-psych-report.pdf> (Accessed 24 March 2019). Downloading made possible, thanks to J.M. Berger, (aka) Intelwire.com. For a more thorough analysis on the psychotherapeutic value of rituals, see El-Islam, M. F. (1967). The Psychotherapeutic Basis of Some Arab Rituals. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*. 13(4), p.p 265–268. For an astute analysis on weeping and militant Islamism, see Hegghammer, T. (2018). Jihadi Weeping. In: S. Schmidtke, ed., *Studying the Near and Middle East at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, 1935-2018*. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press. For an outline of the perceptions about schizophrenia and Islam, see Youssef, H. A., Youssef, F. A., & Dening, T. R. (1996). Evidence for the existence of schizophrenia in medieval Islamic society. *History of Psychiatry*. 7(25), pp. 55–62.

⁸² The author appears to insinuate that Dr Siddiqui's dream sharing attempt serves also as a Da'wa effort.

' She knows she has limited opportunities to communicate with people so she makes her communications worthy! She has used correspondence with her brother to give Da 'wah to her non-Muslim friends from when she was young (imagine, she's still giving Da 'wah!) and through a phone call with her mother she conveyed the following message [...]'.

Da'wa, in essence, could be described as a call to mobilization and propagation of Islam. For an outline of the employment of da'wa in radicalized Islamic contexts, see: Otayek, R. (1993). Ed. *Le radicalisme islamique au sud du Sahara: Da'wa, arabisation et critiques de l'Occident*. Paris: Karthala.

⁸³ Two more accounts of dreamers who saw the Prophet every night in their dreams (Kister, p.73) are widely circulated: Anas bin Malik (Sunni tradition) and Ali, whose dreams saved his life (Shi'i tradition)

For a detailed account of sources on Prophet's appearance in dreams, see: Kister, M.J. (1972). The interpretation of dreams : An unknown manuscript of Ibn Qutayba's "Ibarat al-Ru'ya. *Israel Oriental Studies*. 4, pp. 67-103.

⁸⁴ In terms of authoritative power, a vision of the Prophet in a dream enjoys the same status with a physical encounter with him, according to the following prophetic hadīth: "He who sees me in a dream sees me in reality, because Satan does not take up my appearance". For an extensive list of references in primary sources, see Kister, M.J. (1972). The interpretation of dreams: An unknown manuscript of Ibn Qutayba's "Ibarat al-Ru'ya. *Israel Oriental Studies*. 4, p. 73. For a comprehensive analysis on the projection of normative power struggles in dream narratives, see Kinberg, L. (2008). Qur'an and Hadith: A Struggle for Supremacy as Reflected in Dream Narratives. In: L. Marlow, ed., *Dreaming across Boundaries: The Interpretation of Dreams in Islamic Lands*. Washington, D.C.: Ilex Foundation & the Center for Hellenic Studies, Trustees for Harvard University.

Thusly, the rather existential candy of her mother's permanent residency in Paradise acquires, also, the ancillary essence of a clandestine moral counseling. As Kinberg (1994, p.20) postulates, by perceiving a seat in Janna(paradise) as a reward, a believer is consoled to indulge in a modus vivendi of piousness; impending death acts, henceforth, as a quasi conditioning of righteousness, straight out from the uterus of religion.

The second dream, according to which she becomes a member of Prophet's family, operates at three basic dimensions. Under a micro-perspective, it comforts the mother, by making her feel that no matter how hard the situation is for her daughter, the latter is everlastingly protected and being taken care of. In the meso-level, an ethereal seal of piousness and rightness is stamped upon Siddiqui's shoulders while her social capital is being engineered towards an extensive enhancement⁸⁵. Lastly, the macro-function of the dream has to do with the implied divine justification⁸⁶ of her deeds and synecdochically her ideology. After all, the Prophet blesses with his appearances only the virtuous ones⁸⁷.

3.4.1.2 Affect and Dreams

Siddiqui's daily encounters with the prophet and his wife, Aisha, signify a high cultural, ethical and social caliber which gets even higher since her mother appears to

⁸⁵When Prophet Muhammad appears in a dream, the dreamer is considered to be a pious and respectful believer whereas the dream, per se, is qualified ipso facto as good, sound and true (Rahmani). The authoritative status that is ingrained in these type of dreams acts conjointly as a pump booster for the cultural, moral and social capital of the dreamer. For more on this scheme, see the eighth chapter in: Schimmel, A.(1999). *Die Träume des Kalifen. Träume und ihre Deutung in der Islamischer Kultur*. Munich: C.H. Beck. On legitimizing dreams, see further, Kinberg, L.(1983). The legitimization of the Madhāb through Dreams. *Arabica*. **32**, pp. 47-49. Kinberg, L. (1994). *Ibn Abi al-Dunyā, Morality in the Guise of Dreams: A critical edition of Kitāb al-Manām with Introduction*. New York: Leiden. On a discussion and cases of dream as a concept of authority, see Kirster, M.J. (1994). Social and Religious Concepts of Authority in Islam. *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*. **18**, pp.84-127.

⁸⁶ Prophet's approval and authorization was given quite regularly by the agency of dreams; from establishing approval of poets to attesting sanctity and engaging with (theological) conflict resolution, prophetic appearances operated as a protean currency of legitimacy. On establishing poets and authority, see Kister, M.J.(1972). The interpretation of dreams : An unknown manuscript of Ibn Qutayba's "Ibarat al-Ru'ya. *Israel Oriental Studies*. **4**, pp.74. On attesting sanctity, see Katz, J.G., (1992). Visionary Experience, Autobiography and Sainthood in North African Islam. *Princeton Papers in Near Eastern Studies*. **1**, pp.85-115; Katz, J.G.(1996). *Dreams, Sufism and Sainthood: The visionary career of Muhammad al-Zawāwī*. Leiden: Brill. On theological and worldly conflict resolution, see Goldziher, I., 1912. The Appearance of the Prophet in Dreams. *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*.**44**, pp. 503-506 .

⁸⁷ In the words of a widely cited Qur'anic verse which is used to illustrate Allah's bestowal of prophetic dreams: "Those who believe and are pious have glad tidings(al-bushrā) in this world and in the next.(Q 10.63-64, op. cit. in: Lamoreaux, 2002, p.57)

have a place in Jenna (Paradise), too. This quasi ad hoc isnād⁸⁸ of piousness breeds extra respect and legitimacy while it concomitantly activates the mediated hand of affect. The latter gets hypostatized by the alleged emotional effect that those dreams have upon the commentator:

“However, can you imagine the honour? I cannot! Every time I try; an unbearable and overwhelming sense of emotions takes over. I cannot describe in words the love I have for my sister, the respect and honour she holds in my heart; I WISH I was brave enough to see everything she has seen and still be able to hold onto sanity and reason.”

The interweaving of pragmatic and emotional cues is a staple in the tactical tools of jihadi propaganda publications (Ingram 2014, 2015, 2016a, 2016b)⁸⁹. The anonymous blogger seems to follow the same *modus operandi*. Respectively, after the abovementioned emotion-tense description, he precedes with a list of rational appeals aiming at mustering institutional, financial and psychological support for Siddiqui. Closure comes with a final subliminal appeal to the shared religious identity of the readers and Siddiqui; an appeal to affect which engages emotion again in the persuasive arena.

3.4.2 An Old Imam’s Dream

A former imam in central Mosul has allegedly seen a dream which was foreboding the defeat of Islamic State in the city. According to unnamed local sources (Basnews, 2016), the old man’s arrest and the ensuing spread of rumors tied to his dream, were directly interconnected:

The old man who was previously an imam (prayer leader) in a mosque in central Mosul was given a prophesy in his dream about the end of IS in the city, and his dream was spread in the city which concerned the group. After the leaders of the group heard about the news, the militants raided the man's house in Tahrir district in Mosul and captured him.

⁸⁸ Isnād is the chain of authorities that are said to guarantee the historical authenticity of the written data to which they are ascribed. Accordingly, the truth is as good and solid as the isnād(s) of its manufacture. Here it is used figuratively. For more information on the role of isnād in Islam, see Berg, H.(2000). *The Development of Exegesis in Early Islam*. London: Routledge. On isnād and the transmission of dream lore, see Lamoreaux, J.C., 2002. *The Early Muslim Tradition of Dream Interpretation*. New York: State University of New York Press, p.42.

⁸⁹ A fusion of identity and rational choice appeals – in different ratios- is being noted in the most notorious contemporary jihadi publications. Using a sort of ironic prose, the chief editor of Inspire magazine illustrates his perception of the Muslim decision making apparatus (Ibrahim 2013 op. cit. in Ingram & Reed, 2017) and the strategized inner architecture of his publication:

“The kuffar [disbelievers] are so terrified by this section [Open Source Jihad]. In fact, they limit the weight of the magazine on this section alone, while they forget that all a Muslim needs to fight the kuffar is enough *Iman* [faith] and the simplest of tools. Thus, the magazines [sic] content complete each other.”

The abovementioned divinational , ru'yā dream of the old man communicates pretty literally its content about the impending end of the city and it could thusly operate as a litmus test for the Islamic State's perception of dreams' (damaging) potency. Hence, the emphasis is given on the analysis of the components of the dream which are expedient for top down strategic imperatives use.

3.4.2.1 Dreams and the Munitions of Affect

The use of fear appeal for propagandistic purposes requires a sine qua non: anxiety arousal rooted in the threat of an impending death, ruination or an end of any sort (Baines, 2009). In this sense, the foreboding of the impending end of the group in Mosul, wrapped in the mantle of divination, poses a grave threat for the Islamic State.

The identity of the dreamer sets the level of threat even higher. Seniority in Islam is a key determinant for the social status and the credibility of an individual (Sharon, 2016). The position of the imam, paired with the heavily charged symbolic value that it carries, commands respect, authority⁹⁰ and trustworthiness. Hence, the dream revelation to a man of such a high stature and piousness assigns to its content an almost unbreakable credibility. The location of the mosque is also of critical importance since it denotes the multitude of dissemination networks available to the dreamer⁹¹.

Timing plays an important part, too; it acts as a multiplier force when properly instrumentalized, and Islamic State has weaponized serendipity quite dexterously⁹² in the past. In essence, an acute awareness of time's operational and tactical weight is deeply embedded in IS modus operandi. That being said, the article was published on

⁹⁰ Interestingly enough, in Middle Ages, Sunni jurists perceived revelation as a more important criterion of an imam's selection compared to reason (Zaman, 2004).

⁹¹ The informative function of the mosques dates back to early Islam. In times of crisis the "khutba" operated as a dissemination center attesting the current commanders in chief. See further Hillenbrand, R. (1985). *The Mosque in the Medieval Islamic World: An Essay*. In: S. Cantacuzino, ed. *Architecture in continuity: Building in the Islamic world today*. New York: Appenture, pp. 33-51.

⁹² Islamic State has demonstrated a wily and perceptive approach towards media cycle exploitation. In parallel, there are reported cases, where Islamic State attempted to wage attacks, aiming at cashing in on local turmoil and conjoin it with wider doctrinal objectives. See for instance Barr, N., Gartenstein-Ross, D. and B. Moreng. (2016). *The Islamic State's Global Propaganda Strategy*. *The International Centre for Counter-Terrorism – The Hague*. 7(1). Available at: <https://www.icct.nl/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/ICCT-Gartenstein-Ross-IS-Global-Propaganda-Strategy-March2016.pdf> [Assessed 25 May 2019]; Mccants, W.F. (2016). *The ISIS apocalypse: the history, strategy, and doomsday vision of the Islamic State*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

September 19, 2016, which means that rumors⁹³ about it could have started circulating since summer,⁹⁴ while almost a month later, the group suffered one of its severest casualties at the symbolic arena: the loss of Dabiq. Thusly, the spreading of such a credible rumor, foreboding an impending catastrophe, at such a critical timing could be detrimental for both the combatants' and the populace's morale.

The size of the perceived threat⁹⁵ posed by both the dream per se and of its spillover as a rumor is being projected to the rapid and decisive action it elicited; it was handled as a tactical threat that must be eliminated instantaneously. The nature of Islamic State's response directly corroborates dreams' importance in the jihadi milieu. In an emotion-intensive culture, as the jihadi one, (Hegghammer, 2018) the munitions of affect appear to be among the most effective combat weapons.

⁹³ No matter what name we put them on, "souk-telegraph", "whispering campaigns" or plainly rumors have a profound importance as sources of information in Middle East. The way Saddam Hussein handled them is indicative of their power and value; rumors were his quasi personal conduit for the hearts and minds of Iraqi people. After their daily registration by his security forces and his subsequent briefing, his intelligence services were in charge of manufacturing new ones and disseminating them to the Iraqi population. See further Kelley, S.R. (2004). *Rumors in Iraq: A Guide to Winning Hearts and Minds*. Master's Thesis. Monterey: Naval Postgraduate School. Available at: <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a427257.pdf> (Accessed 23 May 2019).

⁹⁴ By July 16th, IS's controlled territory has already shrunk to 68.300 sq km and this territorial change has been depicted, if not betokened, in the shift of the group's propaganda narratives. The spreading of rumors auguring its demise, namely counter-narratives, could be interpreted in the same context, too. For an analysis on the effect of losing physical territory upon IS narrative, see Capece, A. (2018). *A Terrorist Story in Three Acts: Dabiq, Rumiya, and The Hero's Journey*. Master Thesis. Monterey: Naval Postgraduate School. Available at: <https://www.hsdl.org/?abstract&did=818121> [Assessed 20 May, 2019]

⁹⁵ According to the Extended Parallel Process Model (EPPM), the reaction to fear appeal (Witte, 1992; Witte& Allen, 2000) is determined by the levels of perceived threat (in terms of scale) and perceived efficacy (in terms of content).

CONCLUSIVE REMARKS

Old Major the Boar, the ‘commander’ of animals in Orwell’s *Animal Farm*, managed to mobilize the animals to riot against “Man” by virtue of a song he heard in his dream, that described a Man-free life (Lahoud & Pieslak, 2018). Prophet Muhammad had a dream before the battle of Badr, which led his army to victory. Back in 2015, Abū Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of Islamic State, following the orders given by Prophet Muhammad in his dream, left the province of Mosul almost without striking a blow (Edgar, 2015; 2016).

Dreams of individuals appear to provide a cultural stew of emotional, theological and ideological appeals which feeds both the individual and the collective cognition. A quality that makes dreams a compelling object for cultural propaganda; whereby the systematic alignment of particular cultural attitudes takes place (Lasswell, 1927). Along these lines, the top-down instrumentalization of dreams by Islamic State’s Anglophone propaganda mechanisms was essentially grounded on the respect that dreams command in Islam. After all, cultural orthodoxy appears to be the established tradition which defines the *modus vivendi* of jihadi groups, badgering thusly an authenticity-laden distinctiveness (Hegghammer, 2017).

According to Islamic State’s propaganda doctrine, the establishment of the Caliphate was foretold by God; it was his promise (‘Hadha Wa‘du Allah’), for which he ‘‘had informed the Angels about’’⁹⁶. By employing ru’yā dream narratives, the continuation of prophecy mediated by Angels to humans according to Islamic

⁹⁶ Abu Muhammad al-Adnani, ‘Hadha Wa‘du Allah’, 29 June 2014. Available in English at: <https://scholarship.tricolib.brynmawr.edu/bitstream/handle/10066/14242/ADN20140629.pdf> (Assessed 31 May 2019)

ontology, Islamic State bolsters the credibility of its foundational doctrinal pillar while in tandem gets access to an almost inexhaustible soft power supply.

As evidence presented in this dissertation suggests, the Islamic State reaped the strategic benefit which stemmed from the dexterous employment of the mainstream Islamic cultural practice of dream interpretation. The mediated jihadi dream narratives operated as emotional hotbeds rife with decision-making instigators and legitimating cues, whereby affect had a leading role. In this context, engagement with violent action was justified, tactical decisions and operations were legitimized and individuals' motives for joining the group got the seal of divine providence.

Some of the aforementioned findings could be used to inform policies aimed at both combating jihadi Islamist militants and reintegrating them into Western societies. In this vein, counter-narrative campaigns could include dream accounts that led former militant Islamists to deradicalization, as in the case of Mr. Bashir Mohammad, a former Nusra jihadi, whose dream of Jesus giving him chickpeas was the last trigger for his conversion in Christianity⁹⁷. On a similar note, the practice of dream interpretation could become a standard procedure of (former) jihadis' reintegration routines, headed by moderate-Islam oriented imams or coordinators. This would allow both the sincere release of negative feelings as well as a cultural-relevant guidance towards the step-by-step cultivation of less open to violence cognitive schemes.

Still, this dissertation covers only a tiny portion of the dynamics of jihadi dream interpretation. More research is needed especially in the fields of conversion and decision making. In the general run of things, the studious research of jihadi culture could give us unimpeded access to the jihadi soft power resources enabling us thusly to improve and enrich our respective deficits; undercut and limit the jihadi attractiveness and seduction potency on time; and develop effective strategies so as to limit the bloodletting in both sides.

And to conclude with the words of Lacan (1977, p.45)'who knows the Gods may still speak through dreams. Personally, I don't mind either way. What concerns us is the tissue that envelops these messages, the network in which, on occasion, something is

⁹⁷ For a detailed account of Mr Mohammad's story, see Kingsley, P. (2017). The Jihadi Who Turned to Jesus. *The New York Times*, 24 March. [internet]
Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/24/world/middleeast/the-jihadi-who-turned-to-jesus.html> (Assessed 31 May 2019).

caught.’’ It this tissue, that if cartographed properly will provide invaluable mappings of deeper understanding of the human condition in a prejudice-free and empathic-loaded approach.

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ANNEX

Table A1 : Dabiq Content Analysis

Title	Issue	Page	Dream Refer.	Dream Relevance
The Return of Khilafah	1	27	1	-
The Flood	2	-	0	0
A Call to Hijrah	3	24	1	+
		27	1	-
The Failed Crusade	4	36	1	-
		38	1	-
Remaining and Expanding	5	-	0	0
Al Qa'idah of Waziristan: A Testimony From Within	6	-	0	0
From Hypocrisy to Apostasy: The Extinction of the Grayzone	7	13	1	+
		49	1	-
Shari'ah Alone Will Rule Africa	8	31	1	-
They Plot and Allah Plots	9	40	1	-
The Law of Allah or the Laws of Men	10	-	0	0
From the Battles of Al-Ahzāb to the War of Coalitions	11	-	0	0
Just Terror	12	13	1	-
		57	2	-
The Rafidah from Ibn Saba' to the Dajjal	13	41	1	0
		45	1	+
The Murtadd Brotherhood	14	6	1/3	+
		7	7	++
		12	1	-
		51	1	-
Break the Cross	15	9	1/2	+-
		38	1	-
		66	1	-
		68	3	-
		69	1	-
Σύνολο	15	23	6	

Table A2: Rumiya Content Analysis I

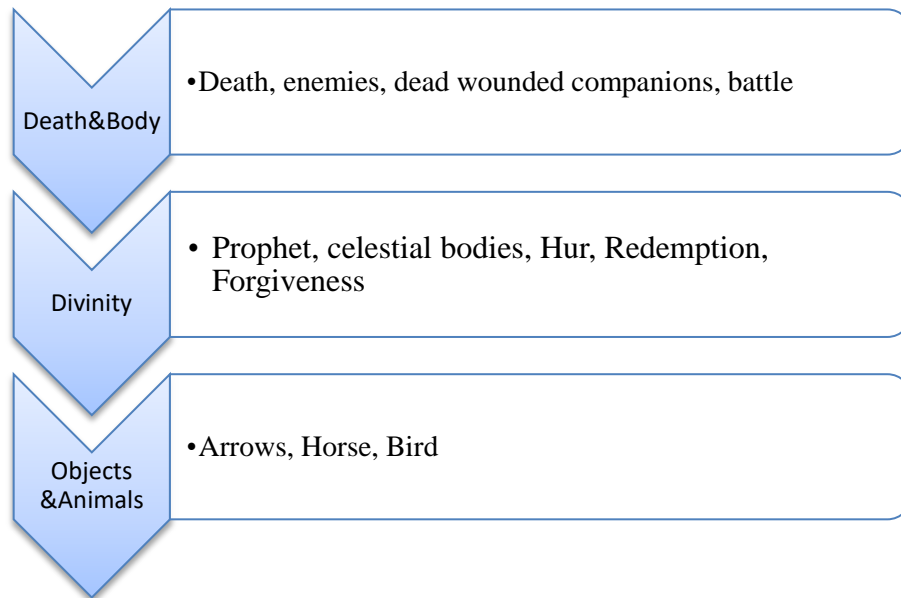
Foreword's Headline	Issue	Page	Dream Word- Reference	Dream Episode
Stand and Die	1	36	1	-
A Message from East Africa	2	-	0	0
The weakest House is that of a Spider	3	-	0	0
Hijra does not stop as long as the Kuffar are fought	4	3 7	1 2	+ -
The Syrian Sahwat: Shallow Unity and Reliance on Taghut	5	-	0	0
They Say " We Fear That a Calamity May Strike Us".	6	-	0	0
Sum:	6	3	4	1

Table A3: Rumiya Content Analysis II

Title	Issue	Page	Dream Reference	Ep.
Establishing The Islamic State Between The Prophetic Methodology and the Path of Deviants	7	-	0	0
Among the Believers are Men: Shaykh Abu Sulayman Ash-Shami	8	9	1	-
		20	1	-
		31	1	+
The Ruling on the Belligerent Christians	9	-	0	0
Jihad in East Asia	10	30	1	-
		37	1	-
The Ruling on Ghanimah, Fay, And Ihtitab	11	49	1	-
		50	1	-
It will be a Fire that Burns the Cross And its People in Raqqah	12	11	1	-
Allah Cast Terror In their Hearts	13	4	1	-
		5	1	-
Sum:	7	10	10	1

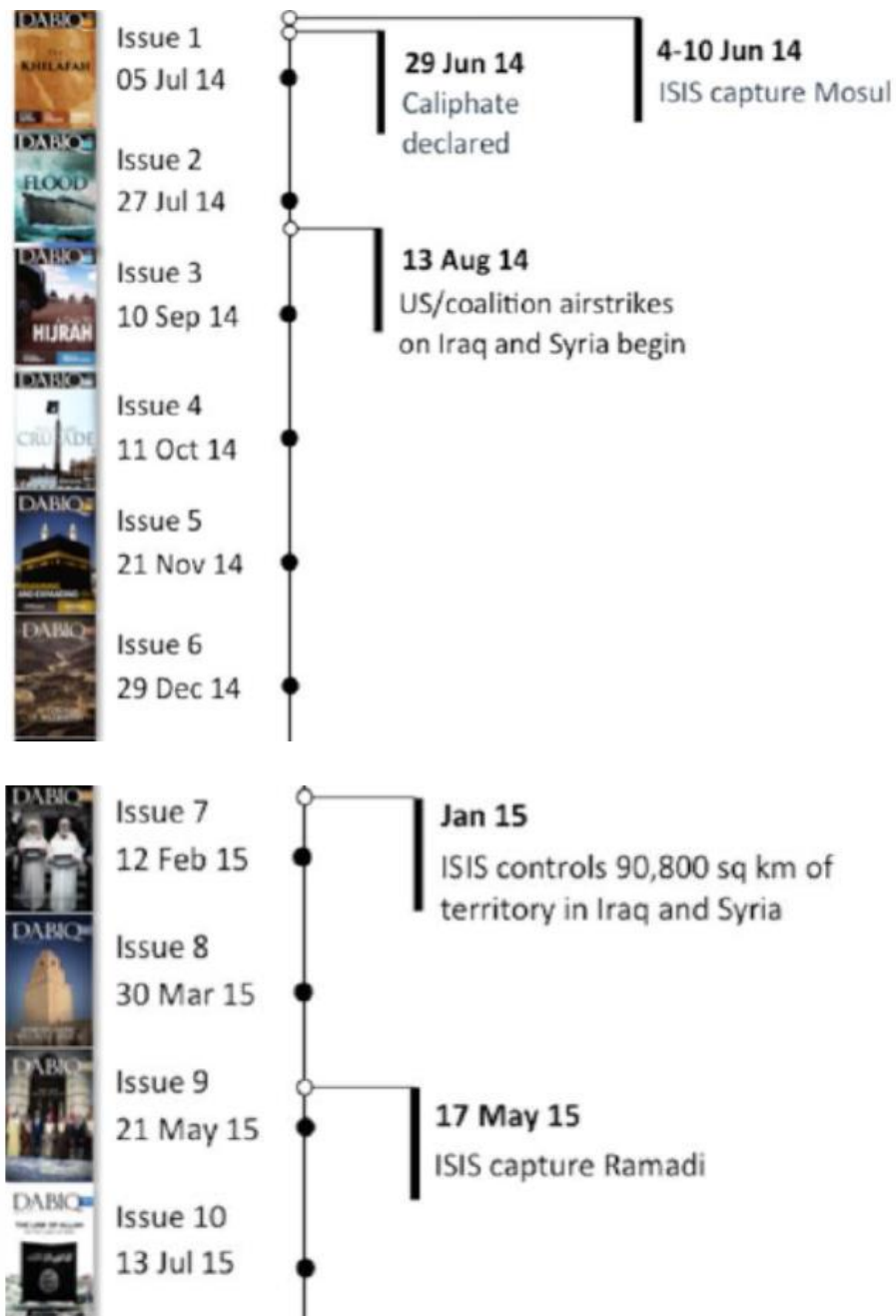
Source: Maria Giannarou, 2019

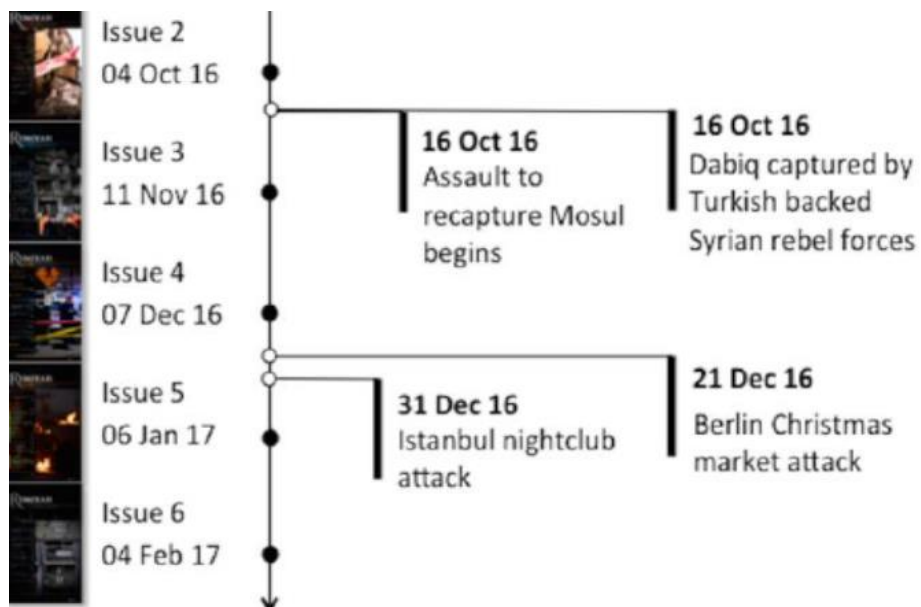
Figure A1: Dominant Imagery Themes



Source: Maria Giannarou, 2019

Figure A2. Timeline of Issues of Dabiq and Rumiya and Key Events in the Changing Fortunes of ISIS





Source: Wignel, P., Tan, S., O'Holloran, K.L., Lange, R., 2017

