



# **PROPAGANDA OF TERROR: KONSTANTINIYYE MAGAZINE AND THE DISCOURSE OF DAESH**

**ORSAM Report No: 204**

**August 2016**

**ISBN: 978-605-9157-09-4**

**Ankara - TURKEY ORSAM © 2016**

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## PREFACE

Terrorist groups target people on different levels by using not only their actions, but also their discourse. Terrorist organization DAESH attracts a great deal of attention with its actions and media campaigns. The organization, which, having emerged in Iraq and improved its position in Syria continues to govern vast amount of territory in both countries, uses propaganda tools along with its armed attacks in order to maintain its control.

The social services DAESH provides, military operations it conducts, fatwas it publishes about contemporary developments and the commentaries it releases about the “foreign policy” of the so-called Islamic State are published in its Turkish-language magazine *Konstantiniyye*. DAESH claims that the goal behind publishing the magazine is to inform people about its activities and to clarify misunderstanding about the organization. When we consider informative activities as propaganda and efforts to avoid misunderstanding as perception management, it is clear that DAESH pursues a multi-dimensional communication strategy. Thus, analyzing the discourse and content of the *Konstantiniyye* magazine is quite important.

Moreover, in order to limit DAESH’s both physical and online recruitment capacity, it would be helpful to carry out thorough analyses of the magazines published by the organization which is an important leg of its communication activities. This study, prepared by Sertaç Canalp Korkmaz, ORSAM Research Assistant, focuses on the *Konstantiniyye* magazine published specifically for the terror group’s target audience in Turkey. I personally believe that this research would significantly contribute to the literature and hope that it will prove very informative for the readers.

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# PROPAGANDA OF TERROR: KONSTANTINIYYE MAGAZINE AND THE DISCOURSE OF DAESH

## INTRODUCTION

The terrorist organization DAESH<sup>1</sup> capitalized on the opportunities offered by the governance gap, which emerged in the war environment. It has declared the establishment of the Islamic State on the lands it controls through a strategy of hybrid warfare.<sup>2</sup> It follows an effective communication strategy, which is based on both traditional and new media tools, in order to keep those who live in so-called Islamic State together, and to invite people from different countries to live under the roof of this structure.

Besides the organization's *Dabiq*<sup>3</sup> magazine published in English, there is also a magazine called *Konstantiniyye* which is published in Turkish and released by Al-Hayat Media in order to make propaganda against Turkey. As of August 2016, the seventh issue of the magazine has been published.

It is believed that analyzing arguments in the *Konstantiniyye* is important for Turkey in terms of forming a counter-narrative in the process of fight against DAESH. As *Konstantiniyye* has been an a-spatial tool on internet, people have an easy access to it.

Today, recruitment by terrorist organizations is not only conducted through armed actions, but also through effective propaganda strategies. With propaganda, individuals are radicalized first. Then, they become parts of the process which includes even joining a terrorist organization. The reason for people joining a terrorist organization as a result of propaganda strategies by terrorist organizations is push and pulls factors. DAESH's discursive strategy, its promises and propagandas have a great effect in pulling individuals into the terrorist organization.

In this study, *Konstantiniyye* magazine published by DAESH is analyzed in terms of its discourse and content. It would be helpful to analyze Salafist discourse first before the discourse of DAESH is examined in this study. Before proceeding to DAESH's discourse, the relations between terrorism and propaganda, and what kind of a discourse Salafi understanding has will be examined. Then, the communication strategy of DAESH will be analyzed by examining its discursive strategy and the content of *Konstantiniyye* magazine, and which terms it utilizes the most.



## 1. FUNDAMENTALS OF DAESH PROPAGANDA

### 1.1. The Relationship between Terror and Propaganda

Propaganda is a vital element for terrorist organizations. They are created through propaganda and survive with propaganda.<sup>4</sup> The use of propaganda as a tool of mass communication by terrorist organizations can also be considered as psychological war tactics of terrorist organizations.<sup>5</sup> They make effective propaganda by conducting sensational acts when they are weakest.<sup>6</sup> Their propaganda helps terrorist organization to motivate itself and recruit human resources.

The concept of propaganda is described in different studies as follows: Propaganda refers to all kinds of activities with psychological effects which aims to affect and manipulate emotions, ideas, attitudes, and actions of a person or group.<sup>7</sup> In another definition, propaganda is defined as an activity of influencing target society through mass media, using news, information and specific documents aiming to affect ideology, belief, attitude and actions of specific target groups.<sup>8</sup>

Terrorist organizations which have completed their ideological infrastructure and structuring try to be effective through various methods besides sensational acts, as they seek to survive in challenging environments. Terrorist organizations create feeling of fear and being suppressed in people through armed actions. They also use such environment for recruiting new members as well as improving the morale of present militants.

Although armed propaganda contributes terrorist organizations to make themselves heard, in the long term, it gets reaction from the public.<sup>9</sup> Armed propaganda,

which is not a sustainable method in the long term, is not as preferable as it used to be. Nowadays, propaganda activities through media are more popular. In this sense, propaganda can be conducted by using guns, as well as through written and verbal means of communication, helping terrorist organizations reach their goals.

While propaganda brings an issue to the spotlight, it helps the organization to explain itself differently, by preventing another issue in the background from being spoken about.<sup>10</sup> The purpose of propaganda is to draw people's attention to specific events or target elements rather than informing people.<sup>11</sup> One of the main functions of propaganda is to affect people's ideas by using every opportunity.<sup>12</sup> Propaganda does not give people the right to free choice, while it blurs target group's attention and prevents it from making rational choice, by affecting them through the use of emotional words.<sup>13</sup> When we look at the characteristics of propaganda we see the following elements:<sup>14</sup>

- Propaganda should attract attention
- Propaganda should be eye-catching and understandable
- Propaganda should bring out a necessity
- Propaganda should meet a need

Alkan explains the use of guns as a propaganda tool by terrorist organizations as follows:<sup>15</sup>

- Demonstrating its presence and power
- Forcing state to oppress people
- Intimidating and silencing those who do not support them
- Putting society through hypnosis of fear



- Giving supporters moral support
- Educating members of the organization
- Having authority on members of the organization and keeping discipline
- Creating chaos

## 1.2. Salafist Thinking in DAESH Propaganda and its Formation

Salafism is a movement, which borrowed from Ahmed bin Hanbel in terms of basic deeds, systematized its unique position on fundamentals of belief by drawing on Ibn-Taymiyyah, and established relations with state authority through Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab. Its main reference is Quran and *hadiths*, which are Hz. Mohammed's words and deeds intended to help understand Quran. Salafist ideology takes position against *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) which is extended version of sharia, including *ijma* and *ijtihad*. According to this understanding, which is also called School of *Ahl Al-Hadith*, adscitious practices should be removed from religion, and *jihād* is treated as a necessary practice. However, it is important to state that *jihād* does not mean a military struggle only. Military struggle is only one dimension of actual struggle consisting of verbal, written and defensive war in order to spread religion. More importantly, in

religious literature, while *lesser jihād* refers to a military struggle, *greater jihād* refers to the one's struggle against the self's basic desires. Thus, different meanings of the term *jihād* are important. In the discourse and activities of DAESH, it refers to the term *jihād* often by ignoring such nuances in the meaning of the term, which limits the profundity of the term.

The discourse of DAESH has some similarities intellectually with the historical evolution of the Salafist discourse. The fact that there are many different understandings under Salafism has led to different interpretations of Salafism and the emergence of different practices. The use of violence in Salafism, emerged in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as radical groups reacted against particularly the colonial policies of the West.<sup>16</sup> The new developments in the Palestine issue, which emerged after the 1970, and the Soviet Union's occupation of Afghanistan have accelerated this process.<sup>17</sup>

Today, the violence conducted by radical movements is not only towards individuals and material values. The values that keep people together socially and politically have also become a target of violence.<sup>18</sup> In this sense, an important value of our age, democracy, has become a tar-

get by DAESH. Its intolerance and opposition to differences comes to the fore as a major feature of Salafist discourse.

When we look at radical Salafism, which forms the foundations of DAESH, it can be seen that the fourth<sup>19</sup> generation of Salafi understanding, which emerged after the Afghan resistance against the Soviet Union's occupation of Afghanistan in 1979, has a significant impact. Objecting *tawil* (allegorical interpretation) and *ra'y* (personal opinion) which is the major idea of Salafist discourse, can be found in the discourse of DAESH. In order for Islam to return to its pure origin, religious innovation or *bid'ah* should be removed, and at this point Salafism's militant protest characteristic becomes visible.<sup>20</sup>

Because Salafist discourse considers itself superior over other sects, Islamic interpretations and Sufi understanding, it seeks to gain psychological dominance.<sup>21</sup> Considering itself superior leads Salafis to see other ideologies as sick, and treats them as enemies, through the practice of othering those ideologies. In a situation where different ideologies cannot exist together, the ideology considering itself superior begins to see the ideologies, which it considers as sick, as enemies that should be destroyed. As such, it transforms its superiority into actual practice.

### 1.3. DAESH's Emergence as a Radical Salafi Movement and its Discourse

Keeping Sunnis away from Iraqi administration, and establishing predominantly Shia-dominated administration and pursuing policies after the American occupation of Iraq in 2003 demonstrates that the country lagged behind the inclusive democratic framework foreseen for the post-Saddam period. With the emergence of reactions by Sunnis against the policies of Shia-dominated administration, the groups, which joined Iraqi al-Qaeda first, has taken part in the structure called Islamic State of Iraq in later period.

DAESH has been able to spread in a large geography, as its arguments on the anomy and despair that Sunnis face at social level has resonated with people. The most important factor that helps a terrorist organization to survive is the presence of a sociological basis to appeal to target group. This factor has occurred more perceptively in post-Saddam period in Iraq, and DAESH has used this successfully.

In the Middle East there is lack of quality education and analytical thinking. Not internalizing values such as democracy, pluralism and multiculturalism causes the exclusion of even non-violent radical ideologies emerging in the Middle East, by the existing political order. Local, regional and international developments may prompt individuals to consider violence as legitimate, as a result of being excluded from the system. They may also subscribe to violent extremism. However, traumatic effects of the wars on individuals should also be taken into account. The fact that conflicts and wars have become a part of the Middle East should not be ignored, when analyzing the discourse and actions of terrorist organizations in the region. The arguments of individuals, societies or organizations are not independent from the places they live, values they have and incidents they face. The discourse of DAESH is not independent from the negative developments and factors lasting for centuries in the areas where DAESH emerged and currently controls. These incidents and factors can be listed as follows: Socio-economic and socio-cultural texture of the region, English, French, Russian and American policies which have been felt intensely in the region since the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, ongoing struggle for influence, regional competition, corrupt structure of the states in the region, and corrupt and oppressive governments.

The presence of monarchies in large parts of the Middle East, which have close relations with western countries, and a regime of democratic republic in Turkey make



these countries a natural target. They have been framed as enemies in the discourse of DAESH.<sup>22</sup> For this reason, there are arguments in *Konstantiniyye* magazine, which call on groups with different religious understandings in the region, to resist against the regimes of their countries.

#### 1.4. Target Audience of DAESH Propaganda

The arguments in *Konstantiniyye* magazine should be studied from different angles. The organization constructs its discourse, in order to introduce itself and prompt into action those who will fight for the so-called Islamic State in the areas that it controls.

*Konstantiniyye* magazine targets Turkish speakers. While the majority of the target audience live in Turkey, there is a large number of Turks living in other countries such as Germany, France, Belgium, Holland and England. Muslims living in western countries have some difficulties when they try to integrate into the society. Especially people with religious sensitivity are excluded from the society and otherized, due to Islamophobia in Europe. Thus, when considering DAESH's propaganda activities through *Konstantiniyye* magazine, it is important that not only Turkey but also other countries where Turks

live should be taken into consideration for developing a counter-narrative in the process of fight against DAESH. Moreover, people having identity and integration problems in European cities are easily affected by the propaganda of terrorist organizations with religious motivations, such as Al Qaeda and DAESH.<sup>23</sup>

On the other hand, it is important to note that basically the target group for DAESH can be divided into two. The first group is those who are considered as enemy and should be destroyed. DAESH declared them unbelievers. The second group is those whom DAESH wants to benefit from. This group is radicalized, so that they have sympathy for DAESH, and they are encouraged to join the so-called Islamic State in the Syria-Iraq region.

#### 1.5. Turkey's Capacity against the Salafist Ideology

Although the Salafist ideology tries to expand its reach in Turkey, the cultural understanding that Turks have had in historical process may prevent the propaganda by Salafist ideology from reaching its goal. The fact that there is an effective Sufi understanding (*tasavvuf*) in Turkish-Islamic history and that this understanding is considered as a major antithesis to the Salafist ideology can prevent Turks

from joining DAESH, by paying attention to the Salafist propaganda.

Currently, there are some Turks in DAESH or in some terrorist organizations with Salafist ideology. However, it should be taken into account that Turkish participation in DAESH or other terrorist organizations with religious motivations is not at a high level proportionally, although Turkey has a long border with Syria and Iraq, and that an overwhelming portion of Turkey's population is Muslim.

Furthermore, the fact that Republic of Turkey has a secular administration after 1937 has prevented Salafist movements from growing in Turkish society until the rise of 'Political Islam' in Middle East. It should also be remembered that secularism has been a target in the discourse of DAESH.

The presence of a Presidency of Religious Affairs which is the highest religious authority in Turkey makes the spread of radical ideology around Turkey difficult. Religion is under control in other Middle Eastern countries, too. However, whether Salafist ideology finds a ground depends not only on the presence of a religious authority, but also the acceptance by the public of this religious authority and its interpretations and overall approach. It should not be overlooked that the emergence of Salafist groups and the participation in these groups are at a high level in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iran, Syria or other

Middle Eastern countries, although religion is under control by different mechanisms and different proportions. It also needs to be noted that in some countries this ideology has an active role in religious establishment.

The ongoing conflicts in the Middle East may lead people living in the regional countries to leave their countries and migrate to other regions. The conflict can also prompt people who have not left their countries to take part in the conflicts. Some of those who have taken part in the conflicts may join terrorist organizations. In Syria and Iraq, a terrorist organization like DAESH, which has a religious motivation, comes to the fore. However, there is another point here. There are foreign terrorist fighters from different regions around the world or from neighboring countries, in order to fight in the countries where conflict is happening. These foreign terrorist fighters are mobilized, with the effective propaganda strategy by terrorist organizations. For example, in the post-2003 era, the number of foreign terrorist fighters going to Iraq from Turkey is stated as 0 according to Sinjar records, while there is a noticeable increase in foreign terrorist fighters going to Iraq and Syria from Turkey in order to fight for DAESH in the current phase of the conflict.<sup>24</sup> This finding makes it necessary to find an answer to the question whether the communication strategy pursued by DAESH has an impact on this outcome.

## 2. ABOUT KONSTANTINIYYE MAGAZINE

DAESH has stated that the purpose of publishing the magazine is informing target group in Turkey, preventing Turkish people from thinking wrongly about DAESH, and countering arguments against DAESH in Turkey. The choice of the name *Konstantiniyye* is a remarkable point, and in the foreword of each issue it is prayed to Allah in order for Him to help with the conquest of 'Constantinople.' Moreover, in the contents part of each issue, there is the *hadith* by Hz. Mohammed: "Constantinople will be conquered."

The name *Konstantiniyye* is the Arabic version of Istanbul. In the Ottoman period, this version was used widely. Istanbul, which is referred as *Konstantiniyye*, is historically important for Muslims, as it is mentioned in a *hadith* by Hz. Mohammed. It couldn't be conquered until the year in which Mehmed the Conqueror conquered it, i.e., 1453, although it was laid sieged many times after the death of Hz. Mohammed. However, when it is discussed in terms of Turkish-Islamic history, although Istanbul was conquered in 1453 by Turks who are Muslims, because Republic of Turkey is called as *taghut*<sup>25</sup> by DAESH, it is emphasized that Istanbul should be conquered again. DAESH prays that this conquest will be granted to them.

Crystalizing its propaganda strategy against Turkey with the first issue of the magazine published in Hijri 1436, month of Shaban (June 2015), DAESH chose the title "Conquest of Constantinople" for the cover topic of the *Konstantiniyye* magazine. There are 10 articles in the first issue, which has 46 pages. The subjects of these articles are as follows: there are 2 articles with negative arguments towards Turkey, 2 articles with negative arguments

towards democracy, 5 articles with religious information, and 1 article about the activities of DAESH.

The cover topic of the second issue published in Hijri 1436, month of Shavval (July 2015), is "Does Fighting the Caliphate Lead to Apostasy?" The second issue of the magazine consists of 60 pages and has 8 articles. The subjects of the articles are as follows: 1 article with negative arguments towards Turkey, 1 article legitimizing fight against Kurds, and 6 articles with religious information.

The third issue of the magazine was published in Hijri 1436, month of Zilhajj (September 2015), with the cover topic of "Virtue and Lawfulness of Suicide Attacks". The third issue consists of 72 pages. It has 8 articles. The subjects of the articles are as follows: 1 article with negative arguments towards Turkey, 5 articles with religious information, and 1 article about activities of DAESH.

The fourth issue of the magazine was published in Hijri 1437, month of Safar (November 2015), with the cover topic of "You Perceive Them in Unity whereas Their Hearts Are Shattered in Fact." The fourth issue consists of 68 pages and 8 articles. The subjects of the articles are as follows: 2 articles with negative arguments towards Turkey, 5 articles with religious information, and 1 article about activities of DAESH.

The fifth issue of the magazine was published in Hijri 1437, month of Rabi-ul-Akhir (January 2016), with the cover topic of "Infidels Fight for Taghut." The fifth issue consists of 56 pages and 7 articles. The subjects of the articles are as follows:



1 article with negative arguments towards Turkey, 2 articles with religious information, and 4 articles about activities of DAESH.

The sixth issue of the magazine was published in Hijri 1437, month of Rajab (May 2016), with the cover topic of "Apostate Brothers." The sixth issue consists of 52 pages and 5 articles. The subjects of the articles are as follows: 1 article with negative arguments towards Turkey, 1 article with negative arguments towards the Muslim Brotherhood, 1 article with religious information, and 2 articles about activities of DAESH.

The seventh issue of the magazine was published in Hijri 1437, month of Zulkida (August 2016), with the cover of "Leaflets of Infidelity." The seventh issue consists of 60 pages and 7 articles. The subjects of the articles are as follows: 1 article with negative arguments towards Turkey, 1 article with negative arguments towards the Said Nursi and Nur Community, 2 article with religious information, and 2 articles about the activities of DAESH.

The distribution of the subjects featured in the total of 53 articles out of seven issues of the magazine are as follows: 10 articles with negative arguments towards Turkey, 26 article with religious information, 12 articles about activities of DAESH, 1 article legitimizing fight against Kurds, 2 articles with negative arguments towards democracy, 1 article with negative arguments towards the Said Nursi and Nur Community, 1 article with negative arguments towards the Muslim Brotherhood. It can be seen from the subjects featured in the magazine that DAESH seeks to live up to the statement in the foreword of the magazine that their goal is informing people in Turkey about Islam and preventing them from thinking wrongly about DAESH.

While religious propaganda is running regularly, there are harsh criticisms to-

ward Turkey from the very first issue to the latest issue in the *Konstantiniyye* magazine. Every time, different institutions or values which are important for Turkey are being targeted by DAESH. However, the Turkish Armed Forces is a specifically targeted institution in fifth, sixth and seventh issues of the *Konstantiniyye* magazine. Also, DAESH follows the developments in Turkey closely. After Fethullah Gulenist Terror Organization's (FETÖ) coup attempt on 15 July 2016, DAESH mentioned Fethullah Gülen shortly in the foreword of the seventh issue. However, from the first issue to the seventh issue, there were no mentions of Fethullah Gülen. Rather, Said Nursi and Nur Community are targeted by DAESH independently from Fethullah Gülen and his terrorist movement, which is noteworthy.

### 2.1. Numerical Findings Regarding *Konstantiniyye* Magazine

Analyzing *Konstantiniyye* magazine numerically is important for understanding in what framework their arguments have been developed. In Salafist ideology, *ayahs* (Qur'anic verses) and *hadiths*, sayings and doings attributed to the Prophet Mohammed, are two main reference points. Thus, in *Konstantiniyye* magazine it can be seen that verses and *hadiths* are referred often in the discourse of DAESH. In the report published by the Presidency of Religious Affairs, it has been emphasized that DAESH strays from historical context when it refers to *hadiths* and Islamic verses (*ayahs*).<sup>26</sup> These references, which lose their original meanings, are made in order to legitimize DAESH.

In the 7 issues of *Konstantiniyye* magazine which have been examined, how many times the chosen key words are repeated in each issue of the magazine is analyzed in Table 1. It is concluded that the chosen key words reinforce the Salafist ideology that DAESH follows, and support their arguments based on alienation.

**Table 1-** *Keywords in Konstantiniyye magazine – 1*

Keywords	Issue 1	Issue 2	Issue 3	Issue 4	Issue 5	Issue 6	Issue 7	Total	Average
Haram	9	21	4	29	11	15	14	103	14,71
Kafir	29	38	79	25	70	64	118	423	60,42
Kufr	35	38	49	56	60	66	58	362	51,71
Riddah	29	18	12	21	21	28	30	159	22,71
Mushrikun	22	35	45	1	17	18	64	202	28,85
Idol	18	6	1	1	4	0	1	31	4,42
Idolatry	5	1	1	2	5	3	0	17	2,42
Shirk	46	37	37	27	9	20	31	207	29,57
Taghut	49	36	44	67	53	36	40	325	46,42
Total	242	230	272	229	250	250	356	1829	---

When we look at the figures in Table 1, it is noticeable that the words kafir, kufr and taghut respectively are the most referred words. Kafir refers to someone who denies the existence and oneness of Allah; kufr means rejection of beliefs which are considered as main pillars of the religion such as existence and oneness of Allah; and Taghut means creature that is accepted as superior and that strays people away

from Allah's path.<sup>27</sup> It is possible to interpret DAESH's referral to these words often in its discourse, in terms of securitization, alienation and antagonization. When looking at the discourse of DAESH from a different perspective, the proportion of the use of key terms in Table 2 verifies the discourse of DAESH that are gathered from the data in Table 1.

**Table 2-** *Keywords in Konstantiniyye magazine – 2*

Keywords	Issue 1	Issue 2	Issue 3	Issue 4	Issue 5	Issue 6	Issue 7	Total	Average
Dialogue (Diyalog)	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	0,28
Negotiation (Müzakere)	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	4	0,57
Peace (Barış & Sulh)	0	4	0	2	1	7	4	18	2,57
War (Savaş)	59	163	92	84	144	69	162	773	110,42
Tolerance (Hoşgörü)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0,14
Freedom (Özgürlük)	6	8	0	4	0	4	0	22	3,14
Justice (Adalet)	1	27	2	7	9	1	0	47	6,71
Total	66	202	94	97	155	83	169	866	---

When we look at the terms in Table 2, we can come to a similar conclusion as Table 1. It can be seen that DAESH acts according to its radical Salafist discourse and

almost there is no reference to tolerance, peace and negotiation in its discourse, while the word 'war' is referred many times in each issue. This demonstrates



that the words in the discursive practice of DAESH correspond to its operational practice. Beyond military actions that the terrorist organization has conducted in

Syria and Iraq, its attacks in the countries where it describes as near and far enemies can be evaluated as operationalization of this discursive practice.

**Table 3-** Frequency of ayahs and hadiths per *Konstantiniyye* magazine

	Issue 1	Issue 2	Issue 3	Issue 4	Issue 5	Issue 6	Issue 7	Total	Average
Ayah	42	71	81	111	138	47	86	576	82,28
Hadith	15	4	6	53	73	49	26	226	32,28

**Table 4-** Frequency of referrals to particular ayahs in *Konstantiniyye* magazine

Ayah Number	At-Tawbah 111	Al-Anfal 39	Al-Ma'idah 44	An-Nahl 36	Al-Nisa 76
Usage Number	7	7	6	6	6

The most referred verse in 7 issues of *Konstantiniyye* magazine is the 111<sup>th</sup> verse of Surah at-Tawbah. This verse is referred to 7 times. Including the 111<sup>th</sup> verse of Surah at-Tawbah<sup>28</sup>, other verses in different suras are widely used in the texts of different authors who support Salafist ideology. According to a study conducted by Donald Holdbrook, the 111<sup>th</sup> verse of Surah

at-Tawbah, the 39<sup>th</sup> verse of Surah Al-Anfal and the 76<sup>th</sup> verse of Surah an-Nisa are referred several times in many other Salafist texts, just as the *Konstantiniyye* magazine.<sup>29</sup> Another conclusion is that the most referred Surah is at-Tawbah, which is referred to 58 times. The following is the longest surah of Quran, Surah al-Baqarah, which is referred to 57 times.

**Table 5-** Frequency of referrals to certain suras in the *Konstantiniyye* magazine

Surah's Name	At-Tawbah	Al Baqarah	An-Nisa	Al Imran	Al-Anfal
Usage Number	58	57	54	48	35

Moreover, it can be seen that Ibn Taymiyyah is referred many times in the 7 issues of the magazine. Although Al-Ghazali and Ahmad ibn Hanbal are referred as well, the names of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Sayyid Qutb and Abdullah Azzam, who are remarkable names in the Salafist movements, are not referred. This can be understood better, if we remember that the Muslim Brotherhood is targeted explicitly in the 6<sup>th</sup> issue of the magazine. Although there are several points similar ideologically to the Salafist ideology formation, the discursive practices have been formed around the early period Salafist ideology.

**2.2. Leading Arguments in Konstantiniyye Magazine**

In the *Konstantiniyye* magazine, the discourse analysis has been carried out, by utilizing the method of Van Dijk.<sup>30</sup> The discourse analysis consists of four important points in Van Dijk's methodology, such as "emphasize statements that entail positive evaluations of us," "emphasize statements that entail negative evaluations of them," "do not emphasize negative evaluations about us," and "do not emphasize positive evaluations of them." In order to uncover the discourse of DAESH in line with Van Dijk's methodology, analysis has been made by looking at 2 points, namely,



DAESH's discourse of positive representation of itself, and the negative representation of the others. The statements below are presented in the *Konstantiniyye* magazine and are uttered by DAESH. The arguments are categorized as follows with reference to Van Dijk methodology. From this point, itemized statements in the following headlines are the direct transfer of the discourse used by DAESH in the *Konstantiniyye* magazine.

#### ***a. Islamic State Propaganda (Affirmation)***

It can be seen that there are affirmations about Islamic State in the arguments of *Konstantiniyye* magazine. It can be claimed that the aim of such affirmative coverage by DAESH is to ensure the continuity of the flow foreign terrorist fighters, who make *hijrah* and leave their countries in order to live in Islamic State.

As an example of the Islamic State propaganda, in the following sections from the *Konstantiniyye* magazine, it is stated that even American dream has failed in terms of putting different people together, but DAESH can provide this.

*Yes, Islamic State has understood the solution and has materialized it. Any atrocity that is present in different countries of the World does not exist here. The USA, which*

*poses as beacon of justice, could not unify even the black and white people.*<sup>31</sup>

*Jihad in the way of Allah is here! There is no shirk, no idols, no nationalism, no polytheist democracy, no infidel secularism here. There is no difference between the Arab and Persian, and the white and black. American has become the brother of Arab, African has become the brother of European, the easterner has become the brother of the westerner here.*<sup>32</sup>

*Allah ordered that, people, who cannot fulfill their religious duties under tyrannical regimes, have to go where they will be able to fulfill their religious duties without any oppression.*<sup>33</sup>

When we look at the other statements regarding the affirmation of Islamic State, we can see that the affirmations and praises to Islamic State continues, and it is stated that Islamic State follows the way of Hz. Mohammed, if Islamic State is not being protected it will be the end of the Islamic world, and those who live in the area of the so-called Islamic State are safe from danger and unlawful innovations (*bid'ah*).

*Islamic State knows dignity, way of our Prophet and follows him, holding on his guidance. Inshallah, neither it will change nor stray!*<sup>34</sup>

*Soldiers of caliphate, rejoice! With Allah's willing, your state will survive until Qiyyamah (day of judgement). Because Allah is*



*the one who watches it, helps it, supports it and protects it.*<sup>35</sup>

*Sunnis! If Islamic State is destroyed, Allah forbid, you will not have either Mecca or Madinah!*<sup>36</sup>

*Muslims! If you want safety, there is no safety out of the shadow of Islamic State which protects you, prevents attackers, preserves what you want to be preserved, saves your honor and protects your goods.*<sup>37</sup>

*Today, people, who live under taghut regimes like Turkey and say I'm fulfilling my religious duties, tell lies. Hereof, we advise these people to fear from Allah and immigrate to Islamic State.*<sup>38</sup>

**b. Securitizing and Contentious Language (Affirmation)**

It can be seen that DAESH has a securitizing language which makes military struggle permanent. In this sense, both western countries with Christian identity and Turkey with Muslim identity have become targets for DAESH.

*Crusaders, remember! Jews, remember! Arousing of our Ummah is with blood. The more our blood is shed, stronger we get. If you kill one of us, tens of us will come alive with his blood.*<sup>39</sup>

*With Allah's will, we will fight against all taghuts and followers of them until the whole World will be governed by sharia of Allah.*<sup>40</sup>

*Islamic State has made sharia of Allah dominant over life in the lands it controls, and wages war against every shirk system.*<sup>41</sup>

*Our Rab, who chose Ibrahim to break the idols once, has chosen mujahids of Islamic State today.*<sup>42</sup>

It is important to state that the so-called Islamic State's emphasizing on blood does not corresponds to Islam's real basis. At its basics, the religion of Islam lays emphasis on mankind and puts a distance to blood and violence. It is not possible for those, who claim that they are following a religion which is based on maintaining humanity, to feed on blood, and build the so-called Islamic State on the foundations of the religion of Islam. Stating that the fight against all taghuts will continue until sharia dominates the world is similar to the statement of "war against terror" by George W. Bush after September 11 attacks.

**c. Opposition to Turkey (Negation)**

In the 7 issues of the magazine, there are trenchant arguments against Turkey in terms of both the government and state. It can be seen that they call the Presidency of Religious Affairs, the Turkish Armed

Forces, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and in general the Republic of Turkey as *kafir* and *taghut*. They base their arguments against these institutions on the premise that the Republic of Turkey is secular and that this secular order is legitimized by the Presidency of Religious Affairs.

*Entering on an inheritance after collapse of the Ottoman Empire, and building its new structure on racism and irreligion, the secular Republic of Turkey has conducted violence for a long time in order to make itself accepted in the land it began to control.*<sup>43</sup>

*Taghut Turkey wants to harm Islamic State by making khutbahs read against it in the evil institutions.*<sup>44</sup>

*Taghuts, such as Kemal Ataturk who abolished sharia and established the republic, who killed those who wanted to live Islam, and who eliminated Islam and harm Muslims throughout his life, are taught and praised as heroes, and role-model leaders in textbooks.*<sup>45</sup>

The institutions and the names in DAESH's target list mentioned above have a broad social base, owing to the roles they have played in building and sustaining the modern Turkey, and the values they have protected and represented. Attacking these values through these institutions and people, DAESH reinforces the ideological line it represents and creates a zone of influence.

Moreover, DAESH has some arguments about Turkey, in the context of the PKK which is the primary threat to Turkey. In these arguments, it is claimed that President Erdogan supports the PKK, who are labelled as 'taghut Kurds'. In the meantime, showing itself as the savior of the Kurds, the so-called Islamic State affirms itself as a safe haven for the Kurds who escape from the conflict between Turkey and the PKK.

*While Islamic State has pulverized this organization and its other extensions in Syria and Iraq, Erdogan, the architect of the new Kurdish state, has supported openly this enemy which Turkey has fought against for years.*<sup>46</sup>

#### **d. Arguments towards PKK Terrorist Organization (Negation)**

The main theme of DAESH's arguments towards the PKK, which is one of the major groups that DAESH fights, has been mostly about Kurds. Kurds living in Turkey are invited to live under the so-called Islamic State. Giving reference to historical processes, DAESH presents itself as a savior, in contrast to both Turkey's and PKK's policies towards the Kurds.

*Those who have claimed that they will bring justice and freedom to Kurds, have persecuted Kurds more than what TC (the Republic of Turkey) has done.*<sup>47</sup>

*These Kurd taghuts, who have learnt well to play the role of victim in every incident, approach those who are from their race with Kurdism, and in every incident they face they try to gather support by showing themselves as victims, and emphasizing slogans on issues such as Kurdish genocide and atrocity towards Kurds.*<sup>48</sup>

*Going through symbolic disarmament, the organization, in fact, has sent its fighters to Turkey for a new positioning. Pretending to be surrendered, terrorists actually came for the leadership of a new structuring.*<sup>49</sup>

#### **e. Opposition to Democracy (Negation)**

Legitimizing religion for their own power, DAESH-like terrorist structures instrumentalize the concept of *jihad*, which also means resistance against brutality of tyrants and self-defense, for their own interests. It is important for the organizations with radical ideologies to have strong othering ability in their discourse, so that they could bolster their organizational identity and ideological structuring.<sup>50</sup> Ideologies can be seen as important tools in

the process of gathering a large number of people together. DAESH presents the hate against democracy with its following statements, in order to reinforce the order in so-called Islamic State and to maintain its visibility. With this hate language, democracy or other administrative tools are otherized and securitized, hence rendered targets to be fought against.

*Democracy is a religion, as well. A Muslim can convert to another religion only if he leaves his own religion. Those who accept democracy refuse Islam and attribute a partner to Allah. They have turned away from part of the religion which Allah has chosen for them. By changing the rules, they do not like and turning away from the religion Allah has chosen for them, they have subscribed to the religion of shirk.<sup>51</sup>*

*None of democracy, communism, socialism and other ideologies and systems complies with Islam. Each of them is a different religion. If one accepts a religion, he abandons the other religion. It is shirk when both of them are practiced together.<sup>52</sup>*

*There is no other system in history, for which so many people have been killed, except for democracy. The liars who constantly refer to freedom, equality, rule of law and rights started to be unmasked.<sup>53</sup>*

*The group of infidels according to Islam is comprised of two groups as argued by Ibn Qayyim; who pay obedience and who do not. Making any other distinction or being subject to the terms invented by the religion of democracy or evil is not approved in our religion. On the contrary, we are obliged to reject all those.<sup>54</sup>*

As it is seen in the statements in the *Konstantiniyye* magazine, it is emphasized that there can be no relationship between democracy and Islam. What is fundamental in Islam throughout the history has been the values, such as justice, peace, anthropocentric understanding and the freedom of belief. Although in theory these values are internalized by democracies in today's

world, in practice it can be different from this time to time.

### ***e. Opposition to Iran (Negation)***

Iran, the target of Daesh, and Shiism represented by Iran are called as *Rawāfi* (*rejecters*). In the historical background of the Salafist discourse, the struggle between sects has an important place. The process of struggle has a long history dating back to the early periods of Islam.

In the following arguments of DAESH presented in the *Konstantiniyye* magazine, the opposition to Shia and Iran can be seen explicitly. In the calls on Sunnis, it is stated that there is an alliance between the crusader West and *Rafidi* and Safavid Iran. It is remarked that this alliance is against Sunnis and it is a threat for them.

*O Sunnis! Today, the alliance between Crusaders and Safavids is obvious.<sup>55</sup>*

*The war is Crusader-Safavid war. It is against Islam, tawhid and Sunnis.<sup>56</sup>*

*Iran is sharing regions and roles with the greatest demon America in the war against Islam and Sunnis.<sup>57</sup>*

When analyzing the arguments in the *Konstantiniyye* magazine, it is possible to discuss the 'Crusader-Safavid alliance' theses with reference the nuclear deal between Iran and West. Also, the heavy use of such arguments also supports the thesis that the perceived exclusion of the Sunnis in Iraq and Syria at the hands of the Shia-centered policies is shaping the discourse of DAESH to a large extent.

### **2.3. About Photographs in *Konstantiniyye* Magazine**

Extensive use of visuals by DAESH is a key component in all the seven issues analyzed in this study. The fact that DAESH pursues an active communication strategy helps it construct itself through its discourse in the *Konstantiniyye* magazine.

Similarly, the images in the magazine help maintain propaganda-centered communication. It can be seen in the photos in the magazine that there are both supportive elements for statements in the magazine, and the values, institutions and people considered as the target of DAESH are among the images.

While there are photos published in order to threaten and intimidate, there are also photos of service delivered to the people whom the so-called Islamic State has taken captive in the territories it controls. In this sense, visual communication strategy of DAESH is not using one channel only.

Nevertheless, the photos have been chosen to support the arguments in the magazine. It demonstrates that DAESH seeks to act professional while conducting its communication strategy.

In the images such as decapitation, burning of captured Jordanian pilot and executions it can be seen that DAESH continues to use its strategy of threatening and intimidating through the magazine. By using the images of guns and violence often and by adding captions to the images, DAESH's communication strategy seeks to state clearly that it spreads fear and fights all around the world.



## EVALUATION

It can be said that not only actions but also discourses are important for the security of states. While operational steps are taken into account by states, discourses can sometimes be ignored. Today, however, with the developments in technology, discourses can be effective in different parts of the world, and have an impact on people who already have the same ideology with that presented in the discourse. In this sense, it is understandable why not only actions but also discourses have begun to be considered in the security agenda of the states.

Besides the military actions of Daesh in the field, its discourse is also remarkable. With its current communication strategy, it has been able to draw more than 30.000 foreign terrorist fighters from 100 countries around the world to the territories it controls in Syria and Iraq. It has also prompted many people who have been radicalized but have not joined a terrorist organization to conduct terrorist acts individually.

In the issues analyzed in this study, it is seen that DAESH used "affirmation" strategies in order to inform the people of Turkey about itself, which is the main priority for the organization. In the magazine, frequent references were made to Salafi interpretation of Islam, DAESH's affiliation with this particular interpretation, and the argument that all the people from different socio-political backgrounds can live happily together in the so-called Islamic State.

In this study, it can be seen that the words *kafir*, *kufr* and *taghut* are used many times in the sample consist of first 7 issues of the magazine. This magazine published for Turkish audience tries to reinforce its ideological formation by othering the Republic of Turkey, due to its regime. This

analysis, conducted by using Van Dijk' methodology on the arguments in the 7 issues of the magazine, demonstrates that DAESH uses a language which presents positive statements for themselves and negative statements for Turkey. Daesh considered the, state of Turkey, Turkish Armed Forces, Directorate of Religious Affairs and President Erdogan as rival at actor level, and democracy at system level. In the seven issues analyzed, not only Turkey, but also terrorist organization PKK, Muslim Brotherhood, Said Nursi and Nur Community and Iran have been frequently selected as some key targets attacked. Another key component in these issues is DAESH's securitization and otherization. Referring to the concepts of *takfir* and *ji-had* as well as extensive use of the concept of "war" points to the role securitization and otherization occupy in DAESH's communication strategy.

As it is published and circulated online, *Konstantiniyye* magazine potentially can exert great influence in terms of propaganda, given that internet access has increased in Turkey. In this sense, a counter-narrative, which can be constructed through the coordination of particularly Presidency of Religious Affairs, various public institutions and NGOs, would increase Turkey's chance for developing counter-narratives against Daesh's propaganda activities in the *Konstantiniyye* magazine.

In conclusion, in the process of constructing a counter-narrative it is important to explain how democracy and Islam work together, to inform the public against the discourse of DAESH often, and to follow an effective social media strategy. If such steps are taken, it is possible to reach positive outcomes in a short term and lessen the impact of the propaganda by DAESH.

## ENDNOTES

- 1 DAESH is abbreviated usage of Dawlat al-Islamiyah f'al-ıraq wa belaad al-sham." Detailed information about DAESH usage: <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/why-isis-hate-being-called-daesh-whats-correct-name-worlds-most-dangerous-terrorists-1531506> (Access: 15.05.2016)
- 2 Murat Yeşiltaş, (2016), "ISIS: Geopolitical Management of Terrorism" <http://www.orsam.org.tr/index.php/Content/Analiz/4629?s=orsam|english> (Access: 25.05.2016)
- 3 Dabiq, Halep'in 40 km kuzeydoğusunda Suriye'de yer alan ve Hz. Muhammed'in hadislerinde de yer aldığı bilinen, kıyamet gününe dair önem atfedilen bir yerleşim yeridir.
- 4 Necati Alkan, (2009), Söz Bitmeden Terörle Mücadelede Önleme Stratejileri, USAK Yayınları: Ankara, 3. Baskı, s. 99
- 5 Muzaffer Erkan ve Sabri Dilmaç, (2006), *Devlet Güvenliği, Terörizm ve İstihbarat*, EGM İDB Yayınları: Ankara, s. 88
- 6 Ünal Acar, (2012), *A'dan Z'ye Terörizm*, Kripto Yayıncılık: Ankara, s. 139
- 7 Erkan ve Dilmaç, *Devlet Güvenliği, Terörizm ve İstihbarat*, s. 170
- 8 Tamer Kumkale, (2007), *Psikolojik Savaş*, İstanbul: Pegasus Yayınları, s. 137
- 9 Kumkale, *Psikolojik Savaş*, s. 145
- 10 Edward S. Herman, (2000), "The Propaganda Model: A Retrospective", *Journalism Studies*, 1(1), s. 103
- 11 Muzaffer Erkan ve Sabri Dilmaç, *Devlet Güvenliği, Terörizm ve İstihbarat*, s. 171
- 12 Fatma Geçikli, (1999), "Geçmişten Günümüze Propaganda Kavramı", İstanbul Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi Hakemli Dergisi, Sayı: 9, s. 268
- 13 Müjde Ker, (1998), "Halkla İlişkiler ve Propaganda İlişkisi", İstanbul Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi Hakemli Dergisi, Sayı 8, s. 272
- 14 Tamer Kumkale, (2007), *Psikolojik Savaş*, s. 149-150
- 15 Alkan, *Söz Bitmeden: Terörle Mücadelede Önleme Stratejileri*, s.100
- 16 Necati Alkan, (2016), "El Kaide'den İŞİD'e Din, Şiddet ve Terörizm", Karınca Yayınları: Ankara, s. 90
- 17 Alkan, "El Kaide'den İŞİD'e Din, Şiddet ve Terörizm", s. 90
- 18 Hilmi Demir, (2016), "Radikal Selefi Hareketler ve Terör Örgütleri: Kavram ve Teorik Çerçeve", *TE-PAV Değerlendirme Notu*, s. 5
- 19 Ferhat Koca'nın "İslam Düşünce Tarihinde Selefilik: Tarihsel Serüveni ve Genel Karakteristiği" adlı çalışmasında Selefilik dört döneme ayrılarak incelenmiştir. Birinci dönem olarak 9. ve 14. yüzyıllar



arasını, ikinci dönem İbn Teymiyye'den Muhammed b. Abdulvehhab'a kadarki dönemi, üçüncü dönem ise Muhammed b. Abdulvehhab'tan 1979'da Afganistan'ın Sovyetler tarafından işgal edilmesiyle savaşı bir yapıya bürünen dönemin başlamasına kadar geçen süreci kapsamaktadır.

- 20 Mehmet Zeki İşcan, (2015), "Tarih Boyunca Selefi Söylem", İlahiyat Akademi Dergisi, Cilt 1, Sayı 1-2, s. 2
- 21 Mehmet Evkuran, (2015), "Bir Kriz Teolojisi ve Toplumsal Hareket Olarak Selefilik", İlahiyat Akademi Dergisi, s. 76
- 22 Ramazan Biçer, (2015), "İŞİD Düşünce Yapısının Teolojik Arkapları", *Kelam Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Cilt 13, Sayı 1, s. 10
- 23 Alkan, "El Kaide'den İŞİD'e Din, Şiddet ve Terörizm", s. 218
- 24 <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/beyond-iraq-and-afghanistan> (Access: 14.05.2016)
- 25 Hak yoldan saptıran, bazılarınca yaratılmışlık üstü konumunda tutulan varlık anlamında bir Kur'an terimi. <http://www.diyantislamansiklopedisi.com/tagut/> (Access: 14.05.2016)
- 26 Presidency of Religious Affairs, (2015), "The Fundamental Philosophy and Religious References of DAESH", p. 18-19 [http://webdosya.diyagnet.gov.tr/anasayfa/UserFiles/Document/TextDocs/dais\\_en.pdf](http://webdosya.diyagnet.gov.tr/anasayfa/UserFiles/Document/TextDocs/dais_en.pdf) (Erişim Tarihi: 01.05.2016)
- 27 <http://www.diyantislamansiklopedisi.com/> (Access: 09.06.2016)
- 28 **At-Tawbah [9:111]**: "Surely Allah has purchased of the believers their lives and their belongings and in return has promised that they shall have Paradise. They fight in the Way of Allah, and slay and are slain. Such is the promise He has made incumbent upon Himself in the Torah, and the Gospel, and the Qur'an. Who is more faithful to his promise than Allah? Rejoice, then, in the bargain you have made with Him. That indeed is the mighty triumph"

**Al-Maida [5:44]**: "Surely We revealed the Torah, wherein there is guidance and light. Thereby did Prophets - who had submitted themselves (to Allah) - judge for the Judaized folk; and so did the scholars and jurists. They judged by the Book of Allah for they had been entrusted to keep it, and bear witness to it. So (O Jews!) do not fear men but fear Me, and do not barter away My signs for a trivial gain. Those who do not judge by what Allah has revealed are indeed the unbelievers."

**Al-Anfal [8: 39]**: "And fight against them until the mischief ends and the way prescribed by Allah - the whole of it - prevail. Then, if they give up mischief, surely Allah sees what they do."

**An-Nahl [16:36]**: "We raised a Messenger in every community (to tell them): "Serve Allah and shun the Evil One. "Thereafter Allah guided some of them while others were overtaken by error. Go about the earth, then, and observe what was the end of those who rejected the Messengers, calling them liars"

**Al-Nisa {4:76}**: "Those who have faith fight in the way of Allah, while those who disbelieve fight in the way of taghut (Satan). Fight, then, against the fellows of Satan. Surely Satan's strategy is weak."

- 29 Donald Holbrook, (2010), "Using the Qur'an to Justify Terrorist Violence: Analysing Selective Application of the Qur'an in English-Language Militant Islamist Discourse", *Perspectives on Terrorism*, Volume 4, Issue 3, s. 27
- 30 Teun Van Dijk, (2003), "Söylem ve İdeoloji: Çok Anlamalı Bir Yaklaşım", (Çev.) N. Ateş, (Hazırlayanlar) Barış Çoban ve Zeynep Özarslan, *Söylem ve İdeoloji*, Su Yayınları: İstanbul, s. 57
- 31 *Konstantiniyye Magazine*, (2015), Number 2, p. 18
- 32 *Konstantiniyye Magazine*, (2015), Number 1, p. 14
- 33 *Konstantiniyye Magazine*, (2016), Number 7, p. 9
- 34 *Konstantiniyye Magazine*, (2015), Number 3, p. 5
- 35 *Konstantiniyye Magazine*, (2015), Number 4, p. 56
- 36 *Konstantiniyye Magazine*, (2015), Number 1, p. 19
- 37 *Konstantiniyye Magazine*, (2015), Number 4, p. 51
- 38 *Konstantiniyye Magazine*, (2016), Number 7, p. 13
- 39 *Konstantiniyye Magazine*, (2015), Number 1, p. 15
- 40 *Konstantiniyye Magazine*, (2016), Number 5, p. 4
- 41 *Konstantiniyye Magazine*, (2015), Number 1, p. 40
- 42 *Konstantiniyye Magazine*, (2015), Number 1, p. 27
- 43 *Konstantiniyye Magazine*, (2015), Number 2, p. 49
- 44 *Konstantiniyye Magazine*, (2015), Number 4, p.4
- 45 *Konstantiniyye Magazine*, (2015), Number 4, p. 8
- 46 *Konstantiniyye Magazine*, (2015), Number 2, p. 50
- 47 *Konstantiniyye Magazine*, (2015), Number 2, p. 17
- 48 *Konstantiniyye Magazine*, (2015), Number 2, p. 17
- 49 *Konstantiniyye Magazine*, (2015), Number 2, p. 50
- 50 Biçer, (2015), IŞİD Düşünce Yapısının Teolojik Arkapları, s. 8
- 51 *Konstantiniyye Magazine*, (2015), Number 1, p. 8
- 52 *Konstantiniyye Magazine*, (2015), Number 1, p. 9
- 53 *Konstantiniyye Magazine*, (2016), Number 7, p. 8

- 54 *Konstantiniyye Magazine*, (2016), Number 7, s. 8
- 55 *Konstantiniyye Magazine*, (2015), Number 1, p. 18
- 56 *Konstantiniyye Magazine*, (2015), Number 1, p. 19
- 57 *Konstantiniyye Magazine*, (2015), Number 1, p. 18



