A Framework for Savagery?

A Thematic Network Analysis of the Management

of Savagery and

Examination of its Relationship to Islamic State

Strategy in the West

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A thesis presented to:

Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia
Department of Security Studies and Criminology

Submission Date: 14 October 2019
Higher Degree Research Office, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia

In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of:

Master of Research (Security Studies and Criminology)

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Statement of Originality

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

(Signed)_   Date: 14/10/2019

Shane Dennis

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List of Abbreviations

9/11:   11 September 2001 terrorist attacks

AQ: Al Qaeda (*Tanzim Qa'idat al-Jihad*)

AQAP: Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (*Tanẓīm Qā'idat al-Jihād fī Jazīrat al-'Arab*)

AQI: Al Qaeda in Iraq (*Tanzim Qa'idat al-Jihad fi Bilad al-Rafidayn*)

Dāʿish: *Doulet al-Islamiyah fi al-Iraq wa al-Sham*

GTD: Global Terrorism Database

IO: Information Operations

IS: Islamic State (*al-Dawlah al-Islāmiyyah*)

ISI: Islamic State of Iraq (*Dawlat al-ʿIrāq al-ʾIslāmiyyah*)

ISIL: Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (*al-Dawlah al-Islāmiyyah fī al-ʿIrāq wa al-Shām)*

ISIS: Islamic State of Iraq and Syria or Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham

JTJ: Organisation of Monotheism and Jihad (*Jama'at al-Tawhid wal-Jihad*)

MoS: Management of Savagery (*Idārat at-Tawaḥḥuš: Akhṭar marḥalah satamurru bihā l 'ummah*)

UK: United Kingdom

US: United States

Acknowledgements

Sincerest gratitude to the following:

Dr Julian Droogan of the Department of Security Studies and Criminology. I am truly grateful for your knowledge, patience and guidance throughout this project and I am truly honoured to be your student.

All the remaining staff at the Department of Security Studies and Criminology, Macquarie University for the extensive dedication, knowledge and support for those striving to deepen their understanding.

Abstract

Abu-Bakr-Naji's '*The Management of Savagery*' (MoS) is widely considered as a 'blueprint' for Islamic State' strategy. Indeed, both MoS themes and Islamic State' external operations incorporate principles of revolutionary warfare. However, despite correlations, Islamic State deviates from the strategic and systematic guidance articulated in MoS and appears to prioritise operational flexibility over doctrinal rigidity, often traversing through various phases of a politico-military strategy.

This thesis finds Islamic State operations in the West are more opportunistic than strategic. What emerges from a comparative analysis of MoS themes and jihadist terrorist attacks between 2014 and 2018 is a strong correlation between themes of 'violence', 'vexation', 'small-scale operations', and the 'media battle' and broad operational trends. Yet these trends do not strictly follow MoS' structured approach. Rather, Islamic State strategy reflects the group's own adaptation of revolutionary warfare which has evolved over time and is relatively consistent with the group's ideological foundations.

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Introduction

Islamic State (IS) attacks in the West are often explained as a reaction to military and territorial degradation rather than part of a broader strategy,[1] while the literature on IS strategy primarily focuses on IS' activities in Iraq and Syria.[2] Indeed, the group is largely seen to adopt a 'near enemy' strategy,[3] resulting in a narrower analysis. This is reinforced by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's acknowledgement of similarities between his brutal, sectarian strategy and Abu-Bakr-Naji's (*Management of Savagery* or MoS).

"It is as if the author knows what I'm planning."[4]

Reported comment by Zarqawi – *Dabiq, Issue 12*

Drawing on Zarqawi's sectarian themes, the small number of studies that analyse the influence of 'jihadist strategists' tend to conclude that IS' strategy is inspired by strategic manuals.[5] Of these, MoS is considered as a strategic guide or 'blueprint' for jihadists.[6] Yet the document's influence on IS' external operations strategy remains underexplored in the scholarly field.

This project argues that MoS strategy and trends in IS' external operations reflect principles of revolutionary warfare, however despite these correlations, IS prioritises operational flexibility over doctrinal rigidity. Consequently, IS' operations in the West are opportunistic rather than strategic. What emerges from this thesis is a strong correlation between MoS themes of 'violence', 'vexation', 'small-scale operations', and the 'media battle' as reflected in IS' operational trends. However, unlike MoS' systematic approach, these trends suggest IS traverses through various phases of a politico-military strategy.

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[1] "Why a 'Dramatic Dip' in ISIS Attacks in the West Is Scant Comfort," New York Times, September 12, 2018
[2] Jessica D Lewis, 'The Islamic State: A Counter-Strategy for a Counter-State', *Middle East Security Report*, 2014.
[3] Daniel Byman and Jennifer R Williams, 'IS vs. Al Qaeda: Jihadism's global civil war', *Brookings*, 2015.
[4] Abu Bakr Naji, *The Management of Savagery: The Most Critical Stage Through which the Umma Will Pass,* Translated by William McCants, 23 May, 2006, Section 4. https://azelin.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/abu-bakr-naji-the-management-of-savagery-the-most-critical-stage-through-which-the-umma-will-pass.pdf
[5] Anthony N Celso, 'Islamic Regression, Jihadist Frustration and Takfirist Hyper Violence', *Journal of Political Sciences and Public Affairs*, 2016, Vol.4, No.2.
[6] Robert Manne, '*The Mind of the Islamic State*', Chapter 6, p.5., Victoria: Redback Quarterly, 2016.

The project addresses this argument by exploring correlations between MoS using a thematic network analysis and IS related terrorist plots and attacks in the West between January 2014 and January 2018. MoS themes are examined against IS' operations in the West to understand the widely cited influence of MoS on IS' strategy. The thematic network analysis offers a unique approach to understanding the influence of jihadist strategic manuals, while the analysis situates strategic manuals within discourse and analysis of IS, which have usually focused on 'Salafi-jihadist' religious elements. This project instead focuses on the strategic and doctrinal evolution of the group. Naji's quote reflects this distinction however as documents alone are not sufficient to establish strategy, this thesis explores IS' actions.[7]

> *Regrettably, the youth in our Umma, since the time when they were stripped of their weapons, no longer understand the nature of wars. One who previously engaged in jihad knows that it is naught but violence, crudeness, terrorism, frightening (others), and massacring – I am talking about jihad and fighting, not about Islam and one should not confuse them.[8]*
>
> *Abu Bakr Naji, The Management of Savagery*

Due to a large gap in the literature, the project's significance is to offer unique insights regarding the potential influence of jihadist strategists and strategic manuals on IS' external operations strategy. This thesis consists of six chapters dedicated to further understanding jihadist terrorism in the West and contributing to debates on Salafi-jihadist doctrine, strategy and the adaptive capacity of the global jihadist movement.

Chapter 1 introduces the topic by providing an overview of the strategic and doctrinal evolution of IS, its historical context as part of the global jihadist movement and its use of terrorism in the West. This chapter will build the foundations of the conceptual framework and scope of this study, which will be examined in the subsequent chapters.

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[7] Ryan refers to the need to explore Al Qaeda's actions to understand strategy. Michael W.S Ryan, *Decoding Al-Qaeda's Strategy: The Deep Battle Against America*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2013, p.9.
[8] Abu Bakr Naji, *The Management of Savagery: The Most Critical Stage Through which the Umma Will Pass,* Translated by William McCants, 23 May, 2006, Section 4. https://azelin.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/abu-bakr-naji-the-management-of-savagery-the-most-critical-stage-through-which-the-umma-will-pass.pdf

Chapter 2 analyses the existing literature in three areas relevant to this study. This includes studies on the influence of jihadist ideologues and doctrine on the strategies and operations of Al Qaeda and IS. The chapter also examines studies that situate IS' terrorist operations within a revolutionary warfare model,[9] and existing research on IS' strategic communications, information operations and propaganda material. The purpose of this chapter is to position this thesis within the scholarly field and identify key debates and potential gaps in the literature which this study seeks to address.

Chapter 3 outlines the research methods and approach used for this thesis. Following an outline of the research approach and data sources, the qualitative and quantitative methods used are explained in more depth. This includes an analysis of MoS to identify key themes as well as an analysis of jihadist terrorist attacks in the West drawn from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) to identify IS' operational trends. The final section considers the project's research limitations and mitigations.

Chapter 4 examines MoS using a grounded theory approach to draw out themes and illustrate these themes in a thematic network analysis. Following this, themes are summarised based on prevalence. The final section interprets patterns from the themes and constructs these logically as they appear in the text, to establish MoS strategy. The purpose of this chapter is to analyse MoS through the lens of its strategic underpinnings, identify prevalent patterns that emerge, establish themes of most relevance and assess their significance in relation to this study.

Chapter 5 analyses IS related (directed, inspired or linked) terrorist plot and attack data from the GTD between January 2014 and January 2018 to identify broad trends in IS external operations in the West. This is followed by a comparative analysis of trends and the strategy drawn from MoS themes. The purpose of this chapter is to establish trends in operations and to assess whether a correlation exists with MoS.

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[9] Revolutionary warfare is defined in the conceptual framework to incorporate a blend of military, political, social and psychological efforts including terrorism.

Chapter 6 draws conclusions from the research and presents the project's key findings and research limitations. These findings reinforce the central argument and the project's contribution to the academic debate. This research found that despite broad correlations with MoS, IS' strategy in the West prioritises operational flexibility over doctrinal rigidity. Based on this finding and the analysis in the preceding chapters, further research on the influence of jihadist strategic manuals is required in this field. This chapter concludes with the limitations and opportunities for further research.

Chapter One

Historical Context and Conceptual Framework

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a historical overview of the group *al-Dawlah al-Islāmiyyah*,[10] known in the West as Islamic State (IS)[11] from its ideological roots to the group's doctrine and strategy. It first discusses IS' ideological foundations within *al-salafiyya al-jihadiyya* (Salafi-jihadism) and its emergence within the global jihadist movement before outlining shifts in IS' strategy and operations. This is followed by defining key concepts central to this study, particularly jihadist ideologues, revolutionary warfare and external operations.

Historical Context

This section frames IS within a broader global jihadist movement by outlining the group's origin, ideological foundations and strategic and doctrinal evolution. As the origin of IS and Al Qaeda (AQ) are in part manifestations of movements that date back much earlier,[12] this section is not intended to be an extensive overview of the historical and ideological roots of Islamic-based militancy but rather explain the emergence and more recent evolution of a global jihadist movement. This movement is characterised by two camps with IS and AQ competing for power, influence,[13] recruits, recognition

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[10] Arabic name for the Islamic State. Western and Arab countries have also used an abbreviated term Dāʿish or Daesh (*Doulet al-Islamiyah fi al-Iraq wa al-Sham*).

[11] The group has many names and apart from the Arabic abbreviation 'Daesh', it is also referred to in Western media as Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). Terms have become politicised, perhaps to undermine legitimacy. However, as with RAND studies, this study refers to the group as it refers to itself as 'Islamic State' (IS). The use of 'IS' does not endorse the group or a so-called caliphate but is instead used to maintain scientific objectivity. 'IS' is also the term used in the terrorist organisation listing. B Connable, N Lander and K Jackson, 'Beating the Islamic State: Selecting a New Strategy for Iraq and Syria', *RAND*, Report for the Office of the Secretary of Defence, 2017, p.2. 'Islamic State' listing as a terrorist organisation available on Australian National Security website.
https://www.nationalsecurity.gov.au/Listedterroristorganisations/Pages/IslamicState.aspx

[12] Taqi ad-Din Ahmed ibn Taymiyya is an important reference for today's revolutionary Salafists and the use of jihad. Christopher Henzel, 'The Origins of al Qaeda's Ideology: Implications for US Strategy', *Parameters,* US Army War College, Spring 2005, Vol.35, No.1, p.77. The turbulent relationship between the West and the Muslim world arguably dates back to the 18th century. One of the most well-known movements was Wahhabism, founded by Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahab. Aureo de Toledo Gomes and Michelle Mitri Mikhael, 'Terror or Terrorism? Al Qaeda and the Islamic State in Comparative Perspective', *Brazilian Political Science Review*, 2018, Vol.12, No.1, p.12.

[13] Colin P. Clarke and Assaf Moghadam, 'Mapping Today's Jihadi Landscape and Threat', *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, May 2018, p.349.

and religious authority[14] over the Islamic world through appeals to themes such as Caliph and Caliphate. As the foundations of the global jihadist movement are grounded in Salafi-jihadism, this section begins by exploring these ideological roots.

Salafi-Jihadism

IS' ideology and intellectual framework sits within the mainstream tradition of Salafi-jihadism.[15] Although both Salafism and jihadism are neither new nor novel, Salafi-jihadism is a relatively modern concept. IS represents the most recent iteration of an ideology that has been developing for the past fifty years founded upon the writings of the revolutionary Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood's Sayyid Qutb.[16] Qutb's *Milestones* publication marked the intellectual origin of the Salafi-jihadist movement by merging Salafism with jihadism, both of which have existed for centuries but are distinct from one another. In its simplest construction, Salafism is an idealised version of Islam concerned with the revival and realisation of an authentic and pure Islam, free from contemporary deviations.[17] Although Salafi and jihadi are terms applied by outsiders,[18] Salafism is often treated with suspicion despite being a broader concept than jihadism which forms a part of the Salafi spectrum.[19] As such, Salafism is categorised according to three ideals and is expressed through quietism and purists, political or jihadist.[20]

Jihadism has a place of central importance within Salafi-jihadist thought and is variously interpreted as a war in defence of Islam as well as a personal struggle espousing the virtues of combat or fighting in an Islamic holy war, sanctioned both as a means of protection and territorial conquest.[21] Celso explains the origin of jihadism as a propensity for violence that predates the Crusades and is instead embedded in

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[14] Aaron Y. Zelin, 'The War between ISIS and al-Qaeda for Supremacy of the Global Jihadist Movement' *The Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, Research Notes, June 2014, No.20, p.5.

[15] Shiraz Maher, *'Salafi-Jihadism: The History of an Idea'*, United Kingdom: Penguin Books, 2016, p.3..

[16] Robert Manne, *'The Mind of the Islamic State'*, Victoria: Redback Quarterly, 2016, Chapter 1, p.4.

[17] Maher, 2016, p.5. Salafism refers to a movement within Islam that reveres the 'Golden Age' of the Prophet and seeks to revive the practices of the first three generations of Muslims.

[18] Cole Bunzel, 'Jihadism on Its Own Terms: Understanding a Movement', *Hoover Institution*, 2017, p.2.

[19] Bernard Haykel, 'On the nature of salafi thought and action,' in Roel Meijer (ed), *Global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement*, London: Hurst, 2009.

[20] Quintan Wiktorowicz, 'Anatomy of the Salafi Movement', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 2006, Vol.29, p.207.

[21] Maher, 2016, Chapter 2, p.1.

the theological and political struggles of the Muslim community called the *ummah*.[22] In this regard, jihad is believed to be intertwined with the Islamic faith whereby 'the *ummah* is called to march forward to protect its religion' either through offensive or defensive jihad.[23] While Salafi-jihadists cite the *Quran* to support claims of jihad as an obligation to fight and the highest priority after belief in Islam, Moghadam considers Salafi-jihadism to be a distinct ideology that employs religious rhetoric.[24]

The intellectual histories of Salafi-jihadism however suggest that it is subject to various interpretations.[25] As a jihadist ideologue, Qutb took the ancient concept of *jahiliyyah*[26] and redefined it to promote the use of jihad to defend and separate Islam from *jahili* society. This required true Muslims, or a small 'enlightened vanguard' to remove pagan ignorance as a result of the cultural and political invasion of the West in the Middle East and the world.[27] Qutb's idea of Salafi-jihadism has arguably evolved. Celso for example argues that despite Qutb's contempt for the West, his work focuses on intra-Muslim conflict and not the West or 'far enemy', whereas his ideological heirs Abdullah Azzam, Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri reinterpreted this message and reversed the order by targeting the far enemy before Muslim apostates or 'near enemy'.[28] Indeed, the influence of jihadist ideologues and their different versions of Salafi-jihadist ideology and debates over targeting the near or far enemy has shaped doctrine and strategy over time.

Muhammad Abd Al-Salam Faraj expanded on Qutb's vision to first attack the near enemy to establish a Caliphate and then move toward global expansion. Manne argues that since Faraj's '*The Neglected Duty*', Salafi-jihadists have been divided over waging war against the near enemy or far enemy.[29] The priority has shifted depending on the

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[22] Anthony Celso, *Al Qaeda's Post-9/11 Devolution: The Failed Jihadist Struggle Against the Near and Far Enemy*, New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2014, Chapter 1, p.16.

[23] Abdallah Azzam, *The Defence of the Muslim Lands: The First Obligation After Iman*, https://archive.org/details/Defense_of_the_Muslim_Lands/page/n3

[24] Assaf Moghadam, 'The Salafi-Jihad as a Religious Ideology', *CTC Sentinel*, February 2008, Vol.1, No.3, p.16.

[25] Bunzel, 2017, p.1.

 In Qutb's *Milestones*, jahiliyyah is a time of pre-Islamic ignorance or pagan darkness. Jahili society, a condition of spiritual darkness would need to fall to return to a period of enlightenment. [26] Robert Manne, '*The Mind of the Islamic State*', Victoria: Redback Quarterly, 2016, Chapter 1, p.13.

[27] Sebastian L. Gorka, 'Understanding the Enemy', *Special Warfare*, April – June 2014, Vol.27, No.2, p.9.

[28] Anthony Celso, *Al Qaeda's Post-9/11 Devolution: The Failed Jihadist Struggle Against the Near and Far Enemy*, New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2014, Chapter 1, p.24.

[29] Robert Manne, '*The Mind of the Islamic State*', Victoria: Redback Quarterly, 2016, Chapter 5, p.15.

ideological underpinnings and overarching strategies of jihadist organisations as well as broader international and geopolitical trends.[30] Saudi Arabia's appeal to US troop presence during the Gulf War, the failure of jihadists to defeat 'near enemy' Arab regimes and United Nations sanctions in Iraq contributed to a view of Western expansionism and the narrative of a 'cosmic struggle' between Islam and the West.[31]

The Global Jihadist Movement

Presenting itself as the vanguard for the struggles of Muslims around the world,[32] *Tanzim Qa'idat al-Jihad*, known as Al Qaeda (AQ)[33] developed this narrative by drawing attention to the US' ongoing presence in Saudi Arabia where the West was seen as invading the Middle East holy lands, justifying *fard ayn* or defensive jihad as an individual responsibility because the *ummah* was under threat. The focus on the 'far enemy'[34] and the idea of a global jihadist movement followed. In 1995, AQ leader Osama bin Laden issued his Declaration of War against America. Bin Laden's focus was transnational jihad against the 'far enemy' with a rationale to strike against 'the head of the serpent'.[35] This declaration was followed by a *fatwa* in 1998, where bin Laden in alliance with Ayman al-Zawahiri's *Tanzim al-Jihad* issued their call to Jihad.[36]

Referred to as an expeditionary mobile army or global insurgency, AQ differed from the vast majority of insurgent groups by privileging a transnational, pan-Islamic, *ummah*-based concept,[37] focused on targeting the US and its allies in pursuit of broad

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[30] Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda*: *Global Network of Terror,* New York: Berkley Books, 2003, p.4.

[31] Jason Burke, *The New Threat From Islamic Militancy,* London: Penguin Random House, 2015, Chapter 2, p.12.

[32] Daniel Byman, *Al Qaeda, The Islamic State, and the Global Jihadist Movement: What Everyone Needs to Know*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.

[33] The Islamic revolution in Iran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 marked the rise of a new wave of Islamist movements. AQ was formed against the backdrop of these developments and other events across the Middle East. Ali Ansari and Kasra Aarabi, 'Ideology and Iran's Revolution: How 1979 Changed the World', *Institute for Global Change*, 11 February 2019.

[34] Bin Laden viewed local regimes as having betrayed the *ummah* for joining and assisting the West, he considered the US as the main *kufr* and a higher threat priority than attacking Muslim rulers.

[35] Fawaz A. Gerges, *The Far Enemy*: *Why Jihad Went Global*, 2nd edition, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012, Chapter 3, p.145.

[36] Zawahiri's *Tanzim al-Jihad* was originally more focused on the 'near enemy', where targeting the secular Egyptian government was the highest priority. This changed following Zawahiri's merger with bin Laden and the group's operational integration with AQ. Gerges, 2012, Chapter 3, p.120.

[37] Paul Kamolnick, *Al Qaeda & Islamic State: History, Doctrine, Modus Operandi and U.S. Strategy to Degrade and Defeat Terrorism Conducted in the Name of Sunni Islam*, Strategic Studies Institute: Madison & Adams Press, 2017, Chapter 1, p.9.

geopolitical aims as opposed to traditional jihads which involve armed Islamic groups attacking local adversaries.[38] While the US had been tracking bin Laden's activities since the 1990s, it was not until the September 11, 2001 (9/11) attacks that AQ came under the international spotlight[39] and came to lead the global jihadist movement.[40]

Post 9/11 military and counter-terrorism efforts decimated AQ's infrastructure, incapacitated its core leadership[41] and degraded its ability to carry out terrorist attacks on the scale of 9/11.[42] By the mid-2000s, AQ's reputation as the vanguard of the global jihadist movement was at stake due to its inability to attack the 'far enemy' of which its ideological foundations and credibility in the jihadi community are based. During this period, AQ supported efforts in the Middle East, Africa and South Asia by backing jihadist insurgencies and local jihadist groups. AQ-linked groups carried out terrorist and guerrilla warfare campaigns in war zones such as Iraq and Syria.[43] In Iraq, AQ struggled to reign in its affiliate, *Tanzim Qaidat al-Jihad fi Bilad al-Rafidayn* known as Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI). AQI embarked on a brutal campaign of terrorism subscribing to a *takfiri* doctrine and strategy targeting the near enemy, Shia civilian population and rival Sunni groups to trigger a sectarian civil war and force the US to withdraw. This same group would later be expelled by AQ and evolve into the Islamic State (IS).[44]

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[38] For example, AQ bombings of US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. Anthony Tucker-Jones, *The Rise of Militant Islam*: *An Insider's View of the Failure to Curb Global Jihad*, South Yorkshire: Pen & Sword Books Ltd, 2010, Chapter 4, p.16.

[39] 9/11 was the culmination of steadily spreading militant Islam. *Ibid*, Chapter 1, p.4.

[40] Angela Rabasa et.al, 'Beyond Al Qaeda. Part 1: The Global Jihadist Movement', *RAND*, 2006, p.1.

[41] Paul Pillar, 'Counterterrorism after Al Qaeda' *Washington Quarterly*, 2004, Vol.27, No.3, pp.101-113.

[42] Randy Borum and Michael Gelles, 'Al Qaeda's Operational Evolution: Behavioural and Organizational Perspectives', *Behavioural Sciences and Law*, 2005, Vol.23, p.472.

[43] Daniel Byman, *Al Qaeda, The Islamic State, and the Global Jihadist Movement: What Everyone Needs to Know*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2015, Chapter 2, p.20.

[44] Aaron Zelin, 'The War Between ISIS and Al Qaeda', *The Washington Institute for Near East Policy,* June 2014, No.20, p.1.

The Origin, Strategy and Doctrine of Islamic State

Often considered an AQ offshoot,[45] IS emerged out of a century of Sunni Islamist political mobilisation, learning lessons from the past but bringing its unique brand of savagery and extreme violence.[46] Despite numerous incarnations of the group,[47] various factors contributed to IS' formation. IS' foundations emerged from the ideas of influential Yemeni jihadist scholar, Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi and the brutal and sectarian approach to jihad of Jordanian criminal-turned terrorist Ahmad Fadhil Nazzal al Kalaylah, better known as Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.[48] Despite their very different backgrounds, Maqdisi and Zarqawi forged a close friendship and were later incarcerated together in a Jordanian prison after a series of failed terrorist operations.[49] In prison, Zarqawi would overshadow Maqdisi as a leader and depart from his theological foundations to develop a more hard-line approach based on indiscriminate violence against the 'near enemy', sectarianism and *takfiri* doctrine.

Takfiri doctrine, indiscriminate violence and sectarianism have characterised IS from the outset as it emerged from *Jama'at al-Tawhid wal-Jihad* (JTJ) and later as AQI.[50] Although the 2003 invasion of Iraq led to Zarqawi's pledge of *bayah* (allegiance)[51] to bin Laden and the creation of AQI in 2004, tensions due to ideological and theological differences between AQ and Zarqawi's more indiscriminately violent and sectarian approach existed as early as 1999 when Zarqawi met bin Laden.[52] Central to these differences was Zarqawi's *takfiri* approach and the use of extreme savagery as a

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[45] Joby Warwick, *Black Flags: The Rise of ISIS,* London: Bantam Press, 2015, p.6.

[46] Brian Mello, 'The Islamic State: Violence and Ideology in a Post-colonial Revolutionary Regime', *International Political Sociology*, 2018, Vol.12, p.140.

[47] Jamaat al-Tawhid wal-Jihad, Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), Majlis Shura al-Mujahedin, Islamic State of Iraq (ISI), Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS), Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and the Islamic State (IS). Aaron Zelin, 'The War Between ISIS and Al Qaeda', *The Washington Institute for Near East Policy,* June 2014.

[48] Paul Kamolnick, *'Al-Qaeda & Islamic State: History, Doctrine, Modus Operandi and U.S. Strategy to Degrade and Defeat Terrorism Conducted in the Name of Sunni Islam'*, Madison & Adams Press, 2017. Refer to Weiss and Hassan for further history on Zarqawi. Michael Weiss and Hassan Hassan, *ISIS: Inside the Army of Terror*, New York: Regan Arts, 2016.

[49] Jessica Stern and J.M Berger, *'ISIS: The State of Terror'*, London: Harper Collins, 2015, p.3.

[50] Al Qaeda in the Land of Two Rivers, more commonly known as Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI). Zack Gold, 'Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI): An Al Qaeda Affiliate Case Study', *CNA*, October 2017, p.9.

[51] Zelin describes this alliance as a 'marriage of convenience'. Aaron Y. Zelin, 'The War between ISIS and al-Qaeda for Supremacy of the Global Jihadist Movement', *Washington Institute for Near East Policy,* Research Note 20, June 2014, p.2.

[52] Zarqawi's *takfiri* approach diverges from bin Laden's and Zawahiri's strategy based on building popular Muslim support and resentment towards the West. William McCants, *'The Isis Apocalypse: the history, strategy, and doomsday vision of the Islamic State'*, New York: St Martin's Press, 2015.

weapon, which included indiscriminate violence and targeting of Muslim civilians.[53] Political conditions in Iraq enabled Zarqawi to exploit sectarian divisions and to an extent, revived the global jihadist movement. AQI's violent actions appeared to be sanctioned by AQ who needed a proxy in Iraq[54] and publicly endorsed attacks against the Iraqi state however Zarqawi operated independently and maintained a different vision and strategy.[55] The multifaceted and violent nature of this strategy is arguably reflected in the book *Idārat at-Tawaḥḥuš* (*Management of Savagery*).

While IS media disputes the influence of this document,[56] AQI's multifaceted political efforts and military campaign, characterised by brutality effectively provoked Shia retaliatory attacks and resulted in short-lived claims to territory.[57] AQI's brutality prompted the Sunni 'Awakening' and this, coupled with the widely debated US surge, degraded the group's capability by 2010, however proved to be short-lived and by 2011 the group re-emerged as *Dawlat al-ʿIrāq al-ʾIslāmiyyah*, referred to in the West as the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI).[58] AQ directed ISI, now led by Abu Bakr-al-Baghdadi to fight in Syria,[59] however Baghdadi was also able to run operations in Iraq, employing a cadre of former Ba'athist military personnel into the leadership.[60]

Although IS evolved to be considered as 'the most dominant and resourceful jihadist organisation'[61] referred to as a pseudo-state rather than a terrorist organisation,[62] Baghdadi maintained a similar apocalyptic approach to Zarqawi based on anti-Shi'ite

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[53] Jessica Stern and J.M Berger, *'ISIS: The State of Terror'*, London: Harper Collins, 2015, p.7.

[54] Jason Burke, *The New Threat From Islamic Militancy,* London: Penguin Random House, 2015, Chapter 3, p.8.

[55] Paul Kamolnick, *Al Qaeda & Islamic State: History, Doctrine, Modus Operandi and U.S. Strategy to Degrade and Defeat Terrorism Conducted in the Name of Sunni Islam*, Strategic Studies Institute: Madison & Adams Press, 2017, Chapter 2, p.4.

[56] Craig Whiteside, 'New Masters of Revolutionary Warfare: The Islamic State Movement (2002-2016)', *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 2016, Vol.10, No.2.

[57] Jay Sekulow, *The Rise of ISIS: A Threat We Can't Ignore*, New York: Howard Books, 2014, Chapter 2, p.3.

[58] By this stage, AQI was operating as the Islamic State in Iraq (SI). Daveed Gartenstein-Ross in Robert J. Bunker, John P. Sullivan, Brian Michael Jenkins, Matthew G. Devost and James T. Kirkhope, *Counterterrorism: Bridging Operations and Theory,* A Terrorism Research Center Book, 2015.

[59] David Kilcullen, *Blood Year: The Islamic State and the Failures of the War on Terror*, London: Black Inc., 2016, Chapter 7, p.2 and p.6. To note Zarqawi's immediate successors Abu Ayuub al-Masri and Abu Omar al-Baghdadi were killed by US forces in 2010.

[60] IS has evolved from an Iraqi-based insurgency to a quasi-state, controlling territory, acquiring substantial and diversified sources of revenue and mobilising recruits and supporters from across the globe.

[61] Omar Ashour, 'Why Does the Islamic State Endure and Expand?', *IAI Working Papers*, 2015, p.1.

[62] Cronin, 'ISIS is not a Terrorist Group: Why Counterterrorism Won't Stop the Latest Jihadist Threat', *Foreign Affairs,* March/April 2015, 87–98.

savagery and goading the West into the battle. Stern and Berger for instance argue that when IS began beheading Westerners on video in September 2014, it intended to draw the US into deeper engagement in Iraq consistent with the blueprint in the *Management of Savagery.*[63]

As IS' identity and narrative[64] based on establishing a caliphate is threatened by territorial losses, IS has proven adaptable and resilient with mass-casualty attacks in Iraq,[65] activities by affiliates in other *wilayats* (overseas governorships) and efforts to attack Western countries.[66] IS has openly encouraged and conducted attacks in the West since the start of coalition air strikes in 2014, however this may not simply be a reaction to the strikes but rather part of IS' strategy. Warwick for example argues that despite Zarqawi's sectarian approach and inability to achieve a successful terror attack outside of Iraq, terrorist operations in the West were part of IS' ambitions from the outset.[67] Given the potential influence of jihadist ideologues and doctrine on the multifaceted nature of IS strategy, whereby IS also uses propaganda to flaunts its full spectrum of combat and terrorist operations[68] and place these within a strategic and historical context,[69] the following section defines the key concepts used in this study.

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[63] Jessica Stern and J.M Berger, *'ISIS: The State of Terror'*, London: Harper Collins, 2015, Chapter 11, p.8.

[64] Islamic State slogan *Baqiya wa tatamaddad* (remaining and expanding). Aaron Y. Zelin, 'The Islamic State's Model', *Washington Post*, Policy Analysis, 28 January 2015.

[65] Michael Knights, 'The Islamic State Inside Iraq: Losing Power and Preserving Strength?', *CTC Sentinel*, December 2018, Vol.11, Issue 11, p.1.

[66] Christopher M. Blanchard and Carla E Humud, 'The Islamic State and U.S. Policy', *Congressional Research Service*, CRS Report, 25 September 2018.
Michael Weiss and Hassan Hassan, *ISIS: Inside the Army of Terror*, New York: Regan Arts, 2016.

[67] Warwick, 2015, Chapter 4, p.15.

[68] Nadia Al-Daqel and Aaron Anfinson, "In the Words of the Enemy": the Islamic State's reflexive projection of statehood', *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 2018, Vol.11, No.1, p.45.

[69] Haroro Ingram, 'The strategic logic of Islamic State information operations' *Australian Journal of International Affairs,* 2015, Vol.69, No.6, p.40.

Conceptual Framework

This section defines key concepts used throughout the study. As the role of jihadist ideologues and the strategic manuals and doctrinal influence of the texts they produce are a central feature of the analysis, the term 'ideologues' will be defined to distinguish between jihadist strategists and jihadists theologists. As the study's examination of MoS considers IS' strategy within a broader 'revolutionary warfare' model, this concept will be defined by drawing on the existing literature. The final and critical concept to be defined relates to IS' 'external operations' strategy and terrorism in the West.

Jihadist Ideologues

Since the 1960s, when the most recent wave of Islamic militancy began, strategists and thinkers within the movement have elaborated different visions of how the battle against the West, their local allies or unbelievers might play out.[70] Yet 'thinkers' and 'strategists' form different parts of the strategist-doctrinarian divide.[71] According to Byman, Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi is the most important living Salafi-jihadist ideologue and more influential than Ayman al-Zawahiri. However, Maqdisi's views are distinct from AQ's as he focuses on Muslim apostates and while his teachings influenced Zarqawi, Maqdisi would later criticise and rebuke IS' *takfiri* approach and brutality against fellow Muslims.[72] Criticised by jihadists for lacking combat experience or the fearless fighter image of Zarqawi, Maqdisi draws on religious knowledge rather than experience.[73] As an ideologue, Maqdisi is a theologist rather than a strategist.

In contrast to Maqdisi's view on *takfir,* Abu Abdullah al-Muhajir's '*The Jurisprudence of Blood'* is believed to have had a major influence on Zarqawi'*s* hard-line approach. Muhajir's rigid doctrine relating to *takfir* encourages the killing and punishment of Shia as the main threat to Islam and justifies suicide bombings and beheadings of infidels,

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[70] Jason Burke, *The New Threat From Islamic Militancy,* London: Penguin Random House, 2015, Chapter 4, p.2.

[71] Assaf Moghadam and Brian Fishman, *Self-Inflicted Wounds: Debate and Divisions within Al-Qaeda,* 2011.

[72] Daniel Byman, *Al Qaeda, The Islamic State, and the Global Jihadist Movement: What Everyone Needs to Know*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2015, Chapter 4, p.8.

[73] Joas Wagemakers, 'Invoking Zarqawi: Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi's Jihad Deficit', *CTC Sentinel*, June 2009, Vol.2, No.6.

including women, children and the elderly.[74] This influence was reflected in AQI's adoption of martyrdom operations as a tactic in Iraq in the 2000s, Muhajir's text as core reading in AQI training camps and Zarqawi's shift from his former mentor, Maqdisi.[75] Although not necessarily representative of strategy, Muhajir's views and ideas appear to have been incorporated into IS operations with the use of suicide tactics.

The work of Abu Musab al-Suri is considered central to the strategic and doctrinal thinking of the global jihadist movement. Al-Suri's 1600-page book, *A Call to a Global Islamic Resistance* advocates leaderless resistance and individual terrorism. While al-Suri's thinking itself was influenced by Qutb, al-Suri's strategic theory is evident in IS' strategy and organisational structure which encompasses both 'Individual-Terrorism Jihad' and 'Open-Front Jihad'. Al-Suri's strategic theory identifies the vulnerabilities of a hierarchical centralised structure and suggests a way to mesh the tactical, de-centralised structure of individual jihad and the strategic structure of open-front jihad into one functional unit.[76] This appears to be reflected in IS' strategic objectives of establishing a physical Caliphate, seizing and defending territory as well as its outwards focused activities of directing and inspiring attacks in the West.

While little is known about the obscure jihadist strategist Abu Bakr Naji, his book *Idārat at-Tawaḥḥuš* known as *Management of Savagery* (MoS) is considered as one of the most influential and widely read texts. Composed online in 2004, this 113-page treatise is a compilation of lessons learned from previous jihadist failures and an advancement in thinking about the future direction of the global jihadist movement. It describes three stages of a revolutionary campaign including '*nikayah*' operations where terrorist tactics are used, a second phase of '*tawahhush*' involving a mixture of guerrilla tactics to foment civil conflict and exacerbate sectarian tension, and finally '*tamkin*' where militants move in to control territory, establish authority and consolidate a base. Unlike other strategists, Naji endorses a merger of the near and far enemy with attacks on multiple fronts based on *takfiri* ideology and the extreme use of violence against the

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[74] Tore Hamming, 'The Hardline Stream of Global Jihad: Revisiting the Ideological Origin of the Islamic State', *CTC Sentinel*, January 2019, Vol.12, Issue 1.

[75] Charlie Winter and Abdullah K. Al-Saud, 'The Obscure Theologian Who Shaped ISIS' *The Atlantic*, 4 December 2016.

West.[77] Despite uncertainty around Naji's identity, he is believed to be Egyptian Muhammad Khalil al-Hakim[78] an AQ insider with a background in media and links to Zarqawi's AQI[79] who either died or wrote under a different name after 2004.[80]

Unlike most studies that tend to focus on jihadist ideologues or theologists who frame doctrine around religious authority, this study focuses on jihadist strategists, specifically the influence of Naji's MoS on IS' external operations strategy. As such the conceptual framework distinguishes between theologists and strategists. This framework is based on the following delineations[81] to categorise jihadist ideologues:

◻ Jihadist theologist or theorist: Salafi-jihadist ideologues who advance religious arguments based on scholarly knowledge in Islamic jurisprudence and interpretations of the *Quran*. Their writings are aimed at multiple audiences and do not articulate a strategy as such but rather provide religious justifications for Salafi-jihadism whether against a near or far enemy.

◻ Jihadist strategists: Salafi-jihadist ideologues that may not have a religious education but instead draw on an understanding of military strategy, doctrine and intellectual debates. Their writings are not aimed at ordinary readers and while they may include Islamic references, they are based on human reason or strategic logic rather than religious arguments.[82]

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[77] Anthony Celso, *Al Qaeda's Post-9/11 Devolution: The Failed Jihadist Struggle Against the Near and Far Enemy*, New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2014, Chapter 3.
[78] Robert Manne, 'The Mind of Islamic State', Victoria: Redback Quarterly, 2016, Chapter 6, p.3. The former head of Egyptian Islamic Jihad claims Naji is Muhammad al-Hukayma, an Egyptian member of the Islamic Group who had a professional background in media and worked with Al Qaeda;s media wing in Iran when he wrote MoS but was later killed in a US airstrike in Pakistan in 2008. William McCants, *The Isis Apocalypse: the history, strategy, and doomsday vision of the Islamic State*, New York: St Martin's Press, 2015, Chapter 4, p.8.
[79] David Martin Jones and M.L.R Smith, 'The Strategy of Savagery: Explaining the Islamic State', *War on the Rocks*, 24 February, 2015. Naji may have also contributed to AQ's online magazine *Sawt al-Jihad*.
[80] Given the Naji's focus on the importance of undermining the US' 'deceptive media halo', advocacy for propaganda operations and numerous references and contempt towards the Egyptian regime, including lessons learned and specific historical, political and operational insights, this theory is plausible.
[81] Michael W.S. Ryan, *Decoding Al Qaeda's Strategy: The Deep Battle Against America,* Chapter 4, New York: Columbia University Press, 2013.
[82] *Ibid*, p.5.

External Operations

Since 2014, IS has conducted attacks in the West by inspiring, directing or in some cases having planners and operatives involved in attacks. There has been clear direction by IS figures in the group's propaganda publications such as *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* to execute attacks in the West. While the call for individuals to launch attacks in the West is not new with Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) calling for such 'lone jihad' attacks since 2010 through *Inspire* magazine, the strategy and doctrine of these two jihadist groups is markedly different.

As IS has suffered territorial losses, some observers explain this as a shift from a state-building entity to a transnational terrorist organisation,[83] much like AQ. However IS' use of terrorism in the West demonstrates operational adaptability as the group appears to traverse through various phases of a politico-military strategy[84] that incorporate a blend of military, political, social and psychological efforts as part of a broader revolutionary warfare model.[85] Indeed, there is a vast amount of literature on IS as a state-building enterprise. Yet IS' external operations strategy,[86] specifically relating to terrorist attacks in the West has not been explored in the context of the group's overarching strategy and only a relatively small number of studies have examined the influence of doctrine on IS' operations in the West.

IS has demonstrated resilience, adaptability and a propensity for violence both within conflict zones such as Iraq and Syria and in Western countries. This violence is advocated by the group through a well-developed media operation[87] which includes public beheadings for a global audience[88] as well as inspiration and guidance to a

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[83] Andrew Watkins, 'Losing Territory and Lashing Out: The Islamic State and International Terror', *CTC Sentinel*, March 2016, p.14.

[84] Haroro Ingram, 'The War on Islamic State After Paris: a Strategy Remaining and Expanding', *Australian Institute of International Affairs,* Australian Outlook, Analysis, 19 November 2015.

[85] Craig Whiteside, 'New Masters of Revolutionary Warfare: The Islamic State Movement (2002-2016)', *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 2016, Vol.10, No.2.

[86] Rafay argues IS plots in the West form part of a 'grand strategy'. Jakub Rafay, 'AMN ALKHARJI: An Analysis of External Operations Wing of Islamic State', *Defense & Strategy*, 2017, Vol.17, No.1, pp.1-13.

[87] Daniel Milton, 'The Islamic State" An Adaptive Organization Facing Increasing Challenges in 'The Group That Calls Itself a State: Understanding the Evolution and Challenges of Islamic State, *Combatting Terrorism Center at West Point*, December 2014, p.53.

[88] Simone Molin Friis, 'Behead, burn, crucify, crush': Theorizing the Islamic State's public displays of violence', *European Journal of International Relations*, 2018, Vol.24, No.2, p.245.

global support base to use any means of violence available to create as much carnage, terror and death as possible.[89] Indeed, Naji has emphasised the role of excessive violence or 'savagery' against infidels in combat and media battles.[90] As a learning organisation, IS' modus operandi or '*manhaj*' (methodology) continues to shift however analysing the doctrinal influence of MoS on IS' external operations might provide insight into the group's strategy and operations.

IS has adopted AQ's theory and doctrine of revolutionary war and the strategies and tactics derived from classical guerrilla warfare doctrine as practiced by Mao and other revolutionary warfare theorists.[91] Revolution for the purpose of this study is defined as a comprehensive and fundamental change to the political order, social structure, economic ownership and standing social order. It is the attempt of a non-governmental group to take control of the government, which reflects AQ and IS' aims on a global basis.[92] This study situates IS' external operations as part of a broader revolutionary warfare model with a specific focus on the group's use of 'terrorism' in the 'West'. The definition of terrorism is drawn from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) as the database being used for quantitative collection and analysis:

- ☐ Terrorism is defined as the intentional act of violence or threat of violence by a non-state actor where the violent act was (i) aimed at attaining a political, economic, religious, or social goal and (ii) included evidence of the intention to coerce, intimidate, or convey some other message to a larger audience beyond the immediate victims.[93]

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[89] Abu Muhammad al-Adnani's call to kill Westerners 'in any manner', *Dabiq*, Issue 4
[90] Marwan M Kraidy, 'The projectile image: Islamic State's digital visual warfare and global networked affect', *Media Culture & Society*, 2017, Vol.38, No.8, p.1197.
[91] Michael S Ryan, 'ISIS: The Terrorist Group That Would Be a State', Case Study, Newport: US Naval War College, *Center on Irregular Warfare and Armed Groups,* 2015, p.15.
[92] *Ibid.*
[93] GTD, 2009-2018. https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/

As external operations may encompass any attack or operation outside of conflict zones and this project is focused on Western countries, to ensure the data search parameters of the GTD[94] meet the scope of this study, the term 'West' is based on Barkawi and Laffey's definition:[95]

☐ 'West' is defined as Western Europe,[96] North America,[97] Japan and the British settler societies of the Oceania.[98]

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This chapter provided a historical overview of IS' ideological roots and the origin of the group's doctrine and strategy in order to lay the foundation for the key concepts that will be discussed and analysed throughout this study. First an historical overview of IS within the global Salafi-jihadist movement explained the group's emergence from a violent group operating in Iraq through to an insurgency, quasi-state and a terrorist organisation. This overview was followed by defining the key concepts for this study, which focuses on jihadists strategists and the influence of strategic manuals, specifically the potential correlations between Naji's MoS and IS' external operations strategy and use of terrorism in the West. The following chapter is dedicated to examining the existing literature on the influence of jihadists manuals on terrorist group strategies and operations and situating this study within the academic field.

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[94] Discussed further in Chapter 3: Method and Approach.
[95] Tarak Barkawi and Mark Laffey, 'The postcolonial moment in security studies', *Review of International Studies,* 2006, Vol.32, p.331.
[96] Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Gibraltar, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Vatican City, West Germany (FRG). GTD Codebook. July 2018.
[97] United States (US) and Canada.
[98] Australia and New Zealand.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the existing literature on the influence of Abu Bakr Naji's work, '*The Management of Savagery'* (MoS) on IS external operations strategy and in doing so define this study's contribution to the field. This chapter first examines research on jihadist ideologues such as Naji, and the influence of their work on the strategy and operations of jihadist terrorist groups. It then focuses on studies that have explored the use of terrorism as part of a broader politico-military strategy. In the final section, studies that have analysed jihadist material to identify key themes and their relationship with jihadist strategy and operational trends in the West will be discussed before outlining this study's focus and contribution to the field.

The Influence of Jihadist Ideologues

Jihadist terrorist groups disseminate information through a variety of means to inspire and recruit from a pool of potential supporters but also to advocate their cause and market their strategy to a global audience. This is particularly the case for groups such as IS and AQ with global ambitions where jihadist ideologues disseminate doctrinal texts on the Internet intended to shape behaviour from the strategic level down to the tactical level.[99] As outlined in Chapter 1, it is important to distinguish between jihadist theologists who are primarily focused on the ideological foundations and religious justifications for jihad (the why) and jihadist strategists that look to translate theory into practice with a focus on strategy and methods (the how). While this chapter examines the existing literature on the influence of jihadist ideologues more broadly, it is specifically concerned with the latter.

The existing literature on the influence of jihadist ideologues and their respective doctrinal contributions to strategy have drawn various conclusions. This is in part due to the many jihadist ideologues who have contributed in some way to the ideological foundations or strategic evolution of jihadist terrorist groups. Indeed, several studies have explored the relationship between jihadist ideologues and the influence of their work on the strategy and operations of Salafi-jihadist movements. These studies have

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[99] Brian A Jackson and Bryce Loidolt, 'Considering al-Qaida's Innovation Doctrine: From Strategic Texts to "Innovation in Practice", *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 2013, Vol.25, No.2, p.288.

considered the work of prominent jihadist ideologues such as Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi,[100] Abu Abdullah al-Mujahir,[101] Abu Musab al-Suri,[102] and Abu Bakr Naji.[103] All important contributions with studies analysing the words used by jihadist theologists to provide religious justification for terrorist acts and inspire others to join the cause as well as key texts by jihadist strategists whom lay out the strategic logic, operational phases and methodology for pragmatists concerned with the execution of such plans.

Brachman and McCants argue that there is value in mining the works of jihadi ideologues to gain an insight into the strategic vision of jihadi leaders who have put their team's 'playbook' online. By understanding the tactical and strategic insights as well as the strengths and weaknesses identified by jihadi strategists, effective measures for defeating the jihadi movement might be formed.[104] The influence of ideologues is of particular relevance to this thesis and in this review of the literature, studies that have examined the influence of religious scholars within the global jihadist movement as well as ideologues focused on marketing viable strategies are explored. It is important to distinguish between studies that have focused on the influence of jihadist theologists and those that have examined the influence of jihadist strategists on the global jihadist movement as such studies, by nature are bound to draw different conclusions. As Gorka's study assesses the influence of both theologists and strategists, it offers a starting point to distinguish between the two.[105]

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[100] Abdullah bin Khaled al-Saud, 'The Spiritual Teacher and His Truants: The Influence and Relevance of Abu Mohammad al-Maqdisi', *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 2018, Vol.41, No.9, p.737.

[101] Charlie Winter and Abdullah K. al-Saud, "The Obscure Theologian who Shaped ISIS," *The Atlantic*, 4 December 2016. Available at www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/12/isis-muhajir-syria/509399/

[102] Brynjar Lia, '*Architect of Global Jihad: The Life of Al-Qaeda Strategist Abu Mus'ab Al-Suri*', Oxford University Press, 2009. Paul Cruickshank and Mohannad Hage Ali, 'Abu Musab Al Suri: Architect of the New Al Qaeda', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 2007, Vol.30, No.1, pp.1-14.

[103] Michael W.S. Ryan, *Decoding Al Qaeda's Strategy: The Deep Battle Against America,* Chapter 4, New York: Columbia University Press, 2013.

[104] Jarret M Brachman and William F McCants', 'Stealing Al Qaeda's Playbook', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 2006, Vol.29, No.4, p.309.

[105] Sebastian Gorka, 'Understanding Today's Enemy: The Grand Strategists of Modern Jihad', *Military Review*, May-June 2016.

Gorka examines the work of Sayyid Qutb, Ayman al-Zawahiri,[106] Brigadier General Malik and Anwar al-Awlaki and their influence on the strategy of the global jihadist movement. In his analysis, a common theme across these various jihadist ideologues is their violent puritanical vision of Islam whereby jihad is an obligation for all Muslim believers and the most effective weapon to target the infidel is terror. Symbolic attacks such as 9/11 were considered as critical for destroying the will of the infidel for this reason.[107] Apart from Malik, these jihadist thinkers grounded their works in religious and revolutionary theories or were spiritual leaders. Although Gorka considers Malik to be a strategic thinker of great importance to the global jihadist movement,[108] Malik's rejection of Western military and strategic thought to jihadist strategy is not shared by all jihadist ideologues or other Western scholars.[109] Zabel's analysis of al-Suri, al-Qurashi, al-Murqin and Naji for instance suggests that these jihadist ideologues were adept in the military, insurgency and revolutionary warfare models from both East and West, and in some regards incorporated these principles into their own strategies.[110]

McCant's 2006 study on militant ideology provides a comprehensive analysis of AQ's most widely read texts and influential ideologues to better understand the jihadist movement. Based on this study, Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi is considered as the most influential living jihadist theorist to support militant ideology with religious credentials.[111] Yet recent studies suggest limitations regarding religious and ideological influences on jihadist strategy and tactics. Bin Khaled al-Saud's study found that while al-Maqdisi may have been a spiritual father of the Salafi-Jihadist ideology and contributed to the ideological underpinnings of IS, this influence waned over time. According to al-Saud, a praxis-based approach focused on actions has held increasing appeal, characterising IS' messaging and narrative rather than theory, religious knowledge and

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[106] Zawahiri's *Knights Under the Prophet's Banner* is partly a history of the Egyptian Jihadist movement and partly a treatise to inspire others. Daniel Byman, *Al Qaeda, The Islamic State, and the Global Jihadist Movement: What Everyone Needs to Know*, Chapter 3, p.2, New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.
[107] Sebastian Gorka, 'Understanding Today's Enemy: The Grand Strategists of Modern Jihad', *Military Review*, May-June 2016, p.37.
[108] *Ibid*, p.36.
[109] William McCants, *'The Isis Apocalypse: the history, strategy, and doomsday vision of the Islamic State'*, Chapter 4, p.8, New York: St Martin's Press, 2015. Robert Manne, '*The Mind of the Islamic State'*, Chapter 6, p.5., Victoria: Redback Quarterly, 2016.
[110] Sarah E. Zabel, 'The Military Strategy of Global Jihad', *Strategic Studies Institute*, US Army War College, October 2007, p.6.
[111] William McCants, 'Militant Ideology Atlas', *Combatting Terrorism Center*, Executive Report, November 2006, p.8.

scholarship.[112] Abu Musab a-Suri and Abu Bakr Naji are jihadist strategists focused on an action-oriented rather than theoretical approaches and are considered as the foremost ideologues to influence AQ's post-9/11 strategy.[113]

In their study on AQ's 'innovation doctrine', Jackson and Loidolt note that the work of al-Suri and that of Naji became available at a pivotal moment for the global jihadist movement and despite their differences, the need for innovation is a prominent thread in both texts.[114] Jackson and Loidolt argue it is plausible that al-Suri and Naji shaped the thinking of senior AQ leaders by representing a shift from the ideological conservatism that resulted in past jihadi failures and emphasising the importance of innovation. While their study does not focus on testing the influence of doctrine on strategy and tactics, their comparative analysis of both al-Suri and Naji provides a foundation from which this study builds. In the case of al-Suri, several scholars have examined the influence of his ideas on AQ's post-9/11 strategy, targeting and doctrine.

According to Burke, 'if al-Awlaki was the propagandist who did the most to shape today's threat against the West, and al-Zawahiri and al-Baghdadi are currently the most influential commanders, then al-Suri is the strategist of greatest relevance'.[115] Burke considers al-Suri's reach beyond AQ, laying the foundations for IS' strategy and therefore central to the strategic and doctrinal thinking of the global jihadist movement. While al-Suri's thinking itself was influenced by Qutb, al-Suri's book, *A Call to a Global Islamic Resistance* advocates leaderless resistance and individual terrorism. The themes from this text appear evident in IS' strategy and organisational structure encompassing both 'Individual-Terrorism Jihad' and 'Open-Front Jihad'. Al-Suri's strategic theory identifies the vulnerabilities of a hierarchical centralised structure and suggests a way to mesh the tactical, de-centralised structure of individual jihad and the strategic structure of open-front jihad into one functional unit.[116] This appears to be

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[112] Abdullah bin Khaled al-Saud, 'The Spiritual Teacher and His Truants: The Influence and Relevance of Abu Mohammad al-Maqdisi', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 2018, Vol.41, No.9, p.743.
[113] Anthony Celso, *Al Qaeda's Post-9/11 Devolution: The Failed Jihadist Struggle Against the Near and Far Enemy*, New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2014, Chapter 3, p.58.
[114] Brian A Jackson and Bryce Loidolt, 'Considering al-Qaida's Innovation Doctrine: From Strategic Texts to "Innovation in Practice"', *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 2013, Vol.25, No.2, p.288.
[115] Jason Burke, *The New Threat From Islamic Militancy,* London: Penguin Random House, 2015, Chapter 7, p.6.
[116] Abhijnan Rej, 'The Strategist: How Abu Mus'ab al-Suri Inspired ISIS', *Observer Research Foundation*, Occasional Paper, August 2016, p.3.

reflected in IS' strategic objectives of establishing a physical Caliphate, seizing territory as well as directing and inspiring attacks in the West.

Cruickshank and Hage Ali note that al-Suri was pressing a new modus operandi prior to 9/11 which would later manifest itself in AQ's structure and strategy and therefore consider al-Suri's influence as critical to the group's strategic evolution. Referring to al-Suri, they argue that 'no other individual has done more to conceptualise AQ's new strategy after 9/11'.[117] Al-Suri's concept of 'individual -terrorism jihad' appears to have gained traction as AQ adapted operational tactics to the post-9/11 security environment and rather than conducting 'spectacular' attacks, Western countries were subject to attacks by their own citizens.[118] This new environment was characterised by 'homegrown terrorism' perpetrated by Western citizens in their home countries with loose ties, if any to AQ leadership.[119] While not involved in operations, Cruickshank and Hage Ali conclude that al-Suri has had a significant impact on jihadist strategy, and posed the greatest threat to the West as a strategist and online teacher.

Stern and Berger draw similar conclusions in their analysis of al-Suri's influence on IS. According to Stern and Berger, Zarqawi was influenced by al-Suri's model of 'leaderless resistance', decentralisation and apocalyptic vision in which ordinary moral rules do not apply.[120] Their study is distinct due to their focus on IS and emphasis on IS' apocalyptic narrative, justifying extreme violence based on the notion of a 'cosmic war'. In this regard, IS has drawn more from al-Suri and emerged as an especially violent and barbaric strain of AQ with anti-Shi'ite savagery due to the belief in end-of-times prophecies. Stern and Berger consider this apocalyptic expectation of drawing the West into a final battle in *Dabiq* as an important part of IS' modus operandi.[121]

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[117] Paul Cruickshank and Mohammad Hage Ali, 'Abu Musab Al Suri: Architect of the New Al Qaeda', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 2007, Vol.30, No.1, pp.1-14.
[118] Petter Nesser, 'How did Europe's Global Jihads Obtain Training for their Militant Causes?', *Terrorism and Political Violence,* 2008, Vol.20, No.2, p.241.
[119] Cruickshank and Hage Ali, 2007, p.2.
[120] Jessica Stern and J.M Berger, *'ISIS: The State of Terror'*, London: Harper Collins, 2015, p.10.
[121] *Ibid,* p.10.

Of equal importance but seemingly less explored is the influence of Abu Bakr Naji's 'The Management of Savagery' (MoS).[122] It comprises three distinct stages, which include a phase of violent resistance with an emphasis on carrying out acts of highly visible violence, intended to send a message to both allies and enemies.[123] This is of particular relevance to IS' external operations strategy where Naji advocates the planning of increasingly diversified operations or strikes against the Crusader-Zionist enemy in every place in the Islamic world and outside it, and specifies the types of attacks to be used. While existing studies have identified Naji as an important strategist,[124] only a relatively small number of studies have analysed the influence of Naji's work on IS' strategy or use of terrorism in the West. This may in part be due to the origin and age of the document, however as Burke has indicated that al-Suri's strategic reach is beyond AQ, the same may be true for Naji.

William McCants describes MoS as a 'blueprint' for Salafi-jihadists.[125] The importance McCants places on this document to understanding the strategic underpinnings of jihadist terrorist groups is evident in the need to translate the document into English.[126] McCants argues that the 'Strategic Plan' for reinforcing the political position of ISI circulated by Iraqi jihadists in 2009 has a lot in common with MoS. In his analysis, McCants finds that much like the 'Strategic Plan' for ISI, Naji draws on Western military strategy and universal laws of insurgency rather than from Islamic teachings. Distinguishing between jihadist strategists and those more focused on theological arguments for jihadism is a core theme identified by McCants in relation to MoS. McCants addresses a broader argument that jihadist strategists such as Naji, draw from non-Muslim strategists and the need for action and 'uncompromising violence' rather than being constrained by Islamic scripture.[127]

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[122] Celso argues al-Suri's influence is trumped by Naji. Anthony Celso, 'Islamic Regression, Jihadist Frustration and Takfirist Hyper Violence', *Journal of Political Sciences & Public Affairs*, 2016, Vol.4, No.2, p.6.
[123] Stern and Berger, 2015, p.9.
[124] Reinforcing its strategic focus at the time of release, Ulph claimed MoS to be one of the few works of jihadi literature specifically devoted to strategy. Stephen Ulph, 'New Online Book Lays Out Al-Qaeda's Military Strategy', *Terrorism Focus*, Jamestown Foundation, 2005, Vol.2, No.6.
[125] Robert Manne, *'The Mind of the Islamic State'*, Chapter 6, p.5., Victoria: Redback Quarterly, 2016.
[126] McCants received funding from John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies at Harvard University to translate.
[127] William McCants, *'The Isis Apocalypse: the history, strategy, and doomsday vision of the Islamic State'*, New York: St Martin's Press, 2015, Chapter 4, p.8.

McCants also considers the use of MoS at the operational level, where on occasions from 2008 to 2014 Naji's book was found on terrorist plotters in Saudi Arabia, used by al Shabab in Somalia, referred to by IS fanboys as the 'first resource for mujahids' on social media and advocated by IS as a manual to be studied.[128] While McCants primarily refers to MoS within IS' insurgency context, there are also 'themes' that may be considered as part of a broader strategy. In their analysis of Naji's work, Brachman and McCants identify key themes which include provoking US intervention to drain its economy and military, establishing a caliphate with 'administrations of barbarism', the importance of popular support, the use of small attacks and the critical role of violence to effect change.[129] Although written prior to IS' emergence, these themes appear to reflect IS' activities, attacks and use of violence both within conflict zones and in relation to the group's use of terrorism in the West.

Lia's study on the doctrinal influence of leading jihadi scholars on jihadist training and indoctrination analyses the work of Abdallah Azzam, Sayid Abd al-Aziz Imam al-Sharif, Abu Musab al-Suri and Abu Bakr Naji. According to Lia, the focus on attacking the West and devising a comprehensive strategy for defeating the US and its allies through a 'know your enemy' approach is a primary aim of Naji's work.[130] Lia distinguishes Naji's contribution to jihadist strategy as its focus on the post-combat phase through a deterrent strategy that involves repeated terrorist attacks anywhere in the world. Lia however considers Naji's strategy to involve spectacular and 'dazzling' attacks against the US, offering a different interpretation than Brachman and McCants.[131]

Manne's analysis of IS situates Naji's work within the wider group of jihadist ideologues. Similar to Lia, Manne considers Naji's contribution as distinctively unique as it builds on al-Suri's research while aiming to capitalise on Western responses to 9/11 and the US invasion of Iraq by calling for 'vexation and exhaustion' operations to cause mayhem and savage chaos.[132] According to Manne, Naji adopts this approach

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[128] *Ibid*, Chapter 4, p.8.
[129] Jarret M Brachman and William F McCants', 'Stealing Al Qaeda's Playbook', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 2006, Vol.29, No.4, p.311.
[130] Brynjar Lia, 'Doctrines for Jihadi Terrorist Training', *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 2008, Vol.20, No.4, pp.518-542.
[131] *Ibid*, p.528.
[132] Robert Manne, '*The Mind of the Islamic State*', Chapter 6, p.5., Victoria: Redback Quarterly, 2016.

due to his own understanding of Western military and political strategy, based on self-interest and striking opponents when they are weak. Naji advocates the use of vexation and exhaustion operations such as the Bali bombings in 2002 to inflict extreme violence, coupled with the role of mass media as this should spread generalised fear, forcing the enemy to think twice or 'pay the price'.[133] Manne's analysis also suggests IS' approach departs from Naji's work in several ways as Naji suggests indiscriminate violence and zealotry rather than targeting for example, could prove counterproductive.

Mello however argues Naji's doctrine is not about the religious and ideological justification for violence but the strategic imperative for it.[134] In this regard, MoS provided Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi with the tactical and strategic rationale for his brutal behaviour. The use of violence is not random or meaningless[135] but rather designed to cause fear and resentment. Stern and Berger's study on IS offers a similar view by exploring the influence of Naji's work on Zarqawi and consequently providing IS' historical justification for the use of violence.[136] They argue that the influence of Naji's work could clearly be seen in the military and media strategies of AQI and the use of violence should also be seen as a central element of IS' strategy. According to Stern and Berger, MoS outlines a psychological campaign designed to provoke enemies into the same simplistic thinking that dominated jihadists thought. Therefore, rather than performing extreme displays of violence to rally support from a local audience, IS carries out such acts to polarise and provoke Western intervention.[137]

Ryan offers a comprehensive study on the writings of key AQ ideologues and strategists. In his book '*Decoding Al-Qaeda's Strategy*', Ryan argues of the need to fully understand AQ's strategic thinking to engage in the 'deep war' or war of ideas with a specific focus on Naji's MoS as a major work of jihadist strategic literature that is

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[133] *Ibid*, p.6.

[134] Brian Mello, 'The Islamic State: Violence and Ideology in a Post-colonial Revolutionary Regime', *International Political Sociology*, 2018, Vol.12, p.143.

[135] In a more recent study, former British intelligence officer Alastair Crooke argues IS' violence is not 'whimsical, crazed fanaticism, but a very deliberate, considered strategy' as laid out in the MoS. Max Quigley and Tasia Wagner, 'Unravelling ISIS's Strategy in the West', *Institute for Islamic Strategic Affairs*, Neojihadism & Transitional Challenges Programme, 16 June 2016, p.5.

[136] Jessica Stern and J.M Berger, *'ISIS: The State of Terror'*, London: Harper Collins, 2015, p.9.

[137] *Ibid,* p.9.

used as a source of guidance for Al Qaeda.[138] Ryan emphasises similar themes to other authors by drawing similarities between jihadist, non-Muslim and Western military strategists.[139] The application of 'universal laws' by strategists such as al-Qurashi, al-Murqin, al-Suri and Naji whom base their thinking on reason rather than religion is a common theme and core to Ryan's argument whereby Naji and AQ base their strategy on human reasoning that is not necessarily Islamic.[140] This aligns with this study's emphasis on distinguishing between theologists and strategists.

Unlike other studies, Ryan examines MoS to offer unique insights into the relationship between Naji's thinking and AQ's strategy by also considering operations. According to Ryan, Naji's concept of jihad based on revolutionary warfare builds on al-Qurashi's work on fourth-generation warfare, al-Murqin's military doctrine and al-Suri's decentralised operations however Naji's focus is the overarching strategy and not the operational details.[141] MoS is not intended to recruit Muslims to join the caravan of jihad but rather market AQ's approach grounded on 'solid strategy' and lessons learned. Ryan suggests MoS strategy considers Western military thought, yet also identifies a promotion of terrorist operations to draw the West to overextend and exhaust its will to fight. Given IS' politico-military strategy involves terrorism in the West, it is surprising that a similar analysis of MoS and IS' external operations is yet to be undertaken, although some consider IS' use of terrorism within a revolutionary warfare model.

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[138] Michael W.S Ryan, *Decoding Al-Qaeda's Strategy: The Deep Battle Against America*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2013, p.12.
[139] McCants, Brachman, Mannes, Mello and Stern and Berger.
[140] Ryan, 2013, Chapter 4, p.3. In Naji's words, MoS is intended to be a broad outline which is not concerned with operational details other than to guide leaders or provide examples for 'sharpening of the mind'. Abu Bakr Naji, *The Management of Savagery: The Most Critical Stage Through which the Umma Will Pass,* Translated by William McCants, 23 May, 2006.
[141] *Ibid*, Chapter 4, p.7.

Revolutionary Warfare and External Operations

Whiteside examines IS' adoption of a revolutionary warfare model, its adaption of doctrine and its execution at the operational level based on the perspective of movement veterans such as Abu Muhammad al-Adnani. In doing so, Whiteside defines the concept of revolutionary warfare beyond military aspects to include political, economic, social and psychological efforts to cripple social organisation and weaken an enemy politically and psychologically.[142] Acknowledging the relationship between revolutionary warfare and the strategies of AQ and IS that other authors such as Ryan[143] and Kalyvas[144] have examined, Whiteside's study analyses IS' transition through Mao's three phases of revolutionary warfare in Iraq and Syria. Yet Whiteside also describes the influence of Naji's Mos on IS' use of terrorism and violence, a notion interestingly disputed by IS media due to ideological differences.[145]

As for the concise but beneficial 100 page book titled Management of Savagery by an unknown author who only went by the penname Abu Bakr Naji, then when the Shaykh al Zarqawi read this book he commented, "it is as if the author knows what I'm planning". Note: Although Naji's book describes very precisely the overall strategy of the mujahidin, Naji fell into some errors in his discussions on issues related to takfir of parties who forcefully resist the Shariah and its laws.[146]

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While the passage suggests Naji had a limited understanding of the theological aspects, it also outlines the broader debate regarding IS as a religious, secular or revolutionary movement. Wood argues that despite denial of IS' religious nature, it is very Islamic. According to Wood, IS' ranks are deeply infused in religious vigour,

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[142] Craig Whiteside, 'New Masters of Revolutionary Warfare: The Islamic State Movement (2002-2016)', Perspectives on Terrorism, 2016, Vol.10, No.2.

[143] Michael W.S Ryan, *Decoding Al-Qaeda's Strategy: The Deep Battle Against America*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2013.

[144] Stathis Kalyvas, "Is ISIS a Revolutionary Group and if Yes, What are the Implications?" *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 2015, Vol.9, No.4,pp. 42-47.

[145] Whiteside, 2016.

[146] Islamic State, Dabiq: The revival of Jihad in Bengal, 2015, Vol.12, 39. http://jihadology.net/2015/11/18/new-issue-of-the-islamic-states-magazine-dabiq-12%E2%80%B3/

propaganda laced with theological discussion and a commitment to *takfiri* doctrine.[147] This view is not necessarily rejected by other scholars, although some view IS as more akin to a revolutionary movement. Kalyvas for example, argues that existing studies on IS have unsurprisingly focused on the religious dimension however framing IS as a revolutionary group may provide a different way of understanding the group. By noting IS' campaign of violence, capture of territory and ideological indoctrination of motivated cadres, Kalyvas draws parallels between IS and Marxist revolutionary groups. However, IS' engagement in conventional warfare in Iraq and Syria as its first instead of final stage differs from Marxist groups and Maoist doctrine.[148]

Payne also analyses the global jihadist movement through a revolutionary lens, with a focus on AQ's strategic use of terrorism and violence as a diversionary effort in support of territorial ambitions. In Payne's view, the global jihadist movement is a worldwide insurgency with a distinct revolutionary flavour based on Che Guevara's focoist approach, whereby the strategic use of terrorism is designed to provoke, divert and exhaust Western political and military efforts.[149] Payne considers this approach to be a common theme advocated by jihadist strategists, particularly Qurashi, al-Suri and Naji who have adapted the ideas of Communist revolutionary theorists into a war of attrition with the West. The analysis of Naji's work captures themes such as the use of terrorism to disperse and deter, an emphasis on violence, small scale attacks that do not require planning by high command and regions of savagery to be established and led by 'warriors'.[150] Apart from Payne's argument that AQ's strategy is based on focoism, the study discusses some of the existing debates regarding 'jihadist strategic studies',[151] organisational structure[152] and the objectives of AQ linked insurgencies.[153]

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[147] Graeme Wood, 'What ISIS Really Wants', The Atlantic, March 2015, https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/03/what-isis-really-wants/384980/

[148] Kalyvas, p.45.

[149] Kenneth Payne, 'Building the Base: Al Qaeda's Focoist Strategy', *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 2011, Vol.34, No.2, p.125.

[150] *Ibid*, pp.124-143.

[151] Brynjar Lia and Thomas Hegghammer, 'Jihadi Strategic Studies: The Alleged Al Qaida Policy Study Preceding the Madrid Bombings', *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 2004, Vol.27, p.356.

[152] Existing debate between Sageman and Hoffman on whether terrorist organisations without a central command can have a 'strategy'. Marc Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008.

[153] David Kilcullen, 'Counterinsurgency Redux' *Survival*, 2006, Vol.48, No.4, p.115.

Kilcullen refers to AQ as a globalised insurgency due to its ability to manipulate, mobilise and exploit many local disparate groups and twist their local grievances into a transnational agenda.[154] The global jihadist movement is therefore an aggregation of dozens of local actors into a broader movement able to function as a global entity. However, Kilcullen notes that AQ and other jihadist terrorist groups adapted to the post 9/11 security environment where disaggregated cells and radicalised individuals carried out smaller, more frequent attacks instead of centrally organised operations. As IS' activities grew in scope and ambition, it also directed or inspired terrorist attacks in the West. Rather than 'expeditionary' terrorist operations that characterised AQ-style attacks such as 9/11, IS' approach has included guerrilla terrorism, urban siege, remote radicalisation and leaderless resistance.[155] IS' use of various types of operations in the West is considered by some observers as a transition from the near enemy to the far enemy.[156]

According to Watkins, there is a strong correlation between territorial losses inflicted on IS by an international coalition and the group's increasingly global campaign of terror. In this regard, IS strategy involves diverting attention away from these losses by consolidating *wilayats* (provinces), drawing on foreign fighters and inspiring a global support base to carry out attacks in the region and the West.[157] As IS continues to lose ground in Iraq and Syria, it will transform itself from a caliphate-building entity to a terrorist organisation.[158] On this basis, IS has adopted a decentralised approach similar to AQ with a focus on the 'far enemy' however with a dual targeting strategy using a range of mediums to reach targets and audiences beyond the conflict zone.

Cronin raises issues with viewing IS as a terrorist organisation in the same way as AQ, arguing that the counterterrorism and counterinsurgency strategies that were used for

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[154] David Kilcullen, *Blood Year: The Islamic State and the Failures of the War on Terror*, London: Black Inc., 2016.
[155] *Ibid*, Chapter 11, p.9.
[156] Erin M. Saltman and Charlie Winter, 'Islamic State: The Changing Face of Modern Jihadism', *Quilliam Foundation*, November 2014, p.43.
[157] Andrew Watkins, 'Losing Territory and Lashing Out: The Islamic State and International Terror', *CTC Sentinel*, March 2017, p.16.
Note: Military pressure and the loss of strongholds in Somalia and Nigeria led al-Shabab and Boko Haram respectively to expand operations into neighboring countries.
[158] Rohan Gunaratna, 'Global threat Forecast' Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, *Journal of the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research,* January 2017, Vol.9, No.1, p.2.

AQ will not work against IS. According to Cronin, IS uses terrorist tactics but it is not simply a terrorist organisation and Western efforts to delegitimise the group by publicising its violent excesses and attacks on Muslims will only augment its aura of strength and potentially assist in recruitment as IS' core message is brutal violence and savagery and this draws followers seeking adventure not necessarily religious righteousness.[159] If IS hovers between being a terrorist organisation that runs a state and being a state that sponsors terrorism as Barrett suggests,[160] it might be prudent to consider a revolutionary warfare model whereby IS traverses through strategic phases that include external operations in the West rather than see IS' use of terror abroad as a new element in its strategy.

According to Hoffman, IS built an independent external operations capability that remained relatively unnoticed, and despite territorial losses IS will continue to pose an international terrorist threat.[161] As IS' spokesman and director of external operations, Abu Muhammad al-Adnani was seen as instrumental to IS' revolutionary propaganda campaign drawing in recruits and inspiring attacks in the West but also overseeing and planning attacks outside the region. Like Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) propagandist Anwar Awlaki who gained notoriety by calling for 'lone wolf' attacks, al-Adnani sought to extend his group's reach.[162] This reach, defined by IS' global expansion and propaganda efforts is considered critical to IS' success.

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[159] Audrey Kurth Cronin, 'ISIS is not a Terrorist Group: Why Counterterrorism Won't Stop the Latest Jihadist Threat', *Foreign Affairs,* March/April 2015, 87–98.

[160] Richard Barrett, 'The Islamic State Goes Global', *CTC Sentinel*, November 2015, Vol.8, No.11, p.1.

[161] Bruce Hoffman, 'The Global Terror Threat and Counterterrorism Challenges Facing the Next Administration', *CTC Sentinel*, November/December 2016, Vol.9, No.11, p.1.

[162] Dan de Luce, Elias Groll and John Hudson, 'Going After the ISIS Propaganda Mastermind' *Foreign Policy*, August 2016. https://foreignpolicy.com/2016/08/31/going-after-the-isis-propaganda-mastermind/

Analysis of Jihadist material

This section focuses on studies that consider jihadist materials, use of propaganda, strategic communications and information warfare within the discourse of AQ and IS strategy and terrorism studies. The growing field examines IS' arguably effective use of media and propaganda and strategic communications to incite, inspire, motivate, recruit and ultimately present itself as a 'winner' within the global jihadist movement.

Gartenstein-Ross et.al argue that IS' propaganda apparatus is one of the group's most effective tools advocating its brand, worldview and organisational strategy while marketing IS as a 'winner'. IS messaging and externally-oriented propaganda advances narratives around its military strength, battlefield gains and organisational successes where the group's use of violence and terrorist attacks in the West cultivate a perception of superiority, legitimacy and global reach while undermining AQ's religious credibility and operational capability.[163] Indeed, it is this messaging and propaganda material that some authors suggest is indicative of IS' strategy.

In his analysis of the 2015 Paris attacks for example, Brisard notes that all the warning signs for IS as a global threat were evident in the group's ideology, repeated statements and threats of attacks in the West.[164] Given the importance of IS' propaganda and its potential relationship with IS doctrine and strategy, it is necessary to consider the literature on IS' strategic communications and information operations (IO) of which some studies have undertaken thematic analyses. This will further inform the focus of this thesis as IS' use of strategic communications, including its English-language propaganda is seen by some authors to represent the group's strategy.

Phillips for example argues IS should be understood as a new form of insurgency that pivots around strategic communications, blending Maoist and post-Maoist warfare.[165]

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[163] David Gartenstein-Ross, Nathanial Barr and Bridget Moreng, 'Islamic State's Global Propaganda Strategy' *International Centre for Counter-Terrorism – The Hague*, Research Paper, March 2016, p.18.
[164] Jean-Charles Brisard, 'The Paris Attacks and the Evolving Islamic State Threat to France', *CTC Sentinel*, November 2015, Vol.8, No.11, p.6.
[165] Vaughan Phillips, 'The Islamic State's Strategy: Bureaucratizing the Apocalypse through Strategic Communications', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 2017, Vol.40, No.9, pp.731-757.

IS' propaganda is considered to be critical to its global outreach strategy to draw recruits and supporters to its cause, laying out the religious underpinnings of the Caliphate while also providing a rich source of information about the group's 'grand strategy'. In his analysis of IS' *Dabiq* magazine, Gambhir claims that the publication aims to communicate to both enemies and potential supporters in the Western world. In contrast to AQ's *Inspire*, which focuses on encouraging lone-wolf attacks in the West and providing instructions on attacks, Gambhir notes *Dabiq* articulates IS' vision for the Caliphate framed in religious justifications and an apocalyptic context implemented by extreme violence as outlined in Naji's MoS.[166] The emphasis is on encouraging *hijrah* or travelling to conflict rather than carrying out attacks in the West.[167] However, there are potential limitations to this approach as IS' propaganda materials have proven to change over time and in some regards become more similar to *Inspire*.[168]

According to Ingram, the research field has been flooded with studies on IS' propaganda.[169] Ingram discusses the multifaceted nature of IS' propaganda campaign which is designed to amplify the impact of its actions and credibility as a politico-military actor while undermining the credibility of its opponents. The appeal of *Dabiq* and other jihadist media sources for recruitment has been somewhat of a focus due to the potential to shape perceptions and gather support.[170] As IS uses multiple media platforms to convey its messages to local, regional and global audiences and is able to quickly issue statements much like current news, IS often synchronises its narrative with actions.[171] Indeed much of the analytical trends from studies on IS' propaganda and IO initially focused on violence[172] and although some within the context of IS'

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[166] Harleen K. Gambhir, 'Dabiq: The Strategic Messaging of the Islamic State', *Institute of the Study of War,* Backgrounder, August 15, 2014, pp.1-12.
[167] *Ibid.*
[168] Al Qaeda's *Inspire* and IS' *Rumiyah* both have instructional sections.
[169] For example: Stern and Berger 2015, D Milton 2016, D Mahlouly and C Winter 2018. Haroro J. Ingram, 'The Use of Narratives by Terrorists and How to Prevent Their Resonance: Hedging, Legacy-Nostalgia and Its Counterstrategy Implications', *Combatting Violent Extremism and Terrorism in Asia and Europe*, August 2018, p.68.
[170] Haroro J. Ingram, 'An Analysis of Islamic State's *Dabiq* magazine', *Australian Journal of Political Science*, June 2016, pp.1-20
[171] Haroro J. Ingram, 'Three Traits of the Islamic State's Information Warfare', *The RUSI Journal*, 2014, Vol.159, No.6, pp.4-11.
[172] Haroro J. Ingram, 'The Strategic logic of Islamic State information operations', *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 2015, Vol.69, No.6, 729-752.

broader politico-military efforts,[173] Ingram considers these elements as part of a larger campaign. Yet there have also been some studies that have considered themes in both AQ and IS propaganda materials and how these may have changed over time.

In a thematic analysis of IS' *Dabiq* magazine, Droogan and Peattie identify some of the confusion as to whether *Dabiq* represents a direct and honest insight into the strategic aims of IS leadership as Gambhir suggests or as one element of IS' larger IO and propaganda campaign.[174] Droogan and Peattie find a number of variations in *Dabiq's* narrative based on themes, shifting focus from 'Building the Caliphate', to anti-Western themes and in later issues a strong focus on out-group enemies.[175] The shifting nature of themes across *Dabiq* presents challenges for identifying a coherent strategy although it may suggest something of IS' adaptive capacity. In a subsequent study, Droogan and Peattie undertake a thematic analysis of Al Qaeda's *Inspire* magazine.

This study follows the origin and purpose of the publication itself which, crafted by Samir Khan and Anwar al-Awlaki was primarily understood as a Western-centric instrument of jihadi discourse.[176] In this regard, the authors outline the widely-held view that the publication aimed at inspiring self-starters to carry out attacks in the West and providing them with instructions to do so. However, the study focuses on undertaking a more in-depth analysis of *Inspire's* content beyond the instructional material within the 'Open Source Jihad' section. Analysing basic, organising and global themes across 14 issues of *Inspire*, Droogan and Peattie identify a consistent global theme where Islam is engaged in a protracted war and four broader anti-Western themes. Of relevance to this study, is the finding that *Inspire* focused on events of the moment rather than a strategy over time.[177]

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[173] Muhammad al-Ubaydi, Nelly Lahoud, Daniel Milton and Bryan Price, 'The Group That Calls Itself a State: Understanding the Evolution and Challenges of the Islamic State', *Combatting Terrorism Center at West Point*, December 2014, p.46.

[174] Julian Droogan and Shane Peattie, 'Mapping the thematic landscape of *Dabiq* magazine', *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 2017, Vol.71, No.6, p.592. See also Ingram, 2016.

[175] Droogan and Peattie, 2017, p.618.

[176] Julian Droogan and Shane Peattie, 'Reading jihad: Mapping the shifting themes of *Inspire* magazine', *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 2018, Vol.30, No.4, p.685.

[177] *Ibid*, p,709.

Research Focus and Significance

Existing studies have examined the role of jihadist ideologues both as theologists and strategists and the aim and influence of their documents. In several studies, MoS has been described as a strategic manual,[178] a guideline[179] and a blueprint for Salafi-jihadists and the strategy of IS.[180] These studies consider the influence and underlying themes in MoS to be consistent with IS' politico-military strategy in Iraq and Syria as well as IS' use of terrorism and propaganda as part of a revolutionary warfare model.[181] While some studies explain a recent shift in IS' strategy from the near enemy to the far enemy as a reaction to Western intervention in Iraq and Syria,[182] others suggest IS traverses through various phases of a politico-military strategy involving operations in conflict zones, weak and failing states as well as the West.[183]

In reviewing studies that have analysed AQ and IS' use of propaganda, it was determined that an analysis of IS' IO and propaganda campaign is beyond the scope of this study and would require a separate research project. Complexities due to the vast array of themes within IS' issues of the *Dabiq* publication and the shifting nature of these themes may present challenges in formulating a foundation for strategy and mapping such a strategy to actual terrorist attacks. The review did however identify the limited attention given to examining correlations between MoS as a 'strategic manual' and conditions on the ground, namely IS' use of terrorism in the West.

This project therefore seeks bridge the gap in this literature by focusing on the relationship between themes identified in MoS and terrorist attacks in the West claimed or attributed to IS to determine how such jihadist manuals might influence the group's

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[178] Ryan, 2015, p.15

[179] William McCants, *'The Isis Apocalypse: the history, strategy, and doomsday vision of the Islamic State'*, New York: St Martin's Press, 2015, Chapter 4, p.8.

[180] Robert Manne, '*The Mind of the Islamic State*', Chapter 6, p.5., Victoria: Redback Quarterly, 2016.

[181] Michael W.S. Ryan, *Decoding Al Qaeda's Strategy: The Deep Battle Against America,* Chapter 4, New York: Columbia University Press, 2013.

[182] Fawaz A. Gerges, *ISIS: A History*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016.

[183] Haroro Ingram, 'The War on Islamic State After Paris: a Strategy Remaining and Expanding', *Australian Institute of International Affairs,* Australian Outlook, Analysis, 19 November 2015.
http://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australianoutlook/the-war-on-islamic-state-after-paris-a-strategy-remainingand-expanding/

strategy, and in what way.[184] The project's significance is to contribute to the literature by situating strategic manuals within discourse and analysis of IS, which have usually focused on 'Salafi-jihadist' religious elements and employing a different method to draw themes from MoS and offer unique insights regarding the potential influence of jihadist strategists and strategic manuals on IS' external operations.[185]

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

This chapter explored the existing literature on the influence of MoS on IS' external operations strategy and in doing so, identified a gap within the current literature to inform the focus of this project and the study's contribution to the field. The chapter considered three areas of research of relevance to the aims of this project.

The first section examined research on jihadist ideologues and the influence of their work on the strategy of jihadist terrorist groups to find that of the relatively small number of studies on jihadist strategists, MoS is widely considered as a 'strategic blueprint' for IS strategy. In the second section, studies that considered IS within a revolutionary warfare model were reviewed to distinguish this project's specific focus on IS' use of terrorism as part of an overarching strategy. This was followed by a review of analytical studies on jihadist material, which is of central relevance to the research approach taken for this study. As the literature review informed the research focus and the project's contribution, this was outlined in the final section of this chapter. The following chapter will explain the research methodology to be used for this study, offering a combined qualitative and quantitative approach to extract and analyse data.

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[184] IS' external operations strategy is defined in the conceptual framework in Chapter 1. This strategy is characterised by the group's use of terrorism in the West.

[185] Adamsky acknowledges a gap in the literature that integrates strategy, means and methods across all spheres and levels of waging war. Dima Adamsky, '*Jihadi* Operational Art: The Coming Wave of *Jihadi* Strategic Studies', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 2009, Vol.33, No.1, pp.1-19.

Chapter Three: Method and Approach

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the research methods and approach used for this thesis. Acknowledging the limitations of an analysis of primary documents alone, this study seeks to undertake a *ground-truth* test by comparing MoS as a written strategy with IS terrorist operations.[186] The first two sections of this chapter describe and justify the selected approach, research methods and data sources. This is followed by the qualitative and quantitative methods that will be employed to collate and analyse data in subsequent chapters, which is conducted in three stages. First, a thematic network analysis of MoS is undertaken to identify themes that reflect strategy. Second, broad trends in IS terrorist operations will be drawn from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) Third, a comparison of MoS themes against IS operations is undertaken to produce the key findings. Following this outline, the chapter concludes with the limitations and mitigations of the selected research methods and approach.

Selection and Approach

Understanding the influence of jihadist ideologues and their 'strategic manuals' on IS' external operations strategy is a central aim of this research. MoS was selected due to its stated significance in the existing literature[187] yet the limited empirical evidence regarding the documents' influence on IS strategy and operations suggests the document is deserving of greater analytical attention.[188] Although Naji's document is also referred to in other studies as *The Administration of Savagery*[189] this study refers to the document as MoS and is based on William McCants' 2006 English translation of the text due to its readability in English and availability on Aaron Zelin's *Jihadology* website. McCant's translated version of MoS has also been used in most of the existing

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[186] Michael W.S. Ryan, *Decoding Al Qaeda's Strategy: The Deep Battle Against America,* Chapter 4, New York: Columbia University Press, 2013, p.23.

[187] According to Ryan, Al Qaeda and IS are influenced by two major jihadist authors being Abu Musab al-Suri and Abu Bakr Naji. Michael W.S. Ryan, 'ISIS: The Terrorist Group That Would be a State', *United States Naval War College, Center on Irregular Warfare and Armed Groups*, 2015, Case Study, p.15.

[188] Lia's study on al-Suri is considered to be required reading for anyone in the terrorism and counter-terrorism field. Naji's work in contrast has received less attention, even though MoS is viewed as an important strategic manual that both Al Qaeda and IS use to give recruits a broad overview of the strategy to create the modern Islamic emirates that will replace existing governments.

[189] Michael W.S. Ryan, *Decoding Al Qaeda's Strategy: The Deep Battle Against America*, Chapter 4, New York: Columbia University Press, 2013, p.163.

studies relevant to this research. Due to the objects under investigation,[190] data is collected concurrently and analysed through a processual research design employing a mixed methods approach. The reason for this approach is that two different types of data are compared with the results later integrated to explore correlations or instances of convergence, divergence, contradiction, explanation or a combination of them.[191]

Data Collection

Qualitative data from MoS and quantitative data from the GTD will be collected concurrently to form two independent databases. As neither data set is dependent on the other, each database will also be analysed separately and presented as independent data sets in the Results sections of Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 respectively. As the statistical data is translated into broad trends, the results are merged into a table presenting the key findings in Chapter 6. Data will be drawn from MoS using a thematic network analysis as this is considered one of the most useful methods for capturing the complexities of meaning within a text,[192] and is a relevant and appropriate approach for this study. While various data sets for terrorist activity exist to construct a database,[193] GTD is used as the sole statistical terrorist attack data set for the purpose of this study. Apart from being one of the more comprehensive data sets used for reports such as the *Global Terrorism Index,* it provides the most extensive open-source database on terrorism.[194] Acknowledging data limitations in other terrorism incident databases,[195] GTD was selected as its incident data coverage aligned with the scope and requirements of this study, which focuses on IS-related terrorist plots and attacks in the West between 2014 and 2018.[196]

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[190] MoS as a textual document and IS external operations strategy as explained through actual terrorist attacks.
[191] Greg Guest, Kathleen M MacQueen and Emily E Namey, *Applied Thematic Analysis,* Chapter 8: Integrating Qualitative and Quantitative Data, California: Sage Publications, 2012, p.23.
[192] Greg Guest, Kathleen M MacQueen and Emily E Namey, *Applied Thematic Analysis,* Chapter 1: Introduction to Applied Thematic Analysis, California: Sage Publications, 2012, p.10.
[193] Global Terrorism Index Report (2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018), *Institute For Economics and Peace* and European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report, (TE-SAT) *Europol*, (2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018).
[194] Gary LaFree, Laura Dugan and Erin Miller, *Putting Terrorism in Context: Lessons from the global terrorism database,* (1st Edition), New York: Routledge, 2015.
[195] For example, International Terrorism: Attributes of Terrorist Events (ITERATE), RAND Database of Worldwide Terrorism Incidents (RDWTI)
[196] Noting GTD recently synthesised data sets collected over separate timeframes, the scope of this study avoids issues of data consistency.

Qualitative Methods

This thesis uses a 'thematic network analysis'[197] method based on Attride-Stirling's six step process (Figure 1) to identify MoS themes within the text using a coding framework[198] and organise a thematic analysis of the text.[199] The objective of such an analysis is to identify themes and patterns, interpret data and make sense of it.[200] While relatively novel in this field, existing research on jihadist terrorist material has identified the value of this method. In their study of *Inspire,* Droogan and Peattie suggest a thematic network analysis method is applicable to all forms of textual terrorist literature across all periods of time.[201] This method is also a logical approach to analysing MoS.

The coding framework is used to analyse and dissect textual data from MoS and provide clarity around the empirical claims of this thesis. Therefore, it uses specific pre-established criteria related to this research including 'strategic guidance', 'revolutionary warfare', 'politico-military strategy' 'external operations', 'far enemy', 'violence', 'propaganda' and 'operations.'[202] MoS 'themes'[203] are drawn from repetitive topics, metaphors and analogies[204] within six selected studies to establish an initial list of *a priori codes.*[205] This initial coding process[206] assists in identifying themes and informing the scope of the analysis while considering themes which are not of direct relevance to this study.[207] These codes are used to develop a codebook that is subject to further refinement, forming the foundation of the thematic network analysis (as per Figure 1).

[197] Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, 'Teaching thematic analysis" Overcoming challenges and developing strategies for effective learning', *The Psychologist*, 2013, Vol.26, No.2, p.120.

[198] Jennifer Attride-Stirling, 'Thematic networks: an analytical tool for qualitative research', *Qualitative Research,* 2001, Vol.1, No.3, pp. 385-405. Refer to Figure 1 for Attride-Stirling's six-step process.

[199] Attride-Stirling, 2001, p.391.

[200] Moira Maguire and Brid Delahunt, 'Doing a Thematic Analysis: A Practical, Step-by-Step Guide for Learning and Teaching Scholars', *AISHE*, 2017, Vol.3.

[201] Julian Droogan and Shane Peattie, 'Reading jihad: Mapping the shifting themes of *Inspire* magazine', *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol.30, No.4, 2018, p.715.

[202] Developing a preliminary codebook based on pre-established criteria is useful to test a distinct theory. John W Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches (4th ed.),* California: Sage Publications, 2014.

[203] Ryan and Bernard define themes as 'abstract constructs that link not only expressions found in texts but also expressions found in images, sounds and objects.' G. W. Ryan and H. R. Bernard, 'Techniques to Identify Themes', *Field Methods*, 2003, Vol.15, No.1, p.88.

[204] Greg Guest, Kathleen M MacQueen and Emily E Namey, *Applied Thematic Analysis,* Chapter 3: Themes and Codes, California: Sage Publications, 2012

[205] Guest et al., Chapter 1, 2012.

[206] First cycle codes drawn from the literature are then transformed into an array of themes.

[207] Lorelli S Nowell, Jim M Norris, Deborah E White and Nancy J Moules, 'Thematic Analysis: Striving to Meet the Trustworthiness Criteria', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods'* 2017, Vol.16, p.8.

Figure 1: Attride-Stirling's steps in thematic network analysis

ANALYSIS STAGE A: REDUCTION OR BREAKDOWN OF TEXT

Step 1. Code Material
>   (a) Devise a coding framework
>   (b) Dissect text into text segments using the coding framework

Step 2. Identify Themes
>   (a) Abstract themes from coded text segments
>   (b) Refine themes

Step 3. Construct Thematic Networks
>   (a) Arrange themes
>   (b) Select Basic Themes
>   (c) Rearrange into Organizing Themes
>   (d) Deduce Global Theme(s)
>   (e) Illustrate as thematic network(s)
>   (f) Verify and refine the network(s)

ANALYSIS STAGE B: EXPLORATION OF TEXT

Step 4. Describe and Explore Thematic Networks
>   (a) Describe the network
>   (b) Explore the network

Step 5. Summarize Thematic Networks

ANALYSIS STAGE C: INTEGRATION OF EXPLORATION

Step 6. Interpret Patterns

In order to code qualitative data more efficiently and organise themes, *Nvivo 12* is used to capture sentences, quotes, key words and their frequency across the six studies. Determining and coding a 'theme' is not solely based on its prevalence within the text but rather its importance in relation to this study and as such, is a deductive approach.[208] Issues around coherence and consistency are therefore addressed by ensuring that the approach and method taken fits with this study's empirical claims.[209] Table 1 summarises prevalent themes from these studies and provides a description of these themes with terms repetitively referred to in the context of the theme.[210]

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[208] Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, 'Using thematic analysis in psychology', *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 2006, Vol.3, No.2, pp.77-101.
[209] Immy Holloway and Les Todres, 'The status of method: flexibility, consistency and coherence', *Qualitative Research*, 2003, Vol.3, No.3, p.352.
[210] The descriptions are drawn from the literature, which directly cites MoS and uses Naji's terminology.

Table 1: MoS themes drawn from the literature

Theme	Description
Anti-Western / Far enemy	Attacks in the West are justified based on 'just war' against unbelievers. Global Jihad Strategy against unbelievers is the best way to return Islam to its former glory as America is a 'paper tiger'
Apostates / Near enemy	Attack local sensitive targets to draw in local security forces and create vacuums in remote regions and cities
Battlefield victories	Once American soldiers were killed by mujahidin on the battlefield, their presumed invincibility would fade
Caliphate	Administrations of barbarism can network and move toward a Caliphate. Welcome a jihadi cadre to manage basic necessities.
Commitment to fight	Required pain, suffering and death. Not a task for the faint at heart. Those with intention but are soft should not be involved
Criticism of clerics	Criticism of fellow Salafis who refuse to engage in jihad and focus their energy on proselytising
Exhaustion	Consequences of imperial overreach if America expands military and economic power leading to its downfall
Fourth-Generation Warfare	War of the flea (asymmetric) waged on every possible front, including psychologically, militarily, financially, and in the media
'Know your Enemy'	Understand Western strategies, military principles, political theory, sociology and management
Lessons Learned	Past jihadi failures and weaknesses in the Jihadi movement. Need to capitalise on unique opportunities from 9/11 and invasion of Iraq
Media and Propaganda	Central role of propaganda and manipulation of the media for jihad. Important to goad the Americans to engage Muslim communities directly in battle so AQ can use in the media battle
'Paying the Price'	Retribution and vengeance for enemy actions. Revenge against groups perhaps thousands of miles away on another continent.
Polarisation	Deliberately produced chaos from internal divisions, sectarianism and factionalism. Civil war within Islam and Muslim communities in the West. Strategy underpins ISIS' vision for strategic fluidity
Popular support	Need to avoid Muslim casualties; if local civilian Muslims are killed in terrorist attacks, the repercussions for AQ are very serious
Provocation	Force America to abandon its proxies and attack Muslims directly. Weaken American effectiveness by multiplying operational theaters
Revolutionary Warfare	3 strategic phases. 1. Attrition (strategic defense) 2. Relative strategic equilibrium (policy of 1,000 cuts) 3. Military decision (final attack)
Takfir	Need for a civil war within Islam. Vicious campaign not only against the West but against Shia populations claimed to be non-Muslims
Vexation strikes	Small scale attacks to disperse the enemy's efforts and alliances
Violence	Use of violence, killing and fighting as the most blessed act of worship, savagery and barbarism. All states 'are established after oceans of blood'. 'Slaughter is Mercy'

Thematic Network Analysis

Following the initial coding process for the six studies, *Nvivo 12* is again used to capture sentences, quotes, key words and their frequency within the MoS document to find common statements or ideas that appear repeatedly as they relate to this study and the pre-established criteria. This aims to address the existing gap in the literature by identifying themes in MoS through a different lens due to the study's focus on 'far enemy' strategy and external operations rather than on the near enemy, sectarian divisions, military operations and state-building efforts in conflict zones, which appear to be common themes across existing studies. The second coding framework is therefore based on both the theoretical interest guiding this research and the salient issues that arise in the MoS text itself.[211] Acknowledging the limitations of theoretical coding frameworks, an inductive 'grounded theory' approach is applied to draw additional codes from MoS that may not be listed in either coding frameworks.[212]

Grounded theory is used for this study to identify unanticipated terms, concepts and themes within the MoS text based on drawing such themes as they emerge from the text itself. As a systematic and iterative process, this minimises preconceived ideas about the research problem and remains open to varied explanations and understandings of the data.[213] While the intensity of this analytical approach is arguably difficult to implement with extensive textual data,[214] an analysis of MoS to identify additional emerging themes from this single text is within the scope of this study. Ryan and Bernard's approach of reading the text verbatim, identifying themes, comparing and contrasting these themes, identifying structure among them and building theoretical models grounded in the data through ongoing comparison is used to simplify this process.[215]

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[211] Attride-Stirling, 2001, p.390.

[212] Charmaz describes grounded theory as a set of methods that 'consist of systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analysing qualitative data to construct theories 'grounded' in the data themselves'. Kathy Charmaz, *Grounded Theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis,* California: Sage Publications, 2006.

[213] Kathy Charmaz, Grounded Theory as an Emergent Method in S.N Hesse-Biber & P.Levy (Eds), *Handbook of Emergent Methods*, Chapter 7, pp.55-172, New York: The Guildford Press, 2008.

[214] Greg Guest, Kathleen M MacQueen and Emily E Namey, *Applied Thematic Analysis,* Chapter 2: Planning and Preparing the Analysis, California: Sage Publications, 2012, pp.21-48.

[215] G. W. Ryan and H. R. Bernard, 'Text analysis: Qualitative and quantitative methods', in H.R Bernard (Ed.), *Handbook of methods in cultural anthropology*, California: Alta Mira Press, 1998, pp.595-645.

Following the first step of Attride-Stirling's thematic analysis process (Figure 1), a total of 90 codes were identified using the coding frameworks and grounded theory. The complete list of these codes are at Appendix A however given that several codes either overlapped or were considered relevant to a particular theme, these are consolidated into a single codebook at Appendix B. This codebook comprises codes that were dissected into coded text segments based on boundaries to ensure codes are not interchangeable or redundant before being presented as an array of abstract themes. In accordance with the second step of Attride-Stirling's analytical process, these themes are further refined to reduce repetitiveness, encapsulate a set of ideas in numerous text segments and make the data more manageable.[216] Themes are then arranged into similar groups and categorised as one of three classes:[217]

☐ *Basic Theme:* This is the most basic or low-order theme that is derived from the textual data, that needs to be read within the context of another Basic Theme to make sense. Basic Themes combined represent Organising Themes.

☐ *Organising Theme:* This is a middle-order theme that organises Basic Themes into clusters of similar issues. Apart from sumarising the ideas from Basic Themes, they dissect the main assumptions of a broader theme and grouped together, constitute a Global Theme.

☐ *Global Theme:* Super-ordinate themes that encompass the principal metaphors in the data as a whole. Global Themes group Organising Themes together to present an argument, summarise main themes and provide a revealing interpretation of the text. Each Global Theme is the core of a thematic network.

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[216] Attride-Stirling, 2001, p.392.
[217] The three classes or levels are drawn from Attride-Stirling's definitions. Figure 2 provides an example of themes arranged into a Thematic Network.

Figure 2: Generic Thematic Network – example

The Basic Themes, Organising Themes and Global Themes extracted from MoS are transitioned from text and illustrated as a non-hierarchical web-like (thematic) network in Chapter 4. Figure 2 is a generic example of a thematic network with the three classes of themes arranged into the web-like visualisation explained. Following the establishment of this network, a verification process is conducted where the relevant text segments of MoS are again reviewed to ensure the network reflects the data and is refined as necessary. Noting that each Global Theme produces a network, these are individually described and explored for underlying patterns as part of the analysis. The main themes, concepts and patterns that emerge from the MoS text following this process are presented in the Results section of Chapter 4 and interpreted in relation to this study's focus on IS' external operations strategy in Western countries.

Quantitative Methods

This thesis draws on statistical data from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD), which includes information on both domestic and international terrorist events around the world from 1970 through to 2017. As GTD covers the focus timeframe of this study and includes data on the incident locations, attacks, targets, casualties and where possible the group or individual responsible, it meets the scope and methodological approach of this research. While GTD information is drawn entirely from publicly available open-sources, it is important to acknowledge that the pool of 400,000 articles per month, including English-language translations of sources from over 160 countries in over 80 languages are assessed for validity and quality. In order for an event to be recorded in GTD, it must be documented by at least one high-quality source.[218]

Events that are only documented by distinctively biased or unreliable sources are not included in the GTD, however the GTD does include certain information from potentially biased sources.[219] As such, each attack included in the statistical analysis for this project has been individually analysed and subject to further cross-referencing with various academic and media sources to address potential biases and associated limitations regarding verification.[220] Apart from the GTD's consolidated data set of attacks, the requirement for a single definition of terrorism is essential. As the validity of data and the consistency of terminology and inclusion criteria are critically important, the following section details the project definition and scope, including the types of statistics used, how they are analysed and then mapped against MoS themes.

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[218] High-quality sources are those that are independent, free of influence from the government, political perpetrators, or corporations, those that routinely report externally verifiable content, and those that are primary rather than secondary. Global Terrorism Database (GTD) Codebook: Inclusion Criteria and Variables, *National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START)*, University of Maryland, 2018, p.9.

[219] *Ibid.*

[220] Global Terrorism Database (GTD), *National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START)*, University of Maryland, 2009-2018. https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/

Project Definitions and Scope

This section defines the GTD search criteria and scope of the statistical analysis that will be used to identify IS' broad operational trends in Chapter 5. The conceptual framework provided an understanding of revolutionary warfare beyond the military aspects by discussing the political, social and psychological factors yet the literature review found that IS' strategy and operations in the West is also understood as a reactionary measure to divert attention away from military and territorial losses in Iraq and Syria.[221] While recent studies suggest that IS has become less concerned with territorial control and has embarked on a long war of attrition, with a continuation of attacks in the West to maintain a facade of an unceasing campaign as well as retribution for Western operations against the group,[222] drawing data from plots and attacks may uncover underlying patterns relative to an overarching strategy.

The scope of the study is focused on plots and attacks in the West between January 2014 to January 2018 as this aligns with the research aims. 2014 is the starting point due to the prominence of IS in this year,[223] and what appears to be the beginning of IS' external operations strategy against the West with declared intentions by al-Adnani and a substantial increase in IS-inspired plots in the West. Although there have continued to be IS-related attacks in the West in 2018 and 2019, January 2018 is the terminal date as this timeframe meets the scope and aim of this study. The GTD comprises numerous variables, however as this project compares MoS strategy with IS' *broad* operational trends, only relevant variables are collated and analysed.

GTD search queries are based on definitions of 'terrorism' and the 'West' from the conceptual framework in Chapter 1, with the following additional definitions, variables, criteria and GTD search parameters included in the scope:

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[221] Andrew Watkins, 'Losing Territory and Lashing Out: The Islamic State and International Terror', *CTC Sentinel*, March 2017, p.16.
[222] Michael Munoz, 'Selling the Long War: Islamic State Propaganda after the Caliphate', *CTC Sentinel*, November 2018, p.31.
[223] Daniel Byman and Jeremy Shapiro, 'Homeward Bound? Don't Hype the Threat of Returning Jihadists', *Brookings Institute,* September 30, 2014.

☐ 'Terrorist plots' broadly encompass failed, planned, prepared and executed terrorist attacks.[224] However, as this project uses the GTD, plots or conspiracies that are not enacted or at least attempted are not included as these have not moved beyond planning and reconnaissance. Plots and attacks that were attempted but ultimately unsuccessful are included.[225]

☐ Incidents occurring in both the same geographic and temporal point are captured in the GTD as a 'single incident' whereas if either the time of occurrence of the incidents or their locations are discontinuous, the events are regarded as 'separate incidents'.[226]

☐ Operations refer to either a 'single incident' or a series of 'separate incidents' that are related or in some cases coordinated sequentially or simultaneously. GTD incident summaries are used to determine the relationship between incidents and where one exists, these incidents are grouped as an operation.[227] The scale of an operation is based on the number of perpetrators, target locations and casualties as these provide an indicator of planning and logistics.

☐ Success of a terrorist strike is defined according to the tangible effects of the attack rather than the larger goals of the perpetrators. While the definition of a successful attack depends on the type of attack, if the attack was 'executed' as intended, it is counted as a success.

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[224] Marc Sageman, 'Confronting al-Qaeda: Understanding the Threat in Afghanistan', *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 2009, Vol.3, No.4, p.9.
[225] For example, if a bomb is planted but fails to detonate or if an arsonist is intercepted by authorities before igniting a fire, the plot or attack is included in the analysis. GTD Codebook, 2018, p.11.
[226] GTD Codebook, 2018, p.11.
[227] For example, 9/11 is listed in the GTD as four separate incidents as they occurred at different locations however, GTD incident and attack summaries suggest the attacks were all related. Similarly, the 13 November 2015 Paris attacks are listed as eight separate incidents, however the summaries refer to these are referred to as a series of coordinated attacks. In these cases, the incidents are grouped as a single operation for analysis.

Incident Information

The incident date and location are recorded and grouped according to the *year* and *country* in which the incident or operation occurred. Apart from the year and country, incidents are identified and distinguished from one another by a short 'operation' name or description based on the GTD' incident summaries, which include reference to the city, type of attack, perpetrator and target.[228] Incident information is analysed to discover patterns in the nature and distribution of jihadist terrorist attacks in the West and trends over time, particularly the geographic 'breadth' and 'frequency' of attacks.

Perpetrator Information

Information on perpetrators includes the name of the group that carried out the attack, the number of perpetrators involved as well as details about any claims of responsibility for the attack. The GTD database uses a standardised list of group names to ensure consistency in the usage of group names. In the event that the name of a formal perpetrator group or organisation is not reported, relevant information about the generic identity of the perpetrator(s) is used for the perpetrator or group.[229] Given jihadist terrorist attacks have involved 'home-grown jihadists' or 'inspired' individuals, IS propaganda has incited 'lone wolf' attacks and MoS alludes to their mobilisation to violence, these perpetrators are also considered in the analysis even though they may not necessarily be affiliated or connected to IS or another terrorist group.[230]

Search parameters are used to align incident and perpetrator data with this project's focus while ensuring attacks by inspired individuals are also analysed. It is acknowledged that individual perpetrators may pledge allegiance to IS, AQ or another terrorist group and in these cases, claims of responsibility by the group are also considered. As such, an initial search and analysis of the GTD attack data was

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[228] For example, there were numerous attacks in France in 2015 however descriptors such as 'Charlie Hebdo' attack, France 2015 identifies the operation and distinguishes it from other attacks in France in that year.

[229] These generic identifiers do not characterise the behavior of an entire population or ideological movement, however for many attacks, generic identifiers are the only information available about the perpetrators. GTD Codebook, 2018, p.43.

[230] IS related plots therefore include those which were inspired and 'claimed' by the group as well as those listing IS as the perpetrator. The study does not distinguish between domestic or transnational attacks, noting that homegrown-jihadists, foreign fighter returnees and non-Western citizens have been involved in plots during the timeframe being analysed and in some cases, issues around perpetrator identity and citizenship might be difficult to confirm.

conducted to identify perpetrators, including those inspired by IS or whom pledged allegiance to the group. The following search criteria for 'perpetrator groups' is used to collect incident and attack data of relevance to the scope of this project:

- ☐ Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)[231]

- ☐ Al-Qaeda (AQ)[232]

- ☐ Jihadist-inspired extremists[233]

- ☐ Muslim extremists[234]

Perpetrator numbers analysed in conjunction with attack information, attack type, fatalities and the number of attack locations is used as an indicator of the 'scale' of a terrorist operation. Claims of responsibility by IS or other jihadist terrorist groups are analysed due to the MoS theme 'media and propaganda' identified by other authors and listed in Table 1. In cases where IS has claimed responsibility for an attack where a link with the perpetrator cannot be established, the claim is considered to form part of IS' IO campaign.

Target Information

This variable consists of 22 categories listed and described at Appendix C: GTD Coding. Target information is focused on the general type of target or victim[235] such as 'government', 'police', 'military', 'private citizens' or 'property' rather than specific target sub-categories such as 'politician', 'police checkpoint' or 'marketplace'. Information relating to target selection is analysed to identify trends and compare these with relevant MoS themes in Chapter 5.

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[231] ISIL is the perpetrator group name used in GTD and is the same group as IS.
[232] This includes affiliates Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) as both are listed as having carried out at least one terrorist plot or attack in the West post 9/11.
[233] Generic perpetrator group identifier of relevance.
[234] Generic perpetrator group identifier of relevance.
[235] GTD Codebook, 2018, p.32.

Attack Information

The general method of attack is captured to reflect the broad class of tactics used.[236] Nine categories are used to define broad attack types and these are listed and described at Appendix C: GTD Coding. Typically, only one attack type is recorded for each incident unless the attack is comprised of a sequence of events. If an attack involves a sequence of events or multiple attack types, these are listed accordingly.[237]

Attack information also includes the total number of confirmed fatalities for each incident. As the number includes all victims *and* attackers who died as a direct result of the incident, an additional field is established to separate victims *from* attackers. GTD data on the number of perpetrator fatalities is subtracted from the total number to assess the number of victim fatalities. These statistics are analysed in conjunction with the number of perpetrators, attack type and attack locations as an indicator of the 'scale' of a terrorist operation. Fatalities are used as a tangible measure and mapped against the MoS theme of 'violence', which was a consistent theme from the literature.

Two additional variables are considered within attack information. These fields capture any references made to IS or another terrorist group such as pledges of allegiance by individual perpetrators, law enforcement findings of IS material and witness accounts following the attacks. This information is collected from the GTD incident summaries and analysed in relation to the nature of the attack and the perpetrators involved. As perpetrator attributions recorded for each attack reflect what is reported in open-source media rather than a legal finding, research methods and GTD limitations and mitigations are discussed further in the next section.

Research Limitations and Mitigations

This section considers the limitations associated with the data sources, research method and approach and outlines the mitigations used for this project. First, a thematic network analysis of an English-translation of the MoS text has limitations. It

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[236] GTD Codebook, 2018, p.23.
[237] *Ibid.*

is noted that other versions of the document may exist, however McCants version was selected due to accessibility of primary source material translated from the original text into English. While the primary text is difficult to source and there is a reliance on translation, McCants version is also the most widely cited in the literature and has been used in similar studies. As the thematic network analysis is a subjective process based on individual interpretation, there are also limitations with this approach.[238]

Mitigations are used to overcome these limitations and enhance the rigour, trustworthiness and credibility of the analytical process by employing a combination of two theoretical coding frameworks.[239] The existing literature provides an indication of the themes identified by other authors and a sample of selected studies are used to establish a coding framework that is not based solely on the author's views. The literature review identified six studies most closely related and relevant to this thesis as these studies explored the MoS and jihadist group strategy.[240] Topics, categories or general ideas from these studies are coded and labelled with a term based on the language used by the author (*Nvivo* term).[241] Acknowledging the limitations of theoretical coding frameworks, an inductive 'grounded theory' approach is applied to draw additional codes from MoS that may not be listed in either coding frameworks.

The GTD is based on open source information only, and a limitation for all such databases is that the media may report inaccuracies, conflicting information or false claims of responsibility.[242] However, LaFree argues that there are important advantages due to the media coverage and interest and evolution of open-source data-bases, allowing for a more rigorous analysis of terrorism and terrorist activity.[243] This particular database was selected due to its relevance to this study where the available data met the scope and focus of the research. Unlike other open-source terrorism databases, the GTD includes more recent terrorist attack data to enable an analysis of

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[238] Droogan and Peattie, 2018, p.688.
[239] Refer to Appendix B and Appendix C
[240] Jarret M Brachman and William F McCants', 'Stealing Al Qaeda's Playbook', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 2006, Vol.29, No.4, p.309-321. Max Quigley and Tasia Wagner, 'Unravelling ISIS's Strategy in the West', *Institute for Islamic Strategic Affairs*, Neojihadism & Transitional Challenges Programme, 16 June 2016.
[241] Creswell, 2014.
[242] Gary LaFree, 'The Global Terrorism Database: Accomplishments and Challenges', *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 2010, Vol.4, No.1.
[243] *Ibid.*

patterns and trends.[244] Due to this study's focus on IS, which has emerged as a transnational terrorist threat since 2014, recent attack data from a consolidated source is essential. The use of GTD as a single data set also avoids discrepancies between commonly used data sets, which may not apply consistent definitions or criteria.[245]

In mitigating GTD limitations, key definitions, selection of data variables and search criteria parameters of relevance to this project are used to define the scope. Further, a systematic comparison between different open-source media reports and databases is conducted using the same definitions and criteria from the GTD Codebook[246] and where significant discrepancies are identified, these are excluded from the dataset. As a comprehensive open-source data-set, the GTD also includes attack data from non-Western countries which has been considered limited in the past.[247] Ideally, future research would examine IS' external operations beyond Western countries however the amount of attack data and analysis required was beyond the scope of this study.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

This chapter outlined the research methods and approach to be used for the purposes of this thesis. By using a concurrent research approach employing mixed qualitative and quantitative methods, it seeks to identify and analyse themes from MoS and consider the results in conjunction with the findings from the statistical analysis of terrorist attack data in the West between January 2014 and January 2018. Initial themes from the existing literature provided in Table 1 suggest MoS is a strategic document based on a revolutionary warfare approach, advocating political and military activities influenced by successful communist insurgences in the past as well as Western military theory with an emphasis on the rational use of violence. The following chapter is dedicated to illustrating the thematic and statistical analysis and presenting the results to be compared, integrated and consolidated in Chapter 5.

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[244] *Ibid.*

[245] Ivan Sascha Sheehan, 'Assessing and comparing data sources for terrorism research' in *Evidence-based counterterrorism policy,* New York: Springer, 2012, pp.13-40.

[246] GTD Codebook. July 2018.

[247] LaFree, 2010.

Chapter Four: MoS Strategy – Thematic Network Analysis

The purpose of this chapter is to examine Naji's work and draw themes from MoS to assess the claims made by other authors regarding Naji's influence on IS' strategy, with a specific focus on IS-related operations in the West. In considering the significance of MoS, the chapter comprises four sections dedicated to identifying and illustrating themes within the document. The first section is a summary of MoS which also notes differences with IS' approach. Second, a refined list of MoS themes are described. Third, a thematic network of MoS with text segments of the document arranged into Basic, Organising and Global themes is presented. The final section summarises the key findings from the thematic network analysis. Patterns are explored, interpreted and presented as an overarching MoS strategy resulting in a specific list of themes for the comparative analysis with IS operations in Chapter 5.

The Management of Savagery

Published following 9/11, MoS is a systematic exposition of what the mujahidin must now do so as not to squander the unique opportunity offered by 9/11 and the invasion of Iraq.[248] Naji lays out a strategy for returning the world to a pre-Sykes-Picot era before the fall of the Islamic caliphate and presents a 'broad outline which is not detailed' for the *ummah* to reach and pass through what is considered the most critical stage, the management of savagery.[249] Over five logically ordered topics and associated sections, Naji first provides a historical overview leading to his perception of the current state of world affairs, the overall pathway for establishing an Islamic state and then explicitly outlines an action plan based on principles to return the world to an orderly state under the caliphate. Given Naji's seemingly puritanical worldview and emphasis on returning to a caliphate, it is unsurprising several authors have drawn similarities between MoS and IS' ideological underpinnings and apocalyptic vision as it emerged from Zarqawi's AQI. However, there are also some important deviations which will be discussed prior to the thematic network analysis presented in the following section.

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[248] Robert Manne, '*The Mind of the Islamic State*', Victoria: Redback Quarterly, 2016, Chapter 6, p.4.
[249] Abu Bakr Naji, *The Management of Savagery: The Most Critical Stage Through which the Umma Will Pass,* Translated by William McCants, 23 May, 2006, p.10.

While Naji is critical of apostate regimes, Islamic clerics that proselytise rather than act, moderate Islamic groups and other Muslims, he emphasises the importance of popular support and forging alliances to unify Muslims against a common enemy which contrasts with the sectarian nature and *takfiri* approach adopted by IS. Indeed, Naji describes the negative effects of past transgressions and lessons learned from Algeria regarding the use of violence against Muslims.[250] Rather, Naji's advocacy for the use of extreme violence is directed at the West. The Salafi-jihadist strategy presented in MoS is described by Naji as the enterprise plan for the global jihadist movement which is superior to other Islamist movements that focus on local and nationalist goals. IS' apocalyptic vision and urgency to establish an Islamic caliphate through territorial gains goes beyond such localised goals to regional expansion yet the group's targeting of other Islamic and even jihadist groups contrasts with the MoS.

In addition to this, it is also important to note that while Naji advocates the use of extreme violence and expanding a cadre of global jihadists through youth recruitment, he outlines the risk of excessive zeal which contrasts with IS' activities in Iraq and Syria.[251] Naji explains the importance of recruiting and training the youth to carry out violent acts and form a fighting society at all levels.[252] This is somewhat reflected in IS' 'long game' to radicalise, recruit, and indoctrinate youth as a future cohort of extremely aggressive, violent and remorseless fighters',[253] however this comes with potential problems with overzealous youth recruited into IS ranks.[254] Although Naji views large numbers of exuberant youth as an opportunity to hasten jihadi operations,[255] he cautions of the risks associated with overzealousness and the problems that accompany it such as rushed operations where the youth may not understand strategy and may be overcome with enthusiasm to rush into conducting large operations.

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[250] Naji, 2006, p.60.
[251] Graeme Wood, 'What ISIS Really Wants', *The Atlantic*, March 2015, https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/03/what-isis-really-wants/384980/
[252] Naji, 2006, p.28.
[253] Colleen McCue, Joseph T. Massengill, Dorothy Milbrandt, John Gaughan, and Meghan Cumpston, 'The Islamic State Long Game: A Tripartite Analysis of Youth Radicalization and Indoctrination' *CTC Sentinel*, September 2017, Vol.10, No.8, p.21
[254] Scott Gates and Sukanya Podder, 'Social Media, Recruitment, Allegiance and the Islamic State', *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 2015, Vol.9, No.4.
[255] Naji, 2006, p.22.

Rushing operations: As for rushing, the prescription for it is understanding and sitting with the youth and clarifying the general policy for action and the importance of biding one's time in some of the stages of the battle in order to drain the enemy, for example, and similar explanations. We will show them that this matter will only be mastered by one who is as ponderous as the mountains, who does not easily give into the provocation of the enemy.[256]

Abu Bakr Naji, The Management of Savagery

This section provided a summary of MoS however the quote from MoS above suggests a stark contrast between IS' seemingly urgent concern with establishing an Islamic caliphate in the near future[257] and Naji's longer-term strategy, in essence a 'war of attrition' perhaps more reflective of AQ's longer-term global jihadist project. Therefore, a more in-depth examination of the strategy in MoS and IS' activities, particularly over the past four years is necessary. In accordance with the second and third steps of Attride-Stirling's analytical process,[258] the following sections will focus on drawing refined themes from MoS, arranging these themes into Basic and Organising Themes to deduce Global Theme(s) and illustrating these themes as a thematic network.

MoS Themes

MoS contains a diverse array of topics yet the structure is systematically divided into strategic phases. Drawing on the codebook comprising codes from pre-established criteria relevant to this study and the application of grounded theory, *Nvivo12* software was used to arrange themes based on their prevalence and significance to this project's focus. In cases where concepts and topics overlap and could be relevant to multiple Basic Themes, these were coded to the Basic Theme of most relevance. In order to provide visual clarity in the thematic network analysis, themes that are significantly less prevalent in comparison to other themes or do not have clear contextual relevance to this study are removed from the thematic network.

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[256] Naji, 2006, p.162.
[257] Guy Fricano, 'Honor in Hijrah as Expressed by the Islamic State', *Small Wars Journal*,
[258] Attride-Stirling's six-step analytical process, Chapter 3, Figure 1.

As a result of this process, 32 Basic Themes are present in MoS. Organising Themes are developed by grouping and summarising Basic Themes around a shared idea or topic where multiple themes consistently referred to an idea in a broader context. The four Organising Themes identified include 'know your enemy', 'far enemy strategy', 'universal laws' and 'order to chaos'. These Organising Themes, their associated Basic Themes and descriptions drawn from concepts and text segments of MoS are summarised on the following pages and further explained in Tables 2 to 5.

Table 2: Organising Theme – Know Your Enemy

Organising Theme	Description
Know Your Enemy	Understand Western strategies, military principles, political theory, sociology and management to exploit superpower vulnerabilities, pursuit of self-interest and America's illusion of power embodied by a 'deceptive media halo'.
Basic Themes	**Description**
The West	The United States (America) as the remaining superpower and other Western countries of 'Infidels' and 'unbelievers' that revolve in America's orbit have come to represent the civilisation of Satan and the Crusader enemy.
Apostates	Arab rulers who do not implement Sharia Law but instead control a satellite state that revolves in the orbit of the superpower (America) acquiring economic and military benefits from the superpower. These Taghuts (idols of tyrants) are 'fellow travellers', apostate enemies who have mixed their values and beliefs with the Crusaders (unbelievers) values.
Superpower Vulnerabilities	Doctrine of material interests and an unruffled life of comfort and luxury. Confrontation and exhaustion to directly affect the overwhelming military power, deceptive media and disrupt the social cohesion of the West.
Self-Interest	The aim which motivates the enemies is a material aim. Material interests and the desire to survive fuels their (Crusaders and Apostates) action. Allies and those that support the enemy continue to support them as long as their interests (survival) are served.
Military Principles	Understand the abilities of the enemy and his defeat by plunging into active war. This involves using time-tested principles of military combat including the plans and military principles of non-Muslims. Refer to books on the art of war and guerrilla wars to use the enemy's (the West) overwhelming military power against it. "If regular armies concentrate in one place they lose control. Conversely, if they spread out, they lose effectiveness".
Political Theory	Understand the rules of politics used by the enemy (the West) and their fellow travellers (apostates). Leaders of the Islamic movement should master political science just as they would master military science. Political action is very important and dangerous such that "a single political mistake is worse than one hundred military mistakes".
Lessons Learned	Learning from the failures of past jihadist movements generally attributed to a shortcoming of understanding universal laws (use of violence). Lessons from Egypt, Algeria as well as the enemy's failures (Soviet Union and later the West) in Afghanistan.

Know your Enemy: This theme (Table 2) places an emphasis on understanding the abilities of the enemy to exploit vulnerabilities and achieve victory, it is supported by seven Basic Themes. The enemy is framed as the remaining superpower following the Cold War (the US), 'crusader' states as the West more broadly and 'helpers' among the Arab apostate regimes of the Middle East. References within the text made to the 'West' and 'apostates' describe values and behaviours, predict actions and discuss vulnerabilities.[259] The need to understand, adapt to and even adopt Western 'military principles' and 'political theory' are Basic Themes discussed in the context of this Organising Theme. Predictions are made on the basis of 'lessons learned' from past historical battles and the enemy's pursuit of 'self-interest'.

Far Enemy Strategy: This theme (Table 3) refers to the stages and actions required to defeat the primary enemy, being the West and its supporters as part of a systematic pathway to establishing the caliphate. Eleven Basic Themes support this theme and are laid out sequentially throughout the text. The 'action plan' which involves 'vexation strikes' to 'provoke' the West into engaging in a 'war of attrition' designed to 'exhaust' resources is followed by themes of 'deterrence' and the importance of the 'media battle' and 'political game'. Themes relating to tactics are not explored other than examples however guidance on 'operations', 'targeting' and the need to make 'sacrifices' in the war against the far enemy are Basic Themes that support this Organising Theme.

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[259] Terms such as 'Crusader', 'infidel', 'tyrants' are used to refer to the West. Terms such as 'Taghut', 'apostate' and 'fellow travellers' are used to refer to Middle Eastern regimes and rulers.

Table 3: Organising Theme – Far Enemy Strategy

Organising Theme	Description
Far Enemy Strategy	Attacks in the West to provoke America and its allies to abandon its media, psychological and proxy war against Islam and force the West to attack Islam directly. Use of terrorism, media, political-military and psychological operations to exhaust the West (militarily and economically), leading to its political defeat and cultural and social collapse.
Basic Themes	**Description**
Action Plan	Plan of actions to achieve 3 goals 1) Destroy respect for America; 2) Increase support from the masses (Umma) and anger against the West and apostates; and 3) Force the West to abandon its war against Islam by proxy and provoke the West to attack directly. Includes operational plan and a media plan with sequential strikes against America to reduce its prestige among the masses, elites and armies of apostasy. Increased and diversified vexation strikes (terrorism) against the West in every place to disperse the enemy's efforts.
Vexation Strikes	Harassing attacks, terrorist operations, 'blows' of small to medium scale carried out by 'small bands' to cause fear (in society), expose vulnerabilities and provoke a response.
Provocation	Anticipated response from the West once operations begin against the enemy. Principles of the enemy that motivate it politically and militarily to act in self-interest and force the West to abandon proxy wars and engage in direct confrontation in the regions (of Islam).
War of Attrition	The battle of patience, a long war to drain the West' economic and military capabilities. The most likely way to defeat the strongest enemy (America) is to drain it by operations. The weaknesses resulting from the burdens of war will lead to cultural annihilation.
Exhaustion	Weaker powers succeed against stronger powers by exhausting them militarily. Small battles to exhaust the enemy (the West) are the primary reason for final victory.
Deterrence	The policy of 'paying the price' to spread fear and hopelessness in the hearts of the enemy. Retribution for crimes to deter and make the West think one thousand times before undertaking an attack against the Umma, such that the enemy is limited to defending.
Media Battle	Expose the illusion of Western power ('invincibility') and media deception' by engaging in the 'media battle'. Establish a media plan that justifies operations to the masses, sends a message that mujahids are on the rise continually escalating operations against the enemy in retreat who will be defeated. This encourages the masses and revives hope.
Political Game	Political action is as important as military action. Those engaged in military battles should also be making political decisions. Political interests must be clear for leaders of action as politics (the art of the possible) and bargaining is central to the enemy.
Operations	Small, intensive operations that lead to harmful results are very valuable. These qualitative operations grab peoples' attention and although may only strike a (single) Crusader, will escalate effects for a long period of time. Small and medium operations do not require consultation with High Command as these operations have been approved in advance.
Targeting	Obligation to target the Crusaders and their helpers among the apostates and their armies (the current enemies of the mujahids are not Muslim). Principle to not rush out immediately to kill every class of people that assists the enemy (the West). The decision to target others should be left to High Command to determine the benefit of targeting or delaying.
Sacrifice	Hardships on a long and arduous path. Requirement for giving, commitment, courage, honour, patience, blood and submission to God before life (martyrdom).

Table 4: Organising Theme – Universal laws

Organising Theme	Description
Universal Laws	Pure human reason, practical reality, rational thought and pragmatism firmly grounded in knowledge and the use of time-tested principles such as the use of violence, armed struggle and power of the masses. These laws are considered consistent with Sharia law however the poor application by past movements that have confused the Islamic youth is due to weak knowledge of reality (universal laws).

Basic Themes	Description
Human Reason	Human nature (behaviour), actions justified rationally through cost-benefit approach as opposed to peaceful solutions, elections and peaceful proselytising or solutions with a single strike without shedding blood. However sacrifice and suffering is the practical reality.
Sharia Justice	Guidance on methods to achieve the goal. Sharia commandments and criteria as adopted by the High Command setting the rules for jihad as one of the most important subjects for guidance. Divine Islamic laws and obligations passed from the Prophet.
Criticism of Clerics	Programs advocated by other Islamic groups and clerics that have confused the Islamic youth with propagation and proselytising, popular jihad, innovative and theoretical models with sparkling slogans however neglect universal laws and Sharia commandments. 'Those who study jihad as it is written on paper, do not understand the nature of wars'.
Violence	The central role of violence and coarseness against the Infidels in combat and media battles. Violence, terrorism and massacring (intimidating others) is necessary for success in jihad as one of the most important obligations against unbelievers (the West) and a universal law to attain 'power' and make the enemy unable to oppose.
Armed Struggle	The use of time-tested principles of military combat for jihadi action. These principles are provided to 'sharpen the mind' and clarify the importance of following the principles to improve the efficacy of military actions (armed struggle) and avoid the corrupting influences of rigidity and random behaviour.
Power of the Masses	Importance of unity, allegiance and rules of affiliation. Establish coalitions where permitted, unite the masses under Sharia and a tie of religious loyalty between all groups (the Umma) embodied in a covenant written in blood. Need to unite the Umma under a single banner to establish 'power' and accept each individual, group or band as they enter the jihad.

Universal Laws: This theme (Table 4) emphasises the importance of applying pragmatism and rational thought as a central foundation for the strategic approach at all stages leading to the establishment of an Islamic state. It is supported by six Basic Themes with 'human reason', argued to be consistent with 'sharia justice' as universal laws of action that are not being implemented by clerics and where the use of 'violence', 'armed struggle' and the 'power of the masses' are logical instruments in waging a war against the enemy. The need to use violence is made explicit throughout

the text and is described as a common and logical approach to achieve power. As an Organising Theme, the focus on 'universal laws' appears to be consistent with Ryan's argument that Naji and other jihadist strategists do not aim for their writings to be read by ordinary readers and while MoS includes Islamic references, it is based on human reason or strategic logic rather than religious arguments.

Table 5: Organising Theme – Order to Chaos

Organising Theme	Description
Order to Chaos	The stage following that of 'vexation and exhaustion'. Transition from a situation where regions submit to the law of the jungle, in its primitive form (savage chaos) to regions managed, administered and governed according to Sharia law (order) and establish the Islamic state.
Basic Themes	**Description**
Islamic Virtues	Islamic activists carrying out the command of God will be granted victory and the Umma will once again steer humanity toward the path of divine guidance and salvation. The small group of thinkers and noble people that oppose tyranny (from the West) and seek justice want to change the current reality (state of affairs) for the better.
Sharia Governance	Establishing Sharia laws among the people who live in the regions of savagery, working to spread legal, Sharia science and passing Sharia judgement in accordance with the main jihad movement or a scholar of Sharia criterions. The entity (people of the region) will act to assist the religion and not violate Sharia, achieving purity.
Management	The art of management which consists of managing peoples' needs including the provision of food, medical treatment, education, security and Sharia justice for people living in the regions of savagery. The advancement of managerial groups toward the attainment of the 'power of establishment' and readiness for establishing the Islamic state.
Leadership	Leaders must be the objects of complete reliance within the movement and entrusted with its actions and secrets. Unlike the door to management which is open to many, the door to leadership is only open to those reliable and intelligent pious students of knowledge who responded to horrors with composure, calmness and deep thought.
State Building	Sharia governance and requirements of managing the regions of savagery by spreading internal security and preserving it in every region that is managed, providing food and medical treatment, securing regions from invasions by the enemy (the West and apostates), disseminating spies, continuing vexation operations, expanding and setting up defensive fortifications and developing fighting capacities.
Fighting Society	Raising the level of belief and combat efficiency by training the youth of the region of savagery and establishing a fighting society at all levels. Leaders of the movement should be military leaders or have the ability to fight in the ranks. The political administration should be made up of 'warriors'.
Power	The ability for the group to remain intact despite enemy attacks targeting portions of the group. The group achieves 'power' when it is difficult to destroy in a single strike. Individuals in the group or region of savagery exchanging loyalty, unifying and willing to suffer and make sacrifices for one another is 'power' to confront the enemies.
Problems and Challenges	Obstacles that may cause harm, stop action and prevent development and advancement. These include the decreasing number of believers, lack of administrative cadres, loyalty, infiltration and spies, secession of individuals and groups, excessive zeal and the problems that accompany it.

Order to Chaos: This theme (Table 5) refers to the primitive state of savagery in regions with weak governance that must be managed in accordance with universal and sharia laws. As an Organising Theme, it is supported by eight Basic Themes that primarily focus on the critical stage of the 'management of savagery'. These themes include advocacy of 'Islamic virtues' as a foundation for the path against the morally corrupt enemy, the need for 'Sharia governance', the adoption of 'management' principles, selection of leaders and characteristics of 'leadership', fundamentals of 'state building', developing a 'fighting society', defining 'power' and outlining the 'problems and challenges' that need to be addressed along the pathway.

This section identified the refined themes drawn from the coded text segments of MoS and provided a summary of these themes arranged into meaningful thematic arrays to form 32 Basic Themes supporting four Organising Themes. Basic Themes were categorised according to the Organising Themes of the most logical relevance in the context of the MoS text segment.[260] Each of the Organising Themes were labelled to capture the related Basic Themes within a central concept or idea and each Basic Theme was labelled to capture the related coded text segments. Importantly however, the description for each theme is largely drawn from phrases within the MoS text. The following section focuses on deducing the Global Theme, illustrating the themes as a refined thematic network[261] and describing and exploring the network.[262]

Thematic Network of MoS

MoS at its broadest level, is a strategic action plan for the Ummah to establish an Islamic state. 'Islamic Caliphate' is the Global Theme in which all four Organising Themes and underlying Basic Themes centre around within the text. Preliminary themes comprise historical lessons and examples of failed Islamic movements, criticism of the present situation due to inaction and guidance on the actions necessary to progress and pass through the most critical stage of savagery. While establishing an Islamic state is the Global Theme, the Basic Themes have varying levels of presence with a strong focus on the 'enemy', which is primarily framed as the West. In

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[260] Step 3, Part (a), (b) and (c) of Attride-Stirling's Thematic Network Analysis Process, Chapter 3, Figure 1.
[261] Step 3, Part (d), (e) and (f), Chapter 3, Figure 1.
[262] Step 4, Part (a) and (b), Chapter 3, Figure 1.

order to explain this contradiction, this section provides a visualisation of the relationship between Basic and Organising Themes and the Global Theme and illustrating the prevalence of themes drawn from the MoS text. Themes are combined to form a thematic network of MoS as described in Chapter 3. The purpose of illustrating these themes as a thematic network is to present a visual summary of the main themes and a revealing interpretation of the text as a whole.[263] Figure 3 is an example of a thematic network with an indication of theme prevalence.

Figure 3: Thematic Network and Theme Prevalence – example

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[263] G. W. Ryan and H. R. Bernard, 'Techniques to Identify Themes', *Field Methods*, 2003, Vol.15, No.1, p.89.

As demonstrated in Figure 3, shapes are used to represent and distinguish between each of the theme classes, arrows are used to indicate relationships between themes and colours are used to represent the presence or 'prevalence' of themes. This approach for visually representing and distinguishing themes and their prevalence has been used in previous studies,[264] and is also used for the thematic network of MoS.

Rectangular boxes represent Basic Themes, circles represent Organising Themes and squares represent the Global Theme. Arrows indicate the relationship between Basic Themes, Organising Themes and the Global Theme however do not represent relationships between the Basic Themes. In establishing the presence of themes within the text, MoS was manually combed for sentences, quotes and passages of significance. Text segments, phrases and paragraphs were mapped to the consolidated codebook or using grounded theory assigned a code that summarised the text with a single phrase or label. The use of *NVivo 12* assisted with calculating the percentage of paragraphs containing a theme in MoS. Colour-coding is used to indicate the prevalence of Basic Themes within the theme-containing paragraphs of the text and assign these Basic Themes to one of four categories.

White Basic Themes represent themes that are 'minimally' prevalent as these are present in less <10 percent of the text. Light grey Basic Themes represent themes that are 'moderately prevalent' as these are present in 10 – 20 percent of the text. Light blue Basic Themes represent themes considered 'highly prevalent' as these are present in 21 – 30 percent of the text. Dark blue Basic Themes represent the final colour-coded category and are 'extremely prevalent' as themes present in 30 percent or more. MoS theme relationships and theme prevalence are illustrated in the thematic network of MoS at Figure 4.

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[264] Julian Droogan and Shane Peattie, 'Mapping the thematic landscape of *Dabiq* magazine', *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 2017, Vol.71, No.6. Julian Droogan and Shane Peattie, 'Reading jihad: Mapping the shifting themes of *Inspire* magazine', *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 2018, Vol.30, No.4.

Figure 4: Thematic Network of MoS

The thematic network of MoS centres around the establishment of an 'Islamic Caliphate' with the Organising Themes appearing to be strategies and principles to achieve this goal. Basic Themes are the actions and rules underpinning the Organising Themes and are systematically discussed throughout the text. These four distinct Organising Themes and the prevalence of their Basic Themes as evident in the thematic network of MoS are described and explored in the following section in accordance with Part A and B of Step 4 of the analytical process (Figure 1).

Know your Enemy: The Organising Theme 'know your enemy' includes repetitive references to 'the West' and America in particular, as the remaining superpower and the 'superpower vulnerabilities' that should be exploited. 'The West' is framed as 'the enemy' and presents as an extremely prevalent theme within the text. 'Apostate regimes' are considered as 'an enemy' due to their relationship with the West however does not feature as prominently and as a theme is highly prevalent. 'Lessons learned'

is extremely prevalent throughout the text indicating a need to learn from previous engagements or historical conflicts with the West as well as past jihadi failures. 'Superpower vulnerabilities' presents as a moderately prevalent Basic Theme supporting the 'know your enemy' theme. While three minimally prevalent themes are also present. These themes focus on the enemy's pursuit of 'self-interest' and the need to adopt or adapt to Western 'military principles' and 'political theory'.

Far Enemy Strategy: is the most prevalent Organising Theme within the MoS text and is supported by 11 Basic Themes, three of which are extremely prevalent and four that are highly prevalent. 'Vexation strikes' are extremely prevalent within the MoS text, particularly under the third topic that describes the plan of action and the goals of "the power of vexation and exhaustion". Guidance on 'targeting' and the need to engage the enemy in a 'media battle' are also extremely prevalent themes. Highly prevalent themes include 'war of attrition', 'exhaustion', 'operations' and 'sacrifice' which are primarily focused on an overarching, logical strategy and conveying the various phases and components involved to the target audience. The 'political game' and 'deterrence' are moderately prevalent themes while 'provocation' and 'action plan', although present, are less prevalent in the MoS text.

Universal Laws: This Organising Theme is supported by six Basic Themes. 'Violence' is extremely prevalent in MoS with a section of the text dedicated to providing guidance and emphasising the importance of using violence to achieve operational and strategic objectives. Highly prevalent themes include 'human reason' and 'power of the masses'. These themes are primarily focused on adopting a pragmatic approach to the strategy focused on actions rather than religious proselytising. 'Criticism of clerics' is a moderately prevalent theme with a presence throughout the text. 'Armed struggle' and 'Sharia justice' are minimally prevalent themes that support and are considered by the author, Naji to be consistent with universal laws.

Order to Chaos: Basic Themes supporting the Organising Theme, 'order to chaos' are present throughout the MoS text however the related text segments only marginally touch on these themes from the outset. 'Islamic virtues' is the only exception as text

segments relating to this theme appear at the beginning of the text. The Basic Theme 'problems and challenges' is the only highly prevalent theme and although this theme has similarities with the Basic Theme 'lessons learned' as the author draws on historical accounts and past failures, it is focused on a later stage once the 'regions of savagery' have been established. The 'order to chaos' Organising Theme is also supported by 'Islamic virtues', 'management', 'state-building' and 'power'. These are moderately prevalent themes within MoS and are predominately present in latter parts of the text. 'Sharia governance', 'leadership' and 'fighting society' are also present however are minimally prevalent.

In accordance with Part A and B of the fourth step in Attride-Stirling's analytical process, this section has described the MoS text as a thematic network and explored the prevalence of each of the 32 Basic Themes supporting the 4 Organising Themes identified in the previous section. However as outlined in Chapter 3, thematic networks are a tool in the analysis and not the analysis itself.[265] Therefore, the following section will summarise the main themes, interpret the patterns and illustrate the way in which significant themes and patterns emerge and relate to each other within the MoS text. The results of this summary are presented as the 'MoS Strategy' and explain the relevance of this text to the research focus of this project.

Results: MoS Strategy

This section is dedicated to summarising MoS as a thematic network, interpreting the dominant patterns that have emerged and exploring these patterns as an overarching strategy.[266] In doing so, it seeks to analyse claims discussed in Chapter 2 whereby MoS is widely referred to in the existing literature as a 'strategic manual' being used by IS. While such studies place an emphasis on the correlation between MoS and IS' sectarianism and *takfiri* influences in conflict zones such as Iraq and Syria, these are not dominant themes that emerge from the text. Table 6 provides a summary of theme prevalence in the text, which will be explored in relation to 'MoS strategy'.

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[265] Jennifer Attride-Stirling, 'Thematic networks: an analytical tool for qualitative research', *Qualitative Research,* 2001, Vol.1, No.3, p.393.
[266] Step 5 and Step 6 of Attride-Stirling's Thematic Network Analysis Process, Chapter 3, Figure 1.

Table 6: MoS – Summary of Theme Prevalence

Extremely Prevalent				
The West		Lessons Learned		Vexation Strikes
Media Battle		Targeting		Violence
Highly Prevalent				
Apostates	War of Attrition	Exhaustion		Operations
Sacrifice	Human Reason	Power of the Masses		Problems and Challenges
Moderately Prevalent				
Superpower Vulnerabilities	Deterrence	Political Game		Criticism of Clerics
Islamic Virtues	Management	State-Building		Power
Minimally Prevalent				
Political Theory	Military Principles	Self-Interest	Provocation	Action Plan
Sharia Governance	Leadership	Armed Struggle	Sharia Justice	Fighting Society

MoS is structured in a systematic way to represent various stages required to obtain the ultimate objective of establishing an Islamic caliphate, which is the Global Theme that emerged from the thematic network. Yet both AQ and IS aim to establish a caliphate and it is rather strategic and ideological differences that have set each group apart. Therefore, the thematic network analysis of MoS is useful in summarising the patterns that emerge from this strategic document based on the presence of themes and when they appear within the text. Table 7 is a break-down of the MoS text as it is structured and the presence of the four Organising Themes and 32 Basic Themes.

Table 7: MoS –Theme prevalence within text structure

MoS Structure	Themes Present (in order of prevalence)	Main Organising Theme(s)
Introduction: The Illusion of Power	Superpower Vulnerabilities, The West, Apostates, Universal Laws, Criticism of Clerics.	**Know your Enemy** **Universal Laws**
	Lessons Learned, Order to Chaos.	
	Far Enemy Strategy, Provocation, Islamic Virtues, Operations, Media Battle.	
	Know your Enemy, Military Principles, Power of the Masses, Sacrifice, Exhaustion, War of Attrition, Vexation Strikes.	
First Topic: Management of Savagery Overview	Order to Chaos, Universal Laws, Lessons Learned.	**Order to Chaos** **Universal Laws**
	Vexation strikes, Sharia Governance, State-Building.	
	The West, Far Enemy Strategy, War of Attrition, Sharia Justice, Fighting Society, Deterrence, Power of the Masses.	
Second Topic: The path for establishing an Islamic state	Vexation Strikes, Targeting, Operations, Media Battle.	**Far Enemy Strategy**
	Superpower Vulnerabilities, Power of the Masses, Sharia Governance, Fighting Society, Deterrence, Apostates.	
	Lessons Learned, Provocation, Military Principles, Exhaustion, Management, State-Building, Order to Chaos, Criticism of Clerics, Sharia Justice, The West, Political Game.	**Order to Chaos**
Third Topic: Implementing the plan of action (vexation and exhaustion)	Violence, Operations, Vexation Strikes, Political Game, Media Battle, Lessons Learned, Targeting, Power of the Masses.	**Far Enemy Strategy**
	Deterrence, The West, Self-Interest, Management, Human Reason, Military Principles, Apostates, Leadership.	
	War of Attrition, Islamic Virtues, Sharia Justice, Political Theory.	**Universal Laws**
	Fighting Society, Sacrifice, Problems and Challenges, Criticism of Clerics, Sharia Governance, Power, Armed Struggle.	
Fourth Topic: The most important problems and obstacles	Problems and Challenges, Power of the Masses, Apostates, Sacrifice, Operations, Criticism of Clerics.	**Universal Laws**
	Management, Leadership, Islamic Virtues, Sharia Governance, State-Building.	**Order to Chaos**
Fifth Topic: Conclusion	Universal Laws, Violence, Vexation Strikes, Human Reason, Lessons Learned, Criticism of Clerics, War of Attrition, Power of the Masses.	**Universal Laws**
	Islamic Virtues, Sharia Governance, Apostates, The West.	
	Armed Struggle, Sharia Justice, Exhaustion, Fighting Society.	

As Table 7 demonstrates, the structure of the MoS text itself comprises six distinct sections being an introduction and five topics. The presence of themes for each section varies and indicates Naji's focus for the section, each laid out as a logical, stage-by-stage strategy. The introduction for example, sets the scene with an emphasis on 'know your enemy', being the West and apostate regimes as 'fellow travellers'

supporting the West in pursuit of their own self-interest and survival. In this section, the author Naji frequently refers to the 'enemy's' strength as its effective use of media or 'deceptive media halo' and vulnerabilities being its lack of tolerance or capacity to sustain casualties, as well as economic and political losses in a protracted war of attrition. Islamic clerics are criticised for their focus on religious proselytising rather than applying tried and tested 'universal laws' of action against the infidels.

The first topic is an overview of the strategy and thematically focuses on the need to bring order to chaos and manage regions of savagery being weak and failed states such as Afghanistan. Apart from a historical overview and 'lessons learned', Naji reiterates that the current stage which precedes the 'management of savagery' is one of 'vexation and exhaustion' where universal laws must be applied to expose the two critical aspects of Western hegemony. Naji's three-stage strategy is therefore first focused on exposing America's media deception which has manipulated the masses and demonstrating the limitations of military power.

In the second topic, Naji's explains his three-stage strategy as a 'path for establishing an Islamic State'. These stages[267] include 'vexation and exhaustion operations', then the 'administration of savagery', followed by 'establishing the state'.[268] Thematically however, the focus is on vexation strikes, targeting, operations and the media battle and the 'far enemy strategy' is the most prevalent Organising Theme. This focus might in part relate to the time MoS was written in 2004, whereby Western countries had responded to 9/11 with overwhelming military power and where Naji is critical of the lack of action by jihadists, particularly the small number of operations targeting the West or Western interests. While broad operational trends between 2014 and 2018 will be discussed in the next chapter, apart from the Madrid and London bombings, the years following 9/11 were characterised by a series of predominately failed jihadist terrorist plots in the West that were 'more aspirational than operational'.[269]

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[267] Figure 5 provides a breakdown of these three stages.
[268] Naji, p.36.
[269] Brian Michael Jenkins, 'Would-Be Warriors: Incidents of Jihadist Terrorist Radicalization in the United States Since September 11, 2001' *RAND,* Occasional Paper, 2010, p.6.

Figure 5: Naji's Three-Stage Strategy drawn from MoS

The third topic is dedicated to guidance on implementing the action plan to achieve the goals of 'vexation and exhaustion' and the goals of the 'management of savagery'. Despite the title of the text, it is this focus on vexation and exhaustion (terrorist) operations against the West and the apostate regimes supporting the 'unbelievers' that reflects the main themes of MoS. The most prevalent Organising Themes are 'far enemy strategy' and 'universal laws' with violence, operations, vexation strikes, the political game, media battle, lessons learned, targeting and power of the masses featuring more prominently as Basic Themes supporting these Organising Themes.

Figure 5 demonstrates the three stages discussed in MoS that are intended to occur sequentially, with the stage at the time of writing focused on vexation and exhaustion strikes. It is therefore unsurprising that this stage is the primary focus of the text. The stage of vexation and exhaustion comprises a series of sub-strategies designed to achieve the objective, which is to increase freedom of movement in the regions of

savagery and subsequently move to the next stage in managing these regions. Once governance has been established and the regions can be secured and defended, state-building activities can commence under Sharia law. Leaders and managers within the regions will need to develop a 'fighting society' and build coalitions to further expand and move to the third stage of establishing an Islamic state.

The fourth topic and conclusion focus on the problems and challenges ahead and how these may be overcome. Power of the masses and maintaining popular support, applying universal laws and ensuring management structures are in place are a thematic focus of these final topics. Naji reiterates a caveat from the beginning of the text regarding failure to establish an Islamic state and the need to adapt the strategy based on realities on the ground. This caveat is best summarised in Naji's quote:

> *The management of savagery is the next stage that the Umma will pass through and it is considered the most critical. If we succeed in this savagery, that stage (by the permission of God) will be a bridge to the Islamic state which has been awaited since the fall of the caliphate. If we fail – we seek refuge with God from that – it does not mean an end of the matter; rather, this failure will lead to an increase in savagery!!*
>
> *This increase in savagery, which may result from failure, is not the worst thing that can happen now or in the previous decade (the nineties) and those before it. Rather, the most abominable of the levels of savagery is (still) less than stability under the order of unbelief (nizam al-kufr) by several degrees.[270]*
>
> *Abu Bakr Naji, The Management of Savagery*

As the second and third topics are specifically relevant to the focus of this study, the extremely prevalent Organising and Basic Themes identified within these sections and listed in Table 8 will be subject to the comparative analysis in Chapter 5.

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[270] Abu Bakr Naji, The Management of Savagery: The Most Critical Stage Through which the Umma Will Pass, Translated by William McCants, 23 May, 2006, p.11.

Table 8: Themes to be subject to comparative analysis

Basic Themes	
Vexation Strikes	Violence
Targeting	Political Game
Operations	Lessons Learned
Media Battle	Power of Masses
Organising Themes	
Far Enemy Strategy	Universal Laws

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This chapter examined MoS as a thematic network to understand the text as a strategy as claimed in the literature. However, unlike previous studies, there was a specific focus on the relevance of the text to any such strategy in the West. Following a summary of MoS, the text was presented as a thematic network with text segments arranged into Basic, Organising and Global themes. This process resulted in identifying four Organising Themes and 32 supporting Basic Themes where the prevalence of each theme was further described and explored.

In the final section, MoS was divided in accordance with the document's structure and themes were interpreted to establish dominant patterns that emerged in relation to this study's focus. This resulted in a clear three stage strategy beginning with vexation and exhaustion operations (small to medium scale terrorist attacks) to draw the West into a war of attrition, once the West is drained economically and militarily, it would lose popular support and withdraw from the Islamic world. Sharia governance would then be introduced to manage regions of savagery, (weak and failing states) develop allegiances and expand, to establish an Islamic state. As the prevalence of themes varied across each topic, the eight most prevalent themes from topics and sections of MoS of most relevance to this project were identified (Table 8) and will be subject to a comparative analysis with IS-related plots and attacks in the next chapter.

Chapter Five: IS Operational Trends and Analysis

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse IS plots and attacks in the West, identify broad operational trends and compare these trends with the eight most prevalent themes drawn from MoS identified in Chapter 4. First, an overview of IS external operations in the West is provided from a statistical analysis of IS related terrorist plot and attack data drawn from the GTD using the search criteria outlined in Chapter 3. The results of this analysis are then summarised as IS' broad operational trends. In the second section, the eight themes are compared and analysed against the operational trends. The key findings of this study are then presented in Chapter 6.

Islamic State Terrorism in the West: 2014 - 2018

This section analyses jihadist terrorism in the West, with a focus on operational shifts since IS' emergence. While deaths from terrorism in the West constitute a small percentage of all terrorism-related deaths across the globe, Western countries have experienced some of the most deadly attacks in the last 15 years and a significant increase in the number of attacks since 2014.[271] According to the *2016 Global Terrorism Index Report*, IS' transnational tactics in combination with lone actor attacks inspired by the group drove an increase in European terrorism to its highest levels ever. Attacks in France and Belgium in 2015 were also among the most devastating in the history of these countries.[272]

The majority of attacks in the US have been conducted by environmentalist groups, however despite fewer attacks, jihadi-inspired attacks have been the deadliest.[273] Between 2014 and 2017 all terrorism-related deaths in Australia were either directed or inspired by IS,[274] with the group inspiring the bulk of terrorist activity in Australia.[275] The analysis identifies changes in the scale, frequency and breadth of jihadist terrorism in the West between September 11, 2001 (9/11) and 31 December 2017.

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[271] Global Terrorism Index Report, *Institute For Economics and Peace,* 2015, p.2

[272] Global Terrorism Index Report, *Institute For Economics and Peace,* 2016, p.3.

[273] Global Terrorism Index Report, *Institute For Economics and Peace,* 2017, p.45.

[274] *Ibid*, p.60.

[275] Isaac Kfir and Georgia Grice, Counterterrorism Yearbook 2019, *Australian Strategic Policy Institute* (ASPI).

Historical Trends

Graph 1 captures shifts in jihadist terrorist plots and attacks in the West since 9/11 to January 2018 across three defined periods. 9/11 is used as the starting date as it was a 'watershed', marking the most lethal jihadist terrorist attack in the West by an organisation with global rather than local goals.[276] January 2018 is the terminal date as it is within the scope and specific focus of this study. As reflected in the graph and noted by observers, 9/11 has also been an anomaly in size and scale.[277] Drawn from the GTD, the statistics represent plot and attack data rather than operations. 9/11 statistics for example include four related but distinct attacks despite being part of one coordinated operation, resulting in 3,001 fatalities in total.[278]

Graph 1: Executed jihadist attacks in the West (9/11 – 2018)

Source: Jihadist terrorist attacks in the West dataset – Appendix D (GTD)

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[276] Maria G Donnelly et.al, 'Foreign Fighters in History', *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, 2017, p.13.

[277] Clint Watts, 'Radicalization in the U.S. Beyond Al Qaeda: Treating the disease of disconnection', *Foreign Policy Research Institute,* 2012, p.2.

[278] American Airlines Flight 11 into the North Tower (1384 deaths), United Airlines Flight 175 into the South Tower (1383 deaths), American Airlines Flight 77 into the Pentagon (190 deaths), and United Airlines Flight 93 crash landed into Pennsylvania (44 deaths). This figure includes the perpetrators. GTD.

Between 9/11 and December 2009, 25 jihadist terrorist attacks were executed resulting in 3,264 deaths however if 9/11 is considered as an outlier, the adjusted figures for this period are 21 attacks resulting in 263 deaths. Two other large coordinated operations conducted during this period, being the 2004 Madrid bombings and the 2005 London bombings[279] account for 247 of these fatalities. This period is therefore characterised by medium to large operations resulting in high casualties however the majority of executed plots did not result in any deaths.

By the mid-2000s, AQ's reputation as the vanguard of the global jihadist movement was at stake due to its inability to mount a major attack against the 'far enemy' of which its ideological foundations and credibility in the jihadi community are based.[280] This is reflected in the minor decline to 19 executed plots and the more significant decline in size, scale and lethality of attacks with 17 fatalities during the January 2010 to January 2014 period. In contrast, the January 2014 to January 2018 period represents a significant increase with 104 attacks executed resulting in 508 fatalities in total. IS' has been the primary perpetrator of jihadist terrorism in the West during this period.[281]

Frequency and Scale

As the following analysis focuses on the frequency and scale of 'operations' as defined in Chapter 3, subsequent graphs consolidate GTD plot and attack data into operations and exclude perpetrator fatalities for the three time periods. Graph 2 captures the overall number of operations (frequency) and operations with fatalities (lethality).

The 25 attacks between 9/11 and 2010 are consolidated into 16 operations in total of which five resulted in fatalities.[282] Excluding 9/11, the total victim fatalities for this period is 257. Of the 13 operations carried out between 2010 and 2014, four of these

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[279] Madrid involved six bombings (191 deaths) and London involved four bombings (56 deaths). GTD.
[280] Apart from the Madrid and London bombings and several failed plots in the years that followed 9/11 and preceding the Arab Spring, AQ was unable to successfully execute a terrorist attack in the West. Daveed Gartenstein-Ross and Nathanial Barr, 'How Al-Qaeda Works: The Jihadist Group's evolving Organizational Design', *Hudson Institute*, Current Trends in Islamist Ideology, June 2018.
[281] Tore R Hamming, 'Jihadi Competition and Political Preferences', *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 2017, Vol.11, No.6.
[282] 9/11, Madrid bombings, London bombings (7/7), Fort Hood attack and Little Rock attack.

resulted in 16 victim fatalities. The 104 attacks between 2014 and 2018 is consolidated into 94 operations,[283] of which 40 are lethal and resulted in 451 victim fatalities.

Graph 2: Frequency and lethality of jihadist operations (9/11 – 2018)

Source: Jihadist terrorist attacks in the West dataset – Appendix D (GTD)

Graph 2 demonstrates an increase in the overall frequency as well as number of jihadist operations that caused deaths for the 2014 to 2018 period. This period represents 76 percent of all executed operations and 82 percent of all lethal operations since 9/11. However, it is also important and of relevance to this study to consider changes in the scale of operations as illustrated in Graph 3.

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[283] For example, the November 2015 Paris attacks and March 2016 Brussels bombings were a series of related attacks part of the same operation.

In accordance with the scope and definitions provided in Chapter 3, the 9/11 to 2010 period involved large operations with three of the five operations resulting in more than 50 victim fatalities.[284] The 2010 to 2014 represents a shift to medium and small operations with the four operations comprising two operations with less than five victim fatalities and the other two resulting in more than five but less than 50 deaths. While the 2014 to 2018 period has involved an increase in operations as well as operations of varying scale, Graph 3 also makes evident that this period is primarily characterised by small operations. 24 of the 40 operations resulted in less than 5 victim fatalities, 14 resulted in more than five but less than 50 deaths and two resulted in over 50 deaths.

Graph 3: Scale of jihadist operations (9/11 – 2018)

Source: Jihadist terrorist attacks in the West dataset – Appendix D (GTD)

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[284] Even excluding 9/11, this period remains characterised by larger operations.

Breadth

Apart from shifts in the frequency and scale of operations, the geographic distribution or 'breadth' of operations in the West is another characteristic of the 2014 to 2018 period. Between 9/11 and 2010, operations were carried out in six countries and this declined slightly to four countries between 2010 and 2014. Since 2014 however, operations have expanded across 14 countries. Graph 4 illustrates the breadth of operations in Western countries for the three time periods.

Graph 4: Breadth of jihadist operations (9/11 – 2018)

Source: Jihadist terrorist attacks in the West dataset – Appendix D (GTD)

France and the US have experienced a substantial increase and the most instances of jihadist terrorism since 2014, with 24 and 19 operations conducted in these countries respectively, followed by the UK and Germany with ten each. Of equal significance is the number of countries where attacks had not previously been executed including Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Italy and Norway. This may in part be explained by a shift from group operations to attacks by jihadist inspired lone actors which both AQ and IS suggest are more likely to be executed.[285]

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[285] *Inspire*, 2011, Issue 5, p.12.

Perpetrator Group and Numbers

GTD includes the name of the group that carried out the attack, the number of perpetrators involved as well as details about any claims of responsibility, where these have been reported. As Graph 5 indicates, AQ and its affiliates were the main perpetrator of operations between 9/11 and 2010, however this has changed over time.

Graph 5: Jihadist operations by perpetrator group (9/11 – 2018)

Number of Operations by Perpetrator Group

	AQ / AQAP	IS / ISIL	Jihadist Inspired	Muslim Extremists
2001 - 2009	8	0	5	3
2010 - 2013	1	0	4	8
2014 - 2018	1	6	67	20

Source: Jihadist terrorist attacks in the West dataset – Appendix D (GTD)

Operations in the 2010 to 2014 period were mainly executed by perpetrators that have been generically identified in GTD as 'jihadist inspired extremists' and 'Muslim extremists.' While in 2014 to 2018 six operations are attributed to IS, Graph 5 indicates that the vast majority of operations during this time have also been executed by generically identified perpetrators. Of the 94 operations, 70 involved a single perpetrator and 90 involved three perpetrators or less. Due to this project's focus on IS-related plots and attacks, GTD incident summaries for each of the operations were individually analysed for references to IS.

Perpetrator Pledges of Allegiance

In 46 of the 94 operations, pledges of allegiance and claims of membership or contact with IS were recorded within the incident and perpetrator details. Despite pledges of allegiance or claims of links to IS, the GTD is generally unable to confirm the veracity of perpetrator claims regarding a connection to the group. However, such pledges or claims are indicative of the IS' ability to incite and inspire individuals to carry out attacks in the West on the group's behalf.

Jihadist Group Claims of Responsibility

Historically, AQ appears reluctant to claim operations, claiming only six of the eight operations considered to be AQ operations between 9/11 and 2010. However, the majority of operations are not claimed by any group. Between 2014 and 2018, 70 operations are not claimed. This might be due to several factors as many were indeed carried out by individuals, group reluctance in claiming responsibility for operations that may not have achieved their objectives or groups such as IS were unaware of the operation and therefore did not take credit.

IS does however claim responsibility for 23 operations, 15 of which resulted in victim fatalities. It is important to note that these claimed operations do not include all six operations where IS is listed as the perpetrator nor are all from the 46 operations where perpetrators pledged allegiance or claimed a connection to the group.

In some cases, perpetrators pledged allegiance or claimed a link with the group however these were not claimed by IS and in other cases, IS has claimed responsibility for the operation but the group is not mentioned in relation to the incident or the perpetrator. Yet as raised in Chapter 3, IS claimed operations are included in the analysis whether or not the perpetrator indicated a connection to the group as these claims are considered to be part of IS' propaganda and IO campaign. Graph 6 illustrates GTD data relating to group claims of responsibility.

Graph 6: Group claims of responsibility for operations (9/11 – 2018)

Source: Jihadist terrorist attacks in the West dataset – Appendix D (GTD)

Targeting

Jihadist operations during the 2014 to 2018 period involve a more diverse array of targets than previous years. In the years following 9/11, the primary target was transportation with a slight shift toward business, government and military targets up until 2014. While these remain targets, there has been a clear shift in target selection including several new target types. Indeed, there has been a substantial increase in targeting private citizens, property and police since 2014. Private citizens and property represent the primary target followed by police, whom were not previously targeted. Graph 7 illustrates this shift towards 'soft targets' which also include business, religious figures, educational institutions and tourists.

Graph 7: Shifts in target types (9/11 – 2018)

Source: Jihadist terrorist attacks in the West dataset – Appendix D (GTD)

The shift to soft targets might be due to the increased security measures around government and infrastructure and the increased probability of executing attacks against people as advocated by IS propagandists. As the perpetrators have primarily been jihadist inspired extremists rather than groups, the ability to plan and coordinate 'large scale' operations against symbolic or economic targets appears limited. This limitation is evident in the graphs which reflect changes since 2014 in frequency, scale, lethality and breadth of operations. Yet another feature of the 2014 to 2018 period is the focus on violence as expressed in attack methodology.

Attack Types

Graph 8 reflects the various attack types used in jihadist operations across the three periods. The graph demonstrates that armed assaults were the most common attack method used during the 2014 to 2018 period, featuring in 55 of the 94 operations. While bombings were the preferred method in previous years and still feature prominently, unarmed assaults such as vehicle attacks as well as the use of multiple attack methods for an operation are relatively new methods used in jihadist operations

during the period. Two aspects of the most prominent attack methods used are their 'simplicity' involving basic or improvised weapons, limited skills and planning as well as the impacts with death as a focal point.

Graph 8: Methods of attack (9/11 – 2018)

Source: Jihadist terrorist attacks in the West dataset – Appendix D (GTD)

Results: Broad Operational Trends for 2014 - 2018

This section is dedicated to summarising broad operational trends based on the preceding section's analysis of jihadist terrorist operations in the West. Due to this project's focus on IS' external operations strategy, broad trends are identified for the 2014 to 2018 period. Table 9 identifies the broad trends summarised as IS' external operations that will be subject to a comparative analysis against MoS themes in the following section.

Table 9: Broad operational trends (2014 – 2018)

Variable	Operational Trend
Operations: Frequency and Scale	**Small scale and frequent attacks.** Increased frequency and level of attack execution compared to previous time periods (9/11 to 2014). Decrease in the scale of operations to primarily small scale operations. Higher overall lethality over time in comparison to previous periods (excluding 9/11).
Operations: Breadth	**Dispersion of operations.** Expansion of operations in Western countries, including some which had not experienced attacks previously. Higher number of operations in Western European countries in particular than all previous periods.
Perpetrator Groups and Numbers	**Decentralisation.** Jihadist inspired extremists are the primary perpetrators of operations with IS the primary terrorist organisation referred to in the data. However, links with IS direction or command are generally unconfirmed. Single perpetrators and teams of up to three are responsible for the majority of operations.
Pledges of Allegiance	**Ability to incite or inspire lone actor attacks.** Increase in claims of affiliation with a terrorist organisation compared to previous time periods (9/11 to 2014) where perpetrators generally did not identify with a particular group. Perpetrator pledges of allegiance to a particular group is a new aspect of jihadist terrorism since 2014.
Claims of Responsibility	**Use of media and propaganda.** IS has been the primary terrorist organisation claiming responsibility for attacks however the majority of operations were not claimed by a group. IS has claimed all operations resulting in five or more fatalities with the exception of 2015 Charlie Hebdo (AQAP) and San Bernardino attacks (unclaimed). Despite IS claims, in several cases there was no link, reference or pledge of allegiance to the group.
Targeting	**Soft targets.** Increased focus on 'soft targets' and casualties. Private citizens, property and police are the primary targets of operations followed by business and military. Police emerge as a new target group with additional targets including educational institutions and tourists. Decline in targeting 'symbolic targets'. Relative decrease in targeting transportation and government (primary focus of previous time periods).
Methods of Attack	**Execution and lethality.** Simple attacks focused on killing. Increase in armed assaults and introduction of unarmed attacks involving basic / improvised weapons. Increase in execution as limited need for planning (opportunistic). Use of multiple methods to ensure maximum casualties.

Based on the analysis of the 2014 to 2018 period which coincides with IS' call for attacks in the West and the broad operational trends summarised in Table 9, several aspects distinguish IS' external operations from previous periods. IS has been connected to some attacks and has indeed claimed the major operations during this period,[286] however the period is primarily characterised by small scale, frequent attacks. Apart from the November 2015 Paris attacks and the March 2016 Brussels bombings, which involved the same network of perpetrators, jihadist inspired extremists with no confirmed connection to IS or direction from the group have been the primary perpetrators. These perpetrators generally acted alone carrying out attacks using basic or improvised weapons to target people and inflict casualties rather than symbolic targets. This has also resulted in increased execution and overall lethality.

IS' use of media and propaganda, strategic communications and IO are key features and critical to the group's actual or perceived capability to conduct terrorist operations in the West. This is evident in three ways. IS' ability to incite or inspire lone actor attacks with claims of affiliation, pledges of allegiance or references to the group in 46 of the executed operations since 2014, operational trends that broadly follow IS' focus on inflicting violence as advocated by IS propagandist al-Adnani,[287] and IS claims of responsibility for attacks, many of which did not have a link or refer to the group.[288]

The trends indicate IS' integration of violence and media are fundamental to the group's operations in the West. By inciting and claiming attacks, IS can maintain the appearance of an unceasing campaign of terror and continued expansion. While IS' mobilisation of sympathisers, guidance and advocacy for death and IO reflect psychological and political aspects reflective of revolutionary warfare, as with *Dabiq's* shifting themes,[289] IS' 'operational outsourcing' model presents challenges for defining a coherent strategy. The following section therefore compares themes from MoS which follow a structured, coherent strategy with these operational trends.

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[286] The November 2015 Paris attacks, the March 2016 Brussels bombings and the May 2017 Manchester arena bombing. While no links were established, IS also claimed the June 2016 Orlando nightclub attack and the July 2016 Nice vehicle attack. *GTD*, 2018.
[287] Abu Muhammad al-Adnani's call to kill Westerners 'in any manner', *Dabiq*, Issue 4.
[288] Refer to Annex D – Jihadist Terrorist Attacks in the West: 9/11-2018.
[289] Droogan and Peattie, 2017, p.618.

Comparative Analysis

Table 10 and Table 11 compare the eight MoS themes identified in Table 8 of Chapter 4 with the broad operational trends identified in Table 9 of this chapter. The key findings of this analysis are presented in Chapter 6.

Table 10: Comparative analysis - MoS themes and operational trends

MoS Theme	Operational Trend(s)	Correlation
Vexation Strikes Harassing attacks, terrorist operations, 'blows' of small to medium scale carried out by 'small bands' to cause fear (in society), expose vulnerabilities and provoke a response.	**Small scale and frequent attacks.** Increased frequency and attack execution. **Decentralisation.** Single perpetrators and small teams. **Dispersion of operations.** Expansion of operations in Western countries.	**Correlation between MoS guidance and operational trends.** The use of small, frequent operations in multiple locations to maintain an unceasing campaign of terror and intimidation. Provocation could not be assessed based on the data.
Violence The central role of violence and coarseness against the Infidels in combat and media battles. Violence, terrorism and massacring (intimidating others) is necessary for success in jihad as one of the most important obligations against unbelievers (the West) and a universal law to attain 'power' and make the enemy unable to oppose.	**Execution and lethality.** Simple attacks focused on killing. **Soft targets.** Increased focus on 'soft targets' and casualties. **Use of media and propaganda.** IS claims of responsibility for attacks .	**Correlation between MoS advocacy for violence and use of media with operational trends.** Terrorist operations focused on death, intimidation and use of the media to claim attacks (media battle).
Targeting Obligation to target the Crusaders and their helpers among the apostates and their armies. Principle to not rush out immediately to kill every class of people that assists the enemy (the West). The decision to target others should be left to High Command to determine the benefit of targeting or delaying.	**Soft targets.** Increased focus on 'soft targets' and casualties. Private citizens, property and police are the primary targets of operations. **Decentralisation.** No known links with IS direction or command.	**Partial correlation between MoS guidance on targeting and operational trends.** Broad guidance on targeting the West however operational trends suggest indiscriminate targeting with decentralised command.
Operations Small, intensive operations that lead to harmful results are very valuable. These qualitative operations grab peoples' attention and although may only strike a (single) Crusader, will escalate effects for a long period of time. Small and medium operations do not require consultation with High Command as these operations have been approved in advance.	**Small scale and frequent attacks.** Increased frequency and attack execution. Higher overall lethality. **Execution and lethality.** Simple attacks focused on killing. **Use of media and propaganda.** IS claims of responsibility for attacks . **Decentralisation.** No known links with IS command.	**Correlation between MoS guidance and operational trends.** The use of small, frequent operations, simple attacks to strike even a (single) Crusader, use of media to gain attention and decentralised approach.

Table 11: Comparative analysis - MoS themes and operational trends (Continued)

MoS Theme	Operational Trend(s)	Correlation
Political Game Political action is as important as military action. Those engaged in military battles should also be making political decisions. Political interests must be clear for leaders of action as politics (the art of the possible) and bargaining is central to the enemy.	**No operational trend relevant** due to lack of information around leadership, command, control and decision-making.	**No correlation identified.**
Media Battle Expose the illusion of Western power ('invincibility') and media deception' by engaging in the 'media battle'. Establish a media plan that justifies operations to the masses, sends a message that mujahids are on the rise continually escalating operations against the enemy in retreat who will be defeated. This encourages the masses and revives hope.	**Use of media and propaganda.** IS claims of responsibility for attacks. **Execution and lethality.** Simple attacks focused on killing. **Ability to incite or inspire lone actor attacks.** Increase in claims of affiliation.	**Correlation between MoS theme of 'Media Battle' and operational trends.** IS use of media and propaganda has been a central feature of external operations. This includes justifications to mobilise sympathisers, claim attacks maintain an appearance of an unceasing campaign with frequent executed attacks.
Power of the Masses Importance of unity, allegiance and rules of affiliation. Establish coalitions where permitted, unite the masses under Sharia and a tie of religious loyalty between all groups (the Umma) embodied in a covenant written in blood. Need to unite the Umma under a single banner to establish 'power' and accept each individual, group or band as they enter the jihad.	**Ability to incite or inspire lone actor attacks.** Increase in claims of affiliation. **Use of media and propaganda.** IS claims of responsibility for attacks. **Dispersion of operations.** Expansion of operations in Western countries.	**Partial correlation between MoS theme and operational trends.** Operational trends indicate an increase in claims of affiliation and claims for attacks under the IS banner in multiple countries. However MoS is more rigid regarding rules of affiliation.
Lessons Learned Learning from the failures of past jihadist movements generally attributed to a shortcoming of understanding universal laws (use of violence). Lessons from Egypt, Algeria as well as the enemy's failures (Soviet Union and later the West) in Afghanistan.	**Execution and lethality.** Simple attacks focused on killing. **Soft targets.** Increased focus on 'soft targets' and casualties. **Use of media and propaganda.** IS claims of responsibility for attacks.	**Partial correlation between MoS theme of 'Lessons Learned' and operational trends.** Operational trends indicate a focus on violence and use of media which are identified in MoS as a shortcoming of past jihadist movements. However the attack data lacks information to suggest IS learns from failures beyond this.

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This chapter analysed IS plots and attacks in the West to identify broad operational trends and compared these trends with the eight most prevalent MoS themes. The comparative analysis of trends resulted in correlations with four of the eight MoS themes, including 'vexation strikes', 'violence', 'operations' and the 'media battle'. Partial correlations between trends were identified with MoS themes 'targeting', 'power of the masses' and 'lessons learned', while no correlations between operational trends and the 'political game' theme were found. In cases where partial or no correlations were found this was either due to insufficient operational data relating to the theme or a divergence or contradiction between the theme and trend. The following chapter presents the findings based on this analysis.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was to examine the claimed influence of jihadist 'strategic manuals' on IS' external operations by exploring correlations between MoS themes and jihadist terrorist attack trends in the West from January 2014 to January 2018. This final chapter therefore summarises the research, presents the key findings and situates the project within the academic discourse before identifying limitations and opportunities for further research.

Summary of Project and Results

This thesis argues that IS does not strictly follow MoS as a strategic manual. Correlations from the analysis indicate both MoS themes and IS operational trends reflect principles of revolutionary warfare however rather than follow MoS' structured approach, IS often traverses through various phases of a politico-military strategy. MoS themes of 'violence', 'vexation', 'small-scale operations', and the 'media battle' are evident in IS' operational trends yet are also consistent with the group's ideological foundations. As such, while similarities with MoS exist, IS operations suggest the group's adaptation of revolutionary warfare into its own strategy influenced by various ideologues, key inflections and conditions on the ground has evolved over time. This central argument and the key findings it generated were examined over five chapters.

Chapter 1 provided an overview of the strategic and doctrinal evolution of IS, its historical context and use of terrorism in the West. This chapter introduced the key concepts within the scope of this project with a specific focus on jihadist strategists.

Chapter 2 explored the existing literature on the influence of jihadist ideologues and doctrine on terrorist group strategy, studies that situate strategy within a broader revolutionary warfare model, and those which have examined jihadist material. This chapter highlighted gaps in the literature and positioned this thesis within a field usually focused on 'salafi-jihadist' religious elements by instead focusing on jihadist strategists.

Chapter 3 outlined the research methods and approach. This included the analytical stages for the thematic network analysis of MoS and the use of GTD data, scope and definitions for the statistical analysis of jihadist terrorist attacks in the West.

Chapter 4 examined MoS using a grounded theory approach to draw out themes and illustrate these themes in a thematic network analysis. Themes were summarised based on prevalence with patterns interpreted as they appear in the text, to establish MoS strategy. Prevalent themes were then identified for further analysis.

Chapter 5 analysed IS related terrorist plot and attack data from the GTD between January 2014 and January 2018 to identify broad trends in IS' external operations in the West. Broad trends were compared with prevalent MoS themes to identify correlations and assess claims regarding the influence of MoS on IS strategy.

Key Findings: A Framework for Savagery?

This section summarises the key findings of this research and situates this project's contribution to the academic literature. In doing so, it first outlines the findings relating to MoS themes and IS operational trends in the West before discussing limitations and opportunities for further research.

MoS articulates a clear three stage strategy. The three stages discussed in MoS are intended to occur sequentially:

1. Vexation and exhaustion operations (small to medium scale terrorist attacks) to draw the West into a war of attrition, once the West is drained economically and militarily, it would lose popular support and withdraw from the Islamic world.

2. Introduce Sharia governance to manage regions of savagery, (weak and failing states) develop allegiances and expand.

3. Establish an Islamic state.

Acknowledging that IS' historical development and overarching strategy was almost the reverse of MoS' three stage strategy,[290] with the group first focused on establishing an Islamic caliphate and later expanding to other regions and conducting attacks in the West, the scope of this study focused on stage one.

This project finds that thematically, stage one (vexation and exhaustion strikes) is the primary focus of the text. While the majority of studies focus on MoS in relation to IS' activities in the conflict zone, theme prevalence suggests that MoS' strategic guidance primarily relates to an action plan against the West. Based on the thematic network analysis, this project identified extremely prevalent Organising and Basic Themes. These themes indicate MoS' focus on a 'far enemy strategy' and the application of 'universal laws', as defined by Abu Bakr Naji. Underpinning these Organising Themes are extremely prevalent Basic Themes of 'violence', 'operations', 'vexation strikes', 'political game', 'media battle', 'lessons learned', 'targeting' and 'power of the masses.'

MoS strategy reflects the principles of revolutionary warfare. As prevalent themes are consistently linked throughout MoS, incorporating a blend of military, political, social and psychological efforts including terrorism, the finding is consistent with existing arguments that MoS reflects a broader revolutionary warfare model.[291] Of these principles, Naji frequently emphasises two key elements necessary for success particularly the need to undermine the 'enemy's' strength being its effective use of media and exploiting its vulnerability being its lack of tolerance or capacity to sustain casualties. The use of uncompromising violence blended with engagement in the 'media battle' are therefore considered pragmatic and central to MoS strategy.[292]

In contrast to MoS' structured and systematic approach and previous periods where AQ planned and executed medium to large scale operations, IS' external operations strategy seems fluid. However, IS' operational trends during the 2014 to 2018 period

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[290] Refer to phases outlined in Craig Whiteside, 'New Masters of Revolutionary Warfare: The Islamic State Movement (2002-2016)', *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 2016, Vol.10, No.4.

[291] Zabel, 2007, p.6. Barrett, 2015, Vol.8, No.11, p.1.

[292] Whiteside traces the development of IS' integrated strategy. Craig Whiteside, 'Nine Bullets for the Traitors, One for the Enemy: The Slogans and Strategy behind the Islamic State's Campaign to Defeat the Sunni Awakening (2006-2017)', *ICCT Research Paper*, September 2018, pp.1-35.

also broadly reflect principles of revolutionary warfare. The period represents several operational shifts and attack trends and apart from the 2015 Paris attacks and 2016 Brussels bombings is primarily characterised by small scale, frequent attacks in numerous Western countries by jihadist inspired extremists. During this period, IS' use of media and propaganda appears synchronised with actions as the group identified being connected to some attacks and indeed claimed major operations.[293] In the majority of attacks, the individuals or small teams were not connected or in communication with IS, reflecting a decentralised command structure. Furthermore, IS also claimed attacks that do not refer to the group.

It is for these reasons that arguments around whether IS has a systematic strategy are considered within the academic debate. While IS may not necessarily adhere to MoS' systematic strategy or doctrinal rigidity, IS' strategy draws on revolutionary warfare principles as it traverses through various phases of politico-military activities that include external operations in the West. Inspired attacks or 'operational outsourcing' seem to play a critical role in IS' ability to attack the West based on broad operational trends yet the synchronisation of the group's IO campaign is plausible within a strategic campaign[294] as well as reflective of an operationally flexible and adaptive organisation.

Indeed, IS has engaged in the 'media battle' where the use of violence is a key feature for promoting success, potentially inspiring other attacks throughout the West. By inciting attacks that focus on causing casualties, targeting people using any means available rather than grand schemes against symbolic targets coupled with pledges of allegiance and claims of responsibility, IS creates the appearance of an unceasing campaign of violence. This project therefore finds the use of uncompromising violence blended with engagement in the 'media battle' present the strongest correlations between MoS themes and IS operational trends. Consequently, IS' strategy in the West reflects a preference for flexibility over doctrinal rigidity.

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[293] The November 2015 Paris attacks, the March 2016 Brussels bombings and the May 2017 Manchester arena bombing. While no links were established, IS also claimed the June 2016 Orlando nightclub attack and the July 2016 Nice vehicle attack. *GTD*, 2018.

[294] Zarqawi's 2004 letter to AQ leadership outlines AQI's proposed strategy and earlier emphasis on media. Abu Musab al Zarqawi, Coalition Provisional Authority English translation of terrorist Musab al Zarqawi letter obtained by the *United States Government in Iraq*, 17 February 2004.

Contribution to the Academic Debate

This project and the key findings contribute to the academic debate in several ways. The thematic network analysis of MoS and comparison of prevalent themes against IS' broad operational trends in the West, bridges a gap in the literature and contributes to the small number of strategic studies on IS' activities outside the conflict zones of Iraq and Syria. By situating MoS within the discourse and analysis of IS, which have usually focused on Salafi-jihadist religious elements, this research contributes to debates on the strategist-doctrinarian divide,[295] the influence of jihadist strategists[296] and the relationship between doctrine and strategy.[297]

The project builds on the debates around IS' strategy as part of a revolutionary warfare model[298] or as a reactionary shift to military and territorial losses[299] by arguing that IS' operational flexibility, adaptive capacity and opportunistic approach enables IS to traverse through various phases of a political-military strategy, which support both arguments. Indeed, a key finding of this research is that IS operations reflect the principles of revolutionary warfare however not the systematic structure of the MoS. It also identified that the methodology used in previous analytical studies of jihadist material and propaganda[300] may also be applied to the field of jihadist strategic studies to further understand the integration of doctrine, strategy and operations.[301]

While the research found that IS does not strictly follow MoS as a strategic manual, preferring operational flexibility over strategic or doctrinal rigidity, the key findings supporting this argument offer interesting results regarding previous studies which have focused on the influence of MoS on IS' conflict zone actions. This thesis found that MoS is primarily concerned with attacks against the 'far enemy', due to the lack of operations at the time.

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[295] Moghadam and Fishman, 2011, Brachman and McCants, 2006, Gorka, 2016, Zabel, 2007.

[296] Celso, 2014, Jackson and Loidolt, 2013, Burke, 2015, Cruickshank and Hage Ali, 2007, Stern and Berger, 2015, Rei, 2016, McCants, 2015, Lia and Hegghammer, 2004.

[297] Lia, 2008, McCants, 2015, Manne, 2016, Mello, 2018, Ryan, 2013.

[298] Whiteside, 2016, Ryan, 2013, Kalyvas, 2015

[299] Saltman and Winter, 2014, Watkins, 2017, Gunaratna, 2017.

[300] Droogan and Peattie, 2017 and 2018.

[301] Adamsky, 2009.

Limitations and Future Research Opportunities

This thesis focused on analysing the strategic and doctrinal thinking of Abu Bakr Naji, an unknown yet widely cited jihadist strategist. As Naji's treatise, MoS is broadly considered within the academic literature as influential to the strategic direction of the post-9/11 global jihadist movement, the thesis focused specifically on the relationship between this document and IS' external operations in the West. While the scope of this study was therefore limited, three key limitations emerged that also represent opportunities for further research.

First, the depth of analysis was limited to MoS as a single document, whereas a comprehensive analysis between this 'strategic manual' and other works by al-Suri, al-Qurashi, and al-Murqin that have arguably influenced IS' strategy would build on the literature that has primarily focused on AQ.[302] As Naji's work merges the near and far enemy, future research would also seek to understand the relationship between strategic doctrine and IS' ideological foundations by examining the influence of Faraj and al-Muhajir framed in sectarianism, *takfiri* and the utility of jihadist hyper-violence.[303]

Second, while this thesis has explored IS' external operations within a broader revolutionary warfare campaign, there is scope for deeper analysis of the political, economic, social and psychological efforts outlined by Whiteside.[304] This thesis identified that 'violence' and 'media' are central to both the strategic guidance provided in MoS and operational terrorist trends in the West. Examining IS' integration of terrorist operations and strategic communications, which suggests a strategic logic of inspired attacks is therefore crucial to formulating counter-terrorism strategies.

Indeed, research on IS propaganda strategy[305] and synchronisation of politico-military and propaganda efforts to maximise effects of operations is already underway.[306]

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[302] Zabel, 2007, Lia, 2009, Ryan, 2013.

[303] Celso, 2016, p.8.

[304] Craig Whiteside, 'New Masters of Revolutionary Warfare: The Islamic State Movement (2002-2016)', Perspectives on Terrorism, 2016, Vol.10, No.2.

[305] Charlie Winter, *'The virtual 'caliphate: Understanding Islamic State's Propaganda Strategy',* Quilliam, 2015.

[306] Haroro Ingram, 'Islamic State's English-language magazine, 2014-2017: Trends & implications for CT-CVE strategic communications', *International Centre for Counter-Terrorism – The Hague*, ICCT Research Paper, 2018.

Future research would contribute to this literature using this project's methodological approach to analyse and compare themes from jihadist strategic manuals and IS media and propaganda material.[307]

Finally, despite these limitations, the project sought to address a large gap in the existing literature by offering unique insights regarding the influence of jihadist strategists and strategic manuals on IS' external operations strategy. While existing studies widely cite MoS as a 'blueprint' for the strategy of IS, the emphasis has been on the relationship between MoS and IS' sectarianism and *takfiri* influences in Iraq and Syria and with regards to IS' relationship with AQ. This project therefore examined correlations between this 'strategic manual' and IS' use of terrorism in the West as part of an external operations strategy.

By identifying correlations as well as deviations, the findings reflect similarities between MoS, IS operations and revolutionary warfare principles while also challenging a common assumption around the overall influence of strategic documents. Given this study's contribution to the field and the key findings, more work needs to be conducted to understand the relationship between doctrine, strategy and operations. The project's significance however is also reflected in the limitations of researching jihadist strategic manuals such as MoS, which follow a clear, structured approach against terrorist group actions which may draw on broad principles from such manuals yet will continually adapt and evolve to conditions on the ground.

[307] Droogan and Peattie, 2017.

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Appendix A: List of Theme Codes

Code / Node	Files	References
Actions	2	4
Allegiance	2	4
Anti-Western	3	6
Business Management	1	1
Caliphate	2	3
Chaos	3	14
Code of honour	1	2
Criticism of Islamic religious clerics	4	6
Decentralisation	3	10
Defence	1	2
Deterrence	4	12
Divine Intervention	1	2
Effective use of media and propaganda	5	20
Establishment of the Caliphate	1	3
Exhaustion	2	17
Expansion	2	4
Fighting Society	4	7
Fourth Generation Warfare (4GW)	2	11
Grand strategy	1	6
Guerrilla warfare	1	5
Illusion of Power	1	1
Intimidation	1	1
Islamic Jurisprudence	1	1
Jihadism	2	15
Know your enemy	2	3
Lessons learned	2	11
Military rule - dictatorship	1	2
Operations	3	15
Order	1	4
Outsourcing	1	2
Paying the Price	4	12
Polarisation	2	3
Popular support	4	15

Power	1	10
Pragmatism	2	16
Provocation	4	16
Recruitment	2	3
Retribution	2	2
Revolutionary change	1	3
Revolutionary Warfare	3	17
Salafism	1	4
State-Building	4	7
Strategic guidance	4	25
Strategy against the Near Enemy	3	14
Strategy against the West	4	45
Submission	1	3
Superpower dominance	2	13
Superpower vulnerabilities	3	9
Takfir	2	10
Terrorism	1	3
Unification	2	3
Universal Laws	2	11
Use of Western military theories	3	7
Vexation	5	18
Violence and Savagery	6	34
War of attrition	4	7
War of ideas	1	1

Appendix B: Theme Code Book

Organising Theme	Description
Know Your Enemy	Understand Western strategies, military principles, political theory, sociology and management to exploit superpower vulnerabilities, pursuit of self-interest and America's illusion of power embodied by a 'deceptive media halo'.
Basic Themes	**Description**
The West	The United States (America) as the remaining superpower and other Western countries of 'Infidels' and 'unbelievers' that revolve in America's orbit have come to represent the civilisation of Satan and the Crusader enemy.
Apostates	Arab rulers who do not implement Sharia Law but instead control a satellite state that revolves in the orbit of the superpower (America) acquiring economic and military benefits from the superpower. These Taghuts (idols of tyrants) are 'fellow travellers', apostate enemies who have mixed their values and beliefs with the Crusaders (unbelievers) values.
Superpower Vulnerabilities	Doctrine of material interests and an unruffled life of comfort and luxury. Confrontation and exhaustion to directly affect the overwhelming military power, deceptive media and disrupt the social cohesion of the West.
Self-Interest	The aim which motivates the enemies is a material aim. Material interests and the desire to survive fuels their (Crusaders and Apostates) action. Allies and those that support the enemy continue to support them as long as their interests (survival) are served.
Military Principles	Understand the abilities of the enemy and his defeat by plunging into active war. This involves using time-tested principles of military combat including the plans and military principles of non-Muslims. Refer to books on the art of war and guerrilla wars to use the enemy's (the West) overwhelming military power against it. "If regular armies concentrate in one place they lose control. Conversely, if they spread out, they lose effectiveness".
Political Theory	Understand the rules of politics used by the enemy (the West) and their fellow travellers (apostates). Leaders of the Islamic movement should master political science just as they would master military science. Political action is very important and dangerous such that "a single political mistake is worse than one hundred military mistakes".
Lessons Learned	Learning from the failures of past jihadist movements generally attributed to a shortcoming of understanding universal laws (use of violence). Lessons from Egypt, Algeria as well as the enemy's failures (Soviet Union and later the West) in Afghanistan.

Organising Theme	Description
Far Enemy Strategy	Attacks in the West to provoke America and its allies to abandon its media, psychological and proxy war against Islam and force the West to attack Islam directly. Use of terrorism, media, political-military and psychological operations to exhaust the West (militarily and economically), leading to its political defeat and cultural and social collapse.

Basic Themes	Description
Action Plan	Plan of actions to achieve 3 goals 1) Destroy respect for America; 2) Increase support from the masses (Umma) and anger against the West and apostates; and 3) Force the West to abandon its war against Islam by proxy and provoke the West to attack directly. Includes operational plan and a media plan with sequential strikes against America to reduce its prestige among the masses, elites and armies of apostasy. Increased and diversified vexation strikes (terrorism) against the West in every place to disperse the enemy's efforts.
Vexation Strikes	Harassing attacks, terrorist operations, 'blows' of small to medium scale carried out by 'small bands' to cause fear (in society), expose vulnerabilities and provoke a response.
Provocation	Anticipated response from the West once operations begin against the enemy. Principles of the enemy that motivate it politically and militarily to act in self-interest and force the West to abandon proxy wars and engage in direct confrontation in the regions (of Islam).
War of Attrition	The battle of patience, a long war to drain the West' economic and military capabilities. The most likely way to defeat the strongest enemy (America) is to drain it by operations. The weaknesses resulting from the burdens of war will lead to cultural annihilation.
Exhaustion	Weaker powers succeed against stronger powers by exhausting them militarily. Small battles to exhaust the enemy (the West) are the primary reason for final victory.
Deterrence	The policy of 'paying the price' to spread fear and hopelessness in the hearts of the enemy. Retribution for crimes to deter and make the West think one thousand times before undertaking an attack against the Umma, such that the enemy is limited to defending.
Media Battle	Expose the illusion of Western power ('invincibility') and media deception' by engaging in the 'media battle'. Establish a media plan that justifies operations to the masses, sends a message that mujahids are on the rise continually escalating operations against the enemy in retreat who will be defeated. This encourages the masses and revives hope.
Political Game	Political action is as important as military action. Those engaged in military battles should also be making political decisions. Political interests must be clear for leaders of action as politics (the art of the possible) and bargaining is central to the enemy.

Operations	Small, intensive operations that lead to harmful results are very valuable. These qualitative operations grab peoples' attention and although may only strike a (single) Crusader, will escalate effects for a long period of time. Small and medium operations do not require consultation with High Command as these operations have been approved in advance.
Targeting	Obligation to target the Crusaders and their helpers among the apostates and their armies (the current enemies of the mujahids are not Muslim). Principle to not rush out immediately to kill every class of people that assists the enemy (the West). The decision to target others should be left to High Command to determine the benefit of targeting or delaying.
Sacrifice	Hardships on a long and arduous path. Requirement for giving, commitment, courage, honour, patience, blood and submission to God before life (martyrdom).
Organising Theme	**Description**
Universal Laws	Pure human reason, practical reality, rational thought and pragmatism firmly grounded in knowledge and the use of time-tested principles such as the use of violence, armed struggle and power of the masses. These laws are considered consistent with Sharia law however the poor application by past movements that have confused the Islamic youth is due to weak knowledge of reality (universal laws).
Basic Themes	**Description**
Human Reason	Human nature (behaviour), actions justified rationally through cost-benefit approach as opposed to peaceful solutions, elections and peaceful proselytising or solutions with a single strike without shedding blood. However sacrifice and suffering is the practical reality.
Sharia Justice	Guidance on methods to achieve the goal. Sharia commandments and criteria as adopted by the High Command setting the rules for jihad as one of the most important subjects for guidance. Divine Islamic laws and obligations passed from the Prophet.
Criticism of Clerics	Programs advocated by other Islamic groups and clerics that have confused the Islamic youth with propagation and proselytising, popular jihad, innovative and theoretical models with sparkling slogans however neglect universal laws and Sharia commandments. 'Those who study jihad as it is written on paper, do not understand the nature of wars'.
Violence	The central role of violence and coarseness against the Infidels in combat and media battles. Violence, terrorism and massacring (intimidating others) is necessary for success in jihad as one of the most important obligations against unbelievers (the West) and a universal law to attain 'power' and make the enemy unable to oppose.

Armed Struggle	The use of time-tested principles of military combat for jihadi action. These principles are provided to 'sharpen the mind' and clarify the importance of following the principles to improve the efficacy of military actions (armed struggle) and avoid the corrupting influences of rigidity and random behaviour.
Power of the Masses	Importance of unity, allegiance and rules of affiliation. Establish coalitions where permitted, unite the masses under Sharia and a tie of religious loyalty between all groups (the Umma) embodied in a covenant written in blood. Need to unite the Umma under a single banner to establish 'power' and accept each individual, group or band as they enter the jihad.

Organising Theme	Description
Order to Chaos	The stage following that of 'vexation and exhaustion'. Transition from a situation where regions submit to the law of the jungle, in its primitive form (savage chaos) to regions managed, administered and governed according to Sharia law (order) and establish the Islamic state.
Basic Themes	**Description**
Islamic Virtues	Islamic activists carrying out the command of God will be granted victory and the Umma will once again steer humanity toward the path of divine guidance and salvation. The small group of thinkers and noble people that oppose tyranny (from the West) and seek justice want to change the current reality (state of affairs) for the better.
Sharia Governance	Establishing Sharia laws among the people who live in the regions of savagery, working to spread legal, Sharia science and passing Sharia judgement in accordance with the main jihad movement or a scholar of Sharia criterions. The entity (people of the region) will act to assist the religion and not violate Sharia, achieving purity.
Management	The art of management which consists of managing peoples' needs including the provision of food, medical treatment, education, security and Sharia justice for people living in the regions of savagery. The advancement of managerial groups toward the attainment of the 'power of establishment' and readiness for establishing the Islamic state.
Leadership	Leaders must be the objects of complete reliance within the movement and entrusted with its actions and secrets. Unlike the door to management which is open to many, the door to leadership is only open to those reliable and intelligent pious students of knowledge who responded to horrors with composure, calmness and deep thought.
State Building	Sharia governance and requirements of managing the regions of savagery by spreading internal security and preserving it in every region that is managed, providing food and medical treatment, securing regions from invasions by the enemy (the West and apostates), disseminating spies, continuing vexation operations, expanding and setting up defensive fortifications and developing fighting capacities.

Fighting Society	Raising the level of belief and combat efficiency by training the youth of the region of savagery and establishing a fighting society at all levels. Leaders of the movement should be military leaders or have the ability to fight in the ranks. The political administration should be made up of 'warriors'.
Power	The ability for the group to remain intact despite enemy attacks targeting portions of the group. The group achieves 'power' when it is difficult to destroy in a single strike. Individuals in the group or region of savagery exchanging loyalty, unifying and willing to suffer and make sacrifices for one another is 'power' to confront the enemies.
Problems and Challenges	Obstacles that may cause harm, stop action and prevent development and advancement. These include the decreasing number of believers, lack of administrative cadres, loyalty, infiltration and spies, secession of individuals and groups, excessive zeal and the problems that accompany it.

Appendix C: GTD Coding

Drawn from the Global Terrorism Database Code Book: 2018.

Geocoding Specificity

Attack Type
Categorical Variable
This field captures the general method of attack and often reflects the broad class of tactics used. It consists of nine categories, which are defined below. Up to three attack types can be recorded for each incident. Typically, only one attack type is recorded for each incident unless the attack is comprised of a sequence of events.

When multiple attack types may apply, the most appropriate value is determined based on the hierarchy below. For example, if an assassination is carried out through the use of an explosive, the Attack Type is coded as Assassination, not Bombing/Explosion. If an attack involves a sequence of events, then the first, the second, and the third attack types are coded in the order of the hierarchy below rather than the order in which they occurred.

Attack Type:

- Assassination

- Hijacking

- Kidnapping

- Barricade Incident

- Bombing/Explosion

- Armed Assault

- Unarmed Assault

- Facility/Infrastructure Attack

- Unknown

1 = ASSASSINATION
An act whose primary objective is to kill one or more specific, prominent individuals. Usually carried out on persons of some note, such as high-ranking military officers, government officials, celebrities, etc. Not to include attacks on non-specific members of a targeted group. The killing of a police officer would be an armed assault unless there is reason to believe the attackers singled out a particularly prominent officer for assassination.

2 = ARMED ASSAULT
An attack whose primary objective is to cause physical harm or death directly to human beings by use of a firearm, incendiary, or sharp instrument (knife, etc.). Not to include attacks involving the use of fists, rocks, sticks, or other handheld (less-than-lethal) weapons. Also includes attacks involving certain classes of explosive devices *in addition to* firearms, incendiaries, or sharp

instruments. The explosive device subcategories that are included in this classification are grenades, projectiles, and unknown or other explosive devices that are thrown.

3 = BOMBING/EXPLOSION

An attack where the primary effects are caused by an energetically unstable material undergoing rapid decomposition and releasing a pressure wave that causes physical damage to the surrounding environment. Can include either high or low explosives (including a dirty bomb) but does not include a nuclear explosive device that releases energy from fission and/or fusion, or an incendiary device where decomposition takes place at a much slower rate.

If an attack involves certain classes of explosive devices along with firearms, incendiaries, or sharp objects, then the attack is coded as an armed assault only. The explosive device subcategories that are included in this classification are grenades, projectiles, and unknown or other explosive devices that are thrown in which the bombers are also using firearms or incendiary devices.

4 = HIJACKING

An act whose primary objective is to take control of a vehicle such as an aircraft, boat, bus, etc. for the purpose of diverting it to an unprogrammed destination, force the release of prisoners, or some other political objective. Obtaining payment of a ransom should not the sole purpose of a hijacking but can be one element of the incident so long as additional objectives have also been stated. Hijackings are distinct from Hostage Taking because the target is a vehicle, regardless of whether there are people/passengers in the vehicle.

5 = HOSTAGE TAKING (BARRICADE INCIDENT)

An act whose primary objective is to take control of hostages for the purpose of achieving a political objective through concessions or through disruption of normal operations. Such attacks are distinguished from kidnapping since the incident occurs and usually plays out at the target location with little or no intention to hold the hostages for an extended period in a separate clandestine location.

6 = HOSTAGE TAKING (KIDNAPPING)

An act whose primary objective is to take control of hostages for the purpose of achieving a political objective through concessions or through disruption of normal operations. Kidnappings are distinguished from Barricade Incidents (above) in that they involve moving and holding the hostages in another location.

7 = FACILITY / INFRASTRUCTURE ATTACK

An act, excluding the use of an explosive, whose primary objective is to cause damage to a non-human target, such as a building, monument, train, pipeline, etc. Such attacks include arson and various forms of sabotage (e.g., sabotaging a train track is a facility/infrastructure attack, even if passengers are killed). Facility/infrastructure attacks can include acts which aim to harm an installation, yet also cause harm to people incidentally (e.g. an arson attack primarily aimed at damaging a building, but causes injuries or fatalities).

8 = UNARMED ASSAULT

An attack whose primary objective is to cause physical harm or death directly to human beings by any means other than explosive, firearm, incendiary, or sharp instrument (knife, etc.). Attacks involving chemical, biological or radiological weapons are considered unarmed assaults.

9 = UNKNOWN

The attack type cannot be determined from the available information.

Target/Victim

Categorical Variable

The target/victim type field captures the general type of target/victim. When a victim is attacked specifically *because of his or her relationship* to a particular person, such as a prominent figure, the target type reflects that motive. For example, if a family member of a government official is attacked because of his or her relationship to that individual, the type of target is "government." This variable consists of the following 22 categories:

1 = BUSINESS

Businesses are defined as individuals or organizations engaged in commercial or mercantile activity as a means of livelihood. Any attack on a business or private citizens patronizing a business such as a restaurant, gas station, music store, bar, café, etc.

This includes attacks carried out against corporate offices or employees of firms like mining companies, or oil corporations. Furthermore, includes attacks conducted on business people or corporate officers. Included in this value as well are hospitals and chambers of commerce and cooperatives. Does not include attacks carried out in public or quasi-public areas such as "business district.

2 = GOVERNMENT (GENERAL)

Any attack on a government building; government member, former members, including members of political parties in official capacities, their convoys, or events sponsored by political parties; political movements; or a government sponsored institution where the attack is expressly carried out to harm the government.

This value includes attacks on judges, public attorneys (e.g., prosecutors), courts and court systems, politicians, royalty, head of state, government employees (unless police or military), election-related attacks, or intelligence agencies and spies.

This value does not include attacks on political candidates for office or members of political parties that do not hold an elected office (these attacks are captured in "Private Citizens and Property").

3 = POLICE

This value includes attacks on members of the police force or police installations; this includes police boxes, patrols headquarters, academies, cars, checkpoints, etc.

Includes attacks against jails or prison facilities, or jail or prison staff or guards.

4 = MILITARY

Includes attacks against military units, patrols, barracks, convoys, jeeps, and aircraft. Also includes attacks on recruiting sites, and soldiers engaged in internal policing functions such as at checkpoints and in anti-narcotics activities. This category also includes peacekeeping units that conduct military operations (e.g., AMISOM)

Excludes attacks against non-state militias and guerrillas, these types of attacks are coded as "Terrorist/Non-state Militias" see below.

5 = ABORTION RELATED

Attacks on abortion clinics, employees, patrons, or security personnel stationed at clinics.

6 = AIRPORTS & AIRCRAFT

An attack that was carried out either against an aircraft or against an airport. Attacks against airline employees while on board are also included in this value.

7 = GOVERNMENT (DIPLOMATIC)

Attacks carried out against foreign missions, including embassies, consulates, etc.

This value includes cultural centers that have diplomatic functions, and attacks against diplomatic staff and their families (when the relationship is relevant to the motive of the attack) and property. The United Nations is a diplomatic target.

8 = EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

Attacks against schools, teachers, or guards protecting school sites. Includes attacks against university professors, teaching staff and school buses. Moreover, includes attacks against religious schools in this value.

As noted below in the "Private Citizens and Property" value, the GTD has several attacks against students. If attacks involving students are not expressly against a school, university or other educational institution or are carried out in an educational setting, they are coded as private citizens and property.

Excludes attacks against military schools (attacks on military schools are coded as "Military," see below).

9 = FOOD OR WATER SUPPLY

Attacks on food or water supplies or reserves are included in this value. This generally includes attacks aimed at the infrastructure related to food and water for human consumption.

10 = JOURNALISTS & MEDIA

Includes, attacks on reporters, news assistants, photographers, publishers, as well as attacks on media headquarters and offices.

Attacks on transmission facilities such as antennae or transmission towers, or broadcast infrastructure are coded as "Telecommunications," see below.

11 = MARITIME (INCLUDES PORTS AND MARITIME FACILITIES)

Includes civilian maritime: attacks against fishing ships, oil tankers, ferries, yachts, etc. (Attacks on fishermen are coded as "Private Citizens and Property," see below).

12 = NGO

Includes attacks on offices and employees of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). NGOs here include large multinational non-governmental organizations such as the Red Cross and Doctors without Borders, as well as domestic organizations.

13= OTHER

This value includes acts of terrorism committed against targets which do not fit into other categories. Some examples include ambulances, firefighters, and international demilitarized zones.

14= PRIVATE CITIZENS & PROPERTY

This value includes attacks on individuals, the public in general or attacks in public areas including markets, commercial streets, busy intersections and pedestrian malls.

Also includes ambiguous cases where the target/victim was a named individual, or where the target/victim of an attack could be identified by name, age, occupation, gender or nationality. This value also includes ceremonial events, such as weddings and funerals.

The GTD contains a number of attacks against students. If these attacks are not expressly against a school, university or other educational institution or are not carried out in an educational setting, these attacks are coded using this value. Also, includes incidents involving political supporters as

private citizens and property, provided that these supporters are not part of a government-sponsored event. Finally, this value includes police informers.

Does not include attacks causing civilian casualties in businesses such as restaurants, cafes or movie theaters (these categories are coded as "Business" see above).

15 = RELIGIOUS FIGURES/INSTITUTIONS

This value includes attacks on religious leaders, (Imams, priests, bishops, etc.), religious institutions (mosques, churches), religious places or objects (shrines, relics, etc.). This value also includes attacks on organizations that are affiliated with religious entities that are not NGOs, businesses or schools.

Attacks on religious pilgrims are considered "Private Citizens and Property;" attacks on missionaries are considered religious figures.

16 = TELECOMMUNICATION

This includes attacks on facilities and infrastructure for the transmission of information. More specifically this value includes things like cell phone towers, telephone booths, television transmitters, radio, and microwave towers.

17 = TERRORISTS/NON-STATE MILITIAS

Terrorists or members of identified terrorist groups within the GTD are included in this value. Membership is broadly defined and includes informants for terrorist groups, but excludes former or surrendered terrorists.

This value also includes cases involving the targeting of militias and guerrillas.

18 = TOURISTS

This value includes the targeting of tour buses, tourists, or "tours." Tourists are persons who travel primarily for the purposes of leisure or amusement. Government tourist offices are included in this value.

The attack must clearly target tourists, not just an assault on a business or transportation system used by tourists. Travel agencies are coded as business targets.

19 = TRANSPORTATION (OTHER THAN AVIATION)

Attacks on public transportation systems are included in this value. This can include efforts to assault public buses, minibuses, trains, metro/subways, highways (if the highway itself is the target of the attack), bridges, roads, etc.

20 = UNKNOWN

The target type cannot be determined from the available information.

21 = UTILITIES

This value pertains to facilities for the transmission or generation of energy. For example, power lines, oil pipelines, electrical transformers, high tension lines, gas and electric substations, are all included in this value. This value also includes lampposts or streetlights.

Attacks on officers, employees or facilities of utility companies excluding the type of facilities above are coded as business.

22 = VIOLENT POLITICAL PARTIES

This value pertains to entities that are both political parties (and thus, coded as "government" in this coding scheme) *and* terrorists. It is operationally defined as groups that engage in electoral politics and appear as "Perpetrators" in the GTD.

Appendix D – Jihadist Terrorist Attacks in the West: 9/11-2018

Source:
Data extracted from Global Terrorism Database (GTD), National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), University of Maryland, 2009-2018. https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/

Jihadist Terrorist Attacks in the West: 9/11 to December 2009

	Incident Information		Perpetrator Information			Target Information	Attack Information			
Year	Country	Operation Identifier (Description)	Perpetrator / Group	Perpetrator Number	Group Claiming Attack	Target Type	Attack Type	Total Fatalities	Fatalities Minus Perpetrators	Reference to Group
2001	US	9/11 terrorist attacks	Al Qaeda	19	AQ	Private Citizens & Property and Government	Hijacking	3001	2982	Yes
2001	France	Richard Reid Shoe Bomber	Al Qaeda	1	Nil	Airports & Aircraft	Bombing/Explosion	0	0	Yes
2002	US	Charles Bishop	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Business	Hijacking	1	0	No
2002	US	Pennsylvania Pipe Bomb plot	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Private Citizens & Property	Bombing/Explosion	0	0	No
2003	US	Riverside County vehicle attack	Muslim Extremists	1	Nil	Military	Facility/Infrastructure	0	0	No
2004	Spain	Madrid Bombings	Al Qaeda	unknown	AQ	Transportation	Bombing/Explosion	191	191	Yes
2005	UK	7 July (7/7) London Bombings	Al Qaeda	4	AQ	Transportation	Bombing/Explosion	56	52	Yes
2005	UK	21 July London Bombings	Al Qaeda	unknown	AQ	Transportation	Bombing/Explosion	0	0	Yes
2005	Sweden	Iraq polling station attack	Al Qaeda in Sweden	3	AQ	Government (General)	Facility/Infrastructure	0	0	Yes
2006	US	North Carolina vehicle attack	Muslim Extremists	1	Nil	Private Citizens & Property	Unarmed Assault	0	0	No
2007	UK	Glasgow airport attack	Al Qaeda in Iraq	2	Nil	Airports & Aircraft	Armed Assault	1	0	No
2007	Switzerland	Crissier Islamic Centre shooting	Muslim Extremists	1	Nil	Private Citizens & Property	Armed Assault	0	0	No
2009	US	Nashville incendiary device attack	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Religious Figures/Institutions	Armed Assault	0	0	No
2009	US	Little Rock, Arkansas attack	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Military	Armed Assault	1	1	No
2009	US	Fort Hood attack	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Military	Armed Assault	13	13	No
2009	US	Underwear bomber - Detroit	AQAP	1	AQAP	Airports & Aircraft	Bombing/Explosion	0	0	No

Jihadist Terrorist Attacks in the West: January 2010 to December 2013

	Incident Information		Perpetrator Information			Target Information	Attack Information			
Year	Country	Operation Identifier (Description)	Perpetrator / Group	Perpetrator Number	Group Claiming Attack	Target Type	Attack Type	Total Fatalities	Fatalities Minus Perpetrators	Reference to Group
2010	UK	Choudhry assassination plot	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Government (General)	Assassination	0	0	No
2010	US	Marine Corps shootings -Virginia	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	NGO, Government and Military	Facility/Infrastructure	0	0	No
2010	UK	Flight 232 plot - East Midlands Airport	AQAP	4	AQAP	Airports & Aircraft	Bombing/Explosion	0	0	Yes
2011	Germany	Frankfurt airport attack	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Military	Armed Assault	2	2	No
2012	US	Alabama city shooting	Muslim Extremists	1	Nil	Business	Armed Assault	0	0	No
2012	France	Mohammed Merah attacks	Muslim Extremists	1	Nil	Military, Educational Institution	Armed Assault	8	8	No
2012	France	Indonesian Embassy bombing - Paris	Muslim Extremists	1	Nil	Government (Diplomatic)	Bombing/Explosion	0	0	No
2012	France	Toulouse Hostage-Taking	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Business	Hostage Taking	0	0	No
2012	France	Sarcelles Food Store Bombing	Muslim Extremists	2	Nil	Business	Bombing/Explosion	0	0	No
2012	Germany	Railway station explosion - Bonn City	Muslim Extremists	1	Nil	Transportation	Bombing/Explosion	0	0	No
2013	US	Boston Bombings	Muslim Extremists	2	Nil	Private Citizens & Property, Educational Institution	Bombing/Explosion, Armed Assault	6	5	No
2013	UK	Machete attack on Lee Rigby - London	Muslim Extremists	2	Nil	Military	Armed Assault	1	1	No
2013	France	Assault on French soldier - Paris	Muslim Extremists	1	Nil	Military	Armed Assault	0	0	No

	Incident Information		Perpetrator Information			Target Information	Attack Information			
Year	Country	Operation Identifier (Description)	Perpetrator / Group	Perpetrator Number	Group Claiming Attack	Target Type	Attack Type	Total Fatalities	Victim Fatalities	Reference to IS
2014	US	Ali Mohammed Brown attacks	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Private Citizens & Property	Armed Assault	4	4	No
2014	Belgium	Jewish Museum attack - Brussels	IS / ISIL	1	Nil	Private Citizens & Property	Armed Assault	4	4	Yes
2014	Australia	Numan Haider attack - Melbourne	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Police	Armed Assault	1	0	No
2014	Canada	Attack on Canadian soldiers - Quebec	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Military	Armed Assault	2	1	No
2014	Canada	Parliament attack - Ottawa	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Military	Armed Assault	2	1	No
2014	US	Hatchet attack on police - New York	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Police	Armed Assault	1	0	No
2014	Australia	Lindt Café siege - Sydney	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Business	Hostage Taking	3	2	No
2014	US	Attack on John Clark Jr - North Carolina	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Private Citizens & Property	Armed Assault	1	1	Yes
2014	France	Knife attack on French police	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Police	Armed Assault	1	0	No
2015	France	Charlie Hebdo attack - Paris	AQAP / Jihadist Inspired	2	AQAP	Journalists & Media and Business	Hostage Taking	14	12	No
2015	France	Hyper Supermarket attack - Paris	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Private Citizens & Property and Police	Armed Assault	6	5	Yes
2015	Denmark	Cultural Centre attack - Copenhagen	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Private Citizens & Property and Religious Figures/Institutions	Armed Assault	2	2	No
2015	France	Sid Ahmed Ghlam attack - Paris	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Private Citizens & Property	Armed Assault	1	1	No
2015	US	Garland shooting - Texas	Jihadist Inspired	2	Nil	Private Citizens & Property	Armed Assault	2	0	No
2015	France	Air Products factory attack	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Business	Hostage Taking	1	1	No
2015	US	Chattanooga shooting - Tennessee	Muslim Extremists	1	Nil	Military	Armed Assault	6	5	No
2015	France	Thalys train attack - Arras	IS / ISIL	1	IS / ISIL	Transportation	Armed Assault	0	0	Yes
2015	US	Armed threat at Baptist church - Texas	Muslim Extremists	1	Nil	Religious Figures/Institutions	Armed Assault	0	0	No
2015	Germany	Knife attack on police - Berlin	Muslim Extremists	1	Nil	Police	Armed Assault	1	0	No
2015	Australia	Attack on Curtis Cheng - Sydney	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Police	Armed Assault	2	1	No
2015	US	University of California attack - Merced	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Educational Institution	Armed Assault	1	0	No
2015	France	November 2015 Paris attacks	IS / ISIL	7	IS / ISIL	Business	Bombing/Explosion, Armed Assault, Hostage Taking	137	130	Yes
2015	UK	Attack on Nissar Hussain - Bradford	Muslim Extremists	2	Nil	Private Citizens & Property	Unarmed Assault	0	0	No
2015	US	Holiday party attacks - San Bernardino	Jihadist Inspired	2	Nil	Government (General)	Bombing/Explosion	16	14	No
2015	UK	Machete attack on tube train - London	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Transportation	Armed Assault	0	0	Yes
2016	France	Vehicle attack on soldiers - Valence	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Military	Unarmed Assault	0	0	No
2016	US	Attack on police -Pennsylvania	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Police	Armed Assault	0	0	Yes
2016	France	Knife attack on police - Paris	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Police	Armed Assault	1	0	Yes
2016	Canada	TenX nightclub attack - Alberta	Muslim Extremists	2	Nil	Business	Armed Assault	0	0	No
2016	France	Machete attack on teacher - Marseille	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Educational Institution	Armed Assault	0	0	Yes
2016	Germany	Incendiary attack at mall - Hanover	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Private Citizens & Property	Armed Assault	0	0	Yes
2016	US	Machete attack at restaurant - Ohio	Muslim Extremists	1	Nil	Business	Armed Assault	1	0	No
2016	Sweden	Pro-Kurdish rally shooting - Stockholm	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Private Citizens & Property	Armed Assault	0	0	Yes
2016	UK	Hammer attack on Imam - Rochdale	Jihadist Inspired	2	Nil	Religious Figures/Institutions	Unarmed Assault	1	1	Yes
2016	Germany	Knife attack on police - Hanover	IS / ISIL	1	Nil	Police	Armed Assault	0	0	Yes
2016	Belgium	Brussels bombings	IS / ISIL	3	IS / ISIL	Airports & Aircraft and transportation	Bombing/Explosion	35	32	Yes
2016	UK	Assault and knife attack - Glasgow	Muslim Extremists	1	Nil	Private Citizens & Property	Armed Assault	1	1	No
2016	Germany	Sikh temple bombing - Essen	Jihadist Inspired	2	Nil	Religious Figures/Institutions	Bombing/Explosion	0	0	Yes
2016	Germany	Knife attack at train station - Bavaria	Muslim Extremists	1	Nil	Private Citizens & Property	Armed Assault	1	1	No
2016	France	Knife attack on soldier - Occitanie	Jihadist Inspired	2	Nil	Military	Armed Assault	0	0	Yes
2016	US	Orlando nightclub attack	Jihadist Inspired	1	IS / ISIL	Business	Hostage Taking	50	49	Yes
2016	France	Magnanville knife attack on police	Jihadist Inspired	1	IS / ISIL	Police	Assassination	3	2	Yes

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		Incident Information	Perpetrator Information		Target Information	Attack Information			
Year	Country	Operation Identifier (Description)	Perpetrator / Group	Perpetrator Number	Group Claiming Attack	Target Type	Attack Type	Total Fatalities	Victim Fatalities	Reference to IS
2016	France	Bastille Day vehicle attack - Nice	Jihadist Inspired	1	IS / ISIL	Private Citizens & Property	Armed Assault	87	86	No
2016	Germany	Axe and knife attack on train - Bavaria	Jihadist Inspired	1	IS / ISIL	Private Citizens & Property	Armed Assault	1	0	No
2016	UK	Hostage-taking attempt - UK RAF base	Muslim Extremists	2	Nil	Military	Hostage Taking	0	0	No
2016	Germany	Ansbach festival bombing - Bavaria	Jihadist Inspired	1	IS / ISIL	Business	Bombing/Explosion	1	0	Yes
2016	France	Church hostage-taking - Normandy	Jihadist Inspired	2	IS / ISIL	Religious Figures/Institutions	Hostage Taking	3	1	Yes
2016	Canada	Taxi bombing - Ontario	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Transportation	Bombing/Explosion	1	0	Yes
2016	Denmark	Shooting attack on police - Copenhagen	Jihadist Inspired	1	IS / ISIL	Police	Armed Assault	1	0	No
2016	France	Arson attack using vehicle - Paris	Jihadist Inspired	4	Nil	Unknown	Armed Assault	0	0	Yes
2016	Spain	Arson attack on church - Fontellas	Muslim Extremists	1	Nil	Religious Figures/Institutions	Facility/Infrastructure	0	0	No
2016	Australia	Knife attack on civilian - Sydney	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Private Citizens & Property	Armed Assault	0	0	Yes
2016	US	New Jersey, NY bombings and attacks	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Private Citizens & Property and Transportation	Bombing/Explosion	0	0	Yes
2016	US	Knife attack at mall - Minnesota	Jihadist Inspired	1	IS / ISIL	Business	Armed Assault	1	0	No
2016	Belgium	Knife attack on police - Brussels	Muslim Extremists	1	Nil	Police	Armed Assault	0	0	No
2016	Germany	Christmas market bomb attempt	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Private Citizens & Property	Bombing/Explosion	0	0	No
2016	US	Vehicle attack at Ohio State University	Jihadist Inspired	1	IS / ISIL	Private Citizens & Property	Armed Assault	1	0	Yes
2016	Germany	Christmas market vehicle attack - Berlin	Jihadist Inspired	1	IS / ISIL	Private Citizens & Property	Unarmed Assault and Hijacking	13	13	Yes
2016	Italy	Shooting attack on police - Milan	Jihadist Inspired	1	IS / ISIL	Police	Armed Assault	1	0	Yes
2017	US	Fort Lauderdale Airport shooting	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Airports & Aircraft	Armed Assault	5	5	No
2017	US	Shooting attack on guard - Denver	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Police	Armed Assault	1	1	No
2017	France	Machete attack on soldiers - Paris	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Military	Armed Assault	0	0	Yes
2017	France	Assault on soldier at airport - Paris	Muslim Extremists	1	Nil	Military	Hostage Taking	1	0	No
2017	UK	Westminster vehicle attack - London	Muslim Extremists	1	IS / ISIL	Police	Armed Assault	6	5	Yes
2017	Sweden	Vehicle attack into store - Stockholm	Jihadist Inspired	1	IS / ISIL	Private Citizens & Property	Hijacking	5	5	Yes
2017	Australia	Knife attack at service station - NSW	Jihadist Inspired	2	Nil	Business	Armed Assault	1	1	No
2017	Norway	Metro station bomb attempt - Oslo	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Unknown	Bombing/Explosion	0	0	No
2017	France	Shooting attack on police - Paris	Jihadist Inspired	1	IS / ISIL	Police	Armed Assault	2	1	Yes
2017	Italy	Knife attack at train station - Milan	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Police	Armed Assault	0	0	No
2017	US	Attack/hostage taking, Tampa	Muslim Extremists	1	Nil	Private Citizens & Property and Business	Armed Assault and Hostage Taking	2	2	No
2017	UK	Manchester arena bombing	IS / ISIL	1	IS / ISIL	Business	Bombing/Explosion	23	22	No
2017	UK	London Bridge vehicle/knife attack	Jihadist Inspired	3	IS / ISIL	Private Citizens & Property	Armed Assault	11	8	No
2017	Canada	Knife attack at tyre store - Toronto	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Business	Armed Assault	0	0	Yes
2017	Australia	Hostage taking at apartment - Victoria	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Police	Hostage Taking	2	1	Yes
2017	France	Hammer attack at cathedral- Paris	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Police	Unarmed Assault	0	0	Yes
2017	UK	Armed assault on civilian - London	Muslim Extremists	3	Nil	Private Citizens & Property	Armed Assault	0	0	No
2017	France	Vehicle attack (VBIED) on police - Paris	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Police	Bombing/Explosion	1	0	Yes
2017	Belgium	Train station suicide attack - Brussels	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Transportation	Bombing/Explosion	1	0	Yes
2017	Austria	Assault on elderly couple - Linz	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Private Citizens & Property	Armed Assault	2	2	Yes
2017	Australia	Sydney Airport bomb attempt	Jihadist Inspired	3	Nil	Airports & Aircraft	Bombing/Explosion	0	0	Yes
2017	Germany	Knife attack at supermarket - Hamburg	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Private Citizens & Property	Armed Assault	1	1	Yes
2017	France	Knife attack on soldier -Paris	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Military	Armed Assault	0	0	Yes
2017	France	Vehicle attack on soldiers	Muslim Extremists	1	Nil	Military	Unarmed Assault	0	0	No
2017	Canada	Arson attack on church - Ontario	Jihadist Inspired	unknown	Nil	Religious Figures/Institutions	Facility/Infrastructure	0	0	No
2017	Spain	Vehicle attacks -Catalonia	Muslim Extremists	6	IS / ISIL	Private Citizens & Property	Unarmed Assault and Hijacking	21	16	No
2017	Finland	Knife attack at market	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Private Citizens & Property	Armed Assault	2	2	Yes
2017	Belgium	Machete attack on soldiers - Brussels	Muslim Extremists	1	IS / ISIL	Military	Armed Assault	1	0	No
2017	UK	Parsons Green station bombing - London	Jihadist Inspired	1	IS / ISIL	Transportation	Bombing/Explosion	0	0	Yes

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	Incident Information		Perpetrator Information			Target Information	Attack Information			
Year	Country	Operation Identifier (Description)	Perpetrator / Group	Perpetrator Number	Group Claiming Attack	Target Type	Attack Type	Total Fatalities	Victim Fatalities	Reference to IS
2017	France	Knife attack on soldier at station - Paris	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Military	Armed Assault	0	0	Yes
2017	Canada	Vehicle attacks - Edmonton	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Police and Private Citizens & Property	Armed Assault and Unarmed Assault	0	0	Yes
2017	France	Bomb attempt on building - Paris	Muslim Extremists	3	Nil	Private Citizens & Property	Bombing/Explosion	0	0	No
2017	US	Vehicle attack - Manhattan, NY	Jihadist Inspired	1	IS / ISIL	Tourists	Unarmed Assault	8	8	Yes
2017	US	Suicide bomb attempt at bus terminal -NY	Jihadist Inspired	1	Nil	Transportation	Bombing/Explosion	0	0	Yes
2017	Australia	Flinders street vehicle attack - Melbourne	Muslim Extremists	1	Nil	Private Citizens & Property	Unarmed Assault	1	1	No