RECRUITMENT NARRATIVES THROUGH A GENDERED LENS

A content analysis in online propaganda magazines Dabiq and Rumiyah on the recruitment narratives used by the Islamic State to appeal to Western women

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First reader: Dr. Tahir Abbas
Second reader: Dr. Silvia D'Amato

Eva Lisette Hortensius
S2177781

Universiteit Leiden

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Abstract

Research in the field of terrorism on female perpetrators is often underrepresented and poorly understood (De Leede, 2018b), similarly for female jihadi's (Sciarone, 2016). This study focusses on female recruitment narratives in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*. The research question that is central in this study: "*To what extent does the Islamic State use gender-oriented narratives as a recruitment tool to appeal to Western women?"*. When studying the propaganda efforts made by the Islamic State to recruit women this is a first step in closing this gap in research and to get a better understanding of pull factors that might lure women to travel to Syria and Iraq. Research will be conducted through a content analysis. The analysis shows that the narratives used by the Islamic State are highly gendered. Four main female recruitment narratives can be found in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*: religious obligation; community, belonging and meaning; motherhood and wifehood; and female empowerment.

1| Introduction

Laqueur (2016) argues that while terrorism is widely discussed, it is also one of most poorly understood issues of our time. Terrorists and terrorism have become an international phenomenon (Laquer, 1998). Terrorism is not a new phenomenon; the history of terrorism goes back a very long time. However, this history is often ignored. The words 'terrorist' and 'terrorism' were first used during the French Revolution (Laqueur, 2016). The association of terrorism with state violence lasted till the mid of the 19th century, after that period terrorism was also associated with non-governmental groups (Miller, 2013).

The attacks on September 11th, 2001, mark an important date in the history of terrorism. It was the most destructive day in the history of terrorism (Rapoport, 2004). On this day, two airplanes flew into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Centre in New York and another airplane flew into the Pentagon in Washington. A fourth airplane crashed just outside Shanksville, Pennsylvania, in a field, due to passengers on flight 93 who recaptured the airplane. During this day almost three-thousand people lost their lives (Hamilton & Kean, 2011). Although terrorism has always been around, since the attacks on 9/11, terrorism is high on the international agenda. The attacks perpetrated in the United States fall within the 'religious wave' as it is called by Rapoport. After 9/11, Rapoport (2004) made an analysis of terrorist violence in recent history. In his model he describes four 'waves' of modern terrorism. These waves have an international character, last one generation and one wave is followed by a new wave. Rapoport (2004) argues that modern terrorist~~ic~~ violence emerged in the end of the nineteenth century, during the Anarchist Wave. The waves that followed were the Anticolonial Wave, the New Left-Wing Wave and the Religious Wave. This last wave is currently ongoing, it started in 1979 during the revolution in Iran and the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan. During the past fifteen years, jihadists have carried out 112 attacks in the West. Three quarters of these attacks happened in the last five years. The increase of attacks in the West relates to the rise of the Islamic State (AIVD, 2019). In recent years attacks were carried out in Barcelona, Nice, Brussel, Paris, London, Berlin and Manchester, amongst others (Thijs, Rodermond, & Weerman, 2018). Due to this development, terrorism is high on the political, public and academic agenda in European countries.

Academic research on terrorism mainly focuses on male perpetrators: terrorism is often considered a man's thing (De Graaf, 2012). This widespread assumption that terrorists

have always been male is due to the small number of female terrorists, gender stereotypes, and to women often being neglected or written out of terrorism studies altogether (Banks, 2019). Still, women have long been involved in violent movements (De Graaf, 2012). They have been part of terrorist movements as both supporters and fighters (Banks, 2019). For example, in the third wave mentioned by Rapoport, the Anticolonial Wave, women were involved in the Red Army Fraction and also in Russian terrorist organizations (Weinberg & Eubank, 2011). During the Spanish Civil war in the 1930s, a great number of foreign women traveled to Spain to support the revolution against Franco (Lines, 2009). According to Bloom (2011) since then, "there has been an increase in the number of women engaged in terrorism across the globe (p. 11)". In the last wave mentioned by Rapoport, the Religious Wave, women have had various roles which vary from supporting roles to actual perpetrators of acts of terrorism (Gentry & Sjoberg, 2016). The tactical and strategical use of women in terrorist organizations is rising. Female scholars argue that the increased presence of women in terrorist organizations might show an evolving nature of the importance women have in these groups (Raghavan & Balasubramaniyan, 2014). However, female jihadi's have systematically been underrepresented in terrorism research (Sciarone, 2016). Female foreign fighters are often portrayed as 'jihadi brides' (Jackson, 2019), the role that women play in jihadists movements is often underrepresented and therefore poorly understood (De Leede, 2018b). De Leede (2018b) argues that we have to broaden the understanding of women's positions in the caliphate. Besides supporting their husbands and raising their children according to jihadist ideology, women have maintained and propagated jihadist ideology, recruited other women, helped create alliances through strategic marriage, raised funds and transported messages, weapons and goods. On a smaller scale, women have taken on operational roles in the planning and execution of attacks, including suicide bombers. Therefore, it is absolutely critical to study both the prevalence and motivation of female foreign fighters.

The Islamic State is fundamentally misogynistic and patriarchal, women are subordinate to men. Many people wonder how this terrorist organization can appeal to so many women (The Carter Center, 2017). There is a misconception that women are not involved in terrorism. They are often seen as victims; as actors who have no agency (De Leede, 2018a). A study of Pearson and Winterbotham (2017) refers to 'brain washed jihadi

brides'. Without the acknowledgment that women are independent and voluntary perpetrators of terrorism, their involvement can only be explained trough simplistic explanations based on traditional gender stereotypes (The Carter Center, 2017). According to Jacques and Taylor (2009) women will be seen as "(1) dormant victims who lack agency and are in desperate need of saving, (2) individuals who have lost their inherent femininity by developing masculine tendencies for violence and aggression, and (3) irrational actors whose motivation to participate is driven by romantic and sexual urges as opposed to political and rational calculations". Goñi (2017) argues that women's radicalization and involvement in terrorist groups remain relatively under-researched, and that the topic of gender relating to security and terrorism, is seen as superfluous, which results in misconceptions and gender-blindness.

There is a need for a gender-conscious approach. Women should be seen as independent perpetrators of terrorism (The Carter Center, 2017). Men and women are equal consumers of propaganda efforts made by the Islamic State (The Carter Center, 2017). However, it is important to recognize that women are more often recruited through the internet than men are (Pearson and Winterbotham, 2017). The recruitment narratives used by the Islamic State in their propaganda are gender focused. The Carter Center (2017) argues that a gender-sensitive approach is vital to effectively deconstruct the gendered recruitment discourse of the Islamic State. Men are often recruited with narratives referring to manhood and violence. This study aims to deconstruct the gendered narratives used to recruit Western women in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*.

The Islamic State (IS), also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) or the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), is a Salafi-jihadist militant organization. The goal of the organization is to establish and to expand a so-called caliphate in Syria and Iraq, and the creation of a global Islamist movement (Hashim, 2014). With the rise of the Islamic State, a lot of Western people have traveled to Syria and Iraq to support the Islamic State. Most of the foreign fighters, also called '*muhajirin*', originate from the Middle East, a smaller fraction of the foreign fighters originates from Western countries (Weggemans, Peters, Bakker, & Bont, 2016). Numbers show that 41.190 Westerners have travelled to Syria and Iraq (Cook & Vale, 2018). A significant portion of these foreign fighters is female. Peresin and Cervone (2015) estimate that ten percent of the Western members were women in 2015. A study of

researchers of King's College London, of the International Centre for the Study of Radicalization, shows that between April 2013 and June 2018, thirteen percent of all people affiliated of the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq was female (Cook & Vale, 2018). The European Parliamentary Research Study shows that approximately five thousand European people have traveled to Syria and Iraq since 2012 (Scherrer, Isaksson, Ragazzi, & Walmsley, 2018). A study by Van Ginkel and Entemann (2016) suggests that seventeen percent of all foreign fighters is female. The majority of these foreign fighters join a Salafi-jihadist militant organization (Barrett, 2014), particularly the Islamic State or Jabhat al-Nusra (Gates & Podder, 2015). Numbers from the AIVD, the General Intelligence and Security Service in the Netherlands, show that approximately three hundred people with jihadist intentions from the Netherlands have traveled to Syria and Iraq.These people have reached the age of eighteen. Of these three hundred people who traveled to Syria and Iraq is known that one hundred people have died in Syria and Iraq, sixty people have returned to the Netherlands, one hundred and twenty people with jihadist intentions are still in Syria and Iraq, fifteen people are in Turkey, and five people belong to the category 'others'. Of these one hundred and twenty people that are still in Syria and Iraq, fifty people are in detention camps or Kurdish-Syrian camps, thirty people aligned themselves with other jihadists groups in the North and West part of Syria, and forty people are somewhere else in Syria (AIVD, n.d.).

With the rise of the self-proclaimed caliphate, the large number of foreign fighters traveling to Syria and Iraq became a security problem (Polakova, 2019). Foreign fighters coming back to the Netherlands could impose a risk to Dutch society. The current threat of terrorism in the Netherlands according to the National Coordinator of Security and Safety (NCTV) is a three on a scale of five, which means that the chance of a terroristic act is predictable. The threat assessment shows that returning jihadists from Syria and Iraq, and other conflict zones, as well as jihadists inspired by terrorist organizations, form a threat to Dutch security (AIVD, n.d.).

In the first place the Islamic State focused itself on their local and regional agenda in Syria and Iraq. Since the summer of 2014, the Islamic State has perpetrated more attacks in the West. On the 22nd of September in 2014, Abu Mohamed al-Adnani, former spokesman of the Islamic State, calls on supporters worldwide to carry out attacks in the West or against Western targets elsewhere. According to al-Adnani it is the duty of Muslims to perform '*hijra*',

to travel to Syria and Iraq to support the Islamic State. Supporters that are not able to travel to Syria and Iraq were urged to carry out attacks in their own country. Later, in May 2016, al-Adnani prioritized committing attacks in the West over traveling to Syria and Iraq. In recent years, the Islamic State has shown that they are able to inspire potential terrorists that have not been to Syria and Iraq. Professional propaganda of the Islamic State has played a key role in inspiring these young men and women in the West (AIVD, 2018). Although the Islamic State lost its territory, the terrorist organization is still operating and remains a threat. Without sustained pressure on the group they might resurge in Syria. The group has still a vast number of jihadi supporters (Massé,2020). But lessons learned on female recruitment narratives from this study do not only imply apply to the Islamic State, but also for/to future terrorist organizations. Nesser (2018) demonstrated that many terrorist cells in Europe trace their origins back to networks that were established in Afghanistan during the 1980s and the 1990s. The high number of foreign fighters from Europe in Syria and Iraq might provide a basis for future terrorist groups and networks. Therefore, the lessons learned from this study might also appeal to future terrorist groups and networks.

This study aims to give a better understanding of how gender is used in by the Islamic State to recruit women from the West. It is an effort to close the gap on research between male- and female perpetrators. Women's radicalization pathways and involvement in terrorist organizations remain relatively under-researched (Goñi, 2017). When studying the propaganda efforts made by the Islamic State to recruit women, it is the first step to closing this gap in research and to get a better understanding of pull factors that might lure women to travel to Syria and Iraq. In this study two online propaganda magazines are selected to analyze the propaganda narrative of the Islamic State. *Dabiq* is a primary source of the Islamic State's propaganda during the peak of its power. Fifteen issues of the online magazine were published between July 2014 and July 2016. The glossy propaganda magazine aimed to recruit jihadists from the West. *Rumiyah* was the direct successor of *Dabiq* and thirteen issues of this magazine were published between September 2016 and September 2017. Both online magazines were produced in several languages including English (Clarion Project, 2014). For the purpose of this thesis the English version of *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* are analyzed trough a gendered lens. Therefore, the research question that is central in this thesis:

"*To what extent does the Islamic State use gender-oriented narratives as a recruitment tool to appeal to Western women?*"

To answer this research question, a discourse analysis in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* is conducted. First of all, in the theoretical framework, terrorism and foreign fighters will be discussed. After giving the definitions, background information on the Islamic State will be presented. The origins of the Islamic State, their ideology, the rise of the organization, propaganda, the role men and women have within the so-called caliphate and the decline of the Islamic State will be discussed. Next, narratives and propaganda will be discussed. Then, some recruitment narratives from former research into propaganda will be presented. The last paragraph discusses (online) radicalization and the gender dynamics. In the second chapter the methods that are used in this research are presented, including the type of research, data collection and data analysis. After this chapter, the results of the study will be discussed. In conclusion, a short summary on this study will be given and the research question will be answered. In the discussion the limitations of this study will be addressed and recommendations for future research will be made.

2|Theoretical Framework

To have a better understanding of the main concepts used in this study, it is important to give some background information and definitions of the main concepts.

2.1| Definitions

2.1.1| Terrorism and foreign fighters

The concept of terrorism is often used in academic literature, but there are many regional and national definitions, there is no single universal approved definition of the word. Many scholars, organizations and countries use different definitions (Schmid, 2011). According to Connolly (1993) terrorism is an "essentially contested concept", and such concepts "essentially involve endless disputes about their proper uses on the part of their users (p. 10)". Laquer (1977) even argued that it is impossible to give a comprehensive definition of terrorism, because there are so many forms of terrorism under so many circumstances. Seymour (1975) once said in his novel: "One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter.". Hence, for the purpose of this research and despite the methodological problem it is important to give one single definition on the term. Schmid and Jongman (1988) made a questionnaire and collected one hundred and nine separate definitions from various scholars. In these one hundred and nine separate definitions they discovered twenty-two 'definitional elements'. From sixteen of the most common 'definitional elements' they constructed a definition:

> Terrorism is an anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by (semi-) clandestine individual, group, or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal, or political reasons, whereby—in contrast to assassination—the direct targets of violence are not the main targets. The immediate human victims of violence are generally chosen randomly (targets of opportunity) or selectively (representative or symbolic targets) from a target population and serve as message generators. Threat—and violence—based communication processes between terrorist (organization), (imperiled) victims, and main target (audiences(s)), turning it into a target of terror, a target of demands, or a target of attention, depending on whether intimidation, coercion, or propaganda is primarily sought. (p. 28)

Undoubtedly, terrorism is international. Aspects of terrorism includes issues of recruitment, training, mobilization, communication. Joining a terrorist organization is also punishable, it is a criminal offence, stated in article 140a of the Dutch criminal code (art. 140a lid 1 Sr, 2016).

While there is a great deal of attention placed on the returnee foreign fighters of Muslim origin nowadays, the phenomenon is neither new nor does it have an especially Islamic flavor. Foreign fighters are on the move all the time, from one cause to the next, from one place to the next. There have been numerous waves of foreign fighters in the past, in the nineteenth century, most foreign fighters were anarchists, in the first half of the twentieth century, most foreign fighters were members of Communist groups (Malet, 2009). In recent years, there has been a lot of migration of foreign fighters to the Middle East. Malet (2009) argues that all these various foreign fighters share different 'transnational ideological affiliations' that were a "highly salient identity because immigration and modernization had destroyed other communal ties and produced isolated, embattled individuals ripe for recruitment by movements that spoke to their particular fears" (p. 109).

Malet (2013) argues that foreign fighters are "noncitizens of conflict states who join insurgencies during civil conflicts". Hegghammer (2013) argues that foreign fighting by Westerners is "any military activity (training of fighting), using any tactic (terrorist or guerilla tactics), against any enemy (Western or non-Western) – so long as it occurs outside the West". Not every foreign fighter is a terrorist, Hegghammer (2013) concluded that one out of nine foreign fighters becomes a terrorist. The United Nations Security Council Resolution 2178 (2014) defines foreign fighters as "individuals wo travel to a State other than their states of residence or nationality for the purpose of the perpetration, planning, or preparation of, or in connection with armed conflict, and resolving to address this threat". Concluding, foreign fighters are transnational insurgents who can use terrorist tactics. In this research foreign fighters are men and women who traveled to Syria and Iraq to join the Islamic State, these individuals have different reasons and different backgrounds to join the armed conflict (Lindeklide, Bertelsen, & Stohl, 2016). There is no such thing as ajihadist foreign fighter (Weggemans, Bakker, & Grol. 2014).

2.1.2| Gendered terrorism

As said in the introduction, gender has been largely erased from terrorism's history past (Banks, 2019). There is a gender difference in terrorism. Male terrorists are assumed to be dedicated to a certain cause and are prepared to use violence to achieve their goals, female terrorist, on the contrary, are assumed to have different motivations. Gentry and Sjoberg (2016) depict this difference as: "Media, scholarly, and policy world reactions to women's participation in violence classified as terrorism" is to treat women's terrorism "as not terrorism but women's terrorism, and women terrorists are at once characterized as aberrant, personally motivated, and beyond the agency of the female perpetrator" (p. 145). This study aims to provide a better understanding on how gender is used in by the Islamic State to recruit women from the West. It is an effort to close the gap on research between male- and female perpetrators. It focusses on pull factors found in propaganda magazines *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* in relation to women's radicalization pathways.

2.3| Background information on Islamic State

The Islamic State (IS), also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIL) or the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), is a Salafi-jihadist militant organization. The goal of the organization is to establish and to expand a so-called caliphate in Syria and Iraq, and the creation of a global Islamist movement (Hashim, 2014).

2.3.1| Origin of the Islamic State

A Jordanian extremist called Abu Musab al-Zarqawi founded the militant organization al-Qaida in Iraq. The roots of the Islamic State can be traced back to this militant organization (Weaver, 2006). On June 7, 2006, al-Zarqawi was killed in an American airstrike. His successor, the new leader of al-Qaida in Iraq, was the Egyptian Abu Ayyoub al-Masri. There was ample critique on the foreign components of the organization. Therefore, to brand the organization as more Iraqi, al-Masri merged several other groups and established the Islamic State of Iraq (Freemen, 2014). Abu Umar al-Baghdadi was appointed as head of the Islamic State in Iraq. Al-Masri gained support from the local jihadi movement in his attempt to unify the resistance against American forces and their coalition. He also prepared governing structures for when the American forces and their allies withdrew from Iraq (Felter & Fishman, 2007). These were the first steps towards a so-called caliphate (Siegel, 2008). During this time, al-Qaida in Iraq

faced a lot of opposition from Sunni tribes, American forces and the Iraqi security forces (Felter & Fishman, 2007). On April 18, 2010, both al-Masri and al-Baghdadi were killed in a joint operation of American- and Iraqi security forces. A new leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, assumed control over al-Qaida in Iraq. In December 2011, the opposition forces withdrew and al-Qaida in Iraq gained more control in Iraq. Throughout 2012, there was an increase of attacks carried out by the militant organization (Hashim, 2014). In April 2013 al-Baghdadi moved into Syria. He expanded the influence of the organization beyond Iraq's borders. He renamed the group's name into the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. He also claimed that Jabhat al-Nusra (JN) had merged with ISIS in an audio message. Jabhat al-Nusra is a terrorist organization that is affiliated with al-Qaida (Joscelyn, 2013). Abu Muhammad al-Julani, the leader of JN, denied the merger of the two groups and pledged alliance to Ayman al-Zawahiri, the successor of Osama bin Laden in al-Qaida. After months of disagreement between ISIS and the al-Qaida's Central Leadership (AQC) al-Zawahiri, the leader of al-Qaida, renounced connection with ISIS (Sly, 2014). After the split ISIS continued to expand territory in Syria and Iraq, they were fighting against the government of Syria and Iraq, tribal groups and militias in Iraq, the Kurdish peshmerga, and various rebel groups in Syria (Hackett, 2014). ISIS had a strong presence in the media which helped them recruit foreign fighters from all over the world. Al-Baghdadi even called on all Muslims to travel to Syria and Iraq. He saw this migration as a duty to all Muslims (Peresin & Cervone, 2015). One third of their fighters were foreign fighters from more than eighty countries (Hackett, 2014). In the beginning of 2014, the group gained more and more territory. The group's name was changed to the Islamic State and on June 29, 2014, the so-called caliphate arised with Raqqa as its capital and Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi as its leader (Pizzi, 2014). Throughout 2014 IS gained more territory in Syria. At the end of 2014, the Islamic State controlled 100.000 square kilometers of territory in Syria and Iraq. It was the peak in size of the Salafi-militant organization (Jones, Dobbins, Byman, Chivvis, Connable, Martini & Chandler, 2017).

2.3.2| Ideology and goals

The ideology of the group is rooted in Salafism and Jihadism (Gerges, 2014). Salafism is a fundamentalist movement within Sunni Islam. There are different interpretations of the Salafi philosophy. Cole (2015) has distinguished three types of Salafism: "(1) quietist Salafism that emphasizes a conservative lifestyle but lack ambitions to change the trends of broader

society; (2) political Salafism that seeks to replace secular regimes with conservative ones; and (3) jihadist Salafism that advocates violence to defend against the dangers of secularism". Jihadism refers to the Islamic concept of jihad, or struggle. Within the Islam the concept has two meanings, there is a difference between greater jihad and a lesser jihad. The greater jihad is an internal jihad and refers to a struggle against the evil of one's soul, trying to be a good and pious Muslim. The lesser jihad is an external jihad and refers to a struggle against unbelievers and enemies of the Islam. The lesser jihad is used by the Islamic State to justify their terrorist attacks as a method of defense against Western countries (Lahoud, 2010). Within Salafi jihadism the military history of early Muslim communities is emphasized, and they use this history as a justification for their actions, with their actions they continue the legacy of the predecessors (Hamid & Dar, 2016). The Islamic State can be seen as a Salafi jihadist group.

The concept of takfir is also central in the ideology of the Islamic State. Takfir refers to "excommunicating another Muslim and declaring them a non-believer (Lahoud, 2010)". Every Muslim that rejects the view of the Islamic State is declared a non-believer. This includes Shias, governments in the Middle East that are secular or that are a partner of the United States, and Sunni communities that do not support the extremist view of the Islamic State and reject their strict interpretation of Shariah law. When someone is under takfir, declared as a non-believer, defensive jihad is justified against this person (Hamid & Dar, 2016).

The goal of the organization is to establish and to expand a so-called caliphate in Syria and Iraq, and the creation of a global Islamist movement. This caliphate is based on Salafi philosophy and fundamentalist interpretation of Shariah law (Hashim, 2014). The Islamic State achieved to create a so-called caliphate. In June 2014, al-Baghdadi announced the establishment of a caliphate with Raqqa as its capital (Pizzi, 2014). Shariah law and other religious codes were implemented to emulate the lifestyle of Muhammed and his followers. The behavior of inhabitants of the caliphate was monitored and everybody that violated the religious codes got punished, often in the form of beatings or even executions (Paraszczuk, 2015). State-building was also an important goal for the Islamic State. In order to establish a well-functioning state, they created a bureaucracy in which inhabitants had to pay taxes (Callimachi, 2018). Institutions of the Islamic State include a police force, a militarily, education, healthcare, finance and a governance (Gambanis & Collard, 2015). After 2014, the

Islamic State focused more on inspiring attacks outside of Syria and Iraq (Lister, Sanchez, Bixler, O'key, Hogenmiller & Tawfeeq, 2018). In this way, the Islamic State focused on the creation of a global Islamist movement.

There is a rigid social order within the Islamic State, the organization promotes segregation of the sexes and they claim to have control over a women's body (Zakaria, 2015). It seems conflicting that women from societies that emphasize gender equality and emancipation wish to start a life in the caliphate, where a terrorist organization rules which has a very gender conservative character (Kneip, 2016).

2.3.3| Foreign fighters

The Islamic State is known for its high number of foreign fighters that have traveled to Syria and Iraq (Mironova, 2019). Numbers show that 41.190 Westerns have traveled to Syria and Iraq (Cook & Vale, 2018). A significant percentage of these foreign fighters is female. Peresin and Cervone (2015) estimate that ten percent of the Western members were women in 2015. A study of researchers of King's College London, of the International Centre for the Study of Radicalization, shows that between April 2013 and June 2018, thirteen percent of all people affiliated of the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq was female (Cook & Vale, 2018). The European Parliamentary Research Study shows that approximately five thousand European people have traveled to Syria and Iraq since 2012 (Scherrer, Isaksson, Ragazzi, & Walmsley, 2018). A study by Van Ginkel and Entemann (2016) suggests that seventeen percent of all foreign fighters is female. The majority of these foreign fighters join a Salafi-jihadist militant organization (Barrett, 2014), especially the Islamic State or Jabhat al-Nusra (Gates & Podder, 2015). Numbers from the AIVD, the General Intelligence and Security Service the Netherlands, show that approximately three-hundred people with jihadist intentions have traveled to Syria and Iraq. These people have reached the age of eighteen. Of these three-hundred people who traveled to Syria and Iraq is known that one hundred people have died in Syria and Iraq, sixty people have returned to the Netherlands, one hundred and twenty people with jihadist intentions are still in Syria and Iraq, fifteen people are in Turkey, and five people belong to the category 'others'. Of these one hundred and twenty people that are still in Syria and Iraq, fifty people are in detention or Kurdish-Syrian camps, thirty people aligned themselves with other jihadists groups in the North and West part of Syria, and forty people are somewhere else in Syria (AIVD, n.d.).

As the conflict was first starting to unfold, most foreign fighters came to Syria to help the local population fight against Assad's regime. After the chemical attacks by Assad in 2013, the number of foreign fighters going to Syria increased (Mironova, 2019). Others went for different ideological reasons. These different ideological reasons are the abovementioned pull factors. These reasons range from fighting in the jihad against disbelievers and the afterlife, till monetary personal gains (Mironova, 2019). After the establishment of the self-proclaimed caliphate the number of foreign fighters who travelled to Syria and Iraq arose. Intentions of foreign fighters also changed instead of fighting in the ongoing conflict, people also travelled to Syria and Iraq to live in the caliphate. The Islamic State's utopian propaganda played a major role in attracting these people (Sheikh, 2016). The Islamic State portraited their self-proclaimed caliphate as a comfortable place to live (Mironova, 2019). Many women, with or without their children, travelled after the establishment of the so-called caliphate to Syria and Iraq. In June 2015 Perešin (2015) wrote that more than five hundred and fifty Muslim women from Western countries had travelled to the caliphate of the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq. All of these women have respective personal, political, religious and ideological reasons to move to the self-proclaimed caliphate. According to Peresin, the high number of female foreign fighters is due to the persuasive propaganda campaigns on the internet. The Islamic State is one of the first terrorist organizations to use social media to achieve their goals (Ali, 2015). Trough social media, video messages and writings other women who already joined the Islamic State, lure other women to travel to Syria and Iraq. Narratives are created and distributed through the internet. The Salafi ideology, victory battles, the utopian state and personal experiences of these women conducts the tone in the Islamic State's propaganda. Especially the personal experiences of the women who are already in the caliphate have a great appeal to female foreign fighters (Khaleeli, 2014). In general, for male- and female foreign fighters, internet and social media platforms allow the Islamic State to quickly reach a wide audience of young people who spend a great deal of time on the internet (Perešin, 2015). Apart from the internet being used as a tool to recruit male- and female foreign fighters to travel to Syria and Iraq, it motives people around the world to perpetrated in a terrorist attack. A number of terrorist attacks were inspired by propaganda published by the Islamic State. These terrorists carried out terrorist attacks in the name of the Islamic State (Rosenblatt, Winter & Basra, 2019).

2.3.3.1| Men in the Islamic State

According to Cook and Vale (2018) seventy-five percent of the total IS affiliates in Syria and Iraq is men, which stands for 30.893 men total. Up on arrival in the caliphate, men swear an oath of allegiance, which is a pledge to fulfill the assigned duties (Speckhard & Yayla, 2015). After this oath of allegiance men usually follow some training in a training camp before they are assigned to a specific role. New members study the Arabic language, take lessons in the religion and gain military training (Van San, 2015). Before sending the new recruits to the frontlines they are usually first assigned with guard duties (Bakker & Bont, 2016). After fulfilling this duty men become a fighter, a suicide bomber or they fulfill several supporting activities (AIVD, 2016). These supporting activities entail a whole range of jobs, including doctor, hacker, cook, driver, engineer, administrative worker, or working for the religious police (Weggemans et al., 2016). When they choose to become a fighter, they do not continuously fight, other duties that are related to the life of fighters are guarding checkpoints or patrolling (AIVD, 2016).

2.3.3.2| Women in the Islamic State

Throughout the years, women have joined terrorist and criminal organizations (De Graaf, 2012). The phenomenon of women joining a terrorist organization is not new, but it is still considered exceptional (Martini, 2018). Never before in history succeeded a terrorist organization to recruit so many women (Perešin, 2015).

When relating to the conflict in Syria and Iraq, women are often viewed in gender-conforming ways (Windsor, 2018). Historically, the feminine version of jihad is considered to be different then the masculine version (Peresin & Cervone, 2015). Stories in the media often report on 'Jihadi brides', women with no agency who travel to Syria and Iraq to marry a fighter of the Islamic State. They are portraited as vulnerable, confused and naïve women, who are victims that are lured, used, groomed and enticed (Martini, 2018). Examples of this narrative are constructed in the following statements of women who "flew out to Syria to marry an ISIS fighter (Stone, 2015)", or "many (women) are also attracted to the idea of marrying a foreign fighter, seen as a heroic figure willing to sacrifice himself for a cause (Khaleeli, 2014)". This frame portraits the travel of women to Syria and Iraq as "their biological destiny of becoming wives and mothers (Sjoberg & Gentry, 2008, p. 10)". Many women move to their husband in the caliphate, and women who travel alone to the caliphate are supposed to marry upon arrival (Peresin & Cervone, 2015). However, this is a far cry of

the actual roles' women have had in the caliphate. Women have fulfilled traditional women's roles such as cook or as a nurse for soldiers (Peresin & Cervone, 2015). Women also participated in financing, distributing and recruiting new members for the Islamic State (Khelghat-Doost, 2017; Strømmen, 2018).

Many leaders of jihadist organizations do not allow women to fight, to take part in the jihad. De Leede (2018b) argues that "traditional gender norms are dominant in jihadist ideology and conservative societies, and the consequential risk of losing popular support when putting women in harm's way, might explain this reluctance to employ women in combatant missions". The Islamic State also envisaged strictly non-combat roles for women who joined the group in Syria and Iraq. However, these female foreign fighters also embrace the violent ideology, and there are some suggestions that women and girls who are part of the Islamic State have contributed in violent activities. In the caliphate women have participated in the Al-Khansaa Brigade, this brigade consists merely of women and they are responsible for enforcing strict Shariah on other women in the caliphate. This brigade is known for their harsh and brutal punishments (Peresin & Cervone, 2015). There are also cases of women in the caliphate who committed a suicide attack (Fullmer, Mizrahi & Tomsisch, 2018). As of fall 2016, stories have come out about women who have received military training (Strømmen, 2018). Between 2014 and 2018, the Islamic State allowed women to take on more active roles in the caliphate (Cook & Vale, 2018). Almohammad and Speckhard (2017) have seen an increasement of participation of women in operational ranks, including "enforcement of Sharia law, surveillance, combat, intelligence, assassination, and infiltration".

Not all women travel to Syria and Iraq. A study of researchers of King's College London, of the International Centre for the Study of Radicalization, shows that recently more women have been involved in terrorist attacks around the world (Cook & Vale, 2018). Examples of female attackers in Western countries are Tashfeen Malik, one of the shooters in the San Bernardino shooting in the United States, or Ornella Gilligmann, a French citizen whose fingerprints were linked to a parked car in front of the Notre Dame with seven gas bottles inside the car (De Leede, 2017).

2.3.4| The death of the Islamic State caliphate

Late 2016, large offences were taken by enemies against the Islamic State. In 2017, after months of battling IS lost their strongholds Mosul and Raqqa ("How the battle for Mosul unfolded", 2017; Morales, 2017). Throughout 2018, the Islamic State lost more and more territory in Syria and Iraq. On March 23, 2019, IS lost their last piece of territory in Baghuz, Syria (Callimachi, 2019). After the loss of their final piece of territory, experts warn for a possible resurgence (Lister, 2019). In April 2019, al-Baghdadi stated in a video that the territorial loss of the Islamic State did not mean the defeat of the organization. He claimed that the Islamic State would return to the region (Hubbard, 2019). There is still a large stateless population of foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq who still supports the extremist ideology of the Islamic State (Callimachi, 2019). There is also a large number of foreign fighters that have returned or will return to their home countries (Cook & Vale, 2018). These returning foreign fighters might impose a risk to national security of a country (Mehra & Paulussen, 2019).

2.4| Narratives and propaganda

2.4.1| Islamist narratives

A narrative is "a coherent system of interrelated and sequentially organized stories that share a common rhetorical desire to resolve a conflict by establishing audience expectations according to the known trajectories of its literary and rhetorical form (Halverson, Corman, & Goodall, 2011, p. 14)". Cultural narratives are used by Islamist groups, both violent as well as non-violent groups (Rane, 2016). Many narratives incorporate ideas, texts and interpretations from the Quran, a hadith or Muslim history. These narratives provide understanding to current and past events. They help Muslims to make sense of events, to connect new and existing information, to justify actions and orient towards future objectives (Halverson et al., 2011). Halverson et al. (2011) have identified eleven master narratives that are deeply embedded in Islamic culture:

> (1) the pharaoh, an arrogant tyrant who refuses to submit to the will of God;
> (2) jahiliyya, a reference to a society or state characterised by ignorance of God's will, injustice and vice; (3) the battle of Badr, a military victory of a smaller, poorly-equipped Muslim force over a larger, military-superior infidel force; (4) hypocrites,

> those who outwardly profess to be Muslims but secretly seek to undermine the Islamic State; (5) the battle of Khaybar, which relates to non-Muslim religious minorities who commit treachery against the Islamic State through violation of their covenant; (6) the battle of Karbala, which highlights the wickedness of corrupt regimes and the honour of dying rather than living under them; (7) the Mahdi, the foretold great leader of true Muslims who will appear at the end of time to bring an era of justice; (8) crusaders, infidel invaders who occupy Muslim lands and must be repelled; (9) the year 1924 when the Ottoman caliphate was abolished and replaced with a secular republic, thereby undermining Islam; (10) Nakba or catastrophe for Palestinians and the Muslim world as the state of Israel was imposed over the lands of Palestine, which must ultimately be rectified by the defeat of the Jews and (11) 72 virgins, the reward of those who sacrifice themselves through militant jihad. (Mahood & Rane, 2016, p. 20)

Mahood and Rane (2016) concluded that only two of these master narratives, 'the crusaders' and '*jahiliyya*' are permeated in IS propaganda. The crusader narrative reinforces the demonizing of the West and the *jahiliyya* narrative aims to persuade Muslims in the West with an Islamic utopia.

2.4.2| Islamic State Propaganda

Narratives used in Islamic State's propaganda are well-crafted and are often familiar for many Muslims (Schmid, 2015). Propaganda is described by Jowett and O'Donnell (2012) as the "deliberate, systemic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist" (p. 7). Propaganda is a communication strategy. A communication strategy of the Islamic state is to persuade all Muslims to migrate to the territory of the Islamic State; it is outlined as a religious duty (Farwell, 2014). The above-mentioned definition shows that propaganda emphasizes the manipulation and abstraction of people their ideas (Jowett and O'Donnell, 2012). Propagandists aim to influence the thinking, emotions and actions of people in order to control them (Ali, 2015). The global propaganda campaign of the Islamic State was focused on the recruitment of foreign fighters. Propaganda of the Islamic State also was used to frighten their enemies (Gebeily, 2014). According to Karagiannis (2015) propaganda has three

functions: radicalization, recruitment and identity formation. It pursued Muslims in the West to travel to Syria and Iraq and to carry out attacks in the West (Ali, 2015). The use of recruited foreign fighters and their participation in producing propaganda was a key element of the strategy of IS (Peresin & Cervone, 2015).

Cole (1998) stresses that propaganda "usually addresses a mass audience through mass media or is targeted at special audience and media that provide access to mass opinion". Propaganda of the Islamic State appeals to a wide audience, because of the convenient convenience of social media and the internet media. All kinds of platforms of social media are used to distribute propaganda (Peresin & Cervone, 2015). Propaganda of the Islamic State includes, amongst others, videos, audio statements and magazines published by IS (Rosenblatt, Winter, & Basra, 2019).

2.5| Recruitment Narratives

Recent research has identified several narratives used by the Islamic State in their propaganda. The previous paragraph discusses the two master narratives that were identified by Mahood and Rane (2016), within ten issues of the propaganda magazine Dabiq, namely the 'crusader' narrative and the *'jahiliyya'* narrative.

Gartenstein-Ross (2015) identified four key recruitment narratives in propaganda produced by the Islamic State: (1) the winner's message, (2) the religious obligation, (3) a sense of adventure, (4) and political grievances. Gartenstein-Ross, Barr and Moreng (2016) argue that recruitment of foreign fighters is essential for the growth and success of the Islamic State. In this research they expanded the number of narratives to mobilize foreign fighters. They identified a total of nine recruitment narratives, which are: (1) a winner's message, (2) the caliphate as an Islamic utopia, (3) discrediting the competition, (4) sowing discord in enemy ranks, (5) the illegitimacy of Islamists who embrace electoral politics, (6) exploiting sectarian tensions, (7) jihadist adventure and camaraderie, (8) driving a wedge between Muslims and the west, and (9) religious obligations to join the caliphate.

Winter (2015) collected data over a period of thirty days and processed this data in an exhaustive survey. He found 1145 separate propaganda 'events', which consisted of audio, video, photo and text. He identified six key recruitment narratives: (1) brutality, (2) mercy, (3) belonging, (4) victimhood, (5) war, and (6) utopia. The last two, war and utopia, were divided into fourteen subcategories. War is subdivided in: (1) preparation, (2) offensive, (3) defense,

(4) attrition, (5) martyrdom panegyrics, and (6) summery. Utopia is subdivided in: (1) economic activity, (2) expansion, (3) governance, (4) justice, (5) religion, (6) social life, and (7) nature and landscape.

Martini (2018) conducted a discourse analysis on media narratives of women joining ISIS. She did research into the Independent, the Telegraph and the Guardian/ the Observer, on how ISIS women are described in the newspapers. Martini argues that discourses are reproduced, created and reinforced by the media. She found twelve narratives that describes women joining ISIS. The first narrative she found is the gender-biased category of 'Jihadi Brides'. Other narratives are the vulnerable, confused and naïve jihadists; the lured, groomed and enticed jihadists; marriage as a goal; physical appearances: beauty and 'Islamic appearances'; their failure as women: marriages and motherhood; the Islam; liberation, rebellion, adventure and feminism as goals; family relations; personal traumas; the 'hormone driven' jihadists; and the betrayal of 'Jihadi Brides'. These narratives present an overview of how Western media made sense of the phenomenon of women joining ISIS. The narratives focus on their personal issues, which irrationalizes these women and denies their agency and intentionality. A construct of a terrorist that is not credible and is apolitical is given. These narratives construct these Muslim women as vulnerable and passive subjects, who are a prey of Muslim men and their culture in general. However, Martini argues their choice to travel to Syria and Iraq and to join a terrorist organization is a great gesture of agency.

Welch (2018) did research on recruitment narratives in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah.* He identified five narratives: (1) Islamic teaching and justification; (2) progress and heroism; (3) common enemy; (4) community, belonging and meaning; and (5) inspiration and instruction. The first typology, 'Islamic teaching and justification', offers a justification for violence. Articles with these narratives often refer to the Quran, Hadiths, or Islamic scholarships. The second typology, 'progress and heroism', tells inspiring stories about success, progress and victories, they show superhuman heroes who readers can admire. This is not only about military success, but also about progress in the caliphate. 'The establishment of a common enemy', the third typology, reports the wrongness of the enemies of the Islamic State. The fourth typology, 'community, belonging and meaning', shows an idyllic image of the caliphate. It presents a "welcoming community, a place to find meaning, or makes clear that a sense of belonging exits for those in the caliphate (Welch, 2018, p. 192)". The image of a utopia is presented in this typology. The last typology, 'inspiration and instruction', empowers readers

to individual violent action. Explicit instructions are given for violent action and an invitation for participation in these violence actions is central in this typology. Welch divided the core messages of *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* into several different categories. He argues: "Admittedly, each of the five categories includes a range of articles. Further study to divide articles into exact subcategories, or specifically code passages within articles, would be useful and encouraged. (Welch, 2018, p. 188)". Therefore, to close this research gap, this study aims to build upon the research of Welch and will come up with subcategories which particular appeal to women. Martini (2018) presented an overview of how Western media made sense of the phenomenon of women joining ISIS. This study focuses on narratives told by the Islamic State, will present an overview of how the Salafi-jihadist militant organization portrays women in their propaganda and will give a better understanding of the pull factors that attracted women to travel to Syria and Iraq.

2.6| (Online) Radicalization

Just as with terrorism, radicalization has methodological problems. There are more than one hundred definitions for the concept (Schmid, 2013). Neumann, Stoil and Esfandiary (2008) describe radicalization as 'what goes on before the bomb goes off'. In more recent research, radicalization is seen as a process with societal and individual dimensions where someone in the end radicalized (Ridder, Fassaert, & Grimbergen, 2019). Doosje, Moghaddam, Kruglanski, de Wolf, Mann and Feddes (2016) describe radicalization as a "process through which people become increasingly motivated to use violent means against members of an out-group or symbolic targets to achieve behavioral change and political goals". There are different stages in the process of radicalization. There are a number of models of radicalization, in these models micro-, meso- and macro factors may influence the process (Moghaddam, 2005; McCauley & Moskalenko, 2008; Silke 2008; Doosje et al., 2016).

The internet is plays a crucial role in radicalization, extremism and terrorism (Ministry of Justice and Security, n.d.). Research by The National Coordinator for Counterterrorism (NCTb) shows that the internet, among other things, is used by jihadists as a means to spread propaganda and to recruit people (NCTb, 2010). Trough social media, video's and websites, extremist ideologies are spread. *Dabiq* is an online propaganda magazine, a primary source, used by the Islamic State to recruit new people. It was published during the peak of the

Islamic State between July 2014 and July 2016. *Rumiyah* is the direct successor of *Dabiq* and was published between September 2016 and September 2017 (Clarion Project, 2014). Pearson and Winterbotham (2017) argues that men are often recruited face-to-face, and that women are often recruited online. This difference is explained by the lack of access to public space for women, cultural restrictions becoming at prevented women to becoming at risk for radicalization. Mosques and Islamic bookstores are not available for women (Jiries, 2016). Pearson (2016) warns that this lack of access to public spaces due to cultural restrictions pushes women to search online for information about the Islam online. The Internet, a private space, is a successful place for recruiters to radicalize Western women (Gill, Corner, Conway, Thornton, Bloom & Horgan, 2017).

Motivations to join a violent extremist organization can be categorized into 'push' and 'pull' factors (Bjørgo, 2008). Former research into the motivations of male- and female foreign fighters found five push factors and seven pull factors. The main push factors behind radicalization, violent extremism and terrorism are reaction to a (vicarious) traumatic experiences of violence; anger and individual or collective desire for (vicarious) revenge, based on humiliation and/ or experience of discrimination and injustice; estrangement from mainstream society by uprooted migrants in refugee camps and diasporas, aggravated by socio-economic marginalization, relative deprivation and/ or political exclusion, personal identity crisis; individual search for meaning and purpose in life, frustrated aspirations, lack of future perspectives at home and desire to escape, seeking redemption; and unresolved political conflicts and perceived absence of solutions by state actors (Schmid, 2011; Coolsaet, 2011; Stern & Berger, 2015; Speckhard, 2016). The main push factors are existence of extremist ideology that provides justifications for attacks against out-group members (e.g. non-believers); presence of charismatic leader who translates grievances into incentives to engage in jihad; existence of like-minded militant local peer-group that reinforces individual inclination to become a foreign fighter; lure of adventure, fed by images of 'heroism' of jihadi fighters on social media; imitation (contagion effect) of publicized and seemingly successful terrorist mode of operation; personal recognition: prospect of recognition as valiant fighter for a good cause and opportunity to boost one's (self-)image from near "zero [in own country] to hero" [in the land of jihad]; and promise of rewards on earth and in afterlife (paradise) (Schmid, 2011; Coolsaet, 2016; Stern & Berger, 2015; Speckhard, 2016).

Push factors for female foreign fighters include isolation, the search for identity, having a sense of belonging, a feeling that the international Muslim community is being oppressed and persecuted and aggrievement of the (perceived) lack of international action (Saltman and Smith, 2015). Gielen (2018) adds troubled life histories to the category of push factors. Key pull factors found by Jacques and Taylor (2009) for female violent extremists joining the Islamic State are the notion of a religious duty to move to an Islamic country (hijra) and contribute to the so-called caliphate, the notion of belonging and sisterhood and romanticized notions of the experience. Bloom (2011) highlights the 'four Rs': revenge, redemption, relationship and respect as motivating factors female radicalization.

Pearson and Winterbotham (2017) introduced the concept of 'gendered radicalization', they argue that gender affects the radicalization process. The norms, expectations and structural pressures differ for men and women. Gender and sex are often mistaken. Someone's sex refers to the biological differences between males and females, gender, on the other hand, refers to social or cultural distinctions and roles associated with being male or female. It creates constituted behavioral expectations, stereotypes and rules that develop masculinity and femininity (Stroller, 2020).

The concept of femininity refers to a certain set of characteristics which corresponds with certain gender stereotypes which found their roots in history (Griffin, 2017). The view on femininity and the matching gendered stereotypes are constantly challenged by contemporary feminist theories. There are many feminist theories, but all of these theories have one thing in common: the idea of womanhood as a social construct (Thomson, 2001). One of these theories, radical feminism, suggests that societies are based on patriarchal grounds, due to continuing the marginalization and discrimination of women. This theory argues that men wrongfully dominate women in society. Women are presented as the norm in society, while women are viewed as the other. Radical feminists aim to create an equal society for both women and men, for example, by challenging the concept of gender roles (Vukoičić, 2013). On the other hand, the concept of masculinity refers to behavior, social roles and relations of men in society and the meaning of these roles (Chandler & Munday, 2016). Men are often associated with characteristics such as muscular, strong, brave and in control. They are rarely associated with adjectives such as weak, soft or emotional (Reeser, 2010). Hegemonic masculinity is a discourse that is often used to legitimize male domination over

women in society (Chandler & Munday, 2016). It is defined as "the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women (Connell, 2015, p. 77).

Pearson and Winterbotham (2017) argues that several factors such as discrimination, alienation, socioeconomic concerns, and individual factors such as belonging and identity, affect both men and women. However, the specific impacts are highly gendered, and this creates difference into radicalization mechanism.

Within the Islam specific roles for men and women are discernible. Men are often associated with fighting and violence, while women are often associated with non-violence, with being mothers, daughters and wives (Enloe, 2004). Concepts of gender are contextual, it varies across cultures, societies and time (Kimmel, 2010). Khosrokhavar (2009) wrote: "Islam restores the family and social bonds on a sane basis, according to men's needs. According to the Quran, a man has the right to marry up to four wives, on condition of being 'just' toward them; he can impose, in the name of Allah, 'modesty' on women and exert his authority toward children within a patriarchal family. In the Jihadists' minds, this dimension is connected to another, the rejection of Western sexual and, more generally, gender values (p. 234).". In Islamist terrorism, the role of men is to participate in the violent jihad and to defend the ideology or goals of the organization, in role of women is a supportive position, they have supplementary positions (Elshtain, 1995). Men are considered to be violent and women are conspired to be non-violent (Mahmood, 2019). These masculine and feminine narratives in violent extremist organizations are enforced by patriarchy, hypermasculinity and cultures of misogyny (18). Meyers (2002) argues:

> Because patriarchal societies consider women as inferior beings, and because these societies severely constrain women's choosing and acting, all feminists– theorists activists alike—regard these questions of why women suffer these wrongs and how they can be righted as crucial. Not surprisingly, then, the issues of women's identity and agency inspire intense critical engagement not only with social conventions but also with the philosophical canon. (p. 1)

The social role theory by Eagly (1987) argues that widely shared gender stereotypes developed out of the gender division of labor characterize a society. The gender stereotypes result from roles that men and women are most likely to have in society. Wood and Eagly (2002) connect hostility and violence with predominantly male traits and associate these traits with masculinity, and empathy, compassion and vulnerability are associated with women and femininity. These gender stereotypes associate men with agency and women with communion (Eagley, 1987). Eagly and Steffen (1984) argue that there is a relation between gender stereotypes and the roles men and women are perceived to have in society is at least partly endogenous. Within extremist groups gendered norms and narratives are present in their governance, control and recruitment (Quintero, 2018). The Islamic State constructs narratives of masculinity and femininity to appeal to foreign fighters (Necef, 2016).

Radical groups recruit women based on desperation, when there appears to be a lack of men, or the role entails to be a female role which cannot be replaced by male counterparts (Bloom, 2011; Gonzalez, Freilich & Chermak, 2014). Mostly men and women are separated and have specific gender roles (Bloom, 2011). In terrorism research there is a debate on the role women perform in radical terrorist organizations, some argue that the female roles are complementary (Zakaria, 2015), while other scholars claim that attributing a domestic role to women leads to misconceptions of the involvement of women in such groups (Huey & Witmer, 2016). Research shows that gender affects the radicalization process (Pearson & Winterbotham, 2017), the pull factors differ according to gender (Saltman & Smith, 2015). Bloom (2011) claims that recruitment strategies of terrorist organizations are also gender-related, the groups show gender-specific approaches. She argues that "gendered pathways leading men and women to involvement in terrorism (Bloom, 2011, p. 10)" can be seen in the recruitment narratives. Trough propaganda these gender-specific narratives are transported, they are used as a tool to recruit new members (Bussemer, 2008). Gendered stereotypes are exploited, and a sense of urgency is emphasized to recruit women (Bloom, 2011). To attract women terrorist groups often use terms of empowerment, equality and agency in their ideological narratives (Dalton & Asal, 2011).

Furedi (2014) observes that recruitment narratives used by the Islamic State are aimed at appealing to 'young macho men'. He notes: "this is why they feature lots of guys doing press-ups and shooting at targets, while expressing ISIS's case through the narrative of

mobilization". Masculinity is constructed to attract young men. Van Leuven, Mazurana and Gordon (2016) did research into 'highly gendered narratives' which promises recruits a life in the caliphate in which they idealize 'real men' and 'real women'. They argue that analyzing these "gendered dynamics, motivations and strategies (p. 98)" which mobilize supporters, helps to understand the Islamic State. In the caliphate men can practice masculine roles such as fighter, husband, father and protector, while feminine roles are those of wife, mother and protected. These gendered roles are perceived to be the idealize roles of 'real men' and 'real women'. In their research they studied media output of the Islamic State and they concluded that that "hyper-masculinized, hyper-militarized and particularly violent narratives (p. 107)" are used to recruit young men and to embody the image of a 'real men' in propaganda. These narratives can be found in "slicky edited videos, with fighters choreographed, slow-motion combat and posing on captured vehicles or over the corpses of defeated enemies (p. 107)". These narratives "identify and feed this desire for violent and 'righteous' male domination and empowerment (p. 108)". Sageman (2011) notes that young men are offered a 'high-status brand of masculinity', fighters are perceived the 'rock stars' of the militant Islam. According to Lahoud (2017) men are promoted as 'warrior' prototypes, women protectors and the head of the household. The Islamic State has proven to exploit gender-based narratives to recruit Western men for its cause (Pearson & Winterbotham, 2017).

Mahmood (2019) did research on the involvement of women in terrorism in Indonesia and Pakistan. According to her the distinction between masculine as violent and feminine as non-violent contributes to three misinterpretations. The gendered narratives assume that women their role as non-violent combatants is absolute and unchanging, that women are secondary actors due to their presumably non-violent nature in a violent group, and lastly, that the motives of women are personal and gendered. The feminine narratives in propaganda remain largely under researched. Therefore, this thesis aims to research trough a gendered lens to what extent different narratives are used by the Islamic state in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* to recruit Western women. Gender is used as an analytic tool to explore these narratives.

3| Methods

3.1| Type of research

A content analysis is deployed on this data to analyze different recruitment narratives and messages in both *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*. The content analysis is both qualitative and quantitative of nature. In the quantitative analysis frequencies are expressed in percentages and numbers. This method summarizes the data numeric (Krippendorff, 2005). In the qualitative method the data is presented in words and themes. This makes it possible to interpret the data (Polit, Beck, & Hungler, 2006). The study aims to identify gender-based narratives within *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* and to show how these narratives appeal to female foreign fighters.

This analysis builds upon the theory of framing. Olsen (2014) argues that:

> While frames specify a diagnosis and prognosis of a problem, narrative draws the audience in with the features of employment and temporality, which require the interpretive participation of listeners as they are engaged in an unfolding sequence of events that contains moral or practical consequences. Like frames, narratives are also action-oriented in that they are used to incite and sustain mobilization. (p. 250)

The framing theories attempt to provide a better understanding on how messages are constructed. The narratives found in the data do not simply carry out ideas, these narratives are frames which aim to recruit individuals. Benford and Snow (2000) define 'framing' as "active, processual phenomenon that implies agency and contention at the level of reality construction (p. 614)". To get an insight in how potential foreign fighters are drawn to the messages of the Islamic State, it is best to study the frames that are constructed in certain narratives. This research focuses on strategic framing with a gender perspective. Entman (1993) describes it as: "strategic framing thus prompts people to think in particular, desired ways about a topic and to use only a portion of their extant knowledge stored in memory. In so doing, framing shapes inferences made about situations' definition, causes, and remedy.". The concept of gender is used to frame findings.

3.2| Data collection

The data for this research were gathered from two types of sources, text and photos are being analyzed in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*. Both magazines were used for propaganda and recruitment. *Dabiq* is recognized as the leading propaganda medium of the Islamic State (Heinke & Fouad, 2015), until September 2016 when *Dabiq* was replaced by *Rumiyah*. The narratives displayed in both magazines are considered official narratives of the group (Saltman & Smith, 2015). The articles in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* serve as appropriate data for this analysis, the content in the magazines is representative for propaganda efforts made by the Islamic State.

In early 2014, the Islamic State established their own media centre called al-Hayat which published both magazines. *Dabiq* consists of fifteen issues, which were published between July 2015 and July 2016. The name '*Dabiq*' refers to a town in northern Syria, where according to the Islamic State the final apocalyptic battle will be fought. *Dabiq* was replaced with another magazine named *'Rumiyah'*, after IS was driven out of the town Dabiq by the Turkish Militairy (Ali, 2015). *Rumiyah* is the Arabic name for Rome and refers to an Islamic prophecy about the fall of Rome. Rome is the epicenter of the Christian religion and by using this title they are suggesting that the Islamic State is on its way to conquer Rome. Abu Hamza al-Muhajir, the Minister of War of the Islamic State, once's stated that after conquering Rome all fighters were reposed from jihad. The direct successor of *Dabiq*, *Rumiyah* consists of thirteen issues, all published between September 2015 and September 2017. In the magazines are reports of everyday life in Islamic State territory, stories about the idealized caliphate, reports on military victories and successes, religious teachings and news about social activities (Ali, 2015).

Both magazines were written in various languages. The availability of propaganda written in English and the open online access are leading factors for the selection of data for this study. All the fifteen issues of *Dabiq* and ten issues of *Rumiyah* are available at https://clarionproject.org/islamic-state-isis-isil-propaganda-magazine-dabiq-50/. The missing issues of *Rumiyah,* issues eleven till thirteen are available at https://therinjfoundation.wordpress.com. The issues published at both websites are written in English, therefore is chosen to analyze the English written articles in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah.* Both magazines are the most popular, widely viewed content available and readily accessible

material through the Internet, this makes *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* the most valuable content available to analyze (Mahood & Rane, 2016).

3.3| Data analysis

In order to analyze the collected data, a deductive coding system will be used. Deductive means a framework approach, in which certain themes are already determined. Welch (2018) did research on recruitment narratives in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*. He identified five narratives: (1) Islamic teaching and justification; (2) progress and heroism; (3) common enemy; (4) community, belonging and meaning; and (5) inspiration and instruction. In these narratives no distinction is made between the different genders. In this research gender is used as an analytical tool, narratives that specifically appeal to women are being analyzed in this study.

The first step in this research is to study all the textual material in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* that specifically targeting or discussing women. A systematic search into the articles has to be done to identify which articles appeal to women. A study conducted by Baele, Boyd and Coan (2020) showed that in the twenty-eight issues of *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* women were referred to over 1500 times. This included references to woman, women, sisters(s), female(s), daughter(s), girl(s), mother(s), she, she's, wife and wives. These words, indicated by Baele, Boyd and Coan, are used as search query to identify the articles in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* which specifically targeting or discussing women. In addition, Martini (2018) argues that women who travel to Syria and Iraq are often called *muhajirah*, or *muhajirat* in the Arabic plural form. These words meaning those who make the *Hijrah*, the Muslim sacred pilgrimage. *Muhajirah* and *muhajirat* are being included into the search query for this research. The textual material will be analyzed manually. With Command + F there will be search for the words mentioned above. With the help of a qualitative content analysis the narratives that might appeal to women will be categorized into different themes. Each article may contain more than one theme or narrative. The recurring themes will be categorized with the help of a coding system. The main themes are given a specific color, which will make it easier to identify the overarching themes. The framework of Welch will be adapted specially for women. Based on previous research is believed to find a framework that is unique for potential female foreign fighters. Furthermore, a second step, the results found in this research will be compared with

those of Welch in order to identify to what extent the results of Welch differ from those of this study.

In the data analysis process human mistakes can be made. For example, mistakes can be caused by fatigue, errors in interpretation and personal bias. The quality of the research has to be rigorous and trustworthy, therefore the validity and reliability should be taken into account (Morse and Richards, 2002).

4| Results

In this chapter the results from the content analysis of *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* will be presented. First, a description of the data will be given and thereafter the findings from this study will be presented.

4.1| Data description

Before publishing *Dabiq,* the Islamic State published articles in the Islamic State News and the Islamic State Report. After positive reviews and comments on these articles, the AlHayat Media Centre decided to carry on the effort in a periodical magazine. The magazine contains photo reports, current events and informative articles on matters related to the Islamic State (Dabiq magazine, 2014, p. 3). The name of the magazine is taken from an area named Dabiq in the northern countryside of Halab (Allepo). According to the magazine "this place was mentioned in a hadith describing some of the events of the Malahim (what is sometimes referred to an Armageddon in English). One of the greatest battles between the Muslim and the crusaders will take place near Dabiq (Dabiq magazine, 2014, p. 4)". In every issue of *Dabiq* a quote of Abu Mus'ab az-Zarqawi can be found, which states: "The spark has been lit here in Iraq, and its heat will continue to intensify – by Allah's permission – until it burns the crusader armies in Dabiq. (Dabiq magazine, 2014. p. 2). Fifteen issues of *Dabiq* were published, the first issue was published on the 5th of July in 2014 and the last issue was published on the 31st of July in 2016.

Rumiyah is the successor of *Dabiq,* the shift from the online magazine *Dabiq* to the online magazine *Rumiyah* is related to the loss of the town of Dabiq in October 2016. Rumiyah means in classic Arabic Rome. By renaming the magazine the Islamic State swift their focus. The new vision of the Islamic State can be found on each cover of *Rumiyah* and is a quote of Abu Hamzah al-Muhajir: "O muwahhidin, rejoice, for by Allah, we will not rest from our jihad except beneath the olive trees of Rumiyah (Rome) (Abu Hamzah Al-Muhaji, 2016, p. 1)". Thirteen issues of *Rumiyah* were published, the first issue of *Rumiyah* was published on the 5th of September in 2016 and the last issue was published on the 9th of September in 2017. Just as *Dabiq,* the magazine contains photo reports, current events, and informative articles on matters related to the Islamic State.

Both magazines were searched for articles that reference women. This search includes the following words: “woman, women, sister(s), female(s), daughter(s), girl(s), mother(s), she, she’s, wife, wives, muhajirah and muhajirat. A total of 1493 hits were found in the two online recruitment magazines, in *Dabiq* ~~is~~ there are 806 references to women and in *Rumiyah* there are 687. The data material for the content analysis consists of 152 articles, which included 85 articles in *Dabiq* and 67 articles in *Rumiyah*. Which means that 49.13% of the articles in *Dabiq* and 54.03% of the articles in *Rumiyah* discuss women.

Both magazines feature articles written specifically for women or by women. In *Dabiq* there are eight articles entirely about women, these articles especially targeting women can be found in issue number seven up to and including issue thirteen, these articles are in the format of a column and the section is entitled ‘To Our Sisters’, except in issue nine and ten, when the columns are entitled ‘From Our Sisters’. In issue fifteen another article is published for women; this article is called ‘The Fitrah of Mankind’. The articles in *Dabiq* vary in length from twenty-six up to eighty-three pages. The articles targeting women vary in length from two up to seven pages. The columns are continuous text bodies, except for issue seven which contains an interview. The author of the articles is Umm Sumayyah al-Muhajirah, except for issue thirteen and fifteen, in these articles the name of the author is missing. In issue eight Umm Sumayyah al-Muhajirah states that she “was the only Arab women amongst muhajirah sisters during the trip” (Umm Sumayyah al-Muhajirah, 2015a, p. 33), which suggests that she migrated to the Islamic State and that she is originally from an Arab country.

In each issue of *Rumiyah,* an article is published that specifically targets a female audience, in issue seven, even two articles are written for women. From issue five up to and including issue thirteen, the articles that specifically target women are named ‘Sisters’. The articles targeting the female audience are generally shorter than the articles in *Dabiq* which target the female audience. The articles in *Rumiyah* vary in length from thirty-eight up to sixty pages. The articles targeting women vary in length from two up to seven pages, in the first eight issues, the articles are only two or three pages long and as of issue nine the articles targeting women increase in length. In issue seven and issue thirteen the author identifies herself, the article in issue seven is written by Umm Musa al-Finlandiyyah and the article in issue thirteen is written by Umm Sulaym Al-Muhajirah. The author in issue seven identifies herself as a woman from Finland (Umm Musa al-Finlandiyyah, 2017, p. 18), and the author of

issue thirteen identifies herself as Umm Sulaym al-Muhajirah. In the other issues of *Rumiyah* neither the name nor sex is known of the author.

The articles in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* in the female sections, that specifically targets women, are used as the main body for the content analysis to identify the narratives used to recruit women from Western countries.

Throughout *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* images are used to illustrate the magazines. A total of 1400 images can be found in *Dabiq* and a total of 477 images can be found in *Rumiyah*. In the sections aimed at women there are a total of 24 images in *Dabiq* and 25 in *Rumiyah*. In *Dabiq* each article contains between one and five images and in *Rumiyah* each article contains between zero and four images. Images referring to women or girls and the images used in the articles that are specifically aimed at women are used in the content analysis. These are a total of 32 images in *Dabiq* and 32 in *Rumiyah*.

4.2| Findings

The findings of the conducted content analysis in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* are presented in this paragraph. In the first part, the narratives that appeal to women and which are extracted from the articles in in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* will be outlined and supported with examples from the data material. In the second part, the images that belong to the articles that target a female audience will be analyzed and will be subdivided into the narratives that are found in the first part.

4.2.1. Textual analysis

The data material consists of 152 articles in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah.* A division can be made between articles that mention women and articles that are discussing and targeting women. In this subdivision different recruitment narratives can be found. In articles that simply mention ‘women’, the narrative of the female victim and the common enemy can be found. In the articles that are discussing and targeting women recruitment narratives about religious obligation; community, belonging and meaning; motherhood and wifehood; and female empowerment can be found. These articles can be found in table 1 and 2 in the appendix.

4.2.1. Victim

In articles that do not particularly focus on women, women are often portrayed as victims. In 30.26 percent of the articles of the data material victimization of Muslim women is mentioned. They are depicted as victims of enemy regimes, this narrative tightens stories about imprisonment, rape, torture or death of Muslim women by the enemies of the Islamic State. The common enemy is portrayed as the West, the United State and their allies, especially the Jews, the regime of Assad, the Russians, the Christians and the apostate Muslims. These narratives about victimization are not so much focused on recruiting women, as they are often used to motivate men to wage jihad and to liberate the imprisoned women or to seek revenge for the injustice or the death of Muslim women. Sentences such as:

> They have killed nine Muslim women three days ago by striking a bus transporting them from Shām to Iraq. Will you leave the disbeliever to sleep safely at home while the Muslim women and children shiver with fear of the roars of the crusader airplanes above their heads day and night? (Indeed your Lord is ever watchfull, 2014, p. 9)

Or:

> They are bombing your brothers and sister's day and night in the land where Allah's law is supreme. It is an obligation upon you to act and force them to think thrice before bombing the Muslims. Therefore, terrorize the disbelievers and make them feel fear everywhere, even in their own bedrooms. Due to their mere disbelief, their blood by default is lawful to spill. How much more obligatory is it to do so after they've waged war against the Muslims and killed their women and children. (Abu Sa'd at-Trinidadi, 2016, p. 69)

These quotes must encourage to men to wage Jihad, it is even called obligatory. Muslim men who do not take part in Jihad are described as 'effeminate males'.

A recurring theme in the narrative of the victim is Islamophobia. In 21,74 percent of the articles that are part of the victim narrative a reference is made to Islamophobia. Hostility and hatred against Muslim women and their culture are visible throughout *Dabiq* and

Rumiyah. This hostility and hatred are visible in the following quotes: "They carried on with their pacifist and even pro-democracy da'wah while Muslim women around the world were being abused, vilified, imprisoned, and violated at the hands of the kuffar and their puppets" (Abu Mansur al-Muhajir, 2016, p, 15), or "… the very crusaders who belittle the Sharī'ah on their news and entertainment programs, who arm the secularists and Rawāfid in Muslim lands, who imprison and torture Muslim men and women, and on top of all who burn the Qur'an and mock the Prophet" (Foreword, 2015, p. 4). Making the reference to Islamophobia does not only try to motivate men to wage Jihad, but also encourages women to move to the Islamic State and to perform *Hijrah*. The obligation for Muslim women to perform *Hijrah* will be discussed in the religious obligation narrative.

4.2.2. Common enemy

A recurring theme in the articles that merely mention the female gender is the female enemy. In 25.67 percent of all articles the female enemy is mentioned. It is noteworthy to mention that the Islamic State makes a difference between male- and female enemies in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*. Male enemies should be killed, and 'kufr' women, which means infidel, should be prevented from killing if they do not carry weapons according to an article in *Rumiyah* issue nine: "As for those who don't normally carry weapons, such as women, children, the elderly, and the infirm, the default with them is that they are to be taken as slaves, not that they are to be killed" (The ruling on the belligerent Christians, 2017, p. 7). This article furthermore mentions that "anyone among them who carries a weapon – regardless of whether they are a child or a woman – is to be killed, and whoever participates in the fighting by offering his opinion and counsel is likewise to be killed, even if he is from among the elderly and infirm" (The ruling on the belligerent Christians, 2017, p. 7). Infidel women should be enslaved, and they can be used to bear children. The enslavement of infidel women reveals the subjugation of women by the Islamic State. It is a recurring theme in *Dabiq* issue three, four, nine and ten, and *Rumiyah* issue two, eight and nine. In *Dabiq* issue nine a whole article is devoted to the justification of the enslavement of infidel women. This article is written by Umm Sumayyah al-Muhajirah, she is a female Islamic State recruit who defends the use of sexual slaves by arguing: "I and those with me at home prostrated to Allah in gratitude on the day the first slave girl entered our home" (Umm Sumayyah al-Muhajirah, 2015b, p. 47). The use of sexual slaves is justified on religious grounds (The revival of slavery

before the hour, 2014, p. 15). Sex slavery can be seen as a recruitment tool for men, as they are rewarded with female slaves when they wage Jihad. It is also a sign of political and military success.

4.2.3. Religious obligation

The Islamic State communicates two religious' obligations towards their female audience; (1) to perform *Hijrah*, which is "migrating from the places of shirk and sin to the land of Islam and obedience" (Umm Sumayyah al-Muhajirah, 2015a, p. 32), and (2) to learn more about their religion. Of all the data material 16,45 percent focusses on these religious obligations.

Hijrah is obligatory, it is the migration from the home country to the Islamic State. The obligation of *Hijrah* is central in *Dabiq* issue seven, eight, ten, eleven, fourteen and fifteen, and *Rumiyah* issue seven and thirteen. Both Muslim women and men are called to perform *hijrah*: "And I remind you of the individual obligation on every Muslim and Muslimah to make hijrah from dārul-kufr to dārul-islām (Umm Sumayyah Al-Muhajirah, 2015c, p. 47).". Issue eight of *Dabiq* stresses that performing *hijrah* is just as obligatory for women as for men:

> "Hijrah will not cease as long as the enemy is fought" [Reported by Imām Ahmad and an-Nasā'ī], it would suffice us to refute the doubts of the doubters and the rumors of the fearmongers. This ruling is an obligation upon women just as it is upon men, for Allah (ta'ālā), when excluding those incapables of performing hijrah, he excluded the incapable women just as He excluded the incapable men. (Umm Sumayyah Al-Muhajirah, 2015a, p. 33)

To appeal to their female audience women who already performed *hijrah* are being glorified in issue eight. Personal emotional stories of women who moved to 'dārul-islām', which is a reference to the territory of the Islamic State, are being told in the article 'The twin halves of the muhājirīn' in issue eight of *Dabiq*. According to the article the stories of *hijrah* are almost never without "hardship and tribulations", Umm Sumayyah Al-Muhajirah tells five stories that will "make your eyes sweep" about women who performed *hijrah* and which obstacles they conquered (Umm Sumayyah Al-Muhajirah, 2015b, p. 35). In *Dabiq* issue seven an interview is published with Umm Basīr al-Muhājirah who performed *Hijrah*, in *Dabiq* issue

fifteen a story on the *Hijrah* of Umm Khalid al-Finlandiyyah is published and in *Rumiyah* issue thirteen a story on the *Hijrah* of Umm Sulaym Al-Muhajirah is published. Women who will perform *Hijrah* are promised rewards in life and promises of afterlife. Umm Basīr al-Muhājirah (2015) argues that: "Living in a land where the law of Allah ('azza wa jall) is implemented is something great. I feel at ease now that I have carried out this obligation" (p. 50). Umm Khalid al-Finlandiyyah (2016) argues that: "Of course, when you come to the Caliphate, after sacrificing everything for the sake of Allah, you'll continue to be tested. You're going to see hardships and trials, but every day you're thankful to Allah for allowing you to perform hijrah and to live under the Shari'ah" (p. 38). Umm Sumayyah al-Muhājirah (2015d) argues that this reward is "the life on the soil of the Khilāfah" (p. 45**)**. She argues that there "are the Sharī'ah institutions, training camps, and even the kindergartens" (Umm Sumayyah al-Muhājirah, 2015d, p. 45). Umm Basīr al-Muhājirah (2015) argues that: "The life of the believer is full of trials and tribulations. So be patient while hoping for Allah's reward. Life is short, even if it appears sometimes – during times of sorrow – to be long. By Allah, what awaits us is better and everlasting, inshā'allāh" (p. 51). Umm Sumayyah al-Muhājirah (2015a) argues that in the afterlife Allah "has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever. That is the great success" (p. 32).

A second religious obligatory that can be found in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* is the obligation to learn more about the Islam. A firm statement made by Umm Basīr al-Muhājirah (2015) states: "Do not waste your time and energy in play, futility, and what does not concern you. Learn your religion! Learn your religion! Read the Qur'an, reflect upon it, and practice it" (p. 51). Umm Musa al-Finlandiyyah (2017) argues that after arriving in the Islamic State Muslimah should educate themselves (p. 18).

4.2.4. Community, belonging and meaning

Another recruitment narrative to appeal to Western women is the one of community, belonging and meaning. Terms such as sisterhood, identity, feeling of influence, supporter and state-building are recurring themes in this narrative. These themes occur in 20.39 percent of all of the data materials.

Dabiq as well as *Rumiyah* focus on the relationship between women. Among the recruited women who perform *hijrah* prevails a sense of commonality, it is described as a

sisterhood. The women who travel to the Islamic State are seen as equal: “Their colors and tongues are different, but their hearts are united upon, there is no god but Allah” (Umm Sumayyah Al-Muhajirah, 2015b, p. 33). The group of women are seen as honorable and they are praised for their dedication: “They are fragile as glass bottles, but their souls are those of men with ambitions almost hugging the heavens. Yes, these are the muwahhidah” (Umm Sumayyah Al-Muhajirah, 2015a, p. 34).

In all the articles that target the female audience, the audience is being addressed as ‘to my sisters’. In these articles the writer gives advice on how the sisters should behave and what ‘pure wives’ identity’ is (The Siyahah of Jihad, 2017, p. 21), the appropriate role of women. It underlines the domestic and nurturing role of women. These instructions are aimed at chastity, honor and modesty (The Fitrah of mankind, 2016, p. 23). Topics that are discussed in these female targeted articles are among others *hijrah,* charity, marriage and *jihad*. Being a shepherd and supportive. They are asked to be supporters of their husbands: “My sisters, be bases of support and safety for your husbands, brothers, fathers, and sons. Be advisors to them. They should find comfort and peace with you. Do not make things difficult for them. Facilitate all matters for them. Be strong and brave” (Umm Basīr al-Muhājirah, 2015, p. 51). In *Rumiyah* issue eleven this support is being emphasized:

> This duty is even greater among the wives, mothers, and sisters of the mujahidin, that they might support them in their homes, protecting them from the irjaf of the scaremongers and the speech of the munafiqin. So they should only speak to them in ways that will make them more steadfast and strengthen their hearts… Let us be as those women who knew their role and fulfilled them, for being supportive of your mujahid husband is one of your key roles in the land of jihad, my dear sister, and the importance of it cannot be overemphasized. Let your home be a place of rest for his mind rather than a house of complaints. Make it a place where he can recharge his energy for jihad rather than vacuuming out the energy that is left in him. Put your concerns aside and prioritize his needs first. (Our journey to Allah, 2017, p. 14)

They are seen as the mother of the ‘lions cubs’ (Umm Sumayyah al-Muhājirah, 2015d, 41). “She is the teacher of generations and the producer of men… And the woman is a shepherd in her house and is responsible for her herd.” So have you understood, my Muslim

sister, the enormity of the responsibility that you carry?" (By Umm Sumayyah al-Muhājirah, 2015d, 41). Men and women are seen as allies of one another, they are seen as similar, they have the same responsibility for building the state (The Religion of Islam and the Jama'ah of the Muslims, 2016, p. 7). Therefore, women have a form of influence in building the State, women are portrayed as the cornerstones of the caliphate: "Still, the absence of an obligation of jihād and war upon the Muslim woman – except in defense against someone attacking her – does not overturn her role in building the Ummah, producing men, and sending them out to the fierceness of battle" (Umm Sumayyah al-Muhājirah, 2015d, p. 41). In *Rumiyah* issue two their supportive role is being praised: "How great Allah made these women! They did not sit and cry, lamenting during the hours of hardship and tribulation. Instead, they carried the weight of the religion and the Ummah on their shoulders, helping a husband, inciting a son... The Muslimah should take women like these as her role models. When times are tough and tight, she should remember their steadfastness and adorn herself with the fragrance of their conduct" (Stories of steadfastness from the lives of the Sahabiyyat, 2016, p. 30).

4.2.5. Motherhood and wifehood

One of the major themes in the recruitment narratives appealing to women is the one of motherhood and wifehood. In almost all of the articles that specifically target or discuss women as a mother or a wife, the female audience is often addressed as 'the wife of a mujahid and the mother of lion cubs' (Umm Sumayyah al-Muhājirah, 2015d, p. 41). In this narrative the relationship between women and men, marriage and motherhood are present. The motherhood and wifehood narrative can be found in 17,76 percent of all the data material.

From the articles in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* it is clear that the Islamic State is a patriarchal society, it is promoted that men have power over women. In *Dabiq* issue fifteen this power relationship is discussed:

> Men are in charge of women by [right of] what Allah has given one over the other and what they spend [on their wives] from their wealth… And what is due to wives is similar to what is expected of them, in accordance to what is reasonable. But men have a degree over them [in responsibility and authority]. And Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise. (The Fitrah of mankind, 2016, p. 23)

In *Dabiq* issue seven is argued that a man can order his wife to wear a hijāb (The good example of Abu Basir Al-Ifriqi, 2015, p. 69), in *Dabiq* issue ten it is argued that a man can regulate how a woman dresses (In the words of the enemy, 2015a, p. 67), issue twelve of *Dabiq* shows that a women is subordinated to a man in a marriage, in an article is stated that a man can have multiple wives and in that case "that when her husband wants to marry another woman, it's not obligatory for him to consult her, nor to seek her permission, nor to try and appease her" (Umm Sumayyah al-Muhājirah, 2015e, p. 22). It is often stressed in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* that it is important for a women to stay at home, in *Rumiyah* issue three men are instructed that it is their right and duty to prevent that a woman goes out too often and they can impose restrictions if she goes out too often (Abide your homes, 2016, p. 41). In *Rumiyah* issue twelve is even argued that a woman has to ask her husband for permission to leave the house (The female slaves of Allah in the houses of Allah, 2017, p. 37). In *Rumiyah* issue four is argued that: "A woman is always in need of a husband who will look after her and tend to her affairs, and any woman who says otherwise is opposing the fitrah upon which Allah created her. No one around her can fill the place of a husband, neither her father, nor her brother, nor the closest of her relatives!" (Marrying widows is an established Sunnah, 2016, p. 33). Marriage is another major theme within the motherhood and wifehood narrative.

In *Rumiyah* issue twelve the segregation of sexes is being discussed, women cannot sit with men (The female slaves of Allah in the houses of Allah, 2017, p. 37). In *Dabiq* issue fifteen the role of women in the West is being discussed, they argue that the role of women and man are mixed up. The author argues that "woman need not be a mother, a wife, or a maiden" and that it is un-Islamic for women to "work like man, rule like man, and have intercourse like animals" (The Fitrah of mankind, 2016, p. 20). In *Rumiyah* issue five it is argued that a woman can worship Allah by "marriage, bearing children and raising them" (I will outnumber the other nations trough you, 2017, p. 35). Women are seen as the mother of the lion cubs, who nurses the children at home and teach them the difference between the truth and falsehood, between right and wrong (Umm Sumayyah al-Muhājirah, 2015d, p. 41; The Fitrah of mankind, 2016, p. 21). This role is seen as very an enormous responsibility, because a woman is seen as "the mother of lion cubs is. She is the teacher of generations and the producer of men" (Umm Sumayyah al-Muhājirah, 2015d, p. 41). In the same article is argued: "O sister in religion, indeed, I see the Ummah of ours as a body made of many parts, but the part that works most

towards and is most effective in raising a Muslim generation is the part of the nurturing mother" (Umm Sumayyah al-Muhājirah, 2015d, p. 44). In *Rumiyah* issue five is stated that the "Islam encourages bearing children for numerous reasons. Perhaps the most significant of these is to increase the Muslim population so as to strengthen the Ummah" (I will outnumber the other nations trough you, 2017, p. 34). Furthermore, women are seen as "a place for sowing seeds" (I will outnumber the other nations trough you, 2017, p. 34).

Women are often portrayed as the 'wife of a Jihad fighter'. References to romance between a man and a woman are rare in both magazines, only issue fifteen of *Dabiq* discusses about romance between a man and a woman. More often a marriage is seen as a form of a social contract whereas the men provides for the woman and the woman supports her husband. The Islamic State demands that women do not marry a man who is no Muslim, even when a man and a woman are already married and he "removed the noose of Islam from his neck" they marriage is nullified from the moment he "apostatized from the religion of Islam" (Umm Sumayyah al-Muhājirah, 2015c, p. 44). A woman is not allowed to divorce her husband, and problems within the marriage should be solved within the relationship (The flesh of your spouse is poisonous, 2017, p. 31).

4.2.6. Female empowerment

The last recruitment narrative that might appeal to women is called 'female empowerment'. In 13.82 percent of all articles of the data material, female empowerment is emphasized. Throughout *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* the identity of the empowered women is made visible. Female empowerment in the Islamic State is not the same as female empowerment in Western countries. Feminism by Christian pagans in Europe, America and Australia is seen as 'evil' and a 'crime'. Feminist women abandoning motherhood, wifehood, chastity, femininity and heterosexuality are seen as dangers and deviants by the Islamic State. True women live according to these values crime' (The Fitrah of mankind, 2016, p. 25). Women will empower themselves by rejecting feminism in the West, they can choose to leave these evil countries and to preform *hijrah*. The nurturing role of women in the Islamic State is emphasized throughout *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*. This role is seen as an enormous responsibility, because they are the caretakers of the next Muslim generation (Umm Sumayyah al-Muhājirah, 2015d, p. 44). Their intellect is being praised: "My Muslim sister, indeed you are a mujahidah, and if the weapon of the men is the assault rifle and the explosive belt, then know that the weapon of

the women is good behavior and knowledge. Because you will enter fierce battles between truth and falsehood" (Umm Sumayyah al-Muhājirah, 2015d, p. 44). Umm Sumayyah al-Muhājirah (2015d) argues: "… my sisterly advice to you as you are preparing the lion cubs of the Khilāfah is that first comes knowledge, then the weapon. The danger of a weapon without knowledge is great and very rarely does it get things right" (p. 45). It is argued that without knowledge it not possible to build a state. Therefore, it is emphasized that one of the most important roles of a woman is to share her knowledge with her children. Without women preparing their children for war there would be no such thing as building the Islamic State, therefore women are of a great influence in the Islamic State, they are indispensable. Being steadfast and supporting their husband is seen as another key role (Our journey to Allah, 2017, p. 12), they are seen as similar and they play a major role in keeping their husband and children steadfast (Stories of steadfastness from the lives of the Sahabiyyat, 2016, p. 29). Women will empower themselves by fulfilling the duty of being a mother and a wife. These messages show that women and men are of equal importance for building and contributing to a caliphate. However, it should be taken into account that this does not mean the presence of gender equality.

Women are excepted from fighting: "… the absence of an obligation of jihād and war upon the Muslim woman – except in defense against someone attacking her – does not overturn her role in building the Ummah, producing men, and sending them out to the fierceness of battle" (Umm Sumayyah al-Muhājirah, 2015d, p. 41). Although the Islamic State rejects women fighting, this quote leaves space for own interpretation. In *Dabiq* issue thirteen, Tashfeen Malik, one of the San Barnardino attackers is being honored. She is called 'a brave hero' (In words of the enemy, 2016, p. 46), and she is referred to "the brother's blessed wife accompanied him despite the fact that combat is not even obligatory upon her, but she did not want to lose the opportunity for shahādah at a time when many "men" of the Ummah have turned away from the obligation of jihād" (Foreword, 2016, p. 3). In *Rumiyah* issue two, three women who carried out an attack on a police station in Mombasa, Kenya, are being praised (A message from East Africa, 2016, p. 3). Despite the Islamic State not wanting women to fight, these women are being glorified and praised, they are not being condemned for their actions. This shows a contradiction, a difficult relationship between women and combat. The female authors in *Dabiq* praise fighting the infidels, in issue fifteen of *Dabiq* the female author even calls for violence in Europe (Umm Khalid al-Finlandiyyah, 2016, p. 38).

Publishing these stories about women taking up arms, might empower other women by the prospect of fighting.

4.2.2. Image analysis

There are thirty-two images in *Dabiq* and thirty-two images in *Rumiyah* that make a reference to the female gender. It is noteworthy that there are almost no images of adult women in *Dabiq*, except for two images in *Dabiq* issue seven where there are two images of women who are publicly stoned (Image 7.1. & 7.2.). Even in these images the women are completely veiled. In other images in *Dabiq* which depict adult women, the women are being blurred (Image 12.1. & 15.5.). Blurring adult women also happens in several images of *Rumiyah* (Image 3.1., 4.1., 6.1., 6.2., 8.4. & 10.4.).

The images found in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* can be subdivided into the categories that correspond with the recruitment narratives found in the magazines. The analyzed images in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* support the four female recruitment narratives. In the appendix in table 3 and 4 a list of the analyzed images is being displayed.

The religious obligation narrative is being supported with images that make a reference to the obligatory *hijrah*. All the pictures make a reference to traveling; in one image a train of camels is shown (Image 8.1.), one image is of a suitcase (Image 13.1.), one of an airport in Turkey (Image 13.3.) and one of the border between Turkey and Syria (Image 13.4.).

Different images support the community, belonging and meaning narrative. As said before in *Dabiq* issue seven there are two images of women being publicly stoned (Image 7.1. & 7.2.), in *Dabiq* issue two there are also two images that depict the stoning of women, however, in these images the women are not visible (Image 2.2. & 2.3.). All four images show the public stoning of women who committed adultery. The crowd around the women who carry out the punishment consists solely out of men, which shows the patriarchal structures in the Islamic State. Adultery is seen as a criminal act; it refers to women's behavior and it makes a reference to chastity, modesty and honor. The images instruct how a woman should behave and what these values mean. *Dabiq* shows that women who neglect the values of chastity, modesty and honor are seen as 'vile' (In the words of the enemy, 2015b, p. 53). Being 'vile' is seen as a major sin (The danger of abandoning Darul-Islam, 2015, p. 23). These four images fit in the community, belonging and meaning narrative. It shows how women are getting punished when they are not being a good wife. Furthermore, there are several images

in *Dabiq* that depict cities in the Islamic State (Image 8.1. & 8.3.), and one in *Rumiyah* (Image 6.3.). There are other images in *Rumiyah* that show how life should be in the Islamic State (Image 1.1., 1.2., 8.3. & 8.4.), and there are images that show how beautiful the Islamic State is in *Dabiq* (Image 12.2.) and *Rumiyah* (Image 8.1. & 11,1.).

There are several images that support the motherhood and wifehood narrative. There is a total of eleven images that depict children in *Dabiq* (Image 10.4., 11.1., 11.2., 11.3., 11.4., 14.1., 15.5. & 15.10.) and *Rumiyah* (Image 5.1., 7.3., 9.2. & 9.3.), these images make a reference to motherhood. In one of the images in *Rumiyah* a young girl holds a book and a young boy holds a gun (Image 5.1.), this image shows the patriarchal structure in the Islamic State. Girls are seen as mother, wives and teachers and men are seen as fighters. In several images in *Dabiq* (Image 10.4., 11.3. & 11.4.) and one in *Rumiyah* (Image 9.2.) this image of boys being future fighters is being showed by depicting young boys in army clothes and holding guns. A reference is being made to wifehood by depicting images of jihad fighters in *Dabiq* (Image 9.1., 10.2. & 10.3.) and *Rumiyah* (Image 6.4., 10.1., 10.3. & 13.2.).

By showing images of books a reference is made to female empowerment. In *Dabiq* image 10.1. and in *Rumiyah* image 2.1, 3.2., 7.1., 12.1 and 12.2. a book or a page of a book is shown. In the narrative of female empowerment is seen that women are praised for their knowledge and being a teacher to their children, the images of books in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* represent knowledge.

There are also images in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* which support the victim- and common enemy narrative. These two narratives are found in articles which mention women, but which are not aimed at recruiting women. In contrast, these narratives are used to recruit men. In *Dabiq* an image of a tombstone of a young girl refers to the victim narrative (Image 2.1.). There are several images in *Dabiq* (Image 12.1. & 15.3.) and *Rumiyah* (Image 3.1., 4.1., 6.1., 6.2., 7.2., 8.4., 10.2. & 10.4.) that depict the common enemy. In several images in *Dabiq* (Image 15.2., 15.4, 15.6., 15.7., 15.8. & 15.9.) Western values such as equality, homosexuality, democracy and the legalization of soft drugs, are being rejected.

4.3| Analyzing the findings

The findings show that the narratives used in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* to recruit Western women are highly gendered. The narratives shed a light on the underlying pull factors in the

female radicalization process. Four main female recruitment narratives can be found in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*: religious obligation; community, belonging and meaning; motherhood and wifehood; and female empowerment. Of all the data material sixteen percent of the articles include the religious obligation narrative, twenty-two percent the community, belonging and meaning narrative, eighteen percent the motherhood and wife narrative and fourteen percent the narrative of female empowerment. In table 1 the female recruitment narratives are presented in a bar graph. In *Dabiq* the majority of the recruitment narratives on religious obligation, motherhood and wifehood, and female empowerment can be found, in *Rumiyah* most of the recruitment narratives on community, belonging and meaning can be found. The female recruitment narratives found in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* are being strengthened by emotional and personal stories, Arabic jargon, passages from the Quran and *hadiths*, and visual images.

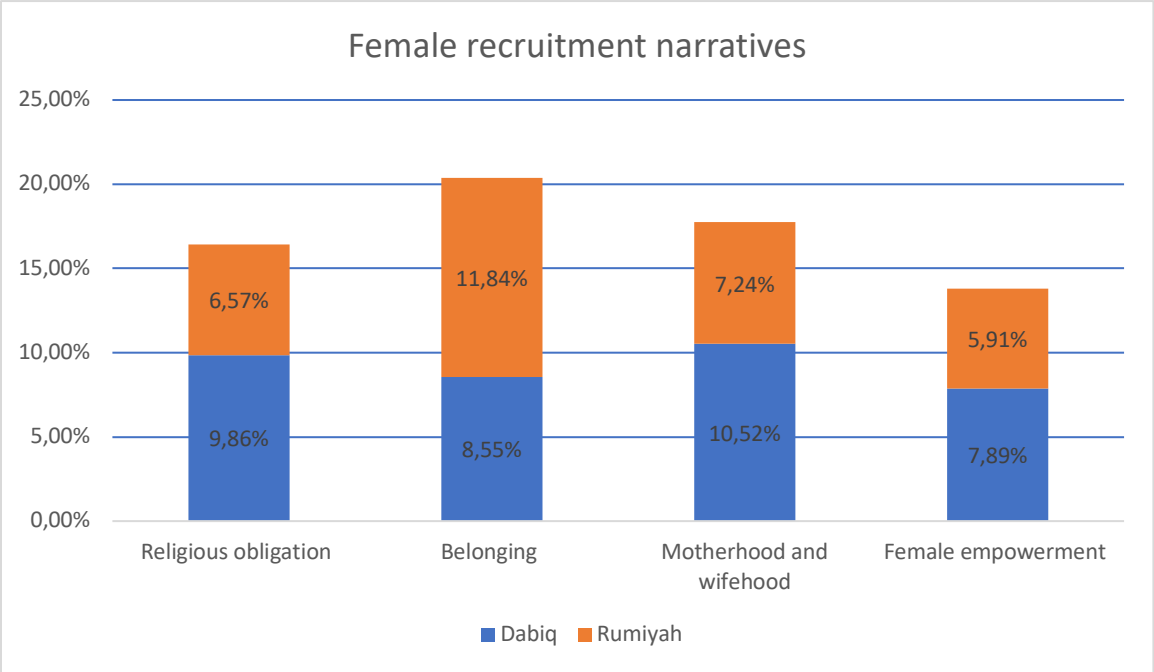

Table 5: Female recruitment narratives in Dabiq and Rumiyah

In the remaining articles in which women are being discussed two other narratives can be found. However, these narratives do not encourage women to join the Islamic State, but these narratives encourage men to join the Islamic State and to perform Jihad. These two narratives are called the victim- and common enemy narrative. The victim narrative can be

found in thirty percent of the data material and the common enemy narrative can be found in almost twenty-six percent of the articles.

The framework made by Welch (2018) is being modified. Welch (2018) introduced five recruitment narratives found in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*. This study specified in recruitment narratives for Western women. Some of the narratives found by Welch are being included in the framework that represents the recruitment narratives for women found in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*, other narratives found by Welch are left out in this framework. This study added two gendered narratives to the framework of female recruitment narratives.

Welch (2018) found five main recruitment narratives in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah:* (1) Islamic teaching and justification; (2) stories of progress and heroism; (3) establishment of common enemies; (4) appeals to community, belonging, and meaning; and (5) instructional and inspirational articles which empower readers to participate in jihad. In this study the first narrative mentioned by Welch, Islamic teaching and justification, is adapted to religious obligation. Welch (2018) found out that the narratives in the Islamic teaching and justification narrative offer a justification for violence. However, the recruitment narratives aimed at women fighting is a subject which is hardly ever discussed. Religious narratives aimed at recruiting women focus on the obligation of *hijrah* and the obligation to acquire knowledge about the Islam. The second narrative mentioned by Welch, progress and heroism, which focuses on inspiring stories about success, progress and victories is left out the current framework, in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* stories about success, progress and victories are not used to recruit women. The third narrative found by Welch, the common enemy, is found in articles that mention the female gender, but these narratives are not used to recruit women. The fourth narrative mentioned by Welch, community, belonging and meaning can be found in the recruitment narratives targeting women. The last narrative mentioned by Welch, inspiration and instruction, is not used in the framework of female recruitment narratives. This narrative mentioned by Welch (2018) empowers readers to individual violent action, the narratives found in this study do not empower the female audience to individual violent action. It empowers readers to perform *hijrah*, to be a 'good' wife or to give charity by telling inspiring stories of women who already did so. However, these inspiring stories and instructions will fit in one of the four female recruitment narratives mentioned in this study and these inspiring stories support the main narratives.

Besides using two narratives that were mentioned by Welch before, two new gendered narratives are added to the framework of female recruitment narratives: motherhood and wifehood, and female empowerment.

5| Conclusion

Laquer (2016) argues that while terrorism is widely discussed, it is also one of the least understood issues of our time. Academic research on terrorism mainly focuses on male perpetrators (De Graaf, 2012). The involvement of women in terrorist organizations is underrepresented (Sciarone, 2016), and therefore poorly understood (De Leede, 2018b). Women have always been involved in terrorist movements (De Graaf, 2012), the last decades the use of women in terrorist organizations is rising (Raghavan & Balasubramaniyan, 2014). Over the last years many women have travelled to Syria and Iraq to join the Islamic State (Weggemans, Peters, Bakker, & Bont, 2016). Goñi (2017) argues that women's radicalization and involvement in terrorist groups remain relatively under-researched, and that the topic of gender relating to security and terrorism, is seen as superfluous, which results in misconceptions and gender-blindness. There is a need for a gender-conscious approach, and therefore, it is critical to study the motivations of these female foreign fighters. This study aims to give a better understanding of how gender is used in by the Islamic State to recruit women from the West. It is an effort to close the gap on research between male- and female perpetrators. When studying the propaganda efforts made by the Islamic State to recruit women, it is the first step to closing this gap in research and to get a better understanding of pull factors that might lure women to travel to Syria and Iraq. The research question that is central in this study: "*To what extent does the Islamic State use gender-oriented narratives as a recruitment tool to appeal to Western women?".*

In this study a content analysis is conducted in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* to answer the research question. Both magazines were a primary source of the Islamic State's propaganda. Both magazines were written in various languages. The availability of propaganda written in English and the open online access are leading factors for the selection of data for this study. Welch (2018) already did research on recruitment narratives in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah,* however, he did not take gender into account. He found five main narratives: (1) Islamic teaching and justification; (2) progress and heroism; (3) common enemy; (4) community, belonging and meaning; and (5) inspiration and instruction. This study focusses on female recruitment narratives, therefore the framework of Welch is used as a starting point and adapted where needed.

A study conducted by Baele, Boyd and Coan (2020) showed that in the twenty-eight issues of *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* women were referred to over 1500 times. First, to identify the articles that mention, discuss or target women in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*, there was searched for woman, women, sisters(s), female(s), daughter(s), girl(s), mother(s), she, she's, wife and wives. After identifying the data material, a deductive coding system was used to determine the main narratives in the data material. This study identified four female recruitment narratives: religious obligation; community, belonging and meaning; motherhood and wifehood; and female empowerment. The female gender is also used in narratives to recruit men, in articles that just rarely mention women, women are seen as victims or portrayed as part of the common enemy. To answer the research question, the Islamic State uses highly gendered-oriented narratives as a recruitment tool to appeal to Western women. These recruitment narratives are being strengthened by emotional and personal stories, Arabic jargon, passages from the Quran and *hadiths*, and visual images.

6| Discussion

The research method used in this study is both quantitative and qualitative. Analyzing the main recruitment narratives in *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* is partly subjective, personal interpretations and bias may be part of the results. However, by searching for specific words and themes it is tried to keep it as objective as possible to secure validity and reliability. This research aims to close the gap between terrorism and the female gender. However, much more research has to be conducted in order to completely close the gap. Therefore, some future recommendations are made.

The involvement of women in terrorist organizations is underrepresented (Sciarone, 2016), and therefore poorly understood (De Leede, 2018b). The relationship between gender and terrorism is also largely underexplored in terrorism research. There is a need for a gender-conscious approach, and therefore, it is critical to study the motivations of these female foreign fighters. This study aims to give a better understanding of how gender is used by the Islamic State to recruit women from the West, it reveals possible pull factors that might appeal to Western women. It is an effort to close the gap on research between male- and female perpetrators. This study remains explorative. Identifying female recruitment narratives is not the same as explaining why people join. In order to know if these recruitment narratives are effective, former female foreign fighters have to be interviewed. Personal stories might gain a better insight in which recruitment narratives and therefore which pull factors attract these women to migrate to the Islamic State. It must be emphasized that individuals are neither radicalized nor recruited by narratives alone. A lot of other factors, such as personal- and environmental factors, play a major role in this process. Another recommendation for future research is to analyze propaganda sources other than *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*. These two magazines were selected because they were easily accessible and written in English. However, *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah* are just a small collection of all the propaganda the Islamic State published. Other propaganda sources, in other languages, might expose other recruitment narratives.

Research on gender and terrorism can be used for counter-terrorism efforts. Results from this study can be used as a tool for countering radicalization. Currently, there are twenty-three women and fifty-six children in detention- and refugee camps who want to return home to the Netherlands. These women launched a lawsuit against the Dutch

government to bring their children and themselves back to their country. In an earlier ruling the Court decided that the state has to make “all possible efforts” to return the children (Al Jazeera, 2019). This ruling was later overruled by another judge. The women turned to the Supreme Court, but they are still awaiting the court ruling (Reuters, 2019). What the motives were for these women to join the Islamic State and what their incentive is to return home is not known. It is important to know the underlying ideology of an extremists’ group in order to encounter its message (Clarion Project, 2014). Ingram (2017) argues that counterterrorism strategic communications efforts should include neutralization of the enemy’s propaganda efforts. So called ‘counternarratives’ is content that deconstructs the message of extremists. These counternarratives are aimed at people who are in the process of radicalizing and at those radicals who return from Syria and Iraq to deradicalize (Briggs & Silverman, 2014). Goñi (2017) argues that current counter-terrorism strategies exacerbating gender blindness, and that gender sensitive policies are important for terrorism and anti-radicalization. Results from this study identify thematic narratives that appeal to women traveling to Syria and Iraq. By examining these narratives a better understanding of proper gender specific counterterrorism strategic communications efforts can be implemented. Further research is needed on how these narratives could benefit counterterrorism strategic communications and how gender can be used as a tool in these counterterrorism efforts.

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Appendix

Table 1: Articles in *Dabiq* targeting a female audience

Dabiq issue	Name of the article	Author
7: From Hypocrisy to Apostasy: The Extinction of the Grayzone	To Our Sisters: A Brief Interview with Umm Basir al-Muhajirah	Umm Bashir al-Muhajirah
8: Shari'ah Alone Will Rule Africa	To Our Sisters: The Twin Halves of the Muhajirin	Umm Sumayyah al-Muhajirah
9: They Plot and Allah Plots	From Our Sisters: Slave-Girls or Prostitutes?	Umm Sumayyah al-Muhajirah
10: The Law of Allah or the Laws of Men	From Our Sisters: They Are Not Lawful Spouses for One Another	Umm Sumayyah al-Muhajirah
11: From the Battles of AlAhzāb to the War of Coalitions	To Our Sisters: A Jihad Without Fighting	Umm Sumayyah al-Muhajirah
12: Just Terror	To Our Sisters: Two or Three or Four	Umm Sumayyah al-Muhajirah
13: The Rafidah from Ibn Saba' to the Dajjal	To Our Sisters: Advice on Ihdad	Unknown
15: Break the Cross	For Women: The Fitrah of Mankind	Unknown
15: Break the Cross	For Women: How I Came to Islam	Umm Khalid al-Finlandiyyah

Table 2: Articles in *Rumiyah* targeting a female audience

Rumiyah issue	Name of the article	Author
1	O Women, Give Charity	Unknown
2	Stories of Steadfastness of the Lives of the Sahabiyyat	Unknown
3	Abide your Homes	Unknown
4	Marrying Widows is an Established Sunnad	Unknown
5	Sisters: I will outnumber the other Nations trough you	Unknown
6	Sisters: Wala and Bara, O Women	Unknown
7: Establishing the Islamic State between the Prophetic Methodology and the Paths of the Deviants	What they never told me	Umm Musa al-Finlandiyyah
7: Establishing the Islamic State between the Prophetic Methodology and the Paths of the Deviants	Sisters: The Flesh of your Spouse is Poisonous	Unknown
8: Among the Believers are Men Shaykah Abu Sulayman Ash-Shami	Sisters: Zuhd in the Dunya is the Way of the Salaf	Unknown
9: The Ruling of the Belligerent Christians	Sisters: The Woman is a Shepherd in Her Husband's Home	Unknown
10: The Jihad in East Asia	Sisters: Be a Supporter, not a Demoralizer	Unknown
11: The Ruling on Gahanimah, Fay, and Ihtitab	Sisters: Our Journey to Allah	Unknown

12: It will be a Fire that Burns the Cross and its People in Raqqah	Sisters: The Female Slaves of Allah in the Houses of Allah	Unknown
13: Allah cast Terror into their Hearts	The Hijrah of Umm Sulaym al-Muhajirah	Umm Sulaym al-Muhajirah

Table 3: List of images from *Dabiq*

Dabiq issue	Photo number	Description	Recruitment narrative	Page
2	2.1.	Tombstone of a young girl	Victim	15
2	2.2.	Stoning of a woman	Community, belonging and meaning	36
2	2.3.	Stoning of a woman	Community, belonging and meaning	36
7	7.1.	Stoning of a woman	Community, belonging and meaning	43
7	7.2.	Stoning of a woman	Community, belonging and meaning	43
7	7.3.	Abu Basir, the men of Umm Basir Al-Muhajirah	Motherhood and wifehood	50
8	8.1.	Train of camels	Religious obilgation	34
8	8.2.	The city of Mosul	Community, belonging and meaning	35
8	8.3.	The great masjid of of An-Nuri in Mosul	Community, belonging and meaning	37
9	9.1.	Jihad fighters	Motherhood and wifehood	46
10	10.1.	Page of a book	Female empowerment	42
10	10.2.	Jihad fighters	Motherhood and wifehood	44
10	10.3.	Jihad fighters	Motherhood and wifehood	45
10	10.4.	Children praying in army clothes	Motherhood and wifehood	47
11	11.1.	Child	Motherhood and wifehood	40
11	11.2.	A rifle	Motherhood and wifehood	42
11	11.3.	Children in army clothes	Motherhood and wifehood	44
11	11.4.	Children praying in army clothes	Motherhood and wifehood	45
12	12.1.	Scene after the attacks in Paris (woman made blurred)	Common enemy	2
12	12.2.	Fruit blossom	Community, belonging and meaning	19
13	13.1.	Letter and envelope	Religious obligation	24
14	14.1.	Little girl holding the flag of IS	Motherhood and wifehood	67
15	15.1.	Sigmeund Freud	Common enemy	21
15	15.2.	LGBTQ colours displayed at the White House	Common enemy	22
15	15.3.	Leaders of an enemy army	Common enemy	23
15	15.4.	Really supporting drugs	Common enemy	23
15	15.5.	Little girl	Motherhood and wifehood	24
15	15.6.	Row of people who are going to vote (women are blurred)	Common enemy	28
15	15.7.	Girl with a poster about gay marriage	Common enemy	32
15	15.8.	A church in Finland	Common enemy	37
15	15.9.	A prison in Finland	Common enemy	38
15	15.10.	Muslim children	Motherhood and wifehood	39

Table 4: List of images from *Rumiyah*

Rumiyah issue	Photo number	Description	Recruitment narrative	Page
1	1.1.	Coins	Community, belonging and meaning	18
1	1.2.	Jewelry	Community, belonging and meaning	20
2	2.1.	Book	Female empowerment	28
3	3.1.	A crowd with people being described as the ideal target (women are being blurred)	Common enemy	12
3	3.2.	Book	Female empowerment	36
4	4.1.	Group of people (woman is blurred)	Common enemy	8
5	5.1.	Children (girl with book and boy with gun)	Motherhood and wifehood	34
6	6.1.	The Astana conference (women are blurred)	Common enemy	6
6	6.2.	Turkish politican (woman is blurred)	Common enemy	14
6	6.3.	Islamic State	Community, belonging and meaning	23
6	6.4.	Jihad fighter	Motherhood and wifehood	24
7	7.1.	Book	Female empowerment	18
7	7.2.	Memorial of Finnish soliers	Common enemy	20
7	7.3.	Child	Motherhood and wifehood	32
8	8.1.	Dates	Community, belonging and meaning	16
8	8.2.	The palace of Khosrau - The enemies of Allah lived in luxury while His Messenger g lived humbly	Common enemy	17
8	8.3.	The early generations of Muslims lived in simplistic homes	Community, belonging and meaning	18
8	8.4.	The aftermath of the attack in London (woman is blurred)	Common enemy	28
9	9.1.	Home	Community, belonging and meaning	18
9	9.2.	Child (soldier)	Motherhood and wifehood	20
9	9.3.	Child	Motherhood and wifehood	21
10	10.1.	Jihad fighters	Motherhood and wifehood	16
10	10.2.	Jihad fighter who returned to his country	Common enemy	17
10	10.3.	Jihad fighter	Motherhood and wifehood	18
10	10.4.	Scene after the attacks in Manchester (woman is blurred)	Common enemy	34
11	11.1.	A wood	Community, belonging and meaning	12
12	12.1.	Book	Female empowerment	36
12	12.2.	Book	Female empowerment	37
13	13.1.	A suitcase	Religious obigation	30
13	13.2.	Jihad fighters	Motherhood and wifehood	31
13	13.3.	Gaziantep International Airport	Religious obligation	33
13	13.4.	The border between Turkey and Syria	Religious obigation	35