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Harbingers of the caliphate: Islamic State revolutionary actions 2011-2014

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THESIS

HARBINGERS OF THE CALIPHATE: ISLAMIC STATE REVOLUTIONARY ACTIONS 2011–2014

by

Jonathan S. Baker

June 2016

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Co-Advisor:	Doowan Lee
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At the time of the U.S. forces' withdrawal from Iraq at the end of 2011, the Islamic State was on the brink of defeat. With roughly 700 members remaining, the movement initiated a well-designed and rigorously executed revolutionary campaign, first in Iraq and then Syria. By June of 2014, a movement once dismissed as "junior varsity" was dominating eastern Syria and routing divisions of the Iraqi Army.

This thesis develops a model of revolutionary growth and employs it as a tool to evaluate the Islamic State's campaign from 2011 through 2014. This evaluation reveals the significance and logic of Islamic State car bomb attacks against the Iraqi Security Forces and Shia civilians. The analysis explains how and why the Islamic State forges alliances and eliminates rival movements and tribal organizations. This evaluation illuminates the Islamic State's internal structure and methodology for governing territory to support further growth.

This thesis allows the reader to form a better understanding of the integrated strategy of the Islamic State, so as to be better prepared to contribute to current efforts to combat the movement—in Iraq, Syria, and other troubled nations.

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**HARBINGERS OF THE CALIPHATE: ISLAMIC STATE REVOLUTIONARY
ACTIONS 2011–2014**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AQI	Al Qaeda in Iraq
IAI	Islamic Army of Iraq
IS	Islamic State
ISF	Iraqi Security Forces
JM	Jaysh al-Mujahideen
JN	Jabhat al-Nusrah
JRTN	Jaysh Rijal al-Tariqa al-Naqshbandi
TwJ	Tawhid wa Jihad
YMB	Yarmouk Martyrs Brigade

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Islamic State shocked many in June of 2014 when the movement seized Mosul during what appeared to be a rapid military offensive in Northern Iraq. The Mosul offensive demonstrated the Islamic State's significant growth since the end of the United States mission in Iraq. The movement routed two Iraqi Army Divisions, totaling approximately 30,000 soldiers, from northern Iraq.[1] Just two-and-a-half years earlier, the Islamic State was on the brink of defeat. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta testified before Congress in June 2011 that only 1,000 Islamic State (then called Al Qaeda in Iraq) members remained. Senior Iraqi intelligence officials estimated the number was down to roughly 700 by the end of the year.[2] How did they reverse this and rapidly grow into formidable revolutionary movement?

When examined carefully, this operational victory was not merely the product of refined guerrilla warfare operations against a fledgling Iraqi military force. The fall of Mosul and other population centers within the Sunni regions of Iraq and Syria were the product of a lengthy and effective campaign of broader activities. These revolutionary activities are frequently overlooked, leading to a lack of understanding of the nature and course of internal conflicts. While efforts to contain and defeat the Islamic State may eventually become successful, understanding how the movement returned to preeminence is essential.

This thesis explains how the Islamic State rebuilt itself from near defeat in 2011 to dominating major portions of Iraq and Syria in 2014. To accomplish this, I will first develop a model of revolutionary movement growth through the integration of previously established theory. This model organizes movement

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[1] Martin Chulov, Fazel Hawramy, and Spencer Ackerman, "Iraq Army Capitulates to ISIS Militants in Four Cities," *The Guardian*, June 11, 2014, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jun/11/mosul-isis-gunmen-middle-east-states.

[2] Qassim Abdul-Zahra and Lara Jakes, "Al Qaeda Iraq Strength Musters," *Associated Press*, October 10, 2012, http://www.stuff.co.nz/world/middle-east/7797190/Al-Qaeda-Iraqi-strength-musters.

actions into categories based on their foci—actions directed at the state, actions directed at competing movements, and actions directed at the population. See Figure 1 for a graphical representation of the model. I then evaluate the significant Islamic State actions within each category, and how the actions contribute to movement's growth in Iraq and Syria. This knowledge is critically important, as the Islamic State remains formidable in the Middle East and has loyal affiliates from Africa to Afghanistan.

A.   REVOLUTIONS AND REVOLUTIONARY ACTION

Revolutions are defined in two ways: by the goals of the participating movements and the nature of the conflict between them. Revolutions may be described as an effort undertaken by a movement seeking to drastically alter or replace existing social, economic, and political institutions.[3] Revolutions are also internal state conflicts consisting of a competition between an incumbent government (henceforth referred to as the state) and one or more movements for the support and control of the population.[4] These definitions are linked, as support and control of the population enables revolutionary movements to grow and ultimately accomplish their aims of changing social, economic, and political institutions.[5] Given these characteristics, the Islamic State is better understood as a revolutionary movement than merely a terrorist organization.

Literature shows varying theories regarding the driving forces behind the formation and conduct of revolutions. These theories may be sorted into two general schools of thought: Theories that recognize structural conditions as the seminal factor leading to revolution, and those that recognize actors and action

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[3] James DeFronzo, *Revolutions and Revolutionary Movements*, 3rd ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2007), 10–27.

[4] Gordon McCormick, "Seminar in Guerrilla Warfare." Lecture, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA, January–March, 2015

[5] Jack A. Goldstone, ed. *Revolutions: Theoretical, Comparative, and Historical Studies* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1986).

as primarily important.[6] Both perspectives are highly relevant to understanding the actions of revolutionary movements, as they are not mutually exclusive. Structural conditions impact the feasibility of revolutionary actions, and activities undertaken by revolutionary movements alter the existing structural conditions. However, analysis through the perspective of revolutionary movement action is more pertinent to the practitioner. Through this lens, it is possible to understand what actions directly and indirectly lead to revolutionary movement growth and eventual obtainment of movement objectives.
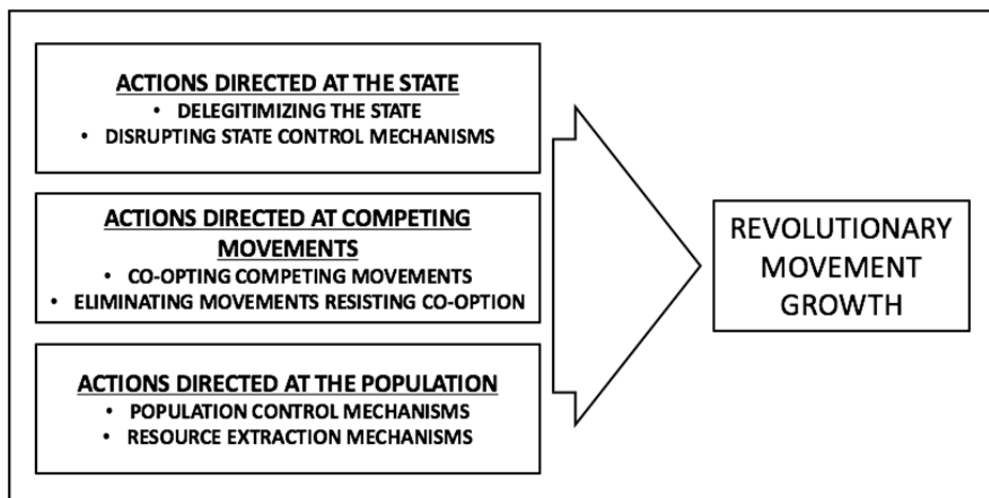
Figure 1. A Model of Revolutionary Movement Growth

I organize the literature describing the growth of revolutionary movements into three categories. These are actions directed at the state, actions directed at competing movements, and actions directed at the population. Revolutionary actions directed at the state are intended to erode the state's control over the population, and render it unacceptable in the realm of public opinion.[7] Revolutionary actions directed at other movements are intended to eliminate or

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[6] Theda, Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 3–32.

[7] Andrew Kydd and Barbara Walter, "The Strategies of Terrorism," *International Security* 31, no. 1 (Summer 2006): 49–80.

co-opt competitors to establish a monopoly over the support of the population. Actions directed at the population are intended to solidify the movement's control over a geographic region and extract resources for growth.[8]

B. REVOLUTIONARY ACTIONS DIRECTED AT THE STATE

Revolutionary actions directed at the state are intended to shape the relationship between the state and the population. Understanding this relationship is key, and it can be shaped in two ways. The first way is to discredit the state's reputation among the population. For the population to support a revolutionary movement, it helps to view the state with a degree of illegitimacy. Discrediting the state provides the population with a degree of motivation to support a revolution. The second way to impact the relationship between the state and the population is to erode the state's control over the population. To achieve this, revolutionary movements must undertake actions that disrupt the state's mechanisms that enforce the status quo, creating the opportunity for the movement growth to occur. Revolutionary movements must understand the relationship between the state and the population, and how actions directed at the state will impact the opportunity and motivation for revolution.

Taking an in-depth look at state legitimacy, there are multiple theories that describe how a state falls out of favor with the population. A social structure perspective describes a balance between the collective values of the population and those espoused by the state. When these entities fall out of synchronization, disorder occurs. States seek to maintain order through incremental reform of domestic policies and the enforcement of social norms. If these measures fail— or are not attempted—the population will increasingly view the state as

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[8] William R. Andrews, *The Village War: Vietnamese Communist Revolutionary Activities in Dinh Tuong Province, 1960–1964* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1973).

illegitimate. This condition is conducive to the growth of revolutionary movements.[9]

The social structure perspective is best exemplified by the French Revolution of 1787–1789. The absolute monarchy that preceded the revolution was stagnant and unable to reform according to changing social dynamics. The growth of an educated middle class and awareness of Enlightenment ideas created incongruence between the expectations of the population and the policies of the government. This social incongruence gave rise to one of the more notorious revolutions in European history.[10]

A second perspective on the relationship between the state and the population is that of aggregate dissatisfaction. This school of thought shares the conditions-based perspective of the social structure theory, but acknowledges that the motivations for revolution among the population are difficult to trace and varied from individual to individual. Collective dissatisfaction is the summation of grievances across the population, or population segments.[11]

This is most true during the beginnings of revolutionary events, as was the case during the 1979 revolution in Iran. Prior to actions taken by religious fundamentalists, collective dissatisfaction was traceable to a variety of issues. Poor economic opportunity, a lack of social justice, conservative cultural ideals, and a lack of political access were all contributing factors to popular discontent. Determining which condition was initially most formative is difficult, lending importance to the aggregation of dissatisfaction.[12]

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[9] Chalmers Johnson, *Revolutionary Change*, 2nd ed. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1982), 16–60.

[10] Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions,* 3–32.

[11] Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel*, 40th Anniversary Ed. (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2010).

[12] Charles Kurzman, *The Unthinkable Revolution in Iran* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).

These theories inform revolutionary movements with knowledge for identifying the sources of a population's motivations for revolution. Revolutionary actions directed at the state foster this motivation by disrupting state activities. The clandestine sabotage of state efforts to provide essential services is a basic example. Disrupting state efforts to meet the needs of the population breeds animosity among the population—as was the case during the initial reconstruction efforts in Iraq following the 2003 invasion.[13]

Revolutionary movement actions can also seek to indirectly erode the state's legitimacy. The state's use—or misuse—of repression against revolutionary movements can further delegitimize the incumbent government. Research shows state attempts to use overt oppression against revolutionary movements that are not isolated from society can have a counter-productive effect on the population, actually increasing public protest against the government. Furthermore, revolutionary movements that are viewed as threatening by the state are more likely to be targeted with repressive state activities. Assuming the revolutionary movement enjoys a degree of integration with the population, threatening activities against the state will encourage repression against the population. Indirectly, this repression then generates outcry and political opportunity for the revolutionary movement.[14] [15]

Other research has given the moniker "Accidental Guerrilla" to this phenomenon.[16] In Afghanistan, a small number of Taliban members operating out of a village would often provoke a substantial U.S. operation in response. These operations often result in collateral damage—not just in lives, but in damaged honor or respect. These actions would push members of the population

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[13] Gal Luft, "Reconstructing Iraq: Bringing Iraq's Economy Back Online." *Middle East Quarterly* 12 no. 3 (Summer 2005): 25–32.

[14] Jennifer Earl, "Tanks, Tear Gas, and Taxes: Toward a Theory of Movement Repression," *Sociological Theory* 21, no. 1 (January 2003): 44–68.

[15] Kydd and Walter, "The Strategies of Terrorism," 49–80.

[16] David Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

who were otherwise bystanders towards active support of the Taliban. A seemingly successful effort to repress a revolutionary movement may indirectly cause more damage to the state's legitimacy[17]

These indirect measures of degrading legitimacy require revolutionary movements to provoke the state into action. Using violence against politically sensitive targets—such as political and military leaders or population centers that are beneficiaries of state patrimony—is likely to invite a response against the revolutionary movement's regions of support. If these responses are indiscriminate, this actions will further convince the population that the state is unacceptable.[18] Targeting noncombatants is considered terrorism, and anathema to western standards. While this limits its feasibility for support by western nations, this abhorrence actually enhances its effectiveness—further demanding state action to reciprocate against the revolutionary movement.

Revolutionary movements often undertake actions directed at the state to directly and indirectly discredit it. These actions, which generally include the sabotage of services and provocation of repression, further the population's willingness to support a revolutionary movement. This motivation is essential for revolutionary movement growth.

Revolutionary movements should also undertake actions that erode the state's ability to control the population. While provocation increases motivation, degrading the state's measures of control increases the population's opportunity for revolution. Research shows degrading the state's ability to control the population is an important means of generating initial momentum in the early stages of a revolutionary movement.[19] As revolutionary movements continue to grow, further disruption of the state's ability to control the population can

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[17] Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla*

[18] Kydd and Walter, "The Strategies of Terrorism," 49–80

[19] Gordon H. McCormick and Frank Giordano, "Things Come Together: Symbolic Violence and Guerrilla Mobilisation," *Third World Quarterly* 28, no. 2 (2007): 295–320.

generate a bandwagon effect that further increases support for the movement.[20] The conflict between revolutionary movements in Algeria from 1997 to 1998 shows that populations will typically render support either to the state or a revolutionary movement based on the provision of security alone.[21]

The use of attrition-oriented attacks is the primary means a revolutionary movement can employ to decrease the state's ability to control the population. Increasing the costs of controlling the population—in terms of lives, financial resources, and time—negatively impacts the state's ability achieve sufficient levels of state control. Research also suggests that the use of attrition against states with a democratic regime type is especially effective, as democracies are typically less tolerant to sustained conflict spending.[22]

Revolutionary actions directed at the state are essential for movement growth. These actions directly and indirectly erode the legitimacy of the state, further increasing the population's motivation to support a revolutionary movement. Secondly, revolutionary actions directed at the state degrade the state's ability to control the population—further increasing the opportunity for a revolutionary movement to grow.

C.   REVOLUTIONARY ACTIONS DIRECTED AT COMPETING MOVEMENTS

To grow, revolutionary movements often undertake actions directed at competing movements. Contrary to the American experience during the U.S. revolutionary war, contemporary intrastate conflicts are frequently contests with multiple revolutionary movements.[23] These organizations offer opportunities for

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[20] Gordon H. McCormick, Steven B. Horton, and Lauren A. Harrison, "Things Fall Apart: The Endgame Dynamics of Internal Wars," *Third World Quarterly* 28, no. 2 (2007): 321–67.

[21] Stathis Kalyvas, "Wanton and Senseless? The Logic of Massacres in Algeria," *Rationality and Society* 11, no. 3 (August 1999): 243–85.

[22] Kydd and Walter, "The Strategies of Terrorism," 49–80

[23] Fotini Christia, *Alliance Formation in Civil Wars* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

forming coalitions or recruiting movement members. Other organizations may represent potential rivals who need to be marginalized. Tribal organizations, depending on the region, may also constitute competing movements. Nations with a degree of neopatrimonialism—where traditional or tribal leaders wield substantial influence over modern political institutions—require revolutionary movements to consider these organizations as competing movements.[24] Ultimately, these actions are intended to establish a monopoly over control of the revolution.

Alliance formation is an important form of revolutionary action directed at competing movements. According to Christia, warring parties in internal conflicts seek to establish the smallest coalition possible that is still large enough to achieve victory. This is derived from the logic that coalition make up will translate into post-conflict government formation. Alliance formation is complicated further by the fluid nature of revolutionary movement strength. As movements grow, alliances are likely to break down or new ones formed as movement leaders seek to position themselves advantageously for post-conflict politics.[25] Revolutionary movements are often aware of this political gamesmanship, and take actions to benefit from it. More successful organizations are prepared to forge new alliances with competing movements, and anticipate defections as organizations within an alliance increase or decrease in strength.

Interestingly, research suggests ideology or movement goals are not important determinants of how movement leaders choose alliance members. However, rank-and-file members of the movements need explanations for why competing movements are joining or departing alliances.[26] Therefore, it is beneficial for movement leaders to describe their objectives as broadly as

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[24] Gero Erdmann and Ulf Engel, "Neopatrimonialism Reconsidered: Critical Review and Elaboration of an Elusive Concept," *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 45, no. 1 (March 2007).

[25] Christia, *Alliance Formation in Civil Wars*.

[26] Christia, *Alliance Formation in Civil Wars*.

possible to facilitate alliance formation. Synchronizing local grievances into a nation-wide master grievance is an essential aspect of revolutionary movement growth.[27] Revolutionary movement actions directed at competing movements are better supported through espousing a rejection of the state instead of a specific political solution. Public or private media communications with other group should be as generic as possible, and differ from those seeking to influence segments of the population.

Given the limitations on alliance formation, many competing movements will be unwilling to participate in a coalition. However, these organizations represent opportunities to recruit active revolutionaries. While alliance formation presents a temporary wholesale relationship, recruitment is a means to achieve more permanent growth on a smaller scale. Revolutionary movements should take actions directed at competing movement members and subgroups to encourage their defection. Recruiting new members from the ranks of other movements is expeditious means of obtaining individuals or sub-movement groups with existing experience.[28]

Inter-movement recruitment requires special individuals who can bridge social relationships across revolutionary movements. These individuals, called brokers, are typically not movement leaders themselves—as these individuals are too invested into one movement or another. Brokers are essential for penetrating and influencing competing organizes or tribes, and revolutionary movements foster brokers wherever possible.[29]

Interactions with competing organizations offers revolutionary movements opportunities to forge alliances or recruit new movement members. However,

[27] Stathis Kalyvas, "The Ontology of Political Violence: Action and Identity in Civil Wars," *Perspectives on Politics* 1, no. 3 (September 2003): 475–94.

[28] Florence Passy, "Social Networks Matter. But How?" in *Social Movement Analysis: The Network Perspective* (Oxford University Press, 2002).

[29] Shin-Kap Han, "The Other Ride of Paul Revere: The Brokerage Role in the Making of the American Revolution," in *Social Movement Analysis: The Network Perspective* (Oxford University Press, 2002).

revolutionary movements may develop rivalries that lead to violence between groups.[30] Actions directed at these organizations should parallel those directed at the state—revolutionary movements should seek to degrade and discredit them. If possible, revolutionary movements should also simultaneously try to support defection away from these groups.

Revolutionary actions directed at competing movements are designed to marginalize peer opposition while bolstering movement ranks. Through savvy alliance formation, fighter recruitment, and conflict with rival groups, a revolutionary movement can achieve dominance over an opportunity for revolution. These measures will enable greater access to the population and the support it can offer.

D.   REVOLUTIONARY ACTIONS DIRECTED AT THE POPULATION

While replacing the existing political institutions is the goal of a revolutionary movement, governance is also a means to that end. Revolutionary movements must take actions directed at the population to support movement growth. These actions—best described as governance—seek to accomplish two primary tasks: to solidify movement control over a geographic region and extrapolate resources for furthering the movement. The ability to control the population garners access to resources, and constitutes a form of social contract between the movement and population.[31] This was well demonstrated by Hezbollah, which forged strong bonds with the population through the provision of services previously denied by the state.[32]

Revolutionary movements have two types of actions at their disposal for controlling the population. These actions are the provision of services and

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[30] Stathis Kalyvas, "Wanton and Senseless?"

[31] Zachariah Cherian Mampilly, *Rebel Rulers: Insurgent Governance and Civilian Life during War* (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 2011).

[32] Augustus R. Norton, *Hezbollah: A Short History*, Princeton Studies in Muslim Politics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

coercive activities, and are synonymous with positive and negative reinforcement measures. The provision of services to the population is a priority for a revolutionary movement, as it is important for fostering the legitimacy of the movement.[33] Just as a revolutionary movement should seek to sabotage the services provided by the state, movements must replaces these services with their own. In geographic regions where the state has established government services, these efforts can be co-opted for use by the revolutionary movement. Furthermore, when a movement can improve upon these institutions—such as provided access to population segments that were previously excluded—they can easily gain credibility.[34] Psychologically, individuals and groups are more likely to support resource requests if they feel a degree of indebtedness to the requestor.[35] The provision of services by the revolutionary movement establishes a quid pro quo for resources from the population that is difficult for human nature to resist.

Revolutionary movements also have more proactive means at their disposal for solidifying control. Measures of indoctrination and radicalization are effective means for controlling the population. Research shows that social factors are strong tools for indoctrinating the population. Public education programs, where individuals attend and learn with and from their community members, are an effective means of fostering movement acceptance.[36] Over time, the population accepts the revolutionary movement as the legitimate authority, which enables access to resources.

Revolutionary movements also often direct actions at the population to solidify control in order to garner access to resources. Extracting resources from

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[33] Mampilly, *Rebel Rulers.*

[34] Mampilly, *Rebel Rulers.*

[35] Robert B. Cialdini, *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion* (New York, NY: Collins, 2007).

[36] Scott Helfstein, "Edges of Radicalization: Ideas, Individuals and Networks in Violent Extremism" (Combating Terrorism Center, United States Military Academy, February 2012), https://www.ctc.usma.edu/v2/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/CTC_EdgesofRadicalization.pdf.

the population is beneficial for the growth of a revolutionary movement. All of a revolutionary movement's activities are constrained by resource requirements. Actions directed at the state and other movements require substantial human and material assets. Controlling the population—in order to marshal resources—is by itself a resource intensive activity.[37] Revolutionary movements that are not able to extract resources from the population are severely limited. These organizations require outside patronage. This outside patronage is likely to come with conditions—such as additional political objectives—that may steer the movement off course.[38]

Revolutionary actions directed at the population seek to establish control to gain access to human and material resources. The provision of essential services and the application of psychological control levers are central to solidifying control. Taxing the population for financial or material resources, or conscripting fighters are central to movement growth, and these activities are not possible without a requisite degree of control.

To summarize, revolutionary movements pursue three types of actions to grow. Movements must conduct revolutionary actions at the government the delegitimize it and erode its ability to control the population. Movements must conduct actions directed at rival movements to establish a monopoly over the population through co-opting or eliminating other movements. Finally, revolutionary movements must pursue actions directed at the population to solidify control and extract resources. This thesis will use this model of revolutionary movement actions as a tool for assessing the overarching Islamic State campaign during their years of revitalization and growth in Iraq and Syria.

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[37] Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution*, 1st. ed (New York: McGraw-Hill Publ, 1978).

[38] Abdulkader H. Sinno, *Organizations at War in Afghanistan and Beyond* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008).

E. METHODOLOGY

This thesis evaluates each component of Islamic State revolutionary actions using a variety of publically available reporting sources. Given the clandestine nature of revolutionary movements, evidence is challenging to acquire. The general public—both in Iraq and Syria, and abroad—are direct and indirect participants in contemporary revolutionary events. A stratagem of information operations may exist beneath the most obvious surface of public data. For this reason, the validity of some evidence sources requires a degree of skepticism.

The assessment of the Islamic State's actions during the 2011–2014 period begins with an analysis of revolutionary actions directed at the Iraqi state. The second chapter of this thesis uses a database of car bomb attacks as an indicator—given their well-documented nature—of the over-arching IS campaign of attacks against the state. This quantitative data set is supplemented with qualitative analysis that shows three associated conditions of IS attacks. First, Islamic State attacks targeted the state directly and indirectly. Directly by using violence against security forces and government personnel. Indirectly through targeting a population deemed sensitive by the majority government—the Shi'a. Second, that the state reacted with indiscriminate violence against the Sunni population. This further disenfranchised a segment of the Iraqi population to a level sufficient to support revolutionary movements. Third, that Islamic State attacks degraded the Iraqi's governments mechanisms for controlling the population. These included the capacity of the Iraqi Security Forces and the provision of essential services needed to uphold the social contract. Finally, the assessment of Islamic State attacks against directed at the state will show such actions were of little importance in Syria, given the on-going revolution at the time of the movement's entry.

Chapter III focuses on the Islamic State's actions directed at competing movements. This chapter assesses IS interactions with a variety of other socio-political organizations in Iraq and Syria. The qualitative data characterizes

Islamic State efforts to co-opt competing revolutionary groups and tribal organizations with varying degrees of success. Quantitative and qualitative analysis describes Islamic State actions to eliminate groups that were unwilling to accept co-option. The analysis shows that when IS efforts directed at competing movements were not successful, growth was impeded.

Chapter IV addresses Islamic State actions directed at the population. This analysis uses a database of internal Islamic State documents to illuminate and evaluate two principle movement goals. First, IS developed multiple, overlapping bureaucracies with the intent to control the population. These efforts—equally robust and brutal—achieved short-term success. This control enabled the Islamic State to pursue its second component of actions, the extraction of resources from the population. These resources are essential for supporting revolutionary movement growth and obtainment of its objectives.

Finally, this thesis concludes by assessing the integration of the Islamic State's revolutionary actions across all three subject groups. This analysis will illuminate the answer to the fundamental question of the thesis: How did the Islamic State recover from the brink of defeat in 2011 to achieve surprising success by the end of 2014? By itself, answering this question is of great importance. Yet, it also opens the door for better informed analysis in the future. This may include better understanding of Islamic State affiliates outside of Iraq and Syria, and strategies for countering the movement, wherever it is found.

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II. REVOLUTIONARY ACTIONS DIRECTED AT THE STATE

As discussed during the first chapter, revolutionary actions directed at the state serve two purposes—delegitimizing the state and degrading the state's capacity to control the population. These objectives are pursued directly and indirectly through the use of violence, as depicted in Figure 2. This chapter explains how Islamic State attacks achieved these purposes in Iraq, and why such attacks were far less important in Syria.

State legitimacy has fluid and fixed components.[39] An ethnic minority ruling an ethnic majority with differing collective values, for example, is a relatively fixed condition that has implications on the legitimacy of the state. While regime change is the ultimate goal, movements cannot impact the ethnic makeup for the state as a means for delegitimizing it to support a revolution. Conversely, the performance of the state is fluid. Revolutionary movements can provoke the state into actions that are detrimental to its legitimacy. The Islamic State directly and indirectly attacked the state to incite indiscriminate reprisals against the population. These actions successfully contributed to delegitimizing the government in Baghdad.

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[39] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *The State's Legitimacy in Fragile Situations Unpacking Complexity*. (Paris: OECD, 2010), http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264083882-en.

REVOLUTIONARY ACTIONS DIRECTED AT THE STATE

ACTIONS DIRECTED AT THE STATE
- DIRECTLY ATTACK THE STATE
- INDIRECTLY ATTACK THE STATE

DELEGITIMIZING THE STATE
- PROVOKING INDISCRIMINATE REPRISALS

DISRUPTING CONTROL MECHANISMS
- DEGRADING SECURITY INSTITUTIONS
- DISRUPTING STATE SERVICES
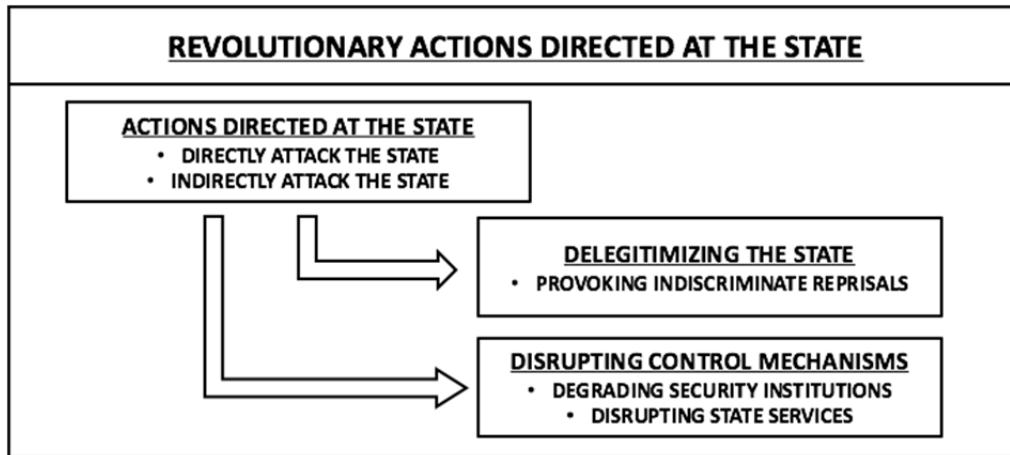
Figure 2. Revolutionary Actions Directed at the State

The second objective is to degrade the state's ability to control the population, which provides opportunities for revolutionary movements to grow. Islamic State attacks directed at state security institutions directly degraded their ability to control the population. Additionally, targeting government administrative buildings disrupts the provision of government services. As government services break down, so does the social contract.

This chapter begins with a quantitative and qualitative analysis of Islamic State attacks against the state within Iraq. This analysis scrutinizes the use of car bombs, as this technique is the most documented and branded form of Islamic State attack. This reveals the significant pressure the movement imposed upon the state to respond.

The second portion of analysis featured in this chapter will qualitatively evaluate the state's reaction to IS car bombs. This reveals the state's reprisals were a response to increased levels of Islamic State attacks. These reprisals were indiscriminate acts of repression against the Sunni population, and accelerated outrage against the Baghdad government.

The third section of this chapter assesses Islamic State actions directed at the state in terms of their disruption of state control mechanisms. Islamic State attacks degraded state security institutions, and their ability to enforce the state's

will on the population. These attacks also disrupted the functioning of state services, which eroded the social contract.

The fourth portion of this chapter accounts for evidence that does not support the model of revolutionary growth. This evaluates other possible explanations of the data, and data that partially contradicts the conclusions. In particular, this portion considers state delegitimizing actions that were not a response to Islamic State attacks.

This chapter concludes by evaluating the interaction of a delegitimized state and disrupted state control mechanisms. These conditions, shaped in large part by the Islamic State, established the circumstances necessary for revolutionary movement growth. This manifested in the Sunni uprising and Anbar, Nineveh, and other enclaves across Iraq.

A.   EVIDENCE OF ISLAMIC STATE DIRECT AND INDIRECT ATTACKS AGAINST THE STATE

The Islamic State employs a variety of types of attacks, but none are more high profile than the car bomb—known in the military lexicon as a Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Device (VBIED). These attacks are periodically used to attack military targets—such as ISF patrols or check points—but are the tool of choice for punishing rival population centers. Unlike abductions and subsequent extra-judicial killings, car bombs dominate media headlines whenever they occur. Thus, they are the most documented form of Islamic State attack.

This analysis includes two reporting sources for data depicting the Islamic State's employment of the car bombs. The first is the Iraq Body Count, an online database that catalogues incidents within Iraq that result in the loss of life. The database includes detailed information—pulled from local media outlets—including attack weapons used, low and high estimates for casualties, location, and time of day. The vast majority of events in the database are vetted by multiple sources, with the preponderance of single-source reported events consisting of small attacks involving only a few individuals. Given the high-profile

nature of car bombs, these are typically well reported by local media agencies—and accurately portrayed in the Iraq Body Count database.[40] Unfortunately, there is not a comparable database available for the Syrian conflict. Given this limitation, analysis of the use of provocative attacks against the Syrian regime can only be qualitative.

The second main data source is the Islamic State itself. The Islamic State has published two annual reports detailing their attacks. These reports cover the periods of November 2011 thru November 2012, and November 2012 through November 2013.[41] The data included within these documents should be treated with some degree of skepticism, given the natural incentive for a combatant to inflate any representation of their operational capacity. However, the data within these documents enumerating the employment of car bombs are generally consistent with the trend depicted by the Iraq Body Count database during the same timeframe. Interestingly, the Islamic State annual reporting on operations only covers provinces within Iraq. By the end of the second reporting period, the Islamic State is already active in Syria, but perhaps only to a limited degree that would not be beneficial to highlight in a self-generated operational report.[42]

Using the reporting periods of the Islamic State annual reports, the Iraq Body Count indicates 203 and 541 car bomb attacks from November 2011 through November 2012 and November 2012 through November 2013 respectively.[43] The Islamic State claimed 252 and 615 car bomb operations

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[40] Iraq Body Count, "The Iraq Body Count Incidents Database" (London, UK, March 3, 2016), https://www.iraqbodycount.org/database/.

[41] Alex Bilger, "ISIS Annual Reports Reveal a Metrics-Driven Military Command" (The Institute for the Study of War, May 22, 2014), http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/ISWBackgrounder_ISIS_Annual_Reports_0.pdf.

[42] The Carter Center, "Syria Countrywide Conflict Report #1" (Atlanta, GA, August 20, 2013), http://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/peace/conflict_resolution/syria-conflict/NationwideReport_aug-20–2013.pdf.

[43] Iraq Body Count, "Incidents Database."

during these periods.[44] It is possible the difference between data sets stems from differences in the unit of measure—events resulting in casualties for the Iraq Body Count Data base and operations for the Islamic State's publications. Ostensibly, "operations" may include attempted car bomb attacks that failed to detonate or were otherwise aborted. Both are events that would not result in casualties and would not be included in the casualty database. Despite the unit of measure differences, and the previously mentioned incentive to inflate operational statistics, both data sets show a greater than two-fold increase in car bomb attacks within Iraq.

During the calendar years 2011 through 2013, the casualty database shows a steady increase in car bomb attacks, with some fluctuation in attack frequency from month to month. During 2011, car bombings occurred at an average rate of 8.25 attacks per month. In 2012, this number more than doubled to a rate of 18.67 attacks per month. The frequency of car bombings increased further yet in 2013, when the average reached 46.25 car bomb attacks per month. Amazingly, from July through October of 2013, the Islamic State conducted nearly 70 car bomb attacks per month—the peak of their car bomb operations. Subsequently, car bombings decreased in frequency during 2014. Complete annual data for IS car bombs and casualties is depicted in Table 1.[45]

Table 1.   Islamic State Car Bomb Attacks

Year	#Car Bombs	#Casualties low	#Casualties High
2011	99	519	590
2012	224	868	1042
2013	555	2118	3091
2014	388	1415	2022

In addition to a vehicle, a car bomb requires a driver (suicide or otherwise), explosives, an initiation system, facilities for construction, and

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[44] Bilger, "ISIS Annual Reports Reveal."

[45] Iraq Body Count, "Incidents Database."

potentially—depending on the size of the payload—reinforced suspension or other mechanical enhancements. Even when considering the costs of vehicle procurement alone—through either legitimate or illegitimate means—maintaining a pace of over 45 car bomb attacks per month during 2013 is a substantial undertaking. While the specifics of the Islamic State's organizational dimensions are not publically available, the operational tempo suggests the organization committed a significant portion of its enterprise to the conduct of car bomb operations.

This data shows that attacks targeting the state were a significantly important aspect of the Islamic State's campaign during the 2011–2014 timeframe. Reviewing the targets of the Islamic State attacks, the database shows there are two major categories. The first is that Islamic State car bombs are frequently used for attacking Iraqi Security Forces and government facilities. The second grouping is that IS car bombs target Shia population centers. The overwhelming majority of attacks fall into these categories. Attacks against Kurdish forces and population centers are a distant third most frequent occurrence.[46]

The employment of car bombs against ISF targets is a clear attempt to directly attack the state. Targeting Shiite population centers—such as the Sadr City district of Baghdad, Karbala, or Najaf—is an attempt to indirectly attack the state. The Baghdad government's base of support stems from the predominately Shiite population centers. Protecting these regions, and satisfying the security needs for their inhabitants, is essential to the political survival of the al-Maliki regime.[47] Thus, an attack on these population centers is an indirect attack on the state. Direct and indirect attacks provoke the state to react using the means available, and this response is evaluated in the following section.

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[46] Iraq Body Count, "Incidents Database."

[47] Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, ed., *The Logic of Political Survival* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005).

Abu Musab al-Zarqawi introduced punishing the Shia as a strategy of provocation as part of the Islamic State's heritage. In a personal letter to senior Al Qaeda leadership written in early 2004, Zarqawi describes his scheme regarding the Shia:

> These in our opinion are the key to change: I mean that targeting and hitting them in their religious, political, and military depth will provoke them to show the Sunnis their rabies and bare the teeth of the hidden rancor working in their breasts. If we succeed in dragging them into the arena of sectarian war, it will become possible to awaken the inattentive Sunnis as they feel imminent danger and annihilating death at the hands of these Sabeans.[48]

The Islamic State car bomb campaign during the 2011–2014 timeframe is consistent with Zarqawi's vision. These attacks purposely sought to incite reprisals against the Sunnis as a means for generating revolutionary motivation.

Within Syria, a lack of significant reports of Islamic State attacks against the state also support the revolutionary growth model. Although there is reporting that the Islamic State has employed car bombs in Syria, such reporting is sparse—and suggests the target is not the state.[49] Islamic State efforts in Syria are largely limited by rival movements, and not the Assad regime in Damascus. In fact, some reports indicate the Islamic State and the Syrian regime operate with a degree of coordination.[50] Given this strategy, it is logical that provocative attacks directed at the state are less important.

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[48] "February 2004 Coalition Provisional Authority English Translation of Terrorist Musab Al Zarqawi Letter Obtained by United States Government in Iraq.," February 2004, U.S. Department of State Archive, http://2001–2009.state.gov/p/nea/rls/31694.htm.

[49] Tariq al-Abd, "Fighters in Eastern Ghouda: ISIS Blows up Car in Duma," *Al-Safir*, June 17, 2014, http://assafir.com/Article/63/355766/MostRead.

[50] Stuart Ramsay, "IS Files Reveal Assad's Deals with Militants," *Sky News*, May 3, 2016, http://news.sky.com/story/1688756/is-files-reveal-assads-deals-with-militants.

B.   EVIDENCE OF THE IRAQI GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO ISLAMIC STATE ATTACKS.

As the Islamic State directly and indirectly attacked the Iraqi government, the state responded in kind. This section reviews a series of Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) attacks directed at the Islamic State. These attacks may be characterized as indiscriminate responses to the Islamic State.

Eventually, al-Maliki would name his campaign against the Islamic State *Revenge of the Martyrs*—a clear indication that ISF operations were a reaction to direct and indirect attacks on the state.[51] A Shiite parliamentary member, Awad al-Awadi of the Sadr Trend, would describe the announcement in August 2013 as overdue, and acknowledged the government's responsibility to respond to the Islamic State attacks.[52] Following previous IS bombings in September 2012,[53] and March, 2013,[54] Shia residents would call the Baghdad government "shameful" for allowing the attacks to occur. This indicates the ISF attacks described in this section were a response to IS attacks—showing Islamic State efforts to provoke the state were successful.

On 25 January 2013, Iraqi Security Forces fired upon Sunni demonstrators in Fallujah, resulting in four killed and 42 wounded. Witnesses claim that the shootings occurred after unarmed protestors began throwing objects at the ISF members. Prime Minister al-Maliki blamed the incident on "regional conspiracies"—a likely reference to the Islamic State.[55] The event also

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[51] "Aid Sought for 'Revenge of the Martyrs,'" *Associated Press*, September 19, 2013, http://www.stuff.co.nz/world/middle-east/9184546/Aid-sought-for-Revenge-of-the-Martyrs.

[52] Ahmed Hussein, "Sadrist MP Describes Revenge for Martyrs Security Operation as 'Late,'" *Iraqi News*, August 9, 2013, http://www.iraqinews.com/baghdad-politics/sadrist-mp-describes-revenge-for-martyrs-security-operation-as-quot-late-quot/.

[53] "Bombings across Iraq Kill 26," *The Guardian*, September 30, 2012, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/sep/30/bombings-iraq.

[54] Mohammed Tawfeeq, "18 Killed as Car Bombs Target Shiite Worshipers in Iraq," *CNN*, March 29, 2013, http://www.cnn.com/2013/03/29/world/iraq-violence/.

[55] Mohammed Tawfeeq, "Officials: Iraqi Soldiers Fire on Anti-Government Protesters," *CNN*, January 25, 2013, http://www.cnn.com/2013/01/25/world/meast/iraq-protests/index.html.

occurred following a year of escalated Sunni violence targeting predominantly Shia populations and security forces. Car bombings more than doubled in 2012 from the previous year, increasing the pressure on the ISF to act in defense of both Iraqi civilians and their own military formations.[56]

This event, known as the "Friday of No Return," marked an increase in the degree of disenfranchisement of the Sunni population. In the week following the first ISF attack on Sunni Protestors, protest leaders formed popular committees to secure the protest sites.[57] Sunni Sheikh Ahmed Abu Risha voiced demands for al-Maliki to deliver the ISF soldiers responsible for the Friday of No Return shooting, or face violence. His echoes the sentiments of the protests, which champion the repeal of the de-baathification law.[58] Abu Risha is an influential Sunni and leader of the Anbar Awakening Council that played a significant role in sidelining the Islamic State prior to the departure of U.S. Forces.[59] Abu Risha's demands—although threatening to the al-Maliki government—seek to obtain a political solution to the turmoil. Making a stronger call to arms, the Islamic State urged Sunnis to take up arms and overthrow the Shiite government in a 1 February statement.[60] Conversely, Sunni cleric Abdul-Hameed Jadoua urged the masses to not give in to zeal, and follow the responsible guidance to tribal leaders.[61] Based on the statements of Sunni leaders, it appears the ISF

[56] Iraq Body Count, "Incidents Database."

[57] *"Juma Loyalty to the Martyrs of Fallujah Mobilize Thousands of Demonstrators with Tight Security Measures," Beirut Press, February 2, 2013, http://beirutpress.net/article/6381.*

[58] Omar Sattar, "Iraq's De-Baathification Controversy Still Lingers," trans. Pascale Menassa, *Al-Monitor*, January 16, 2013, http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/politics/2013/01/de-baathification-10-years.html#.

[59] Mohammed Tawfeeq and Chelsea Carter, "Sunni Sheikh to Al-Maliki: Hand over Soldiers behind Shootings or 'Face Losses,'" *CNN*, January 26, 2013, http://www.cnn.com/2013/01/26/world/meast/iraq-protests/index.html.

[60] Patrick Markey and Aseel Kamil, "Al Qaeda Calls on Iraqi Sunni Protesters to Take up Arms," *The Daily Star Lebanon*, January 31, 2013, http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2013/Jan-31/204472-al-qaeda-calls-for-iraq-sunnis-to-take-up-arms.ashx#axzz2JYxVdNcl.

[61] Karen Bach, "Iraq Sectarian Violence: Sunnis Protest Amid Al Qaeda Calls To Arms," Archive of Huffington Post, (February 1, 2013), http://karenbachxy.blogspot.com/2013/02/iraq-sectarian-violence-sunnis-protest.html.

crackdown in Fallujah on 25 January was marked point for Iraqi Sunnis. The attack delegitimized the state, and some began to discuss violence as a possible option—even if most remained against the notion of renewed violence.

Three months later, the Iraqi Security Forces increased pressure on the Sunni protest sites. In the province of Kirkuk, ISF elements surrounded Sunni protestors in the village of Hawija. On 23 April, 2013, the confrontation boiled over into violence—resulting in the death of 39 civilians and over 100 others wounded. Sunni protestors and Iraqi Security Forces would blame each other for instigating the violence.[62]

The ISF operation on in Hawijah further pushed the Sunni protest movement towards violence. In Ramadi, Sunni leaders announced the formation of the Army of Pride and Dignity on 26 April, taking another step towards violent conflict.[63] Despite this escalation, and a few small confrontations between militia members and ISF formations, Sunni leaders continued to push for a political solution.[64] Sheikh Abdul Malik al-Saadi was chosen to lead a commission charged with negotiating with the Baghdad government, as a means to obtain Sunni protest objectives through political means.[65] Tensions remained heightened, but the onset of any systemic violence between the Sunni population

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[62] Tim Arango, "Dozens Killed in Battles Across Iraq as Sunnis Escalate Protests Against Government," *The New York Times*, April 23, 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/24/world/middleeast/clashes-at-sunni-protest-site-in-iraq.html?_r=1&mtrref=undefined.

[63] Amar Tariq, "Demonstration in Ramadi as 'Juma Burning Demands' and Clans Constitute the Army of 'Pride and Dignity,'" April 26, 2013, http://www.alsumaria.tv/news/75161/تظـاهرة-و-المطالـب-حرق-جمعة-باسـم-بالرمـادي/ar.

[64] Kirk Sowell, "Maliki's Anbar Blunder," *Foreign Policy*, January 15, 2014, http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/01/15/malikis-anbar-blunder/.

[65] Ahmed Valley and Amjad Salah, "Sheikh Saadi Formed a Committee to Negotiate with the Government and Nominate Shrine," *Al-Sumaria*, May 13, 2013, http://www.alsumaria.tv/news/76014/الحكـوم-مع-وض-التقـــاوض-لجنـة-شـــكلت-السـعدي-الشــيخ/ar.; Ahmed Valley and Amjad Salah, "Sheikh Saadi Formed a Committee to Negotiate with the Government and Nominate Shrine," *Al-Sumaria*, May 13, 2013, http://www.alsumaria.tv/news/76014/الشــيخ-الحكـوم-مع-التفـــاوض-لجنـة-شـــكلت-السـعدي/ar.

and ISF formations was curtailed for the time.[66] The ISF operation in Hawija—and second major indiscriminate response to Islamic State attacks—clearly eroded the legitimacy of the Iraqi state even further.

The third major act of violent repression occurred in Ramadi at the end of 2013. During a 22 December speech—a day after an Islamic State operation resulted in the death of an Iraqi General—al-Maliki implied the Sunni protest sites were harboring terrorists.[67] These comments were met with defiance from protest leaders in Ramadi, who stated that protestors would arm themselves and defend the protest site from any ISF operation.[68] On 30 December, ISF formations displaced Ramadi protestors, killing 14 and wounded many others. Unlike the violence in Fallujah that began the year, groups of armed Sunnis exchanged gunfire with ISF formations. Additionally, ISF units raided the home of parliamentary member Ahmed al-Alwani, detaining him and killing his brother. [69] The crackdown on the protest center in Ramadi was a final act of repression from the Government of Iraq, transitioning into a period of open conflict between Sunni organizations and Iraqi Security Forces.

Perhaps al-Maliki recognized the critical error the Iraqi Security Forces made, as he ordered their immediate withdrawal from the city.[70] However, a final line was crossed. On 5 January, the Military Council of Anbar emerged and

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[66] Kirk Sowell, "Maliki's Anbar Blunder," *Foreign Policy*, January 15, 2014, http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/01/15/malikis-anbar-blunder/.

[67] Omar Al-Jaffal, "Anbar Protesters Remain Defiant Despite Government Threats," trans. Tyler Huffman, *Al-Monitor*, December 27, 2013, http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/12/iraq-anbar-protestors-government-threats.html#.

[68] Long-Presse, "Matsamu Anbar: His Children Will Be Orphans and His Wife a Widow," *Almada Press*, December 27, 2013, http://www.almadapress.com/ar/news/23462/ ومعتصـــم-الانبـــار-من-أرادـأن-ـم يتـــبا-أطفـــا.

[69] "Iraq PM Seeks to Calm Tensions after Protest Camp Shut," *The Daily Star Lebanon*, December 31, 2013, http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2013/Dec-31/242755-four-more-killed-in-clashes-after-iraq-protest-camp-shut.ashx#axzz2p4cIIB00.

[70] Agence France Presse, "Iraq PM Seeks to Calm Tensions after Protest Camp Shut," *The Daily Star Lebanon*, December 31, 2013, http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2013/Dec-31/242755-four-more-killed-in-clashes-after-iraq-protest-camp-shut.ashx#axzz2p4cIIB00.

openly engaged ISF formations. Despite their division with the Islamic State, the Military Council of Anbar's operations against the Iraqi Security Forces obscured the differences between the tribal force and the revolutionary movement.[71]

As violence escalated, the Iraqi Security Forces continued the trend of indiscriminate attacks. Reporting from within the Iraqi military surfaced stating the ISF employed indirect fire against the Fallujah hospital. From January through the end of May 2014, sixteen different attacks against the hospital occurred using mortars and artillery. This was corroborated by Hospital employees and residents in the area. Additionally, other residents would report Iraqi military helicopters dropping unguided barrel bombs in Fallujah's neighborhoods. These reports were corroborated by an Anbar security official, who characterized the ISF operation in Fallujah as an effort to destroy the city, and not eliminate terrorists.[72]

In 2013 and early 2014, the Iraqi Security Forces sought to strike back against the Islamic State. Under pressure to respond to frequent car bomb attacks against Shia neighborhoods and frustrated by their own casualties, the ISF failed to discriminate between IS revolutionary and frustrated civilian. This had regrettable results for the state, as Sunni populations rejected the Baghdad government as an illegitimate authority. The Islamic State attacks were effective in provoking the state, and Sunni motivation for revolution followed.

C.   **EVIDENCE OF ISLAMIC STATE ATTACKS DISRUPTING GOVERNMENT CONTROL MECHANISMS**

During the 2011–2014 timeframe, The Islamic State conducted many actions intended to disrupt state control. These actions may be sorted into three categories: attacks targeting government figures and facilities, attacks targeting the Iraqi Security Forces, and attacks targeting the Iraqi prison system. While IS

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[71] *"Fears of Fighting Develops, Displacement of Thousands of Civilians out of Fallujah," Al-Masalah News, January 2014, http://almasalah.com/ar/NewsDetails.aspx?NewsID=22366.*

[72] "Iraq: Government Attacking Fallujah Hospital" (Baghdad, Iraq: Human Rights Watch, May 27, 2014), https://www.hrw.org/news/2014/05/27/iraq-government-attacking-fallujah-hospital.

attacks targeting political figures and facilities occur during the entire 2012–2014 period, the latter two efforts were part of sequential Islamic State campaigns. The *Breaking the Walls* campaign targeted several incarceration facilities starting in July of 2012.[73] The following July, the Islamic State announced the *Harvest the Soldiers* campaign that subsequently focused on the Iraqi Security Forces.[74] These attacks degraded state security institutions, and disrupted state services. Together, these actions disrupted the state's ability to control the population.

Targeting Iraqi government facilities disrupted the provision of government services. In early April, 2013, the Islamic State targeted government administrative facilities in Tikrit. Attackers detonated a truck laden with explosives within the compound, yet an assessment of damages was not reported.[75] In September, the Islamic State attacked the municipal building in Hawija, Kirkuk. Seven government civilians and three Iraqi Army soldiers were killed, with 22 others wounded.[76]

Violence against government figures would escalate dramatically by years end. In June of 2013, a member of Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki's Dawa Party was assassinated near Mosul by unidentified individuals.[77] By year's end, single instances of political violence were no longer making headlines. In December of 2013, government administrative staffs were reporting to the media that the

[73] Jessica Lewis, "Al Qaeda in Iraq's 'Breaking the Walls' Campaign Achieves Its Objectives at Abu Ghraib--2013 Iraq Update #30" (The Institute for the Study of War, July 28, 2013), http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2013/07/al-qaeda-in-iraq-walls-campaign.html.

[74] Sinan Salaheddin, "Al-Qaida Claims Responsibility for Iraq Bombings," *The Big Story / Associated Press*, July 30, 2013, http://bigstory.ap.org/article/al-qaida-claims-responsibility-iraq-bombings.

[75] Stephen Wicken, "2013 Iraq Update #14: Political Calculations Trump Security Concerns" (The Institute for the Study of War, April 5, 2013), http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2013/04/2013-iraq-update-14-political.html.

[76] Long-Presse, "Death Toll in Clashes in Hawija, 36 People Were Killed and Wounded," *Almada Press*, September 25, 2013, http://www.almadapress.com/ar/NewsDetails.aspx?NewsID=18705.

[77] Safaa Abdul Hamid, "The Killing of a Member of the Dawa Party of the Office of Mosul, by Unidentified Fire North of the City," *Al-Sumaria*, June 13, 2013, http://www.alsumaria.tv/news/77647/مقتل-عضو-في-حزب-الدعوة-مكتب-الموصل-بنيرا/ar.

Islamic State was paralyzing state departments. During October and November, approximately 80 government administrators in Mosul were killed by the Islamic State.[78]

The Iraq Body Count estimates between 360 and 546 civilians associated with the provision of state administration were killed between 2011 and 2014. This estimate excludes tribal leaders who fulfill informal positions within the state.[79] Countless others received death threats that may have resulted in absenteeism or other administrative disruptions.[80] The accuracy of the database is limited by the target description, as individuals who were targeted because of their affiliation with the government are not necessarily recorded as such. For this reason, the database range is likely an underestimation of the actual figure. Regardless, it is fair to conclude the Islamic State conducted many actions directed at disrupting government functionality. With substantial numbers of government workers killed—and countless others hiding or otherwise ineffective—the social contract between the state and the population was stressed.

The first named campaign under Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi—*Breaking the Walls*—sought to undermine the Iraqi prison system. During this effort, the Islamic State conducted six major attacks against state prisons, seeking to free hundreds of Islamic State members from state control. Three of these attacks targeted the Camp Taji facility north of Baghdad, in August of 2012, February of 2013, and July of 2013. All of these attempts were unsuccessful, but incurred

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[78] Long-Presse, "Mosul Staff: Armed Groups Are Trying to Paralyze the State Departments and Prevent Citizens from Participating in Upcoming Elections," *Almada Press*, December 4, 2013, http://www.almadapress.com/ar/news/22315/ تحــا-المســلحة-الجماعـات-موصـــليون-موظفـون.

[79] Iraq Body Count, "Incidents Database."

[80] Jessica Lewis, "Further Indications of Al-Qaeda's Advance in Iraq: Iraq Update #39" (The Institute for the Study of War, November 15, 2013), http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2013/11/further-indications-of-al-qaedas.html.

many ISF casualties.[81] Another failed prison break occurred in February, when the Islamic State targeted the prison facility in Kirkuk, Iraq. Reports suggest that over 130 ISF casualties were sustained during the attack, yet the Islamic State was ultimately unable to free any incarcerated individuals.[82]

There were two instances of the Islamic State successfully emptying a prison. In September 2012, IS attacked the Tasfirat Prison in Tikrit, resulting in 90 militants freed. During the attack, 12 ISF were killed, and the Islamic State destroyed the prison rosters. Government representatives reported that this measure prevented the state from being able to track down the freed individuals.[83] The Islamic State later claimed the attack through their official media outlet, reporting they freed 30 movement members during the operation.[84]

The most successful attack on an Iraqi prison occurred on 22 July 2013, and marked the end of the *Breaking the Walls* campaign. This operation is believed to have freed between 500 and 1,000 inmates from the Abu Ghraib prison west of Baghdad. The Iraqi government has not made an official statement regarding the scope of the prison break, and some media outlets reported over 3,000 inmates were freed.[85]

The inability to secure detainees is a significant issue for the Iraqi state. Beyond the proximate issue of Islamic State members returning to operations, there are two second-order negative effects. The inability to keep convicted

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[81] Jessica Lewis, "Al Qaeda in Iraq's 'Breaking the Walls' Campaign Achieves Its Objectives at Abu Ghraib--2013 Iraq Update #30" (The Institute for the Study of War, July 28, 2013), http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2013/07/al-qaeda-in-iraq-walls-campaign.html.

[82] Lewis, "Al Qaeda in Iraq's 'Breaking the Walls' Campaign."

[83] *"Iraq Militants Attack Tikrit Prison, Freeing 90 Inmates," BBC News, September 28, 2012, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-19750039.*

[84] Sophie McIntyre, "ISIS Claims Responsibility for Major Iraq Prison Break Leaving 62 Inmates and Police Killed," *The Independent*, May 10, 2015, http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/over-60-slaughtered-in-isis-prison-break-10239113.html.

[85] Mushreq Abbas, "Al-Qaeda Militants Raid Iraq's Abu Ghraib, Taji Prisons," *Al-Monitor*, July 25, 2013, sec. Iraq Pulse, http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/07/iraq-al-qaeda-prison-raid-abu-ghraib.html#.

revolutionaries in prison degrades the population's assessment of the state's control, giving the perception that a revolutionary movement has a greater chance to succeed. Secondly, prison breaks demoralize security forces and lead to extra-judicial killings. Military and police forces who believe captured revolutionaries may escape easily are more likely to take justice into their own hands. This would cause these security forces to lose credibility with the population.

The second Islamic State campaign—*Harvest the Soldiers*—began following the Abu Ghraib prison raid. The Islamic State shifted focus from prisons to Iraqi Security Forces leadership, targeting headquarters facilities and officers. In September, the Islamic State attacked the Tahadi police headquarters in southern Fallujah, killing six policemen but failing to seriously disrupt operations.[86] In October, the Islamic State targeted the National Police headquarters in Babil. The attack featured multiple car bombs, and resulted in 7 national policemen killed.[87] Also in October, the Islamic State targeted the Nineveh Operations Headquarters with car bombs, resulting in 14 ISF casualties.[88]

In general, Iraqi Security Forces experienced a significant increase in casualties during the *Harvest the Soldiers* campaign. From August 2013 through the start of June 2014, the Iraq Body Count database estimates between 1,046 and 1,255 ISF members died as a result from hostile fire. During the complete year of the *Breaking the Walls* campaign, the database reflects between 357 and 382 casualties. As identified previously with IS car bomb operations, the

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86 Long-Presse, "Ongoing Fighting in Southern Fallujah after Suicide Bombings, Injuring Six," *Almada Press*, September 17, 2013, http://www.almadapress.com/ar/news/18267/استمرار-بع-الفلوجــة-جنوبـي-الاشـــتباكات.

87 Long-Presse, "Death Toll in Northern Babil Double Blow Seven Dead and Others Wounded," *Almada Press*, October 23, 2013, http://www.almadapress.com/ar/news/20092/المزدو-بابــل-شمال-تفجـــير-حصـــيلة-ارتفــاع.

88 Long-Presse, "The Closure of Three Bridges out of Five and Tightened Security in Mosul against the Backdrop of Bombings Yesterday," *Almada Press*, October 25, 2013, http://www.almadapress.com/ar/news/20196/اغلاق-ثلاثـــة-جسـور-من-اصـل-خمسة-ديد-وتشـــ.

database may be off in magnitude, but its consistency should capture an accurate upward trend after August 2013.[89]

Based on attack data, it appears the Islamic State conducted a significant number of attacks to directly disrupt state control mechanisms in Iraq. Revolutionary actions directed at government agencies to disrupt control of the security forces and provision of state services, the disruption of the state's ability to incarcerate known movement members, and the attrition of the security forces themselves, all eroded Baghdad's control over Sunni population centers. The Islamic State contributed to their successful outcome by using revolutionary actions to disrupt state control through attrition.

D. EVIDENCE NOT SUPPORTING THE REVOLUTIONARY GROWTH MODEL

The issue of attribution may potentially complicate the analysis of Islamic State actions targeting the state. As discussed previously, the Islamic State annual reports seem to parallel the Iraq Body Count database. However, the Islamic State is not the only Sunni-based movement in Iraq that is targeting the state. It is feasible that other revolutionary movements are conducting similar car bomb attacks within Iraq, and that the Islamic State is claiming these as a means to increase their perceived strength. These attacks are designed to encourage reprisals that delegitimize the state. If the population begins to view the incumbent government as illegitimate, this is to the benefit of all revolutionary movements—not just the movement responsible for the provoking attacks. The delegitimized state becomes a form of club good shared among the revolutionary movements.

Other evidence may actually impede any conclusions that suggest a causal relationship between revolutionary actions, state repression, and the subsequent disenfranchisement of the population. Such evidence would include

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[89] Iraq Body Count, "Incidents Database."

actions undertaken by the state that alienate the population that were not in response to revolutionary actions. Self-induced political failures might suggest the beginnings of revolutionary opportunity are more about poor state performance than movement actions.

Two state actions that are difficult to identify as responses to Islamic State car bombs, yet generated significant blowback among the Sunni population, were the arrest of two significant Sunni politicians. The first of these occurred on 15 December, 2011, just one day after the end of the U.S. Military operation. The Government of Iraq issued an arrest warrant for Vice President Tariq al-Hashimi and detained ten members of his body guard detail under the Accountability and Justice Act laws—also known as de-Baathification laws. Three of the detained guards issued nationally-televised confessions acknowledging their participation in assassination efforts on behalf of al-Hashimi, the senior Sunni member of the Iraqi Government.[90] These charges were staunchly denied by al-Hashimi—who abstained from signing the Law in 2008[91]—and raised the suspicions of Iraqi Sunnis.[92] Three months after the detention of the security detail, one of al-Hashimi's guards died in prison. Amir al-Batawi's body indicated he was burned and tortured in other ways. It was clear to some the televised confessions were the result of significant coercion from the ISF.[93] This event occurred following a period of few car bombs, averaging less than 8 attacks per month over the 120-

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[90] Jack Healy, "Arrest Order for Sunni Leader in Iraq Opens New Rift," *The New York Times*, December 19, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/20/world/middleeast/iraqi-government-accuses-top-official-in-assassinations.html?_r=0.

[91] Bill Ardolino, "Inside Iraqi Politics - Part 5. A Look at Legislative Progress: Sunnis' and States' Rights," *The Long War Journal*, February 28, 2008, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2008/02/inside_iraqi_politic_4.php.

[92]Michael Schmidt and Tim Arango, "Vice President of Iraq Voices Sunnis' Anger as He Denies Ordering Killings," *The New York Times*, December 20, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/21/world/middleeast/sunni-leader-in-iraq-denies-ordering-assassinations.html.

[93] Anthony Cordesman and Sam Khazai, "Violence in Iraq in Mid 2013: The Growing Risk of Serious Civil Conflict" (Center for Strategic & International Studies, August 22, 2013), http://csis.org/files/publication/130822_iraq_violence.pdf.

day period leading up to the arrest.[94] Given that it predates the rise in car bomb activity, it is difficult to conclude this arrest is a result of Islamic State actions.

On 21 December, 2012, the Government of Iraq pursued another senior Sunni official. Approximately 150 members of Finance Minister Rafi al-Issawi's staff and security detail were arrested on terrorism charges. Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, a Shiite, previously suspected al-Issawi of links to the Sunni insurgency, suspicions that U.S. forces investigated and determined to be false. Furthermore, the arrest occurred while Jalal Talabani—the influential Kurd and mediator between Sunni and Shiite leaders in Baghdad—was out of the country for medical reasons.[95] Following the detention of al-Issawi's staff and security detail, widespread protests occurred in Sunni population centers across Iraq.[96]

The only public evidence against the Sunni politicians was the—potentially—coerced confessions from associates. This leaves the validity of the arrest warrants open to interpretation, and the court of Sunni public opinion clearly viewed the actions as illegitimate. It is inappropriate to conclude these two actions were a reaction to an escalation of Islamic State attacks against Shia entities. It is more likely that al-Maliki viewed al-Hashimi and al-Issawi as political rivals, and not actual terrorist threats.[97] These two arrests suggest that the delegitimizing actions of the Iraqi government may not have stemmed entirely as a response to IS attacks.

The Islamic State's use of attacks against the state appears to be an effective contributor to the negative Sunni perception of the state in Iraq. IS car bombs supported the provocation of Iraqi Security Forces operations that

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[94] Iraq Body Count, "Incidents Database."

[95] *"Iraq's Sunni Finance Minister Denounces Raids," BBC News, December 21, 2012, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-20808769.*

[96] *"Iraq Mass Protests Mount Pressure on Maliki," Al Jazeera English, December 28, 2012, http://www.aljazeera.com/news/europe/2012/12/2012122875346526845.html.*

[97] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Iraq: Playing the Sectarian Crisis Card," *The American Spectator*, January 2, 2013, http://www.aymennjawad.org/12733/iraq-sectarian-crisis.

incurred significant collateral damage. However, these actions are neither necessary nor sufficient to create revolutionary opportunity. Syria would suggest they are not necessary, given a precondition of a disenfranchised population. Sufficiency is also unknown, given the environment of other concurrent activities—such as political gamesmanship—that contributed to the Sunni population's disenfranchisement.

Revolutionary actions directed at the state to disrupt the incumbent government's control over the population are difficult to assess. In order to reach definitive conclusions, one would need assessments of security institutions prior to the conduct of revolutionary actions, with a subsequent evaluation after some period of time to contrast the net change. One independent assessment of Iraqi military forces following the U.S. withdrawal revealed a significant degree of uncertainty in assessing the ISF, a force to which western militaries no longer maintained significant access.[98]

There were other indications the Iraqi Security Forces were unable to unilaterally assume responsibility for state security upon the U.S. exodus. Lieutenant General Babaker Zebari, Chief of Staff of the Iraqi Military, offered a bleak assessment of his nation's security forces following the end of the U.S. training mission in Iraq. He anticipated that Iraq would not be able to fully secure itself until after 2020, leaving a nine-year period when the state would be left exposed.[99] The Special Inspector General for Iraqi Reconstruction (SIGAR) concurred with this assessment, offering that Iraqi ground forces lacked the necessary logistics capabilities that are required for sustaining their military capacity after the U.S. withdrawal.[100]

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[98] Anthony Cordesman, Sam Khazai, and Daniel Dewit, "Shaping Iraq's Security Forces," December 16, 2013, http://csis.org/files/publication/131213_Iraq_Security_Forces.pdf.

[99] Agence France Presse, "Iraqi General Says 'Forces Not Ready until 2020,'" *Al Arabiya News*, October 30, 2011, https://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2011/10/30/174456.html.

[100] Eli Lake, "Iraq's Lousy Odds," *The Daily Beast*, November 1, 2011, http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2011/11/01/watchdog-stuart-bowen-iraq-military-not-ready-for-u-s-withdrawal.html.

Given this bleak assessment at the end of 2011, an argument can be made that the Iraqi Security Forces were destined to fail even without a sustained campaign of Islamic State attacks. Such a counter-factual theory would be impossible to prove or disprove, but it does suggest a measure of uncertainty to the degree to which the Islamic State was responsible for its own success.

E.   CONCLUSIONS ON ISLAMIC STATE REVOLUTIONARY ACTIONS DIRECTED AT THE STATE

The actions of the Islamic State directed against the Baghdad government are largely explained by the model of revolutionary growth. The first section of this chapter illustrates the Islamic State's direct and indirect attacks against the state. These attacks targeted the ISF and sensitive population centers, and steadily increased until early 2014. In 2014, these attacks became less frequent, as they achieved their purpose—provoking the state into indiscriminate violence and disrupting state control.

ISF operations targeting the Islamic State failed to differentiate between members of the revolutionary movement and the Sunni population. This provided gasoline upon the embers of unrest in Anbar, Nineveh, and other Sunni majority regions of Iraq. Concurrently, Islamic State attacks also degraded the capacity of the state security apparatus, and disrupted the provision of state services. While the indiscriminate violent reprisals of the ISF provided motivation for revolution, the disruption of state control mechanisms provided the opportunity for it to occur.

While alternative explanations are possible, given the political errors of al-Maliki and the lack of capability in the ISF—these do not sufficiently explain the onset armed resistance in Sunni regions. Based on the available evidence, the Islamic State's actions directed at the Baghdad government were necessary for the rapid deterioration of stability in Iraq.

Furthermore, the onset of a variety of other movements—such as the Army of Pride & Dignity and the Military Council of Anbar—reinforce the validity

of the first component of the revolutionary growth model. The revolutionary actions described in this chapter foster the desire for change, and the opportunity to do so. These conditions facilitate revolutionary movement growth, as the appearance of the aforementioned additional movements validates.

In Syria, the absence of Islamic State attacks directed at the State appears consistent with the revolutionary growth model. The purpose of actions directed at the state is to facilitate conditions for revolutionary growth. Within Syria, these conditions are exceedingly present when the Islamic State initiates its campaign there in early 2013. Evidence of a significant number of IS attacks against the Syrian regime would suggest their purpose was something other than delegitimizing the state and degrading state control.

Finally, this chapter shows that revolutionary actions directed at the state—without addressing the population or competing movements—is an incomplete strategy. The onset of revolutionary motivation and opportunity are club goods—share by many movements competing to reshape the state in their image. Given this contest, movements should take revolutionary actions directed at competing movements.

III. REVOLUTIONARY ACTIONS DIRECTED AT COMPETING MOVEMENTS

The second category of revolutionary actions are those directed at competing movements. Established theory indicates revolutionary movements conduct these actions to either co-opt or eliminate rival movements in order to establish a monopoly over population control, as depicted in Figure 3. This would predict that IS might seek to establish alliances with other revolutionary movements and tribes, even those with different ideologies or desired goals. The Islamic State might use brokers to recruit individuals and groups from these entities. Those movements and tribes the Islamic State is unable to co-opt, might then be targeted for elimination.

REVOLUTIONARY ACTIONS DIRECTED AT COMPETING MOVEMENTS

CO-OPTING COMPETING MOVEMENTS
- ACTIVE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTS
- TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS & POTENTIAL MOVEMENTS

ELIMINATING COMPETING MOVEMENTS
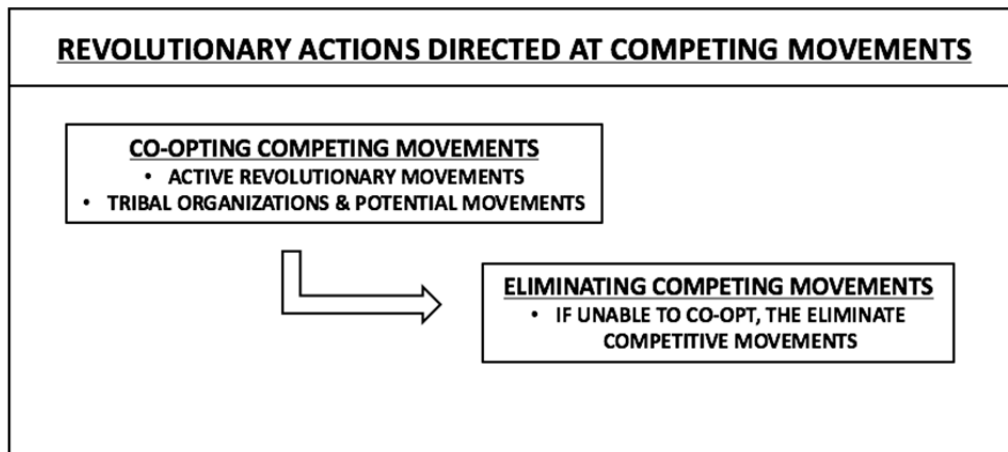- IF UNABLE TO CO-OPT, THE ELIMINATE COMPETITIVE MOVEMENTS

Figure 3. Revolutionary Actions Directed at Competing Movements

The Islamic State performed actions directed at competing movements and tribes in both Iraq and Syria. Organizations that were not effectively co-opted were targeted for elimination in both states. Where the Islamic State was able to accomplish either co-option or elimination of competing movements—and where the state was also delegitimized and weakened—IS was able to pursue the third category of revolutionary actions, population control.

A. EVIDENCE SUPPORTING ISLAMIC STATE REVOLUTIONARY ACTIONS TO CO-OPT COMPETING MOVEMENTS

Within Iraq, the brutality and dominance of the Islamic State makes other Sunni insurgent groups easy to overlook. Portraying the Sunni insurgency as a single movement is an oversimplification that overlooks differences in objectives and ideologies between groups. IS took serious measures to co-opt these organizations to support its own efforts.

One competing group was the Islamic Army of Iraq (IAI). IAI was a Sunni populist movement that was seeking the formation of fully federated areas within Iraq. The movement desires a three-state solution with shared economic resources.[101] However, during the Sunni Awakening, IAI joined the Sahwa in support of the central government. During the onset of Sunni revolt in 2013, IAI defected from the Sahwa and returned as a revolutionary movement.[102] The IAI founder and commander, Sheikh Ahmed al-Dabash acknowledged in June of 2014 that his forces were fighting with the Islamic State. He publically recognized that the ideological differences between their organizations were less important than the need to defeat a common enemy of occupation—be it American or Iranian. Al-Dabash also publically stated that eventually, after Sunni forces retake Baghdad, his organization will need to fight and defeat the Islamic State.[103] Until then, both organizations appeared to be placing the common enemy ahead of ideological matters.

Another competing movement that aligned itself with the Islamic State was the Jaysh al-Mujahideen (JM). JM sought to overthrow the regime and

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[101] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Key Updates on Iraq's Sunni Insurgent Groups," May 11, 2014, http://www.aymennjawad.org/14755/key-updates-on-iraq-sunni-insurgent-groups.

[102] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Comprehensive Reference Guide to Sunni Militant Groups in Iraq," January 23, 2014, http://www.aymennjawad.org/14350/comprehensive-reference-guide-to-sunni-militant.

[103] Ruth Sherlock and Carol Malouf, "Islamic Army of Iraq Founder: ISIS and Sunni Islamists Will March on Baghdad," June 20, 2014, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iraq/10914567/Islamic-Army-of-Iraq-founder-Isis-and-Sunni-Islamists-will-march-on-Baghdad.html.

revitalize Sunni rule over all of Iraq. Like IAI, Jaysh al-Mujahideen has placed the common enemy as a priority over ideological preference, as indicated by social media statements in early 2014. The movement worked with both tribal leaders and insurgent groups to defeat the "Persian" enemy.[104]

Both IAI and JM are likely victims of manipulation by the Islamic State. A statement from the Fallujah Military Council in May of 2014 urged the greater armed Sunni insurgency to focus on defeating the Iraqi Security Forces, and not consolidating control among the rebels. The Fallujah Military Council represents a conglomerate of groups who, at the time, split control of the city with the Islamic State. JM also reported IS co-option efforts during the fighting near al-Karma, where JM bore the brunt of dislodging the Iraqi Security Forces and the Islamic State subsequently consolidated the gains.[105] These statements show the Islamic State was actively focused on co-opting movements and allowing them to take on a greater share of the struggle against government forces.

The Islamic State also employed the same approach with Jaysh Rijal al-Tariqa al-Naqshbandi (JRTN). JRTN is a Ba'athist movement, one that has constantly adapted to changing dynamics within the Sunni insurgency.[106] In January of 2013, JRTN seized the Fallujah Dam, only to subsequently lose control of the area to the Islamic State.[107] Evidence shows JRTN and the Islamic State taking a pragmatic approach to their respective relations. The Twitter account "@wikibaghdady" revealed insider details regarding the Islamic State's interactions with rival groups. While the authenticity is questionable, it offers a

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[104] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Interview with the Leader of Iraq's Jaysh Al-Mujahideen: Abd Al-Hakim Al-Nuaimi," March 17, 2014, http://www.aymennjawad.org/14605/interview-with-the-leader-of-iraq-jaysh-al.

[105] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Key Updates on Iraq's Sunni Insurgent Groups," May 11, 2014, http://www.aymennjawad.org/14755/key-updates-on-iraq-sunni-insurgent-groups.

[106] Michael Knights, "The JRTN Movement and Iraq's Next Insurgency," *CTC Sentinel*, July 1, 2011, https://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/the-jrtn-movement-and-iraq%E2%80%99s-next-insurgency.

[107] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Key Updates on Iraq's Sunni Insurgent Groups."

unique purview into the Islamic State activities.[108] Whomever is behind the account, they revealed discussions between senior representatives on the Islamic State and Ibrahim Izzat al-Duri—the head of JRTN. What is revealed is an agreement for JRTN to support the Islamic State in exchange for placing Iraqi Ba'athists into senior positions of responsibility within controlled territory in Iraq. Furthermore, JRTN asks that foreign fighters constitute no more than 20% of mid-level leadership positions.[109]

Within Syria, the Islamic State was able to co-opt fewer competing movements. One movement IS successfully co-opted was the Yarmouk Martyrs Brigade (YMB). This movement began in 2012 as a secular organization, and established recognition for itself by the spring of 2013. The YMB played an important role in the assault on Syrian Arab Army's 38th Division base, during which the movement coordinated efforts with Jabhat al-Nusrah (JN). By the following summer, YMB was adopting Islamic State insignia and supporting it with its struggle against JN. Of note, the Yarmouk Martyrs Brigade clashed openly with al-Nusrah affiliated organizations in December at the behest of the Islamic State.[110]

Interestingly, YMB operates in southwestern Dera'a province in Syria, a location which has never been contiguously joined with the Islamic State. Other movements in the region were the first to make public the alliance between IS and YMB. Their communications have remained secret, although it is likely individuals with access to both YMB and IS-controlled regions are facilitating the partnership. Interestingly, Yarmouk Martyrs Brigade members have since revised

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108 Jacob Siegel, "Someone Is Spilling ISIS's Secrets on Twitter," *The Daily Beast*, June 18, 2014, http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2014/06/18/someone-is-spilling-isis-s-secrets-on-twitter.html.

109 Yousef Bin Tashfin, "English Translation of @wikibaghdady," Justpaste.it, (January 30, 2014), http://justpaste.it/e90q.

110 Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Liwa Shudada' Al-Yarmouk: History and Analysis," September 18, 2015, http://www.aymennjawad.org/17860/liwa-shuhada-al-yarmouk-history-and-analysis.

their organizational history to conform to IS ideology—denying its having ever been a secular revolutionary movement.[111] With the exception of YMB, co-opting competing movements has been a difficult undertaking for the Islamic State in Syria.

Tribal organizations can also function like competing movements. The Islamic State was able to shore up support among tribal leaders in Syria and Iraq. IS learned during the Zarqawi years the dangers of alienating tribes, a decision that provided motivation and opportunity for the Sahwa movement to gain widespread support.[112] The Islamic State, learning from its previous errors, engaged with these organizations as if they were competing movements.

Internal Islamic State documents seized following the death of Haji Bakr indicate some of the methods of the organization's activities. While the files are not publicly available in their entirety, the documents Der Spiegel has disclosed reveal some specifics of Islamic State's tribal program. Specifically, the information deemed critical by the Islamic State is revealing of the direction of their tribal manipulation. The Islamic State dispatched agents to surreptitiously gather information on the important leaders within the tribal structure. The agents sought to identify their sources of income, their personal habits, which mosques they attended, and which rival insurgent groups—if any—with whom they associated. Answering these intelligence requirements enabled the Islamic State to encourage tribal support through manipulating their leaders. In addition to their efforts directed at tribal leaders, the Haji Bakr documents reveal that the Islamic State sought to integrate into the tribal structures through marriage.[113] Establishing familial ties—using brokers who forge permanent bonds—to

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[111] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Talking to the Yarmouk Martyrs Brigade," October 13, 2015, http://www.aymennjawad.org/17967/talking-to-the-yarmouk-martyrs-brigade.

[112] Craig Whiteside, "The Smiling, Scented Men: The Political World View of the Islamic State of Iraq, 2003–2013" (Washington State University, 2014).

[113] Christoph Reuter, "The Terror Strategist: Secret Files Reveal the Structure of Islamic State," Der Spiegel Online, April 18, 2015, http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/islamic-state-files-show-structure-of-islamist-terror-group-a-1029274.html.

important tribes provides another avenue through which IS was able to solidify local support.

In Iraq in 2013 and early 2014, the Islamic State was able to overcome negative tribal inertia from previous years. Following the ISF crackdown in Hawija in April of 2013, tribes in Anbar captured and delivered 16 Islamic State members to Iraqi Security Forces.[114] In the months that followed, the Islamic State circulated leaflets across Sunni populations encouraging tribal support.[115] In November, a tribal sheikh—presumably unwilling to cooperate with the Islamic State—was shot in front of his home.[116] At the end of 2013, violence was erupting between the Islamic State and some tribal groups, but momentum was beginning to swing in the movements favor. On 1 January 2014, Anbar Chairman Falih al-Issawi made a public statement revealing the Islamic State had successfully made agreements with some of the Anbar tribes.[117] By April of 2014, images of Islamic State tribal meetings were appearing on social media, and tribal opposition had waned.[118]

In Syria, tribes would provide a medium for the Islamic State to garner support in the face of the movement's inability to co-opt competing revolutionary movements. Beginning with the al-Breij tribe, the Islamic State shored up allegiances in the north of Syria. Syrian tribal dynamics in this region differed from those in Iraq. Previously, Sunni tribal leaders in the vicinity of Aleppo and

[114]Stephen Wicken, "2013 Iraq Update #18: Maliki Continues to Target Protesters and Calls for Majority Rule" (The Institute for the Study of War, May 1, 2013), http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2013/05/2013-iraq-update-18-maliki-continues-to.html.

[115] Lewis, "Further Indications of Al-Qaeda's Advance in Iraq."

[116] Long-Presse, "The Assassination of Former Vice-Sheikh of a Sunni Tribe in Front of His Home North of Nasiriyah," *Almada Press*, November 25, 2013, http://www.almadapress.com/ar/news/21797/ أم-ســـنية-عشـــيرة-وشـــيخ-أســـبق-نائـــب-اغتيـــال.

[117] Jessica Lewis and ISW Iraq Team, "Iraq Update 2014 #1: Showdown in Anbar" (The Institute for the Study of War, January 3, 2014), http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2014/01/iraq-update-2014–1-showdown-in-anbar.html.

[118] *Islamic State Meeting with Anbar Tribal Leaders (Anbar, Iraq, 2014),* http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-vKT6bnG0c08/U1qLz5OVrFI/AAAAAAAAA5c/KvQz1EkA584/s1600/BmAHbfnCEAA2BFh+jpg+large.jpg.

Raqqa appeased the Assad regime to garner political and financial support. With Assad clearly out of favor among the Sunnis in Syria, tribal leaders were seeking new political allies. After garnering the backing of the al-Breij tribal leaders, the Islamic State received pledges of support—Bayah—from 10 other tribes in northern Syria.[119] Tribal support for the Islamic State in Syria correlates to regions of IS growth, which suggests co-opting tribal movements offers a viable alternative when co-opting revolutionary movements fails. The co-option of tribes then supports the elimination of competing movements.

B. EVIDENCE SUPPORTING ISLAMIC STATE REVOLUTIONARY ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE COMPETING MOVEMENTS

When co-option was not feasible, the Islamic State eliminated competing movements. Eliminating competing movements—in this case rival movements—is costlier than co-option, but still achieves monopoly over the population. Within Iraq, the Awakening Movement represented a significant obstacle to IS growth.

After the death of Zarqawi in 2006, the Islamic State evolved into the Mujahideen Shura Council—for the military arm—and the Islamic State of Iraq. During this time frame, the organization alienated many important socio-political organizations within the Sunni regions of Iraq. This alienation provided motivation for the development of the Sahwa movement.[120] The Islamic State (then Islamic State of Iraq) recognized the significance of the Sahwa threat—the movement was recruiting from the same population segment, and provided Sunnis with the opportunity for armed local self-defense with a degree of government sponsorship.[121] The movement represented a major obstacle for the Islamic State to overcome, as the Sahwa reached roughly 80,000 members at its peak.

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[119] Hadi Salama, "How ISIS Changed Its Game Plan in Iraq," trans. Joelle el-Khoury, *Al-Monitor*, July 14, 2014, http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/politics/2014/07/syria-clans-isis.html#.

[120] Aaron Zelin, "The War between ISIS and Al-Qaeda for Supremacy of the Global Jihadist Movement" (The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, June 2014), http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Documents/pubs/ResearchNote_20_Zelin.pdf.

[121] Whiteside, "The Smiling, Scented Men."

Yet, the Government of Iraq allowed the movement to atrophy in the years following the decline of sectarian violence.[122] The apathy toward the Sunni grass roots movement provided the Islamic State with an opportunity to roll back the Sahwa's victories.

The Iraq Body Count can provide a gage of Islamic State efforts to defeat the Sahwa. Unlike headline-grabbing car bombings in major population centers, attacks against the Sahwa are far less spectacular, and garner less media interest. The lack of media coverage degrades the efficacy of the database for analyzing the magnitude of small-scale clandestine attacks. However, the issues impacting media reporting on attacks against the Sahwa is constant over time, giving credibility to changes in attack trends, even if the trends differ from reality by orders of magnitude. Table 2 shows numerical data for attacks that contained a variety of aliases for Sahwa in the target description. [123] While it is likely the actual number of attacks and casualties is far greater, the database shows a significant increase in attacks in 2013 and 2014. This spike in violence directed at the Sahwa begins in December of 2012, after three months that averaged 8 attacks. Following December of 2012, the pace of reported attacks against the Sahwa continues to climb until the Mosul Offensive in June 2014, when chaos significantly disrupted media reporting[124] It is not possible to determine the degree of attrition due to attacks on the Sahwa, but there is a clear increase in Islamic State effort placed on these operations.

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[122] Myriam Benraad, "Iraq's Tribal 'Sahwa': Its Rise and Fall," *Middle East Policy* 18, no. 1 (Spring 2011), http://www.mepc.org/journal/middle-east-policy-archives/iraqs-tribal-sahwa-its-rise-and-fall?print.

[123] Iraq Body Count, "Incidents Database."

[124] Iraq Body Count, "Incidents Database."

Table 2. Islamic State Attacks on the Sahwa

Year	#Attacks	#Casualties low	#Casualties High
2011	120	204	230
2012	120	222	230
2013	266	546	620
2014	244	659	707

The Islamic State also used positive incentives to eliminate the Sahwa movement. Of the roughly 80,000 Sahwa members recruited and employed during the U.S. mission in Iraq—all of whom promised assimilation into Iraqi Security Forces and steady pay—only roughly 20,000 Sahwa members continued to receive salaries from the Maliki government. The 60,000 odd armed militiamen were extremely vulnerable to the financial draw of the Islamic State. Even those Sahwa members who were fortunate enough to receive government salaries were vulnerable. IS was reportedly offering $400 USD per month to Sahwa members who were on the government's pay roll, a sizeable pay raise for an individual collective roughly $300 USD per month from the Ministry of Interior.[125]

The positive and negative incentives directed at the Sahwa movement made an undeterminable impact on the organization. What is clear is the movement experienced significant struggles in 2013. In February, Wissam al-Hardan was designated as the new president of the Sahwa, replacing Ahmed Abu Risha who was implicated by the Maliki government for his participation in Anbar protest demonstrations. In June of 2013, tribal leaders in Anbar and Karbala announced the formation of a new awakening organization—reportedly equipped with new weapons and equipment—to address the rising terrorist threat. The new organization was designated the "Desert Falcons" and was

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[125] Hamza Hendawi, "Al-Qaida in Iraq Offers Cash to Lure Former Allies," *The Boston Globe*, August 6, 2010, http://archive.boston.com/news/world/middleeast/articles/2010/08/06/al_qaida_in_iraq_offers_cash_to_lure_former_allies/?page=full.

purposed to address the clear lack of capability in existing security forces.[126] Both events indicate a struggling Sahwa enterprise, facing increasing pressure.

In addition to the targeted attacks and the financial incentives to defect, the Islamic State also dealt an indirect blow to the Sahwa movement. The Islamic State's actions directed at the state encouraged the Government of Iraq—and the security forces in particular—to exacerbate sectarian frustration in Iraq. The Sahwa movement was clearly aligned in the pro-government camp among the tribes. In the wake of multiple ISF crackdowns on protest movements, the tribal support for government agencies began to wane. Between the threat of death at the hands of the Islamic State, the lack of financial compensation, and the low support for the central government, there was little reason for young Sunnis to remain with the Sahwa.

The Islamic State's efforts to co-opt competing movements in Syria was much less successful than their efforts to do so in Iraq. Given this difficulty, the Islamic State was forced to pursue growth in Syria through eliminating competing movements. Unlike Iraq, the Syrian insurrection can be characterized as a highly-parochial multilateral struggle between the Assad regime and an assortment of revolutionary groups.[127] The parochial nature of the conflict presented a significant opportunity for the Islamic State to co-opt warring parties piecemeal using the methodology that proved successful in Iraq. However, nationalist dynamics in Syria seem to prevent insurgent groups from taking the "common enemy first" approach to the struggle. Despite the opportunity, this has inhibited the Islamic State from bringing the majority of revolutionary movements under their umbrella.

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[126] Long-Presse, "Awakening to Start Joint Work between Karbala and Anbar Tribesmen as They Consider the Weakness of Security Forces," July 1, 2013, http://www.almadapress.com/ar/news/14447/كرب-بيـــن-المشـــتركة-الصـــحوات-عمل-انطـلاق.

[127] The Carter Center, "Syria Countrywide Conflict Report No. 5" (Atlanta, GA, February 2015), https://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/peace/conflict_resolution/syria-conflict/NationwideUpdate-Feb-28–2015.pdf.

Within Syria, Jabhat al-Nusrah (JN) is the Islamic State's most significant rival revolutionary group. The movement was originally an off-shoot from the then Islamic State of Iraq. Mohammed al-Joulani, a Syrian member of the Islamic State, left Iraq for Syria with a small cadre and financial resources.[128] Al-Joulani was able to capitalize on support networks in Syria that previously supported AQI/ISI during the years of American occupation. Supporters who once facilitated the travel of weapons and foreign fighters into Iraq, were now at al-Joulani's disposal for developing a new organization.[129]

More than a year after Jabhat al-Nusrah's coming into existence, the Islamic State sought to capitalize on its Syrian investment and claim JN as its own, becoming a trans-national organization. In April 2013, Abu Bakr al Baghdadi announced the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS). Al-Joulani and Ayman al-Zawahiri would both reject this claim, and declare Jabhat al-Nusrah and the Islamic State separate organizations.[130] Zawahiri's declaration is understandable, as a unified Iraq-Syria organization would marginalize the role of Al-Qaeda's senior leadership. Although there would be no easy victory, the Islamic State sought a westward expansion through co-opting their rivals in Syria.

Although unverified, the @wikibaghdady twitter account provided an inside report of the events following the fallout between Jabhat al-Nusrah and the Islamic State. The account indicates Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and senior IS leaders traveled to Syria around the time of al-Zawahiri's declaration, hoping to meet with senior JN members in person. IS members conveyed to JN's leadership their plans to unify the movements, and encouraged JN to make the announcement

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[128] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "The Dawn of the Islamic State of Iraq and Ash-Sham" (The Middle East Forum, January 27, 2014), http://www.meforum.org/3732/islamic-state-iraq-ash-sham.

[129] Ian Rice and Craig Whiteside, eds., "The Return of the Zarqawists: How to Deal with the Islamic State Movement," *CTX: Combating Terrorism Exchange* 6, no. 1 (February 2016), http://calhoun.nps.edu/bitstream/handle/10945/48001/Vol6no1.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y.

[130] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "The Dawn of the Islamic State of Iraq and Ash-Sham."

themselves. Joulani reportedly rejected this request on the basis that it would degrade JN's support among the Syrian population.[131]

This rejection was followed by Islamic State efforts to assassinate select Jabhat al-Nusrah leaders—those particularly uncooperative—and seize JN logistics nodes. The account continues, reporting failed assassinations, distrust, defections, and open hostility that resulted in a permanent schism.[132] It is possible the account has an agenda all its own—or perhaps is even managed by a regional intelligence agency—but Joulani's perspectives on unification highlight a dynamic of the Syrian campaign.[133] Joulani recognized the importance of popular Syrian support to Jabhat al-Nusrah.

After the start of the JN-IS schism, many foreign fighters left the ranks of Jabhat al-Nusrah to join the Islamic State. IS boasts more international appeal, and has more foreign fighters within its ranks. In May of 2013, many foreign fighters defected from JN for the Islamic State.[134] However, the purification of JN into a more-Syrian organization has boosted the movement's appeal with the Syrian population.[135]

Following the failure to unify JN and the Islamic State, IS pursued efforts to co-opt competing groups using a similar methodology to that employed in Iraq. While other revolutionary groups focused on deposing the Assad regime, the Islamic State deployed fighters in the rear areas. Like in Iraq, the Islamic State

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131 Yousef Bin Tashfin, "English Translation of @wikibaghdady," Justpaste.it, (January 30, 2014), http://justpaste.it/e90q.

132 Bin Tashfin, "English Translation of @wikibaghdady."

133 Alice Speri, "Now Even ISIS Has Its Very Own Whistleblower," *Vice News*, June 19, 2014, https://news.vice.com/article/now-even-isis-has-its-very-own-whistleblower.

134 Romain Caillet, "The Islamic State: Leaving Al-Qaeda Behind" (The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, December 27, 2013), http://carnegieendowment.org/syriaincrisis/?fa=54017.

135 Loveday Morris, "In Syrian Civil War, Emergence of Islamic State of Iraq and Syria Boosts Rival Jabhat Al-Nusra," *The Washington Post*, October 28, 2013, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/in-syrian-civil-war-emergence-of-islamic-state-of-iraq-and-syria-boosts-rival-jabhat-al-nusra/2013/10/25/12250760–3b4b-11e3-b0e7–716179a2c2c7_story.html.

sought to allow government forces and rival groups to directly engage each other, while preserving its own man power.[136]

Unlike Iraq, there would be no "common enemy first" approach in Syria. In January of 2014, nearly 500 casualties were incurred during fighting between insurgent groups in Raqqa.[137] The month would serve as a turning point, as conflict between the Islamic State and other groups reached new heights. During this month, the Islamic State assassinated senior Ahrar al-Sham leader Abu Rayyan—a move denounced by other factions.[138] Shortly after, the Syria Revolutionaries' Front—which consists of several insurgent groups—published a list of eleven grievances against Islamic State.[139] This announcement coincided with formation of the Mujihadeen Army, and a widespread offensive against Islamic State-held territory near Idlib, Hama, and Aleppo.[140] The inability to co-opt competing movements resulted in a substantial Islamic State effort to eliminate them.

Aside from eliminating selected competing movements, evidence suggests the Islamic State is seeking to eliminate at least one Sunni tribe. The Albu Nimr Tribe, which has traditionally opposed the Islamic State and its

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[136] Anne Barnard, "Syrian Rebels Turn Against Most Radical Group Tied to Al Qaeda," *The New York Times*, January 12, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/13/world/middleeast/syria-rebels-turn-against-most-radical-group-tied-to-al-qaeda.html?_r=2.

[137] Maayana Miskin, "Syria: Nearly 500 Dead in Rebel Infighting," *Arutz Sheva / Isreal National News*, January 12, 2014, http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/176189#.VyuU3BUrIUF.

[138] Marlin Dick, "IS Condemned for Brutal Murder of Fellow Jihadist," *The Daily Star Lebanon*, January 3, 2014, http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2014/Jan-03/242966-isis-condemned-for-brutal-murder-of-fellow-jihadist.ashx#axzz2pZEbrwVU.

[139] *"Syria Revolutionaries Front Declares War on 'Daash' and Told 'Immigrants' Elements Either the Front or Leave the Country within 24 Hours," Aks Alser, January 3, 2014, http://www.aksalser.com/index.php?page=view_articles&id=489c0c5ff635da9008fc222c63874ce d&ar=208206385.*

[140] Aron Lund, "Pushing Back Against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant: The Syria Revolutionaries' Front and the Mujahideen Army" (The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, January 7, 2014), http://carnegieendowment.org/syriaincrisis/?fa=54103.

previous existences, was significantly targeted in the fall of 2014.[141] At the end of October, the remains of executed Albu Nimr tribal members were turning up large numbers.[142] The Iraq Body Count database has recorded nine incidents from October through December, 2014 where Albu Nimr members died in large quantities. The database estimates that between 300 and 434 tribesmen were killed during this period.[143] Some media outlets have reported the number exceeded 500.[144]

C.   EVIDENCE NOT SUPPORTING ISLAMIC STATE REVOLUTIONARY ACTIONS DIRECTED AT COMPETING MOVEMENTS

The preceding evidence suggests that successful Islamic State actions to co-opt competing movements facilitated its growth. Co-opted movements, through either alliances or integration, serve as force multipliers and enable the Islamic State to achieve a monopoly over the population. However, evidence associated with the Islamic State's actions to eliminate rival movements—particularly in Syria—seem to bear less fruit.

The conflict in Syria remains highly fragmented, with major revolutionary movements such as Ahrar al-Sham and Jabhat al-Nusra fulling opposing the Islamic State. While the Islamic State has seized key terrain in Syria, it has done so without eliminating significant opposition from competing movements.[145] The movement's growth in the face of this opposition is potentially due to other factors. For instance, the Syrian Regime appears to target other revolutionary

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[141] Faraj Obagi, "IS Kills 500 Members of Albu Nimr Tribe," trans. Pascale el-Khoury, *Al-Monitor*, November 5, 2014, http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/security/2014/11/iraq-tribe-albu-nimr-who-are-they.html#.

[142] Martin Chulov, "ISIS Kills Hundreds of Iraqi Sunnis from Albu Nimr Tribe in Anbar Provinces," *The Guardian*, October 30, 2014, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/30/mass-graves-hundreds-iraqi-sunnis-killed-isis-albu-nimr.

[143] Iraq Body Count, "Incidents Database."

[144] Obagi, "IS Kills 500 Members of Albu Nimr Tribe."

[145] The Carter Center, "Syria Countrywide Conflict Report No. 5" (Atlanta, GA, February 2015), https://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/peace/conflict_resolution/syria-conflict/NationwideUpdate-Feb-28–2015.pdf.

movement far more frequently than the Islamic State.[146] The inequitable pressure from the state may offset the Islamic State's inability to effectively eliminate competing movements, resulting in movement growth that would otherwise not occur.

D.   CONCLUSIONS FOR REVOLUTIONARY ACTIONS DIRECTED AT COMPETING MOVEMENTS

The Islamic State conducted revolutionary actions directed at competing movements with varying degrees of success. IS enjoyed significant success co-opting competing revolutionary movements in Iraq, and eventually garnered tacit levels of support from some tribal organizations. Within Syria, efforts to co-opt competing movements were far less successful, which forced the Islamic State to pursue growth through elimination.

Islamic State efforts to eliminate rival groups in Syria has garnered inconclusive results. Significant rival movements remain active in the conflict, despite significant IS efforts to eliminate these groups. The success IS has experienced within Syria may also be in part to the pressure the Assad regime maintains on these groups, and not from IS actions.

However, eliminating rival groups—such as the Sahwa movement and the Albu Nimr tribal forces—within Iraq has given the Islamic State a monopoly over the vast majority of Sunni-dominated regions. The Islamic State grew through co-opting rival movements, and where co-option was not possible elimination of rivals offered a means to continue growth in the face of opposition. With competing movements either co-opted or eliminated, the Islamic State was then able to monopolize the population, given the movement the opportunity to extract resources and onward expand.

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[146] Agence France Presse, "More than 90% of Russian Airstrikes in Syria Have Not Targeted ISIS, US Says," *The Daily Star Lebanon*, December 31, 2013, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/oct/07/russia-airstrikes-syria-not-targetting-isis.

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IV. REVOLUTIONARY ACTIONS DIRECTED AT THE POPULATION

The third category of revolutionary actions are those directed at the population. These consist of two subcomponents: actions that control the population and actions that extract resources. These activities—depicted in Figure 4—are not commenced after the cessation of hostilities, but concurrently with revolutionary movement growth into new geographic spaces. However, most revolutionary movements seek to establish a new political and social system. Not only is governance the desired ends, it is a means to the ends.

Understanding how the Islamic State interacted with its constituents is central to understanding how the movement grew. Information operations, such as execution videos, *Dabiq* magazine, and other provincial-level publications have garnered significant attention and analysis—as they are undoubtedly significant efforts to inform and control the population both domestic and abroad.[147] However, this chapter will address the principally internal facet through the analysis of internal Islamic State documents, which provide a glimpse into their approach to governance.

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[147] Haroro Ingram, "The Strategic Logic of Islamic State Information Operations," *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 69, no. 6 (August 25, 2015): 729–52.

REVOLUTIONARY ACTIONS DIRECTED AT THE POPULATION

POPULATION CONTROL MECHANISMS
- INTERNAL SECURITY SERVICES
- PROVISION OF SERVICES

RESOURCE EXTRACTION MECHANISMS
- HUMAN RESOURCES
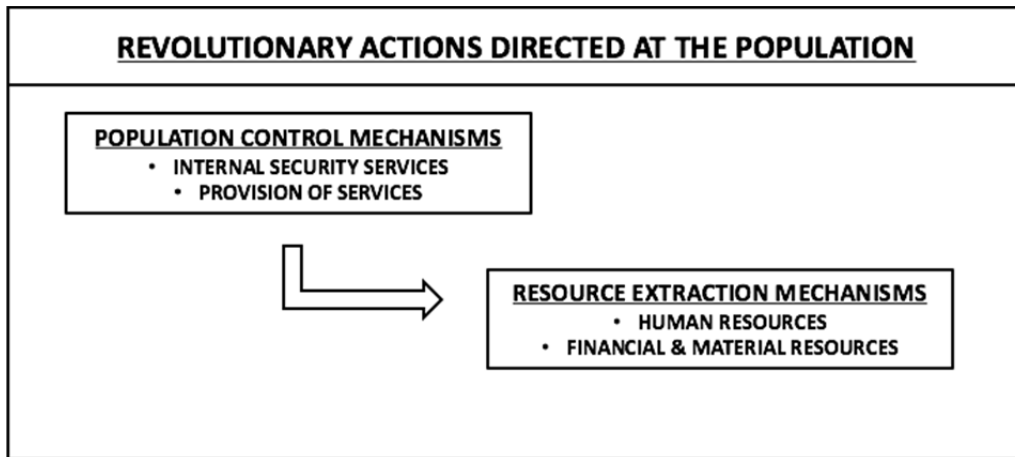- FINANCIAL & MATERIAL RESOURCES

Figure 4. Revolutionary Actions Directed at the Population

Evidence will show the Islamic State has a robust system of governance that seeks to control the population by the provision of services and the strict enforcement of laws. The Islamic State established functional Diwans (councils) that specialize in cabinet-like areas of responsibility, and oversee government activities. These activities created an environment that was difficult and dangerous for individuals to rebel against. This subsequently enables other Islamic State institutions to extract human and material resources from the population without resistance. Despite the movement's claims of establishing an Islamic Utopia, the brutality of the movement did drive many people to flee its territory. This exposes the limits on the effectiveness of their activities that target the population.

A. EVIDENCE SUPPORTING ISLAMIC STATE REVOLUTIONARY ACTIONS TO CONTROL THE POPULATION

When revolutionary movements provide essential services to the population, the population responds by viewing the movement with increased legitimacy. The Islamic State's Diwan al-Khidamat—literally, the Council for Services—oversees the provision of utilities within the movement's territory. Internal documents from the Diwan al-Khidamat show the Islamic State's desire to improve upon the services formerly provided by the state.

Captured documents show the Diwan al-Khidamat establishing fixed prices for utilities in various cities. Documents from Raqqa and Mosul reveal the Islamic State standardizing the cost and hours for electrical services. Other documents show the Diwan al-Khidamat overseeing trash removal, public transportation, and urban water supplies.[148]

Other captured documents from the Diwan al-Khidamat reveal efforts to reduce corruption levels. Specifically, the council established standardized office hours for electricity, water, and health offices in Anbar province. In Raqqa, documents show the Islamic State publishing acceptable business practices with fines for failures to adhere. Also in Raqqa, the Diwan al-Khidamat established an office to receive complaints regarding service-related issues.[149]

A second council that provided public goods is the Diwan al-Sihha, which oversaw the Islamic State's health services. Captured documents show this council overseeing the education of medical professionals, control of medicinal narcotics, and price regulation for medical procedures.[150] Like the Council for Services, the provision of health services can offer a degree of normalcy to the population living within Islamic State territory. Providing these services contributed to establishing a social contract between the movement and the population—the provision on public services in exchange for subordination.

Two other Islamic State councils provided services that also contributed to the public good, but also sought to indoctrinate the population into Islamic State society. The first was the Council for Education, called the Diwan al-Ta'lim. The second was the Diwan al-Da'wah wa al-Masjid, which was the Council for Outreach and Mosques.

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[148] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Archive of Islamic State Administrative Documents," January 27, 2015, http://www.aymennjawad.org/2015/01/archive-of-islamic-state-administrative-documents. Documents 9K, 9X, 7H, 6Y, 4Q, 5Z, 1K, and 6M.

[149] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Islamic State Administrative Documents," Documents 1P, 2R, 4E, and 7G.

[150] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Islamic State Administrative Documents," Documents A, D, and 8A.

The Islamic State Council for Education—at the national and provincial levels—established guidelines for class schedules, maintained student registries, and standardizes exams. At face value, these act like simple public goods, similar to the health and services councils. However, the education council practiced indoctrination of the population through two mechanisms of influence.

The first influence mechanism was the control and standardization over instructional materials used in classrooms. Captured documents from the Mosul area show subject lists for 1st, 2nd, and 5th grade students. For 1st grade students, four out of the nine subjects taught in the classroom were religious classes. For 2nd and 5th grade students, five out of the ten course subjects were religious studies.[151] Diwan al-Ta'lim also managed a youth program called—not so originally—the cub scouts. This program was for boys aged 10–15 and provides religious and military training.[152] Standardized religious study is not inherently wrong, and there is a strong chance the proportion of religious studies as part of standardized education rivals that of other Middle Eastern states. However, a public notice was recovered in Wilayat al-Kheir (Hasakah Province, Syria) that documents the prohibition of employment for selected individuals who would not provide instruction concurrent with jihadist ideology.[153] Ostensibly, those who remain employed are providing instruction that does support such an ideology.

The second influence mechanism wielded by the Council of Education was their authority over teachers. Across provinces in Iraq and Syria, Diwan al-Ta'lim issued periodic requests for teachers to come forward and repent. Documents indicate that the education council maintained an Islamic Police-like authority over individuals who were involved in the education system.[154]

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[151] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Islamic State Administrative Documents," Documents 10D and 10E.

[152] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Islamic State Administrative Documents," Documents 3W and 3X.

[153] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Islamic State Administrative Documents," Document 4T.

[154] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Islamic State Administrative Documents," Documents 4U, 5N, 1V, 3B, 3C, and 3D.

Repenters, especially those who were teachers prior to the establishment of the Islamic State were documented, with their previous infractions noted—perhaps for use as future leverage. The council required repenters to attend religious re-education. Those suspected of non-conforming were identified by the council and prohibited from working.

The standardization of jihadi instruction, with the coercive power maintained over educators, provided the Islamic State with the opportunity to greatly influence the next generation. With the entire Islamic State population learning jihadi interpretations of Islam, the social barriers that may prevent the acceptance of this ideology were eroded. Indoctrination of the next generation will theoretically make controlling the population within the Islamic State easier in the future.

Diwan al-Da'wah wa al-Masjid, the Council for Outreach and Mosques, was also deeply concerned with the indoctrination of Islamic State constituents. Captured documents show the council hosting Quran memorization competitions in a variety of provinces.[155] The council issued guidance to Imams on the topics of their Friday sermons, and coordinates times for services.[156] In the Iraqi province of Nineveh, there were at least three instances where the council issued a complete sermon for reading during Friday services. Two of these sermons clearly divided the population into in-groups and out-groups. The first divided the population as believers and non-believers, and the second divided the population as Sunni Muslims, and all others as non-believers—to include Shia Muslims.[157] These portrayals reinforced Sunni identity against the predominantly-Shia central government—making defection from the movement to the state increasingly difficult.

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[155] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Islamic State Administrative Documents," Documents 9 and 7P.

[156] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Islamic State Administrative Documents," Documents E, 4S, and 5B.

[157] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Islamic State Administrative Documents," Documents 5G, 1Q, and 1R.

Three other relevant documents attributable to the Council on Outreach and Mosques actually predate the so-called caliphate or the formal existence of the Islamic State. In December of 2013—prior to the Islamic State's clear establishment of control of Raqqa, Syria—the Diwan al-Da'wah wa al-Masjid was publishing guidance on acceptable practices and the establishment of religious police.[158] It appears that the Islamic State used religious indoctrination not just as a means of maintaining control, but as a tool to establish or seize territory from rival groups. This principle was documented in the well-circulated article from *Der Spiegel* in April of 2014 that implicated the Diwan al-Da'wah as an integral office for establishing control in new communities.[159] This journalistic source has not made public their captured documents, but the reporting is otherwise consistent with the available evidence.

The councils described above sought to control the population through both the provision of services, and shifting ideologies into harmony with the Islamic State. Other Islamic State councils provided the teeth to their governance, enforcing their established laws. While the rule of law is a form of public service by itself, the following organizations truly serve to inhibit possible internal discord.

The Diwan al-Hisbah, the Council for Islamic Police, was responsible for the punishment of individuals who did not comply with the established standards of behavior within the Islamic State. Captured documents from the Diwan al-Hisbah have shown acceptable punishments for various crimes. These included death and even crucifixion for a litany of crimes—including blasphemy, spying for non-believers, adultery, and highway criminality.[160] Theft was punished with the amputation of a hand, or a hand and foot. The Council for Islamic Police stated in

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[158] *"Syria, Anti-Assad Rebel Infighting Leaves 700 Dead, Including Civilians," Asianews.it, January 13, 2014, http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Syria,-anti-Assad-rebel-infighting-leaves-700-dead,-including-civilians-30013.html.;* Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Islamic State Administrative Documents," Document 1I.

[159] Christoph Reuter, "The Terror Strategist."

[160] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Islamic State Administrative Documents," Document 1C.

their publications their intentions to bring judgments of death without exception, and their desire to make the people fear their lord. Other punishments include lashes and re-education for missing prayer times, lying, or consuming alcohol. Other documents from the Islamic Police have shown their willingness to close barbershops for shaving beards and fining individuals for illegal parking.

The strength of coercive power is determined by two variables, magnitude of the negative action and the likelihood of its enforcement against a subject.[161] The severity of punishments within the Islamic State is well established by the Diwan al-Hisbah, and well understood within the realm of public knowledge across the globe from a variety of video recordings. What is undetermined is the Islamic police's ability to identify the crimes—which would serve as the likelihood of enforcement of negative reinforcement. To support their efforts to enforce crime, the Diwan al-Hisbah has required all male individuals to register at their offices for photo identification cards.[162] These ID cards, which men are required to maintain on their person at all times, eliminate anonymity within the population.[163]

The degree of the effectiveness of population control measures is difficult to determine from outside the Islamic State. However, if the strength of coercive power is a function of severity of punishment and likelihood of punishment, we can infer from the nature of punishments alone. The great severity of punishments, coupled with the public and graphic enforcement of the death penalty, created an incredible pressure to comply with the Islamic States laws. Over time, individuals began to identify with the source of the coercive power,

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[161] John French and Beltram Raven, "The Bases of Social Power," in *Studies in Social Power* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan, 1959), 150–67.

[162] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Islamic State Administrative Documents," Document 10K.

[163] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Islamic State Administrative Documents," Document 9P.

and subsequently less coercive power was required for the same effect, or constant levels of coercive power produce increased levels of obedience.[164]

The Diwan al-Amn is the second Islamic State council focused on enforcing population control. The council for public security primarily focused on policing the communication of Islamic State constituents. The Diwan al-Amn has created requirements to monitor individuals using the Internet.

First, the Council for Public Security mandated that both public Internet cafes and private residences remove Wi-Fi access to the Internet.[165] This forced individuals to physically plug into an Internet connection, removing a degree of anonymity. Secondly, the Diwan al-Amn created requirements for both public Internet café managers and private Internet users. Internet Café managers were required to record the photo ID of all store patrons, and maintain a log of these individuals.[166] This gave the Council for Public Security the ability to determine who is accessing what information on the Internet. Even without actually making inspections, the recording of personal information during public computer usage likely influenced their communication given the potential punishments for blasphemy or apostasy.

In addition to the documents describing policing the Internet, the council for public security, like other councils made public calls for repentance.[167] The council also made a public statement in Wilayat Halab after removing a public official for using his position for personal gain.[168] These documents indicate the Diwan al-Amn has similar authorities to the Diwan al-Hisbah, with special emphasis on policing and regulating the Internet.

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[164] John French and Beltram Raven, "The Bases of Social Power," in *Studies in Social Power* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan, 1959), 150–67.

[165] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Islamic State Administrative Documents," Documents 8U, 9A, 7I, and 6L.

[166] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Islamic State Administrative Documents," Documents 6O, 4F, 9Y.

[167] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Islamic State Administrative Documents," Document 7S.

[168] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Islamic State Administrative Documents," Document 7T.

Although the evidence of Diwan al-Amn activity is limited, consisting of only a dozen documents, the organization clearly provided an internal policing function within the Islamic State. The lack of captured documents may be due to a degree of secrecy that would be similar to typical intelligence collection agencies. Together with the Diwan al-Hisbah, this council reinforced the control of the population within the Islamic State, making resistance extremely dangerous.

B.   EVIDENCE SUPPORTING ISLAMIC STATE REVOLUTIONARY ACTIONS TO EXTRACT RESOURCES

While the Council for Taxation, Diwan al-Zakat wa al-Sadaqat, was involved with providing a form of social security, its principal purpose was extracting financial resources from the population. There are limited numbers of captured documents from the taxation council, but the evidence does indicate the council was responsible for taxation of wealthier members of the Islamic State. Aside from social security, these funds were available for the salaries of soldiers and public sector works, enabling the movement to further grow.[169]

A second council focused on extracting resources from the population was the Diwan al-Rikaz. This council oversaw the management of oil and antiquities within the Islamic State. There were few captured documents that illustrate how the Islamic State managed its access to the region's most precious resource. Captured documents included a receipt for a domestic oil purchase, and general oil oversight guidance for Deir ez-Zor, Syria.[170] However, the movement's efforts to sell oil on the black market were documented in the media. Turkish parliamentary member claimed in the summer of 2014 that the Islamic State

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[169] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Islamic State Administrative Documents," Documents 10B, 9Q, and 8K.

[170] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Islamic State Administrative Documents," Documents 5T, 5U, and 4R.

smuggled roughly $800 million USD worth of oil into Turkey.[171] Iraqi estimates from the same time period placed IS oil revenues at roughly $1 million USD per day.[172] The U.S. Treasury Department projected the movement's oil earnings at roughly $40 million USD per month.[173] Regardless of the exact figure, it is clear that oil is a significant IS resource to support revolutionary actions.

Other documents from the Diwan al-Rikaz highlighted another IS resource, antiquities. Captured documents show the council oversaw digging permits and published notices for security check points to confiscate precious materials.[174] There was a degree of uncertainty regarding how profitable these endeavors were. The U.S. raid on the IS finance minister, Abu Sayaff, yielded documents indicating antiquities sales on the black market in Syria garnered roughly $265,000 US over a 12-month period.[175] While beneficial, this is hardly sufficient for sustaining a revolutionary movement's efforts within the nation.

As discussed earlier, the Council for Outreach and Mosques provided services and influence to the population to solidify its control. However, another documented activity of the Diwan al-Da'wah wa al-Masjid was the recruitment of individuals to serve as Islamic State soldiers. In Albukamal of Wilayat al-Furat—that straddles the Iraq-Syria border—the Council for Outreach conducted a

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171 Elizabeth Whitman, "Is Turkey Buying Oil from ISIS? After Downed Plane, Putin Slams Islamic State's Black Market Fuel Sales," *International Business Times*, November 24, 2015, http://www.ibtimes.com/turkey-buying-oil-isis-after-downed-plane-putin-slams-islamic-states-black-market-2198214.

172 Mohammed Hussein, Christine Van Den Toorn, Patrick Osgood, and Ben Lando. 2014. "ISIS Earning $1M per Day from Iraqi Oil Smuggling" (Iraqi Oil Report, July 9, 2014), http://www.iraqoilreport.com/security/energy-sector/isis-earning-1-million-per-day-iraqi-oil-smuggling-12657/.

173 *"How Much Does Targeting Oil Hurt ISIS?" CBS News, December 11, 2015, http://www.cbsnews.com/news/isis-makes-40-million-monthly-oil-revenue-selling-to-syria-bashar-al-assad-government/.*

174 Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "The Archivist: 'Go Forth, Lightly and Heavily Armed': New Mobilization Calls By the Islamic State in Aleppo Province," October 30, 2015, http://www.aymennjawad.org/18047/the-archivist-go-forth-lightly-and-heavily-armed. Document a, b, c, and d.

175 Ben Taub, "The Real Value of the ISIS Antiquities Trade," *The New Yorker*, December 4, 2015, http://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/the-real-value-of-the-isis-antiquities-trade.

recruitment effort in December of 2014 for males aged fifteen or older. The flier described the effort as a response to the command of God.[176] It should be noted that recruitment is conducted by the council for outreach and mosques, and not by the Council for the Military (Diwan al-Jund). While an individual may not volunteer at first, after weeks of attending selected sermons and fundamentalist training, the slow and steady increase in participation makes volunteering as a soldier much easier. The council for outreach and mosques provided Islamic State constituents opportunity for both acceptance and implementation.

Another Islamic State council recruiting soldiers is the Council for Fatwas and Doctrine—Diwan al-Ifta wa al-Buluth. In Wilayat al-Halab (Aleppo Province, Syria), the council conducted a call for mobilization in October of 2015. This recruitment effort was likely significant, as three separate documents attributable to the effort were obtained, and sought to perpetuate the religious obligation to fight under the phrase of "go forth, lightly and heavily armed."[177] This effort demonstrates using a religious mandate for the purpose of extracting human resources from the population.

C. EVIDENCE NOT SUPPORTING ISLAMIC STATE REVOLUTIONARY ACTIONS DIRECTED AT THE POPULATION

Despite the robust government structures within the Islamic State, evidence exists their actions directed at the population were failing to achieve full success. The brutality of the Islamic State runs contrary to what most civilizations accept as basic human rights. This brutality is connected to the exodus of many individuals from Islamic State territory.

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[176] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Islamic State Administrative Documents," Documents 8D and 3E.

[177] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "The Archivist: 'Go Forth, Lightly and Heavily Armed': New Mobilization Calls By the Islamic State in Aleppo Province," October 30, 2015, http://www.aymennjawad.org/18047/the-archivist-go-forth-lightly-and-heavily-armed. Documents A, B, and C.

The Islamic State Council for Fatwas and Doctrine published guidance clarifying that Alawites, disbelievers, Yazidis, Shias, Jews, and Christians were all acceptable targets for sex slavery, which is hardly an acceptable practice by modern standards.[178] Other sources of discourse for Islamic State constituents were the prohibition of cigarettes and alcohol. Consuming either substance is punishable with a prison sentence, and many with the means the flee from the Islamic State are doing so.[179] Captured documents from the Diwan al-Sihha reinforce the notion that the Islamic State was struggling with individuals fleeing from its territory. These documents suggest the council was struggling to maintain control over qualified medical professionals.[180] Many migrants who left the Islamic State point to the harshness of life within the movement's territory as their reason for fleeing.[181]

This evidence suggests the Islamic State is not effectively handling the population. If the population is fleeing its regions of control, their demands of the population are exceeding their ability to control it. This creates a sustainability problem for the movement that it must overcome.

D.   CONCLUSIONS FOR REVOLUTIONARY ACTIONS DIRECTED AT THE POPULATION

The database of captured Islamic State documents provides great insight into the inner workings of an extremist organization. The documents of the five councils described in this chapter indicate a governing apparatus that was well organized for maintaining power and influence within the Islamic State.

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[178] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "The Archivist: Unseen Islamic State Fatwas on Jihad and Sabaya," November 25, 2015, http://www.aymennjawad.org/17879/the-archivist-unseen-islamic-state-fatwas-on. Document No. 29.

[179] Mark Lowen, "Migrant Crisis: Fleeing Life under the Islamic State in Syria," *BBC News*, September 23, 2015, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34337476.

[180] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Islamic State Administrative Documents," Documents 5I and 8O.

[181] Anne Allmeling, "Islamic State Tries to Stop Refugees from Leaving," *Deutsche Welle*, November 12, 2015, http://dw.com/p/1HMCL.

Independently, the councils maintain levers of influence over the population. However, their effects are combined across their organizations, reinforcing their power of influence and control into an effort without gaps. The redundancy between the councils reinforces the consistent pressure to accept the jihadist ideology. The existence of multiple security apparatuses ensures there is an organization that is policing those who are enforcing ridged laws. Additionally, the dating of the documents is very insightful. The existence of documents that predate clear regional control—such as prior to the fall of Mosul—shows that controlling the population is not an end state, but a means of attaining control.

There are more factors in play than just the publications of the councils this chapter focused on. Although not discussed in depth in this chapter, there is evidence of other councils providing an influential effect on the population. For the needy, the Diwan al-Zakat wa al-Sadaqat provides food and shelter for those in need of welfare.[182] This builds positive rapport, and also a dependency on the state that is not easily broken by the recipients. Also, the Islamic State maintains a massive public relations enterprise, the Diwan al-Aqat wa al-Amma. The council oversaw the production of numerous quality media products. While many products target individuals beyond the borders of the Islamic State, there is an immeasurable effect on the internal population.

All of these activities contribute to the Islamic State's ability to maintain control over its population and extract resources. What remains to be seen is whether these levers of influence outweigh those that drive individuals away from the Islamic State. In time, will the education programs and enforcement mechanisms outpace the opposition's ability to degrade the Islamic States military and economic power?

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[182] Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Islamic State Administrative Documents," Documents 2U and 5C.

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V. CONCLUSIONS

Starting in late 2011, the Islamic State began a substantial period of growth. With an estimated 700 movement members remaining at that time, IS initiated a campaign that in roughly 30 months resulted in the proclamation of a so-called caliphate across significant regions of Iraq and Syria. Using a model of revolutionary growth, this thesis analyzed major components of this campaign and developed new understanding of how the Islamic State returned to prominence. This model appears to be an effective tool for evaluating the Islamic State. The revolutionary growth model's expectations regarding actions directed at the state, at competing movements, and the population have been supported by the actions of the Islamic State and other parties involved in the conflict. While this model is not intended to fully explain all aspects of a revolutionary struggle, it is effective in describing how the Islamic State has grown. What remains to be determined is the applicability of this growth model to other regions where the Islamic State is present.

A. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Islamic State committed considerable resources to actions directed at the state. Between 2011 and 2014, IS conducted over 1,250 car bomb attacks in Iraq. The magnitude of this deadly undertaking—especially considering less than 100 occurred during 2011—is rather shocking. The Islamic State averaged more than one car bomb per day for three consecutive years. Most governments would respond with force in the face of such a sustained and violent assault.

The Iraqi government's response to the attacks was precisely what the Islamic State hoped, and true to Zarqawi's vision in 2004. Iraqi security institutions lacked the capacity to effectively develop the intelligence needed to conduct precision operations against the Islamic State. Given this deficiency, the ISF flailed wildly at the collective Sunni protest movement—killing dozens whom Sunni society presumed were wholly innocent of any crimes. Inciting these

attacks may have proven less fortunate for the Islamic State if Iraqi security institutions enjoyed a greater intelligence collection capacity. If the state was able to discriminate their violence and limit collateral damage, the effectiveness of the provocation strategy would likely be reduced.

As limited as the ISF were at the outset of the Islamic State's campaign in 2011, their capability only eroded over time. As Iraq struggled to maintain the equipment provided by the multinational reconstruction mission, they continued to incur casualties at a greater rate as the fall of Mosul loomed. Concurrent with the degradation of the security sector, government functionality in the Sunni tribal belt also faltered. As the Islamic State killed many government administrators, countless others felt the pressure of the movement's intimidating presence.

With the ISF killing Sunnis by the dozens, governance breaking down, and state security institutions appearing ever weaker, the opportunity and motivation for revolution spread across northern and western Iraq. Revolutionary movements and tribal organizations began to grow in Iraq as they previously had in Syria. The Islamic State conducted revolutionary actions directed at these competing movements on both sides of the border.

The Islamic State co-opted many competing movements in Iraq and Syria. Some integrated into the Islamic State, while others formed alliances to defeat common enemies. The Islamic State demonstrated consistent behavior towards other movements within Sunni alliances. IS encouraged its allies to continue the attack against the state, while they themselves focused on consolidating their control over geographic areas. This allowed competing movements to expend their resources against the state, while leaving IS resources available for eliminating rival movements—of which there were some.

Particularly in Syria, the Islamic State sought to eliminate movements who were unwilling to accept co-option. Jabhat al-Nusrah—the Syrian affiliate of al Qaeda—is the most prolific opposition IS faced from other revolutionary movements. The Islamic State was not able to subdue JN and other movements,

and these organizations have checked IS growth in Syria. Within Iraq, the Islamic State was easily able to eliminate the Sahwa movement, which without its American benefactors was not up to the challenge of a motivated enemy.

Actions directed at the state established the motivation and opportunity for revolution, and actions directed at competing movements solidified a monopoly in regions where IS successfully co-opted or eliminated competing movements. Actions directed at the population established IS control and access to resources. Governing is not only the desired ends for a revolutionary movement, it is also a means to achieve these ends. This Islamic State demonstrated a robust bureaucracy for both establishing control over and extracting resources from the population. While many of the movement's practices—such as barbaric public executions and severe restrictions on personal freedoms—are extremely harsh and contrary to western values, the Islamic State did provide a degree of order to the territories they administered. Conversely, many with the means to do so are fleeing the Islamic State. This questions the degree of control that IS enjoys. At least in the short term, the movement garnered enough control to extract a significant amount of resources and sustain rapid growth.

It is important to note the components of the Islamic State revolutionary growth model are not sequential. Some have described the actions of the Islamic State as a phased approach, with governance components as ordered efforts to support territorial control.[183] This is characterization is inaccurate, as the three forms of revolutionary actions are mutually supporting efforts. Establishing governance over the population marginalizes other movements and the dependence upon the state. Actions against competing movements facilitate establishing control over the population. Targeting the incumbent government establishes the movement as the protectors of the population against the state, fostering control over the population. Research shows the Islamic State—

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[183] Aaron Y. Zelin, "The Islamic State's Territorial Methodology" (Washington, DC: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, January 2016), http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Documents/pubs/ResearchNote29-Zelin.pdf.

perhaps more so than any other movement in Iraq and Syria—executes all three components concurrently.

B. EXTENSIONS OF THE ISLAMIC STATE REVOLUTIONARY GROWTH MODEL

Now that the Islamic State's growth methodology is understood, this knowledge may benefit contemporary strategies to combat the movement. In Iraq and Syria, the Islamic State pursued actions against the state and competing movements with different degrees of emphasis. In Syria, a weakened central government allowed IS to focus on competing revolutionary movements. In Iraq, competing movements willing to accept co-option or succumb to elimination allowed IS to focus on the central government.

Strategies to combat the Islamic State should be as comprehensive as possible. A campaign of attrition through airstrikes is a one-dimensional approach to countering the Islamic State's multi-dimensional campaign of revolutionary growth. Reinforcing the gaps in opposition against the Islamic State will force the movement to divide its efforts along more operational fronts. In Syria, breaking the financial relationship between the Assad regime and the Islamic State constitutes such an effort. Within Iraq, facilitating a competing Sunni movement—such as the Albu Nimr tribal organization—to represent moderate interests will prevent IS from focusing solely against the Iraqi Security Forces.

Both of these strategies have challenges associated with them. Bashir al-Assad is far from a suitable partner, and regime change may empower another fundamentalist movement. Within Iraq, facilitating a Sunni organization to challenge the Islamic State from within is difficult to balance with maintaining partnerships with the Baghdad government.

Another extension of the Islamic State growth model is to apply it to Islamic State territories outside of Iraq and Syria. One significant location experiencing an expanding contingent of the Islamic State is Afghanistan and

Pakistan. Collectively identified as "Khorasan Province" of the Islamic State, the movement's growth is contributing to U.S. apprehension regarding its draw-down of forces in the region. Following the announcement of the death of Mullah Omar, the Taliban is in a position of weakened central authority. Mullah Omar's replacement, Akhtar Mohammad Mansour, was subsequently killed in May of 2016.[184] The leadership of the Taliban is increasingly fluid, which may support fracturing and infighting. Given this condition, we can anticipate the Islamic State will establish geographic control over small enclaves. A fragmented Taliban creates opportunities for the movement to encourage defectors with the promise of success and increased authority. However, the same condition—in fighting—that facilitates the Islamic State's efforts to establish small control zones will prevent it from becoming overly successful. As seen in Syria, there is a strong propensity for rival movements to actively engage each other while pursuing the overall goal of toppling the regime.

These initial considerations are in need of further analysis. Understanding the Islamic State in Khorasan will become increasing important as the Government of Afghanistan and international partners seeks to terminate the conflict with the Taliban. Analysis of the Islamic State in Khorasan will inform strategic and operational decision makers as the conflict evolves into its next phase.

Further analysis of the Islamic State will undoubtedly be undertaken by the academic community that focuses on internal conflict. The growth model and assessment of the Islamic State's campaign to reconstitute itself from 2011 to 2014 provides a tool for further study. Having returned from the brink of defeat, the Islamic State has proven to be a learning organization, revising strategy in

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[184] Antonio Olivo, "Taliban Replaces Leader Killed in U.S. Drone Strike," *The Washington Post*, May 25, 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/taliban-announces-new-leader-replacing-one-killed-in-us-drone-strike/2016/05/25/0f5f9beb-e072–4a60-a90c-8cf770c317a9_story.html.

pursuit of its desired goal. All those opposing it must do the same in kind—constantly learn, adapt, and persevere when victory appears unobtainable.

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