

# **A Representation of ISIS Rhetoric Concerning the Kurds: A Critical Discourse Analysis-based study**

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## **Abstract**

Any political movement intends to seize power enforce certain political, social, economic and, occasionally, religious belief in a society. To achieve this, language plays a leading role. Thoughts and ideologies reside in language thus language has the power to control the way people think. Controlling people's way of thinking implies controlling the way they behave in society. This has direct influence on social constructions and how realities are perceived in a certain society. Providing a brief history of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and the Kurds, this article aims to analyze a number of excerpts from the written discourse of ISIS to identify some of those beliefs and ideas hidden in their discourse concerning the Kurds, who are fighting against them in battlefields, based on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).

**Key words:** Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, Kurds, ideology, Language, Critical Discourse Analysis

## **1. Introduction**

Language is the medium of communication and examples of language use are referred to as discourse. Discourse is not devoid of meanings, values and ideologies that reside in examples of language use. Fowler (1991) believes whatever "is said or written about the world is articulated from a particular ideological position" (p 10). Politicians and owners of mass media introduce their values and thoughts to their discourse. This paper analyzes a number of excerpts from Dabiq, a publication of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (henceforth referred to as ISIS or IS), to detect and decipher ideologies enshrined in IS discourse against the Kurds and how they attempt to promulgate their ideologies to influence and besiege public opinion against the Kurds to recruit more and more combatants to fight with them and to invade Kurdish territory as an integral part of their rapid creation and expansion of the so-called Islamic State.

## **2. States Background**

### **2.1. Historical background of ISIS**

The terrorist religious organization managed to achieve full sovereignty over a geographical area as big as Britain from 2013 to 2015. It enjoys a fairly self-sufficient economy and controls vast oil resources. ISIS emerged and developed in Syria and Iraq, thanks to the failure that state institutions



suffered in the two states which was, in turn, the result of internal conflicts and administrative corruption in Syria and Iraq respectively. ISIS extended its roots to other Islamic movements grown up in the Muslim world, acquired global funding and wide experience in the field of terrorist activities through its many wars. Political Islamic movements were the engine of war in places such as Afghanistan, Algeria, and Chechnya. However the American occupation of Iraq in 2003 was a turning-point that brought almost all extremist groups to that country, which had long wanted to fight against the U.S. and its allies (Muhammad, 2011).

Syria is the latest station for the completion of the evolutionary growth of Islamic movements, which are comprised of armed militants fighting the Syrian regime with the support of Western and Gulf States. Islamic organizations found Syria a safe haven, where they could get fund, military aids, and even training. ISIS, one of the militant groups, is getting financial support and stores of weapons through dissolving them one after the other and has managed to recruit many former Iraqi army officers as well as defectors from the Syrian army, who provided the organization with wide combat experience particularly in the key areas of planning, management, implementation of strategic military operations. Distinguished contemporary dignitaries such as Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein regarded the movements as the birth of progressive movement of Wahhabism and the application of the pure understanding of Mohammed bin Abdul Wahab's doctrine as well as Moslim Brotherhood's particularly that of its leading member Sayyid Qutib. According to ISIS view of Islam, the roughest degrees of savagery and terrorism are better than stability under an infidel political system and if they manage to exercise savagery, they will succeed in reestablishing the Islamic State since the abolition of the Caliphate. Therefore, professed terrorism is the approach taken by the movement to spread fear, terror, and panic to intimidate its opponents and non-opponents (Atwan, 2015).

ISIS has controlled an extensive area in Syria and Iraq, which stretches to Turkey and Kurdistan Region of Iraq in the north, to borders of Jordan and Saudi Arabia in the south, to Baghdad suburbs, Karbala, and Najaf in the east and to Damascus in the west and called those areas Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). It aspires to expand its borders as it does not recognize its current ones and attempts to maximize its military activities in order to control all Muslim world. It has formed branches in almost every region of Muslim world and published a map, showing sacred boundaries in Asia, Africa, and Europe that the organization seeks to impose. The Islamic State is acting as a state and desires to annex more territories to expand the area it controls. It has presented a tarnished image of itself but is proud of it ironically. It strives to acquire chemical weapons and possess what it takes to use such weapons including manufacturing methods. Moreover, it has hired dozens of Iraqi, Syrian, and Libyan chemical experts (ibid).

The strategy of savagery is practiced by IS as part of the requirements of psychological warfare and the most powerful weapon from the arsenal of psychological weapons in jihadists' hands. They use it in a complex and sophisticated way, easily noticeable in the form of excessive violence. Politicians believe IS is applying Abu Bakr Naji's strategic theory called *Management of Savagery* (ibid). In accordance with the theory one can analyze the current behavior as a result of the second stage of strategy of Management of Savagery (Editors, 2014). In much the same vein, that level of cruelty is the second stage of the three-stage strategy to establish Islamic State according to a study entitled *the Management of Savagery* (Naji, 2004).

ISIS is currently engaged in war against the Kurds in the north, the Iraqi armed forces in the east, Syrian government forces and a handful of Syrian opposition factions in the west. The formation of an alliance has been declared by a number of world states against ISIS, which has been embodied in



air strikes. Since 2015, Russia has militarily intervened in the fight against ISIS by bombarding their positions in Syria (RT, 2017).

## **2.2. Historical Background of the Kurds**

Kurdish homeland, commonly known as Kurdistan, consists of about 200,000 square miles. It covers the northern mountainous areas of the Middle East. In the absence of an independent state, Kurdistan is defined as areas in which the Kurds constitute an ethnic majority. It borders three other major ethnic groups in the Middle East –the Arabs from south, the Persian from east, and the Turks from west (Sadiq, 2002).

Kurdish history dates back to thousand years ago. Kurdistan was the birthplace of the earliest agriculture. The modern Kurdish national identity was homogenized and consolidated in classic history and the Middle Ages marked the reemergence of Kurdish political power that could technically be called Kurdish Islamic era. There was a steady decline in every aspect of Kurdish national life with the possible exception of literature in their early modern history (Bichler, 2011).

A considerable number of Kurdish population was relocated in faraway regions. The European model of nation state was unknown to the Middle East until late 19<sup>th</sup> century. This political model influenced the Kurds as much as the other ethnic groups in the region and at the time when the Ottoman Empire was suffering its dismal days (Izady, 2005).

The Ottoman and Safawid (Persian) Empires divided the Kurdistan between them in 16<sup>th</sup> century and both empires made use of religious reasons or excuses to expand their territories. The first one was associated with Sunni religion of Islam while the other was recognized with Shia. Thanks to military clashes on the Kurdish soil, Kurdistanis suffered horrible life and huge losses. Kurdistan turned to a battlefield for the two oppressive forces in the next three centuries after the Kurdish region was split. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century Persian-Ottoman conflicts developed to an unprecedentedly dangerous stage and Kurdistan was divided between five countries but the struggle for independence, by and large, has continued (Ibid).

After the gulf war in 1991, the Iraqi Kurds managed to control some parts of their homeland and establish a local government (Darwesh, 2011). The Kurds in Syria established three cantons – Afrin, Kobani, Qamishlo – in 2011 in Syrian Kurdistan. The cantons were attacked by ISIS in 2014.

## **3. Theoretical Background**

### **3.1. Discourse**

Discourse is rather an elastic term and used “differently by different researchers and also in different academic cultures” (Wodak, 2002, p 8). Some researchers make a distinction between ‘text’ and ‘discourse’, while others believe the term has been used interchangeably for both spoken and written discourse (Kaplan 2002, Schiffrin 1992). Fairclough’s view of discourse (2001), which considers discourse as material form of social processes, has been used in this paper. This view sees ‘social life as interconnected networks of social practices of diverse sorts (economic, political, cultural, and so on)’ (Fairclough, 2005).

### **3.2. Critical Discourse Analysis**

CDA considers language use as ‘social practice’. Using language, people and institutions become engaged in social practices (Bloor & Bloor, 2007) and actors on whom political, social, historical, cultural, and linguistic practice conditions are imposed without being aware of the rules of the game (Wodak, 2002). CDA must be able to identify these practices and the assumptions made by them which reflect the ideological basis of the discourse (Bloor & Bloor, 2007). It assumes that texts are based on ‘recurring discursive practices’ which are themselves based on ‘social practice’ through which ideologies are produced, reproduced and disseminated. CDA goal is thus to



uncover the ways in which discourse and ideology are intertwined (Johnstone, 2008). It involves “a principled shunting back and forth between analyses of the text and the social, between cultural sign and institutional formation” (Luke, 2002, p. 103).

### 3.3. Ideology

Ideology refers to ‘a set of beliefs or attitudes shared by members of a particular social group’ (Bloor & Bloor, 2007, p. 10). It is social forums and processes to circulate symbolic forms in the social world (Thompson cited in Wodak 2002). Ideology presents ‘the perspective of a particular interest’ in a way that ‘the relationship between proposition and fact is not transparent’ (Fairclough, 2010, p. 46). Ideological positions could be hidden and by ‘making hidden assumptions visible, critical analysis challenges the practice that powerful members of society take their words as ‘self-evident truth’ and dismiss the words of others as irrelevant’ (Woods, 2006, p. 50).

Texts are of high significance for critical discourse analysts since they are not free of ideologies and thus unobjective. They maintain social realities and are inseparable from them (Threadgold 1989 cited in Paltridge 2006). Social and discursive practices are enshrined in texts (Johnstone, 2008) thus ideologies exist in texts. Ideology is present in the forms and content of texts but it is not possible to ‘read off’ ideologies from texts (Fairclough, 2010, p. 57).

Ideology is located both in structures and in events (Fairclough, 2010) and it is not just ‘an abstract system of thought but becomes actualized in a variety of material forms’ (Althusseras cited in Wilson). It is obviously materialized in language and features of ‘language and discourse may be ideologically invested’. Word choice as well as presuppositions, implicature, metaphors, and coherence and all aspects of meaning are ideologically significant (Fairclough, 2010). This shows the necessity of detecting and investigating connection between textual structures and social contexts in which they occur.

Linguistic choices used to produce discourse are of high importance from a critical point of view. Every choice is strategic and is actually a choice about how the world is seen, divided up and why a choice is favored over others is not unplanned but has ‘an epistemological agenda’ (Johnstone, 2008). Grammatical and lexical choices made by people are not random; they are rather ideologically burdened and the way language users use and interpret words is based on their understanding of the world and their perception of social reality (Bloor & Bloor, 2007). A typical example is political discourse constructed for public consumption in which words are selected in a strategic and tactical fashion to direct its audience to certain thoughts, beliefs, and, ultimately actions (Johnstone, 2008).

Ideologies and assumptions behind words and structures are usually hidden and undetected and as a result they get naturalized. Naturalization gives the state of common sense to particular ideological representations and makes them opaque and invisible (Fairclough, 2010). CDA is thus tasked with detecting and challenging social orders and practices that are considered naturalized, in fact, naturalized ‘when one way of seeing and interpreting the world becomes so common (and so frequently constructed in discourse) that it is accepted as the only way’ (Woods, 2006, p. XIV). CDA practitioners must be looking for underlying and out of sight ideological practices through discourse that underpin social interaction (Bloor & Bloor, 2007).

Critical discourse analysts may use a number of ways to analyze a particular text. One way is to investigate ‘textual features’ in the text and move forward to ‘explanation and interpretation’ of the text. Analysts are required to detect hidden ideologies and assumption and challenge ‘ideological presuppositions’ that underlie the text (Paltridge, 2006, p. 45). This is a necessary and integral process of discourse analysis since making meanings out of texts is based on interpretations and



different interpretations are, in turn, based upon different ideologies underlying social events (Fairclough, 2010).

The approach used in this paper is that of Fairclough (2010), which is 'based upon a three-dimensional conception of discourse, and correspondingly a three-dimensional method of discourse analysis.' Discourse, and specific instance of discursive practice, is seen as simultaneously (i) a language text (ii) discourse practice, (iii) sociocultural practice. Applying this method, critical discourse analyst is supposed to describe the text, interpret the relationship between the discursive processes and the text, and explain the relationship between the discursive practices and the societal processes (ibid, 2010).

#### **4. Aspects of the war between the Kurds and ISIS**

##### **4.1. ISIS Ideological Aspect**

The growth and dissemination of ISIS ideology in the Muslim world were brought up by the activities of intellectual religious groups, some of which date back to the Middle Ages and others to the contemporary age. ISIS roots trace back to the ideas of religious revival, which considered the revival of Islam as the only solution to bring Muslim communities out of the weakness they live in. Moreover, creating successive intellectual outputs was called upon that work on the revival of Islamic Caliphate in accordance with the standards established in the seventh century.

ISIS carries fascist religious ideology, which a number of internal and external factors have contributed to its dissemination. There have been similar examples in the history of Islam under the same name. The ideology does not recognize the limits of time and place nor the concept of holiness. It is based on their sole leader's (caliph) mentality working to subvert human reconstruction by bringing about disasters. ISIS claims to embody the highest level of the Islamic solution heralded by several Islamic parties as a cure for the failure of the Muslim world – a solution to all the problems they claim. However, they wage inclusive wars, destroy mosques and shrines of prophets, rape and murder innocent people, and their call represents a fatal strategy (Sorani, 2014). The intellectual roots of ISIS have originated from three main ideologies discussed below.

1. Baathist Nationalist Ideology: This represents the Baathist ideology, which forms one of their ideological, intellectual and organizational roots in Iraq. It took a mass dimension after Saddam Hussein started a campaign to revive Islam in Iraq during the 1990s until 2003, when his regime was toppled by U.S. forces. Baathists established connections with religious extremists and Al-Qaeda, in particular, within those years (Karim, 2016).

2. Fundamental Islamic Ideology: In the light of its version of Islam, ISIS attempts to establish a political system based on strictly religious laws represented in the establishment of an Islamic caliphate through, what it calls, Jihad. This is the basic principle behind all concepts, details, and procedures manifested in the project of establishing an Islamic state in Iraq and the Levant and governing all Muslim community not a group of Muslims. Terrorism is considered to be a major ideological principle of ISIS. It is also regarded as the favorite way to approach God. The approach that acts of savagery and overdoing them are closely associated with Jihad refers to Al-Zarqawi, who committed acts of slaughtering as one of the manifestations of violence under the influence of two main characters, Abu Abdulla Muhajir (Abdul Rahman Ali) and Abu Bakir Naji. Zarqawi was deeply influenced by Muhajir and studied his book on blood. In the book he states that anyone who surrenders to God's law will never be like a dead person. Muhajir decrees that a country governed by law belongs to the infidels and should be abandoned. There is consensus on murdering infidels if they are not provided with a religious safe haven. Supporting infidels and following them is a great



blasphemy and Islam does not differentiate between civilians and non-civilians, both of whom should be beheaded violently, which is an act loved by God and his messenger (Almohajir, 2011). However, Abu BukirNaji believes Jihad is the most important door to guide people and terrorizing, expelling, and mutilating Christians and their atheist associates and soldiers are of great duties (Naji, 2004). Christians must face mutilating and maiming acts such as those done to BaniQuraizah whose men were killed, wives were captivated and properties were taken (ibid). Many people might think that ISIS and any otherrule before and similar is no more than a product of faith or religious tendency campaign as they are the result of decades of behavioral and didactic accumulation of dictatorial rule of systemic thought and behavior in various Islamic and Middle Arab countries (Karim, 2016).

3. Ideology of Muslim Brotherhood: The Muslim Brotherhood was forming a sectarian political religion while they tried to compensate for the absence of succession, which fell apart, by establishing an Islamic state applying Sharia as a prelude to the restoration of caliphate. It sought to build a comprehensive Islamic system which would cut its relation with the state in various fields (Al-khatib, 2007). It installed its system based on some special Wahabi (Najdi) fatwas, particularly those related to law. Wahabi's call from Mohammed bin Abdul Wahab even Mohammed bin Ibrahim, the Saudi Arabian mufti, labels everyone who enacts law or enforce law as non-believers (Al-Najdi, 1995). Many researchers believe that the state intellectual reference is based on 'Salafi Jihad' inherited from Al-Qaida which is an attempt to reconcile the Salafi, the Hanbali, Saied Qutib's thought and Sirury (which is based on a reconciliation attempt between the Muslim brotherhood ideology and Salafi). The attempt produced an intellectual pattern distinct from the previous components and combines Salafi doctrine and Qutib's political ideology. The Salafi Jihad was formed particularly among Afghanistan Arabs completely during the period of Afghan Jihad (Khalil, 2011). Among ideological concepts, the fatwa of Mardin people highly relies on Islamic state and Salafi-Jihadist factions rely on famous Mardinian Imam Bin Taymiyya's fatwa, called Tatar fatwa, which legalizes fighting against Muslim rulers. The concept of Tataras (literally 'shield') reads any Muslim who is used as a shield by infidels must be murdered and this has become a legitimate basis for justifying some military operations conducted to murder innocent Muslims. According to this doctrine fighting against non-Muslims is an absolute necessity. Al-Qaida relied on the doctrine that has necessitated fighting against non-Muslims and invading the world in order to spread Islam. The doctrine of TaqiAldin Al-Nabhani, the founder of Tahrir (Liberation) Party, reads Prophet Mohammed's words and actions are a concrete proof that Jihad against infidels to mark God's words and to disseminate Islam is indispensable. Consequently, ISIS ideology has been the outcome of a group of converging orientations in which a number of influential political and social forces have evolved (Al-Khatib, 2014).

#### **4.2 ISIS Ideologies towards the Kurds**

Based on a controversial prophet Mohammed's saying, interpreted differently by Islamic scholars, there would be a great and decisive battle between Muslims and a great alliance of infidels near Aleppo, the second largest city in Syria. Some experts believe the spot is situated somewhere between Rabia, on the Iraqi border with Syria and Aleppo region. The saying constitutes the essence of ISIS ideology. Abu Hurayra narrated that the Prophet Mohammed had said the Romans would arrive in Amaq or Dabiq before the doomsday and an army of the best people in the world from Madina would confront them. The Romans would attempt to fight against those Romans who converted to Islam and are called brethren by Muslims. A war would break out between the two armies and one third of the Muslims would get martyred and another one third would conquer



Constantinople (Istanbul)(Yasri, 2015). The prediction forms the basic rudiments of ISIS ideology and they do whatever military preparation they can. According to the above-mentioned saying there are two groups of fighting people. One is ISIS fighters and the other is their enemy whose women are abducted and raped. They would attack the former group in order to release the women. The Muslim world gathers to defeat the invaders who abducted and raped the other group's women. It's ironic that the invaders would defeat their enemy and the Muslims would be able to conquer Constantinople. The battlefield would be Kurdistan and since many of the raped women are Yazidi Kurds there is a predicted ideological aspect against the Kurds which turns the war to a holy one and religiously necessitates their elimination (Al-Majali, 2015, Al-atabi, 2014).

Furthermore, ISIS believes the Kurds are sympathetic to their nationalistic views and struggle to establish a nation which is considered a potential threat to Islamic state, considered likewise by radical nationalist Arabs such as Baathists(Al-zaman2015, a).

The primitive nature of the state and its strategic relations with radical Arab nationalism makes the state defy the Kurdish nationalist movement as radical Arabs did (Al-Hashemi, 2015). ISIS is currently carrying out the crimes such as intimidating, murdering and displacing the Kurds, which were similarly committed by the toppled Saddam Hussein's regime during its forty-year rule over Kurdistan (Al-zaman,2015, b).

The Kurdistan region of Iraq has played a leading role in reconciling Kurdish political parties in Syria, which are either allied or opposed to the central government. The Kurdistan Region has repeatedly persuaded the Kurds in Syria to remain impartial and stay away from bitter sectarian conflicts in the Middle East. The Kurdistan Region has enjoyed political development in the past few years and the Kurdistan Regional Government's (KRG) role in bringing the Turkish government and the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) to a peace agreement reinforced the development process. The KRG was a party to the agreement, based on which PKK guerrillas were supposed to leave Turkey and seek shelter in Iraqi Kurdistan. By attacking Kobani, ISIS targeted the peace process in Turkey(Doha Report, 2014). The Kurdistan Region is the central entity regarding the Kurdish issue. AbdulhakimKhasraw believes that a secure and stabilized Kurdistan would guarantee Kurdish impartiality in conflicts in Iraq, Turkey, and Syria and any threat to the KRG would lead it to a failed state and jeopardize stability in the region. Consequently, Western military aid to the Kurds to avoid undermining security in the region is entirely justifiable (ibid).

#### **4.3ISIS Political Aspect**

ISIS is considered as a bigoted and racist political movement that clearly demonstrates political orientations against the Kurds, in general, and the Kurdish liberation movement in particular, and has declared its outright hostility towards Kurdish nationalist movements that seek to achieve Kurdish national liberation. It considers all Kurdish lands as parts of its alleged state and has established a number of States, which are specialized in fighting against Kurdish forces in order to subject them and occupy the land controlled by the Kurds, where Kurdish citizens live, and thus seeks to be removed and their presence is a threat to the Islamic state to be established(Alaalem, 2015).

ISIS regards the Kurdish movements as followers of Western powers in terms of ideology and organization due to the fact that ISIS shares ideologies with the defunct Iraqi Baath party. It claims that the Kurdish movements are extensions of Israel and the Western colonial powers and denounces whatever organization with west-ward policies. Thus it extends its disapproval of the Kurds and considers them as unwanted foreign element that must be rooted out (Hatab, 2015). ISIS claims it is trying to end the border set according to the Sykes -Picot agreement based on the interests of the Sunni Arabs, and thus considers any attempt to prevent this as an attempt supported



by the colonial West and thus establish the idea of bias Kurdish -Western because of their opposition to the ISIS project. Anyway, it seems puzzling particularly since ISIS waged a sectarian war in Iraq and Syria (Noon Post, 2014), directed against the Kurds, Shiites, Christians, Yazidis and others who had already been Sykes-Picot victims unlike Sunni Arabs.

On the other hand, one can realize the policies of the Islamic State, on the whole, tend to defend and represent the interests of the Sunni Arabs, and proponents of this belief are working to end the Kurdish presence in those territories that they try to annex to the alleged state set up by the Sunni Arabs, but the developments of Kurdish resistance with the help of the international coalition forces led to significant defeats and losses of Islamic State forces, which suffered most of their losses in battlefields against the Kurds. The strategy of the State seems to have faced resistance on the part of the Kurds and their dogged persistence prevented them from achieving their purpose to occupy Kurdistan fully. However, it can be claimed that Islamic State has traditionally concentrated its efforts on Sunni-Arab-inhabited areas as the main areas under its control—areas which are considered more important than the Kurdish areas (Ahmad, 2014).

A study at IHS Center about monitoring conflicts based on intelligence from open sources such as social media in the areas controlled by IS reveals that Kurdish areas have proven the greatest obstacle in the way of IS trying to invade the region (Skynewsarabia, 2015). Kurdish areas have been the target of IS since the losses it suffered in those areas. The Kurds have posed an obstacle in the way of IS to gain more lands. Kurdish forces are close to Mosul, the largest city under the control of IS, and near Raqqa, the capital of the group. Therefore, they practically present the biggest threat to IS (Aletejahtv, 2015).

But ISIS, still declaring hostility to the Kurds, has not attempted to achieve peace and demarcate border and has created continuous fronts to turn into a defense position, working on launching attacks in order to penetrate Kurdish defense lines to occupy their land. The organization has operated its media to inflame outright hostility toward the Kurds and to mobilize people to fight against them. Being able to end any considerable resistance from Iraqi forces, ISIS faced strong resistance only from Kurdish Peshmarga forces. They quickly penetrated the official Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) borders and the Kurds were challenged to protect 1,000 km of border in front of ISIS forces (Ottaway, 2015). While the Kurdish Peshmerga were trying to stop the advances of ISIS on the ground, the United States announced its assistance to the Kurds in their fight against ISIS forces, which enabled the Kurds to stop ISIS from achieving regional entity to create a great empire. At the time when ISIS announced the end of its holy war against the Kurds, it continued its attacks on Kirkuk outskirts, Mosul Dam, and Sinjar (Al-Rantis, 2014). However, the overall question remains on the table regarding the war between ambitious ISIS forces, which have caused complicated regional trends and strategies and enjoy regional and international guidance, and the Kurds, who do not have any regional vision and have restricted their vision to achieving the right of national self-determination. It should be noted that the process of dismantling the organization of the Islamic state would not be easy and form a crucial part of the Middle East complex geopolitical equation.

## 5. Data Analysis

The data for this paper, as mentioned in the introduction, are taken from Dabiq. Here the excerpts are given and analyzed to detect out-of-sight ideologies behind words and phrases.

“Approximately ten years ago in neighbouring Shām, the marxist Kurds in the north founded a political opposition party called the PYD (Democratic Union Party), which shares the kufri



ideology of Ocalan and is seen as being a Syrian front for the PKK.”Dabiq, 2: 12

Here the Kurds are labeled as Marxist, which means they don’t believe in God and are not followers of Islam and have to be eliminated based on their interpretation of Islam. Moreover, Abdulla Ocalan, the former leader of the PKK, is alleged to have kufri (blasphemous) ideology and anyone following this ideology is the enemy of IS and their version of Islam.

“The Islamic State did not hesitate to wage war against the communist murtaddīn of the PKK/ YPG, while simultaneously continuing their fight against the nusayrī regime and the sahwāt. There are presently a number of fronts in the Islamic State being defended against the Kurdish communists in both Iraq and Shām.”Dabiq, 2: 12

Once more the PKK is labeled as unbelievers by using the word ‘communist’ as well as the Arabic word ‘murtadin’, which literally means any Muslim who abandons their Islamic beliefs. According to Islamic ideology any Muslim giving up their religious beliefs – murtad– must be executed. Using the phrase ‘Kurdish communists’ to describe the Kurds in both Iraq and Sham (Syria), IS considers not only PKK members but also the Kurds in Iraq as communists and nonbelievers and thus deserved to be murdered.

“This was in addition to a number of operations against the PKK within their main strongholds, including istishhādi operations carried out against the PKK/Peshmergamurtaddīn in both Iraq and Shām, as well as a number of PKK vehicles blown up by the Islamic State’s undercover cells in Wilāyat Al-Barakah, all leading to many of their apostate soldiers being killed.”Dabiq, 2: 13

The PKK and Peshmerga are again labeled as mortad and therefore must be slaughtered based on their understanding of Islam.

“May Allah continue to humiliate the secularist murtaddīn in all their colors and stripes.”Dabiq, 2: 13

Here they ask God to humiliate secularist murtaddin, who include not only any secular Kurd but every secularist in the world and thereby they implicitly threaten the majority of peoples around the globe.

“The first conquest was that of the northwestern regions of WilayatNinawa (Sinjar, Zimmar, Rabi’ah, and Wanah). These areas were mostly **occupied** by the Peshmerga, who fled upon hearing of the Islamic State’s approach. Some of these regions were inhabited by the **devil worshipping Yazidiyya**. Alhamdulillah, hundreds of them turned to Allah, declared their Islam, and **repented from their kufr**. As for those who insisted upon their shirk, then they fled with the Peshmerga apostates.”Dabiq, 3: 18

The Peshmerga who are the armed forces of Iraqi Kurdistan are said to have occupied Sinjar and some other Kurdish regions as if they are not parts of Kurdish land and they do not have the right to be present there.

Yazidi Kurds, who are not Muslims, are disrespected and even dehumanized by labeling them devil-worshippers and the label makes them an easy target for mass execution.

The Yazidiz who gave up their so-called kufr (literally means ‘blasphemy’) were forgiven and those who did not ‘fled with Peshmerga apostates.’ It does not account for the male Yazidis who were killed and the female Yazidis who were raped, taken to other areas and sold as sex slaves.

“The PKK is one of the biggest organizations responsible for narcotics trafficking in Europe.” Dabiq, 4: 41

Accusing the PKK of drug trafficking in Europe, IS attempts to justify its attack on the PKK bases in the region and arguably to receive Turkish support, since the PKK is at war with Turkey.

“Aynul-Islam was the major focus of the Islamic State because it was determined the PKK would be the main ally of the crusaders in this stage of their crusade due to the supposed battle

experience of PKK fighters and the purely secularist ideology of their

party, one that considers the Jewish state to be an ally of any future Kurdish state.”Dabiq, 4: 42

IS uses ‘crusaders’ which refers to those Westerners who tried to capture Jerusalem from Islamic rule in the beginning of the last millennium. It attempts to mobilize and direct Muslims’ public opinion against the PKK, which is a Kurdish political party. Furthermore, it mentions the secularist nature of the PKK and takes it for granted that any future Kurdish state will have friendly relationship with Israel and they will be even allies –all as an attempt to achieve further public mobilization against the PKK and the Kurds in general.

“...the bulk of the Kurdish political and military factions today are secularist or Marxist in nature. The most prominent of these rival factions are the PKK, the KDP, and the PUK.”Dabiq, 10: 30

“May Allah increase the animosity and violence between the murtaddīn of the KDP, PUK, PKK, and Gorran.”Dabiq, 12: 45

Calling Kurdish political parties secularist or Marxist makes them easy subjects to being murdered by extreme Islamist groups. Similarly, on another occasion, IS labels the aforementioned parties, namely PKK, KDP, and PUK along with Gorran (Change Movement) murtaddīn to legitimize spilling their blood.

## 6. Conclusion

Within the course of this study, it is explained that by depending on religious interpretations, the IS discourse towards the Kurds is hostile. They try to add a sacred dimension into their discourse in order to provoke this sense of hostility in the hearts of their followers. The same discourse is used to arouse a sense of religious affinity with the Kurds in order to make them join their promised state. And as they have openly announced, Kurdistan with its ethnic borders will be an autonomous province in the state they are determined to build. Hence this symbolic tone in their discourse enabled them to recruit many Kurds, but with their fatwas they soon proved they regarded the Kurds among their main enemies. Therefore shedding Kurdish blood has been legitimized and their women have been sold as sex slaves. This proves that IS have intensified the hateful discourse they have against the Kurds by promoting fanatic nationalism coupled with religious extremism, which has led a great deal of animosity against the Kurds.

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## پوخته

هه موو بزوتنه وه سیاسیه کان هه ولده دان دهسه لات به ده سبتگرن، بو ئه وهی هه ندی بیروباوه ری سیاسی کومه لایه تی ئابوری وهه ندیک جار باوه ری ئاینی خو یان بخه نه واری جیه جیکردن له ناو کومه لگه دا، بو گه یشتن به م مه به سته زمان پو لیککی سه ره کی ده گیری ت. چونکه زمان هه لگری بیروپا و ئایدیولوجیایه و له بهر ئه وه زمان خاوه ن ئه وه هیزه یه که بیرکردنه وهی خه لک وش یوازی بیرکردنه وه یان کۆنترۆل ده کات ، بو ئه وهی بتوانن هه ل سوکه وت وره فتاری خه لک ئاراسته بکه ن بو مه به سته ی خو یان. ئه مه کارتیکردنی راسته وخوی هه یه له سه ر پیکهاته کومه لایه تییه کان و ههروه ها چۆنیه تی بینینی راستیه کان له هه ر کومه لگه یه ک دا. ئه م لیکۆلینه وهیه میژوویه کی کورت له سه ر کورد و دهوله تی ئیسلامی له ئیراق و سوریا (داعش) پیشکesh ده کات و شیکاری بو ژماره یه ک دهقی نووسراوی داعش ده کات بو روو هه لمالین له هه ندیک له و بیروپا شاراوانه ی که پیوه ندییان به کورده وه هه یه به پیی شیکاری ره خنه گرانه ی ئاخاوتن.

**وشه ی کلیل:** دهوله تی ئیسلامی له ئیراق و سوریا (داعش)، کورد، ئایدیولوجیا، زمان، شیکاری ره خنه گرانه ی ئاخاوتن

## ملخص البحث

كل حركات السياسية تعتمز الاستيلاء على السلطة لكي تفرض معتقداتها السياسية والاجتماعية والاقتصادية، وأحياناً الدينية على المجتمع، و تلعب استخدام اللغة دوراً رائداً لتحقيق ذلك. لان اللغة الافكار والتوجهات والايديولوجيات السياسييه ولان اللغة صاحبة القدرة للسيطرة على طريقة تفكير الناس وقولبة ذاكرتهم، وتوجيه سلوكهم من اجل اغراضهم تقام في اللغة وبالتالي اللغة لديها القدرة على السيطرة على الطريقة التي يفكر بها الناس. لان السيطرة على طريقة التفكير لدى الناس تعني السيطرة على الطريقة التي يتصرفون بها في المجتمع. وهذا له تأثير مباشر على الهياكل الاجتماعية وكيف ينظر إلى الواقع في مجتمع معين. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تقديم لمحة تاريخية مختصرة عن الدولة الإسلامية في العراق وسوريا (داعش) والكورد، و استناداً إلى منهج تحليل الخطاب النقدي تقوم بتحليل عدد من الخطابات المكتوبة لتنظيم داعش للتعرف على المعتقدات والأفكار الخفية في خطابهم بشأن الكورد، الذين يقاتلون ضدهم في ساحات القتال.

**كلمات المفتاح:** الدولة الإسلامية في العراق وسوريا (داعش)، الكورد، ايدولوجيا، اللغة، تحليل النقدي

للخطاب.

