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Note. Combatant Hands out Candy. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2021, May).

"If you are a herder, driver or trader, they won't touch you - just follow their rules and regulations governing the territory (…) They don't touch civilians, just security personnel"
– anonymous herder interviewed by Reuters (Carsten & Kimini, 2018).

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Introduction

Traditionally the state was viewed as the sole provider of order and protection, which has led to the association that rebel groups form a violent threat to a population. Yet there seems to be a discrepancy between this perception and the view of civilians living under said rebel groups' rule. A growing body of literature points out that the role of governance is not limited to the state: in some cases, populations recognise and support rebel groups as their legitimate rulers. Indeed, rebel governance is not a new phenomenon, nor is it limited to a particular region. Rebel groups have taken on the role of the provider of services where governments fall short in doing so, as illustrated by Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) in the Lake Chad Basin (LCB). Although conflicts are often associated with chaos, some rebel groups have managed to establish war institutions that bring order to chaos – as seen by the Houthis in Yemen (Arjona, 2014). Rebel groups' ability to create institutions, provide access to services, and maintain order is further proven by the Taliban in Afghanistan, who seized power over a state and rule over a population (Terpstra, 2020).

These examples of 'rebel governance' depart from the stereotype of 'violent rebels' merely creating violence, chaos, and disorder. Despite this, rebel groups remain dominantly approached through a state-centred lens, and as a result their activities are regarded as a threat. Given the growing emergence of rebel groups who provide some sense of order and stability, it seems no longer appropriate to analyse non-state actors' activities through a state-centred lens. Instead, it is useful to expand the security lens to non-state actors as well (Arjona, 2014).

There is a growing body of research that expands their approach to include non-state actors (Arjona, 2014; Podder, 2013). However, current research often assesses rebel governance and the legitimacy required to maintain it by focusing on the alternatives rebel groups can offer in case of weak state relations (Bruijn & Both, 2017; Podder, 2013; Wickham-Crowley, 2015). This leads to a simplified understanding of rebel governance by diminishing it to merely replacing the role of the state when it is negligent or oppressive to civilians (Schlichte & Schneckener, 2015). Often, this approach focuses on performance-centred sources of legitimacy, regarding the actions of rebel groups, such as the delivery of services. By doing so, current research often overlooks the opportunity to examine the symbolic sources of legitimacy rebel groups can draw on as well – which refers to the symbolic language rebel groups can use as part of a narrative that justifies their claims, for instance, through the framing of a common

enemy (Schlichte & Schneckener, 2015). It is, therefore, fruitful to further expand the analytical focus to so-called symbolic centred sources of legitimacy that strengthen rebel groups as well.

ISWAP's rebel governance in the LCB illustrates the discrepancy in media and civilian views on rebel groups, as well as current research' focus on performance-centred sources of legitimacy mentioned above. Whereas the media mostly focuses on ISWAP as violent rebels who pose a threat to the state, civilians living under their rule do not share that sentiment (International Crisis Group [ICG], 2019). In the past decades, the Lake Chad region, which covers territory of the states of Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria, has been neglected by its respective governments (Iocchi, 2020). Consequently, locals reported living with a total absence of services – that is, until ISWAP established order, boosted the economy, and provided access to resources and services (Chitra et. al, 2018). Civilians refer to ISWAP as 'Dawla', which translates to state (Iocchi, 2020). There is little research available on the sources of legitimacy ISWAP uses for their rebel governance. The research that did take legitimacy into account has primarily approached ISWAP as a state-opposing actor by focusing on how it replaced the traditional role of the state through their delivery of services – thus focusing on performance-centred sources of legitimacy (Samuel, 2021; United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2018). As a result, most current research on ISWAP either overlooks the role of legitimacy all together or neglects their possible use of symbolic sources of legitimacy. This limits the understanding of ISWAP's rule in the LCB, which has large implications: counter-terrorism approaches are thus far ineffective and have even alienated civilians more, increasing their loyalty to ISWAP (Iocchi, 2020).

Therefore, it is useful to fill the research gap on the various sources of legitimacy, particularly the overlooked symbolic ones, that ISWAP may use to maintain their rebel governance in the LCB. This makes the group a tangible case to examine. Hence, this thesis aims to examine "In what ways did ISWAP foster symbolic legitimacy for its rebel governance in Lake Chad Basin since 2016?"

Examining this question while using a non-state centred approach that refrains from merely looking at performance-centred aspects of rebel groups makes for a more complete understanding of rebel governance. By doing so, it adds to an understudied yet highly relevant approach to rebel governance.

This thesis first conceptualises rebel governance and legitimacy, which is then followed by a brief overview of the debate on these concepts in the literature. Next, the research of rebel governance will narrow to the case of ISWAP in the LCB, for which the methodology will provide a case justification and the method of choice. Then, this thesis provides an overview of the context of the conflict, ISWAP's emergence, and a review of literature on ISWAP's sources of legitimacy. Finally, an analysis of ISWAP's image and use of myths and symbols shall be conducted, followed by a discussion of the findings as well as a conclusion.

Conceptualization

In order to examine rebel governance and take an approach that goes beyond the performance of rebel groups, this thesis will first establish an understanding of two key concepts necessary for discussing this topic: rebel governance, and armed groups legitimacy.

Rebel governance

Although the rule by non-state actors has long been understudied, more recently scholars have underlined the need to develop more research on rule by rebel groups. As this thesis aims to contribute to this field of study, a clarification of the concept 'rebel governance' is required. Rebel governance refers to the administration of "social, political and economic life of non-combatants during war" (Arjona, Kasfir & Mampilly, 2015, p. 25). It comes with several minimal "scope conditions: territorial control, a resident population, and violence or threat of violence" (Arjona et al., 2015, p. 21). However, despite the latter aspect playing an important role in rebel governance, the use or threat of violence is not sustainable, which makes it useful to create voluntary compliance rather than coercion. Moreover, rebel groups need to create a system to fund their activities. These conditions form incentives for rebel groups to create institutions to manage the regulation of civilian life (Arjona, 2014; Mampilly, 2015). Additionally, (in)formal rules and norms of behaviour play a crucial role in the emergence of a *wartime social order* (Arjona, 2014; Mampilly, 2015). This use of an, often symbolic, social contract establishing the rules of conduct between the rebel groups and the locals results in high predictability, i.e. order. In contrast to this, no social contract between combatants and locals, or not adhering to the social contract, results in high unpredictability: disorder (Arjona, 2014). Although rebel groups are often approached with a focus on state-opposition, recently a growing literature emphasises the usefulness of expanding the lens to improve the

understanding of rebel groups as actors who may add value to a population (Duyvesteyn et. al, 2015). The literature review of this thesis will elaborate on the different approaches to rebel governance. In order to create a social order and trigger compliance rebel groups seek to increase their legitimacy. The following paragraph will expand upon this desired legitimacy.

(Armed Groups') Legitimacy

For those in power, it is important to ensure compliance motivated by perceived legitimacy, as authority based on coercion or rewards is costlier (Beetham, 2013). It is, therefore, useful to conceptualise what is meant by 'legitimacy'.

One of the foundational thinkers of the concept of legitimacy is Max Weber. Weber points out that a ruler's power becomes legitimate "where those involved in it believe it to be so" (Beetham, 2013, p. 8). In other words, a powerholder is legitimate if people feel obliged to obey its rules because they view the ruler as rightful. Weber then classifies the sources of legitimacy beliefs based on rational-legalistic, traditional and charismatic principles. These sources that make a ruler's power legitimate can be divided in separate categories. First, those that come from rule conformity, meaning they are based on pre-existing conventional norms or rules. Second, those that come from traditional, religious or monarchical validity, meaning they are based on the pre-existing beliefs of the sacredness of the authority. Or finally, those that come from "evidence of consent confirmed through actions" that reinforce the ruler's legitimacy – such as pledging allegiance, paying taxes, voting or engaging in a contract (Beetham, 2013, p. 12). However, Weber's notion of legitimacy has been heavily criticised for being reductionist. Moreover, Weber's definition applies to state authorities; in line with the conventional wisdom of legitimacy it overlooks the need for legitimacy of non-state actors. Similar to state authorities, rebel groups need legitimacy as well to justify their claim of power, which makes it a crucial aspect in establishing rebel governance. It is, therefore, useful to apply the concept to non-state actors as well.

Schlichte & Schneckener (2015) build on Weber's notion of legitimacy by conceptualising it as "the belief in the justification or the moral validity of a political organisation and its activities" (p. 413). Applied to armed groups, this translates to "the belief in the rightfulness of an armed group's agenda and violent struggle" (Schlichte & Schneckener, 2015, p. 413). Legitimacy is, therefore, different from support: one can support an armed group out of fear or for their own gain, without viewing the group's agenda as rightful. Receiving legitimacy rather

than merely support comes with several challenges for rebel groups. First, rebel groups need to justify their use of violence. Second, rebel groups must rely on sources of legitimacy to sustain moral and material support for their power. Third, although objectives in addressing various audiences on the local, national, or international level may differ, rebel groups must be consistent in their messages as receiving "support from one level should not be at the expense of legitimacy in another" (Schlichte & Schneckener, 2015, p. 410).

There are numerous ways through which rebel groups can obtain legitimacy, they often draw on multiple sources of legitimacy at the same time. The various sources can be categorised as first 'symbolic' or 'moral' legitimacy, and second 'performance-centred' or 'pragmatic' sources of legitimacy (Schlichte & Schneckener, 2015; Terpstra, 2020). The first category relates to the discourse that constructs a justification of the rebel group's rightfulness. These sources are often part of a larger glorifying narrative using symbolic language related to (local) culture, traditions, and myths that justify the group's actions (Schlichte & Schneckener, 2015; Terpstra, 2020). For instance, rebel groups often deliberately link their narrative to local grievances as that gives them the opportunity to claim they represent the voice of the local community (Schlichte & Schneckener, 2015). Furthermore, symbolic legitimacy can stem from negatively framing a common enemy, as rebel group can use this threat to justify their use of violence as being necessary to protect or liberate the community (Schlichte & Schneckener, 2015). The second category, performance-centred or pragmatic sources of legitimacy, relate to the actual actions and behaviour of rebel groups. For instance, a rebel group can increase its legitimacy through the delivery of services to a population, such as providing access to food, water, health care, protection, justice, and taxation (Schlichte & Schneckener, 2015; Terpstra, 2020). Furthermore, a charismatic leader or martyrs that 'heroically die for the struggle' can further justify the use of violence of rebel groups and increase their perceived credibility (Schlichte & Schneckener, 2015; Beetham, 2013; Terpstra, 2020). Additionally, traditional rule based on personal loyalties can foster legitimacy as well. Finally, the participation in formal procedures, such as regular meetings or internal elections can legitimise a rebel group's image (Schlichte & Schneckener, 2015). Rebel groups can, and need to, draw on various of these sources of legitimacy simultaneously to support their rebel governance (Schlichte & Schneckener, 2015). Whereas symbolic sources of legitimacy are most crucial during the rebel group's emergence, performance-centred sources of legitimacy are important in maintaining long-term legitimacy (Schlichte & Schneckener, 2015; Terpstra, 2020). From now on, this thesis will refer to the sources of legitimacy as symbolic and performance-centred. The next

paragraph will link the concepts of rebel governance and legitimacy together by reflecting upon the debate within the literature on rebel groups.

Literature review

Within the rebel governance literature, some scholars focus on rebel groups as actors who replace the role of the state, for instance in case of state neglect or oppression of the civilian population (Bruijn & Both, 2017; Podder, 2013; Wickham-Crowley, 2015). The first section of the literature review elaborates on this approach and will be titled 'state-opposition: replacing the social contract as a source of legitimacy'. However, there is a debate in the rebel governance literature, which will be reflected upon in the second section of the literature review. This section elaborates on a second approach that expands its scope beyond state-opposition to ensure a broader understanding of rebel governance. This section is titled as 'Rebel groups beyond state-opposition'. Demonstrating that this approach allows for various takes on rebel governance and their sources of legitimacy, the approach is divided into several sub-categories: external relations, order, symbols and myths. The different approaches result in different takes on the sources of legitimacy of rebel governance and whether legitimacy is a zero-sum game or not.

I: State-opposition: replacing the social contract as a source of legitimacy

Although the conventional wisdom to rebel groups has long been that they are destructive to the economy and safety of civilians and, therefore, form a threat to stability and order, some authors point out that this approach is outdated (Arjona, 2014; Podder, 2013). Instead, it is useful to differentiate between rebel groups, as some rebel groups form potential for bottom-up state building (Arjona, 2014; Podder, 2013). For instance, government absence, neglect, or oppression can work as a legitimising mechanism for rebel groups to civilians and creates the opportunity for rebel groups to offer an alternative 'social contract' to win over civilians (Bruijn & Both, 2017; Podder, 2013; Wickham-Crowley, 2015). By doing so, a rebel group replaces the 'social contract' a state usually fulfils yet failed to maintain with its population (Podder, 2013; Wickham-Crowley, 2015). Once the social contract is, often symbolically, established, it ensures obedience and taxation of civilians in exchange for the provision of order, services, and protection – and, thus, security (Arjona, 2015; Duyvesteyn et. al, 2015; Milliken & Krause, 2002; Podder, 2013). Taking over the traditional role of a state then justifies the rebel group's

activities, which translates in long-term legitimacy – thus increasing the effectiveness and durability of rebel governance (Arjona, 2015; Podder, 2013; Schlichte & Schneckener, 2015). A social contract is, therefore, a crucial aspect in relations between a rebel group and civilians they aim to rule over.

In case of weak state power, rebel groups can thus increase their legitimacy by providing alternatives to the state in various levels and manners. There are different sources of legitimacy rebel groups can draw from in doing so. Literature often focuses on rebel group's provision of services that are otherwise not available due to state neglect, thus placing emphasis on a performance-centred source of legitimacy (Arjona, 2014; Podder, 2013; Wickham-Crowley, 2015). However, symbolic sources of legitimacy play a crucial role in the state-opposition approach of rebel governance. For instance, rebel groups may align with local grievances related to historical experiences and marginality and frame these as a narrative on a collective memory and victimhood of an oppressive state (Bruijn & Both, 2017). By doing so, the rebel group presents itself as representative of these grievances and delegitimises the state by framing it as a common enemy, which in turn increases their legitimacy (Bruijn & Both, 2017; Podder, 2013; Schlichte & Schneckener, 2015).

Central in these sources of literature is their focus on rebel governance as a replacement – and thus opposition – to the state. In this logic, rebel governance involves a zero-sum game of legitimacy. This means that the increased legitimacy of a rebel governance simultaneously makes for a decrease in the state government's legitimacy and vice versa. Rebels can improve their legitimacy only *because of* the decreased legitimacy of the state resulting from their neglect or oppression. However, there is a divide in the rebel governance literature on approaching rebel groups' legitimacy as state-opposing and a zero-sum game. The second part of the literature review reflects upon this side of the debate, and the various takes on rebel governance and the sources of legitimacy rebel groups can draw from resulting from this 'beyond state-opposition' approach.

II: Rebel groups beyond state-opposition

As touched upon above, a second approach to rebel governance purposely does not focus on state-opposition or replacement as it maintains the view of rebel groups as a threat, which overlooks the value they may contribute to a population (Coggins, 2015; Duyvesteyn et. al, 2015; Worrall, 2017). This approach allows for a more extensive understanding of the sources

of legitimacy of rebel groups. The following part of the literature review reflects on various takes on rebel groups' sources of legitimacy this second approach allows for: external relations, order, symbols, and myths.

External relations

The state-centric view on rebel groups as violent state-opposing actors often leads to the misconception that rebel groups cannot cooperate or participate in effective negotiations with other actors (Coggins, 2015; Duyvesteyn et. al, 2015). As a result, diplomacy, or "the strategic use of talk" to reach one's goals is seen as an ability limited to states only, which implies that rebel groups only understand communication through the use of force (Coggins, 2015, p. 105). In line with this, the '*warrior diplomacy*' approach reflects the state-centric view outlined in the first part of the literature review: it assumes that rebel groups see diplomacy as a zero-sum game, and strategic talks as simply another means of war (Coggins, 2015). By moving beyond state-opposition, one can recognise that rebels make use of violent and non-violent tactics in a similar manner as state leaders do. This is in line with the *shopkeeper approach*, in which an actor views negotiations as an opportunity to reach a mutually beneficial settlement agreement, in which both parties prefer a compromise over continuing violence (Coggins, 2015). Due to the state-centric view on rebel groups, it is often hard for rebel groups to convince external actors, and sometimes even their own ranks, that they are moving away from the warrior approach and pursue a shopkeeper approach instead – in other words: that the negotiations are not a "tactical ploy" (Coggins, 2015, p. 107). Examples of mutually beneficial diplomacy are rebel group's relations with foreign states or businesses who want to profit from resources in the rebel's territory, diasporas who may send financial support, or third-party states who may grant them recognition in exchange for benefits. Negotiations on the protection of civilians, or compliance with international human rights law can, for instance, increase rebel governance' legitimacy resulting from the recognition that comes from cooperation. Public diplomacy can thus be directed at various audiences, informally or through media (Coggins, 2015).

Order

Due to the state-centred lens the relevance of 'order' in rebel governance is often equated with the binary distinction of 'order' and 'disorder' to link the latter to violent rebels (Worrall, 2017). This is misleading as there is always some form of order that is developing and negotiated – even if it is a violent one, a *wartime social order* can emerge (Arjona, 2014; Worrall, 2017).

By looking further than state-opposition, order is a useful tool to understand the complex interactions between authorities, rebel movements, criminal gangs, and the population. Analysing order in relation to these actors can help to reflect "on the ways in which meaning is created out of interactions, discourse, symbols and power-based relationships" (Worrall, 2017, p. 712). Moreover, order is a way to receive compliance without the use of violence, it is a tool that can be "framed, constructed and marketed" for the audience (Arjona, 2014; Mampilly, 2015; Worral, 2017, p. 715). Moreover, rebel groups can improve their legitimacy by modifying "forms of previous order" such as "ordering actors, as well as norms, rules and customs" to recover the legitimacy associated with the previous order (Worrall, 2017, p. 717). The level of involvement of rebel governance in the previous order then determines the form of order and predictability for civilians, thus affecting the group's legitimacy (Arjona, 2014).

Symbols

As discussed above, modifying traditions, norms, and rules of previous orders can form a source of legitimacy for rebel groups (Arjona, 2014; Worrall, 2017). Additionally, rebels can wage a 'symbolic offensive', as symbols give meaning to their actions which in turns shapes the relations between the rebel group and civilians (Mampilly, 2015). There are two kinds of symbolic processes: first, *referential symbols* relate to "coercive and bureaucratic power of the political authority" – which improve identification and compliance of civilians with the rebel group (Mampilly, 2015, p. 79). Strong identification improves unity in the same way it would promote nationalist sentiments for states, and it makes for more committed recruits (Mampilly, 2015). Examples of these symbols are parades and rallies, military uniforms, and costumes. Second, *condensation symbols* target and manipulate emotions associated with patriotic pride concerning an either glorifying or wronged past, or a promising future (Mampilly, 2015). Ultimately, these symbolic processes can replace coercion as a tool to ensure compliance of civilians. Symbols can, thus, strengthen a certain message or narrative, which can be directed at different audiences simultaneously to promote a collective identity and popular support (Mampilly, 2015; Schlichte & Schneckener, 2015) The use of condensation symbols can transform various local cleavages into one main cleavage that aligns with the rebel group's objectives and can form a tool to manipulate emotion and ensure loyalty. Examples of these condensation symbols are the use of "official flags, currencies, anthems, and mottos that reference historical figures or events" that reinforce "myths of shared history, heroic figures, or common beliefs" as part of a certain narrative (Mampilly, 2015, p. 81, 91). The following section will elaborate on the use of myths as a source of legitimacy.

Myths

As touched upon above, the use of myths can form an important part of symbolic legitimacy that rebel groups can draw from. To justify their objectives, rebel groups often refer to "successful or failed past struggles and popular heroes" to create a sense of legacy (Schlichte & Schneckener, 2015, p. 414). Apart from referring to the past, rebel groups can use promises of a 'better future' without struggles their followers may currently face (Schlichte & Schneckener, 2015). To construct these "pasts and futures" as their own, rebel groups can incorporate values, customs, and beliefs associated with these struggles as part of their rebel governance to increase their legitimacy (Hoffman, 2015; Schlichte & Schneckener, 2015, p. 414). Additionally, examples of such myths that rebel groups can use to construct a narrative are ancient spiritual beliefs, religious- or nationalist sentiments, divine authority, or a worshipped heroic figure or martyr (Hoffmann, 2015; Schlichte & Schneckener, 2015). For instance, a myth that glorifies a population's past can reinforce the framing of an enemy, often foreigners, by referring to a collective history of oppression that has inhibited the glorious times. This can then justify the use of violence as it is associated with protection against the common enemy. Likewise, rebel groups can frame their use of violence by glorifying those who use it as "heroes or martyrs" to increase their perceived 'charismatic legitimacy' (Hoffmann, 2015; Schlichte & Schneckener, 2015, p. 415; Beetham, 2013). Thus, by incorporating myths into their rebel governance, rebels can build a political narrative that aims to improve its symbolic legitimacy towards the local population.

The second part of the literature reviews indicates that taking on a non-state-centred lens leads to the inclusion of more sources of legitimacy, which leads to a more complete understanding of rebel governance. Therefore, this thesis will approach rebel governance in the same manner. Furthermore, this thesis will aim to examine symbolic sources of legitimacy to complement the more extensive existing research on performance-centred sources of legitimacy. By doing so, this thesis moves beyond the outdated state-focus that often limits research by merely focusing on state-opposing or replacing aspects of rebel governance (Schlichte & Schneckener, 2015). A rebel governance that previous studies have approached with a focus on state-opposition and its delivery of services, resulting in a neglect of its symbolic sources, is ISWAP in the Lake Chad Basin (LCB). The following chapter will justify why this rebel governance forms a tangible case.

Methodology

This chapter will first justify the case selection of ISWAP in the LCB. Following this, it will elaborate on how to critically examine the research question by identifying a suitable method and case material to draw conclusions from.

Case justification

Due to decades of state neglect of ISWAP's territory in the Lake Chad Basin (LCB), literature often focuses on ISWAP's state-opposition and replacement of the LCB governments' social contract since their emergence in 2016 (Chitra et al., 2018; UNDP, 2018). This has resulted in a focus on ISWAP's delivery of services, which will be elaborated on below in the case chapter. However, despite pointing out the delivery of services must explain local support, previous studies have not yet identified it specifically as a (performance-centred) source of legitimacy (Chitra et al., 2018, p. 10; UNDP, 2018). It is, therefore, evident that aside from identifying the delivery of services as an important aspect in ISWAP's rebel governance, the sources of legitimacy for ISWAP's rebel governance are understudied. This means that the possible use of symbolic sources of legitimacy of ISWAP remain largely unknown. These two limitations, the state-opposition approach, and the resulting focus on the delivery of services – thus, the neglect of possible symbolic sources of legitimacy – in current research prevent a full understanding of ISWAP's rebel governance and the sources of legitimacy they exploit.

Based on the literature review, the value of expanding this state-centred approach on ISWAP's rebel governance beyond state-opposition is evident. Therefore, it would be useful to examine ISWAP by looking further than state-opposition and the alternative social contract it offers through their service provision. This makes ISWAP an interesting group to examine, as it provides an opportunity to test the literature of rebel governance and legitimacy reviewed above in a new context. This had led to the research question 'In what ways does ISWAP foster symbolic legitimacy for its rebel governance in Lake Chad Basin since 2016?' Hence, using a case study, this thesis will critically analyse the possible sources of symbolic legitimacy ISWAP may have used since its emergence in 2016. Doing so will uncover whether the group uses deliberate framing of a symbolic narrative aimed at legitimising ISWAP.

Method

In order to critically examine the symbolic sources of legitimacy that ISWAP's rebel governance may have used since their emergence in 2016, this thesis will make use of a case study. This is the most suitable method for this research, as it allows for applying the theory reviewed in the literature review to ISWAP's rebel governance: a new and understudied context. By doing so, the analysis aims to fill the knowledge gap on ISWAP's sources of symbolic legitimacy.

The analysis will make use of different primary and secondary sources that may shed light on ISWAP's possible construction of an image or narrative, possible related myths, and the use of condensation symbols to emphasise these. These sources include a book written by ISWAP's founder and leader Abu Mus'ab al-Barnawi, and videos released by ISWAP (Jawad Al-Tamimi, 2018; Zenn, 2020). Furthermore, the analysis will complement these primary sources with a variety of sources: interviews with civilians, ex-combatants of both ISWAP and rival rebel groups, and al-Barnawi; articles; books, and reports by international organisations that cover ISWAP's rebel governance in the LCB since 2016.

The analysis will first examine whether ISWAP has a certain image or narrative it is known for. Next, this thesis aims to identify whether ISWAP strengthens this narrative by triggering collective emotions or memories using myths. This thesis aims to identify these myths by analysing whether the sources contain references to an either glorious or oppressed shared history and the possible related framing of an enemy that obstructed or caused this history, heroic figures or martyrs, personal charisma, or an emphasis on common beliefs (Hoffman, 2015; Mampilly, 2015). Finally, the analysis aims to identify possible condensation symbols that reinforce ISWAP's constructed narrative, such as the use of "official flags, currencies, anthems, and mottos that reference historical figures or events" (Mampilly, 2015, p. 81). Identifying these myths and condensation symbols as part of a constructed narrative or image of ISWAP will then shed light on ISWAP's symbolic sources of legitimacy.

The following chapter will introduce the case by providing background information on the conflict and ISWAP's emergence, and by reviewing current literature on ISWAP's sources of legitimacy. This will illustrate the limited information being focused on ISWAP's performance-centred sources of legitimacy, which resulted in a lack of knowledge on ISWAP's symbolic sources of legitimacy.

The case of ISWAP in the LCB (2016-current)

Background on the conflict in Lake Chad Basin

Context of the conflict

The Lake Chad Basin (LCB) is located in the Sahel and includes the territory of Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria. Historically, this region has been neglected by its governments and therefore struggles with poverty and historic marginalization. Its inhabitants "talk about a total absence of government presence and impact, including the lack of public services" (Chitra et al., 2018, p. 10; UNDP, 2018). Due to a large influx of internally displaced people (IDP), the population has tripled over the last forty years, which exacerbated a struggle over resources (Chitra et. al, 2018). International organisations refer to the situation as a humanitarian disaster (ICG, 2017; UNDP, 2018).

The weak government oversight, illicit trade networks, and the geographically strategic location of the LCB made it an appealing territory for jihadi rebel group Boko Haram (BH) to operate in. Since 2003, the group, led by their founder Yusuf, launched attacks against the national governments and attempted an uprising against the Nigerian government in 2009 (ICG, 2019). When Yusuf was killed in 2009, he was succeeded by Shekau. In the following years, BH became known for their increased use of indiscriminate violence. The group frequently raided villages to plunder their resources, staged mass abductions, and conducted suicide attacks in crowded public places in the LCB states – most frequently in Nigeria (Carsten & Kingimi, 2018). After the efforts of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), created and represented by the LCB states to combat terrorism in the region, the group shrank in power and territory.

Moreover, BH started struggling with internal divisions as various commanders criticised Shekau's atrocities and leadership style. After internal pressure, Shekau reluctantly pledged allegiance to the Islamic State (ISIS) in 2015 (ICG, 2022). Yet, nearly a year later, Yusuf's son al-Barnawi and his stepfather Nur "led a group of dissenters" who aimed to separate themselves from BH as they condemned Shekau's activities (ICG, 2022, p. 9). As a result, the group split in two. From mid-2016 onwards, the original BH group continued by BH's former name "Jama'tu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad (JAS)" and the section that split off continued as ISWAP (ICG, 2019, p. 2).

Emergence of ISWAP

ISWAP is therefore an offshoot from Boko-Haram (BH). After the split in August 2016, ISIS recognised ISWAP as the official local franchise of the Islamic State and announced al-Barnawi as its wali, which translates to governor (ICG, 2022; Jawad Al-Tamini, 2018). As a result, ISIS channelled its training, advice, and financial support to ISWAP (ICG, 2022). In the first years of ISWAP's emergence, it did not hold much territory outside the LCB core. The group learned from BH's mistakes and resorted to guerrilla warfare tactics in which it attacked military bases to raid materials and then retreated rather than aiming to claim the territory. Furthermore, ISWAP retreated to the rural LCB territory known for "complex and changing geography of swamps, basins, wooded areas, islands, basins and channels" that hinders access of armed forces and protects the group from air attacks (Elhadji & Foucher, 2022, p.5; ICG, 2019). This core territory of the LCB is where ISWAP's power is strongest as it "has permanent bases and directly governs civilian settlements" (ICG, 2019, p 12). The most significant change in approach of this splinter group was its military strategy and policies concerning civilians. Moving away from the frequent attacks on public places for which BH was notorious, ISWAP focused on military targets and government-affiliated civilians only (Carsten & Kingimi, 2018). Furthermore, ISWAP did not send women or children on suicide attack missions (Foucher, 2021). Moreover, rather than using violence against civilians, ISWAP attempted to fill the gap left by the central governments by defending civilians from JAS combatants and stepping up as the provider of services for communities in north-eastern Nigeria and in the core of the LCB, as will be elaborated on in the next section (ICG, 2019; UNDP, 2018).

ISWAP's power further increased after the death of JAS' leader Shekau in 2021 by negotiating with commanders of eighteen JAS units "operating in the Sambisa Forest [to join] into its ranks" (ICG, 2022, p. 4). As a result, ISWAP has seized large parts of JAS' territory, followers, and weapons (Samuel, 2021). Other JAS units have either fled, surrendered to the Nigerian government, or maintained pro-JAS and formed resistance against ISWAP – the most important one being 'the Bakura group' (ICG, 2022). Following these developments, ISWAP expanded its territory: it currently controls nearly all areas of the Nigerian north-eastern state Borno, including the Sambisa Forest and the Alagarno Forest– see Appendix A for maps of the LCB that illustrate this territory (Elhadji & Foucher, 2022; ICG, 2022). Moreover, ISWAP has expanded into Yobe State and northern Adamawa State in Nigeria, as well as "the regions of Mayo Sava and Mayo Tsanaga in Cameroon" (ICG, 2022, p. 8). The number of civilians living

in the territory of ISWAP's rebel governance is difficult to determine, yet "one may use as a proxy the count of civilians living in "inaccessible" or "hard-to-reach" areas, the euphemisms used by the government and humanitarian organisations to designate rural areas under jihadist control" (ICG, 2022, p. 11). Following this proxy, estimates range from 800,000 to over 3 million civilians. Having grown in combatants and territory, ISWAP increased its number of attacks on government-affiliated targets and has claimed responsibility in ten different Nigerian states in 2022 (ICG, 2022; Karr, 2023). On the second of January 2023, ISWAP claimed responsibility for an explosion four days earlier that was likely an attempted assassination on the Nigerian president (Karr, 2023). ISWAP thus quickly solidified their authority in the LCB. The following section will review current literature on ISWAP's rebel governance and sources of legitimacy.

ISWAP's sources of legitimacy

The review of previous studies on ISWAP's legitimacy makes it evident that the topic of legitimacy has been understudied. Despite a focus on ISWAP's delivery of services, the literature has not identified this as an example of a performance-centred source of legitimacy. Moreover, aside from some references to ISWAP's image, there are no previous studies that directly refer to the use of symbolic sources of legitimacy. Still, this section is divided into performance-centred and symbolic sources of legitimacy, as reviewing the references to ISWAP's image clarify the knowledge gaps concerning their use of symbolic sources of legitimacy.

ISWAP's performance-centred sources of legitimacy

The current literature's most repeated approach to ISWAP is focused on its rebel governance as a replacement for the neglecting LCB governments. Due to the lack of services, ISWAP has been able to replace the role of the state government in all aspects of life: politics and justice, economy, social relations, or private conducts (Carsten & Kingimi, 2018; ICG, 2019; UNDP, 2018). In exchange for taxation, ISWAP provides access to resources – and ensures they remain accessible in price – and improves local security (Carsten & Kingimi, 2018). Besides, ISWAP funds young business entrepreneurs by providing loans and encourages trade in the LCB to revive the local markets (ICG, 2019). Additionally, it provides help and protection to farmers in the LCB, which has resulted in increased agricultural production in ISWAP territory (Carsten & Kingimi, 2018). Moreover, ISWAP provides public goods such as the construction of wells,

(Islamic) education, and basic health care. Examples of the latter include the provision of medicine, occasional transports of sick civilians to hospitals abroad, and allowing humanitarian workers access to its territory for the provision of vaccinations (ICG, 2019, p. 17).

Current literature frequently focuses on the examples above to illustrate ISWAP's provision of services, yet except for Samuel (2021), no previous studies directly identify this as a source of legitimacy. Despite not identifying legitimacy directly, the literature focuses on ISWAP's interferences in civilian life as fulfilling the role that the LCB governments failed to uphold (Samuel, 2021, UNDP, 2018). By doing so, the literature follows the state-opposing approach reviewed in the first part of the literature review above.

ISWAP's symbolic sources of legitimacy

Some current literature has expanded its view of ISWAP as a state-opposing group by considering its order. Concerning orders of external actors, current literature focuses on ISWAP's provision of order that moves away from the previous orders of BH, and the rival order of both JAS and the LCB governments (ICG, 2019). Furthermore, the literature review established that a source of symbolic legitimacy can stem from mimicking aspects of the previous order. ICG (2015) argues to establish its order, ISWAP had to 'piggyback' on the LCB's disorder and local grievances. However, it is not specified which grievances it built on, or whether ISWAP used certain myths or symbols to reinforce their alignment with these existing grievances. Further research is needed to examine whether ISWAP used such sources of symbolic legitimacy.

As established above, ISWAP's symbolic sources of legitimacy are often overlooked. The following section reflects on some literature that briefly refer to ISWAP's image as an important source of legitimacy. It becomes apparent that the literature does so mostly by contrasting ISWAP to external order yet fails to provide for an analysis of the symbolic legitimising process. Current research has mentioned ISWAP establishing "its own brand of 'Islamic justice" (ICG, 2019, p. 16; ICG, 2022). Unlike its parent organisation or the LCB governments, ISWAP has created a sense of improved security, for instance by decreasing local crime rates. Although this may refer to a source of symbolic legitimacy, previous studies have, again, not mentioned it as such, and lack an in-depth analysis of *how* this personalised brand of Islamic justice is constructed. Still, the available research provides clues to ISWAP's image as a source of symbolic legitimacy. ISWAP follows strict policies for its fighters regarding their use of

violence towards civilians (Hassan, 2018; ICG, 2019). This might reinforce a certain image they aim to build - thus functions as a symbolic source of legitimacy. The rules ISWAP sets for its combatants might form a symbolic aspect in the framing of an image of being trustworthy and just authorities that contrast the stereotypical 'violent rebels' label. Related to this, current literature points to the locally positive image ISWAP built as a source of legitimacy that contrasts to the LCB governments (Samuel, 2021; UNDP, 2018). Thus, current literature approaches ISWAP's legitimacy as a zero-sum game again. There are various situations that literature points to that may have caused local grievances towards the LCB governments.

First, local grievances towards the LCB governments result from the atrocities committed by the regional taskforce MNJTF. Members of the MNJTF reportedly raped and killed civilians in the LCB who they suspected as affiliated with ISWAP or JAS and forced women in IDP camps to have sex in exchange for food (Amnesty International, 2018; ICG, 2019). Moreover, the IDP camps that many inhabitants of the LCB were forced to relocate to lack basic health care and resources. In 2018, famine and sicknesses in IDP camps led to five to 15 deaths a day (Amnesty International, 2018). As a result, former BH members often returned to JAS or ISWAP as the living conditions in the camp were too inhumane (ICG, 2019). Finally, local grievances towards the LCB governments increased following their counter-insurgency measures in 2015. In an attempt to put a halt to jihadi illicit trade networks, the governments banned all movement and economic activities among the LCB states' borders, including markets and fishing, (ICG, 2019; Iocchi, 2020). As a result, the counter-insurgency measures severely harmed civilians: it caused a humanitarian crisis and resulted in the forced removal of large groups of civilians from the LCB (Iocchi, 2020). ISWAP's efforts to strictly monitor and, when needed, prosecute their combatants to maintain good relations with civilians, as well as their efforts to revive the economy, markets, and small businesses thus stood in stark contrast to the governments' policies (Carsten & Kingimi, 2018).

Additionally, current literature points to a similar contrast in ISWAP's policies that is especially evident by looking at ISWAP's use of propaganda directed at IDP camps. ISWAP has regularly sent its people to IDP camps and additionally released videos of markets, cattle, and a thriving economy in ISWAP-controlled territory (Hassan, 2018). By doing so, ISWAP aims to encourage internally displaced people to return to the LCB by emphasising that ISWAP made changes in the living conditions in the LCB (Hassan, 2018; ICG, 2019; Carsten & Kingimi, 2018). The failures of the LCB governments to meet civilians' needs thus further decreased

trust in state authorities. It is possible that ISWAP uses this to increase its symbolic legitimacy by spreading stories about their contrasting image. However, current literature has not examined whether ISWAP purposely constructs an image by aligning with grievances against the government. Further research is needed to examine more specifically whether ISWAP aims to ameliorate grievances concerning the LCB governments' failures to provide for and protect civilians of the LCB.

All in all, reviewing previous studies on ISWAP's rebel governance illustrates the lack of research on ISWAP's sources of legitimacy. As discussed in the literature review, there are various ways to approach rebel groups that result in a more extensive and fruitful understanding of its rebel governance than merely looking at the provision of services. As current literature has prioritised state-centred perspectives of rebel governance, it failed to take symbolic sources of legitimacy into consideration as well. Therefore, the following chapter aims to fill the knowledge gaps concerning ISWAP's use of symbolic sources of legitimacy by analysing various primary and secondary sources.

Analysis

The analysis will first examine the image ISWAP has built in the LCB. Next, the analysis will examine whether ISWAP makes use of certain myths to reinforce and ameliorating this image as part of a larger narrative, aimed at triggering common emotions or memories. Finally, the analysis will examine the possible use of condensation symbols that emphasise such a narrative.

Image

As discussed in the historical background, ISWAP is an offshoot group of BH, which it condemned for its violence against civilians (Carsten & Kingimi, 2018). The first part of the analysis indicates that ISWAP aims to construct an image that moves away from the stereotypical 'violent rebel' label that BH used to confirm. As touched upon, ISWAP did so by limiting violence against civilians, for instance by decreasing (suicide) bombings in crowded public places and instead focusing on military targets (Zenn, 2020). Zenn (2020) conducted interviews in the LCB and summarises what image this resulted in locally:

> *"ISWAP members were known for conversing with, and purchasing supplies from, merchants (....) Therefore, civilians referred to ISWAP as "[Abu Musab] al-*

Barnawi's faction" or "Mamman Nur's men" and viewed their fighters as professionals and civilian-friendly" (Zenn, 2020, p. 289).

This perception of ISWAP combatants as professional and civilian-friendly is the result of strict monitoring of combatant behaviour regarding their use of violence against civilians. The rules ISWAP sets for its combatants form a symbolic aspect in the framing of an image of being trustworthy and just authorities that contrast the stereotypical 'violent rebels' label. To set an example, ISWAP reportedly executed combatants who murdered or raped civilians, and expelled members involved in the kidnapping of civilians (Hassan, 2018; ICG, 2019). Mid-2021, Al-Barnawi has even declared that ISWAP will set up a commission tasked with reviewing unauthorised abuse of civilians by its members which can include dismissing ISWAP leaders who do not follow the civilian-friendly policies well enough (ICG, 2022). Moreover, ICG (2019) reports that a Nigerian NGO worker stated that the group prohibits carrying arms in areas considered safe. Interviews with former ISWAP combatants, combatants of rival rebel groups, and ISWAP's founder al-Barnawi point to ISWAP's leadership deliberately putting emphasis on disapproving violence against civilians by maintaining strict policies on misconduct. This top-down monitoring of combatant behaviour makes ISWAP's rejection of its parent organisation BH's activities credible, underlining that they should not be associated with the group. By doing so, their image is associated with ISWAP distancing itself from rival rebel groups' approaches towards civilians (Elhadji & Foucher, 2022). The following quotes illustrate the deliberate monitoring of ISWAP combatants' behaviour towards civilians:

Ex-combatant Hassan of rival rebel group Bakura confirms the top-down policies concerning the public display of weapons:

> *"In Nur's camp, it is the leaders who authorise people's movements. Nobody is free, they decide for the people. But with Bakura, it's the opposite. People have the possibility to go everywhere and they can do it carrying their weapons" (*Elhadji & Foucher, 2022, p. 6).

The strict monitoring of combatant behaviour is further confirmed by Umar, ex-combatant of ISWAP:

> *"In Lake Chad, for anything, you need permission, and the leaders need to understand why [before granting authorisations]. Before [under Shekau], people were just doing as they wished. You would have munzir going for their own fay' [loot; see below]. In*

*Lake Chad [under ISWAP], you need to ask for permission. The munzir asks his qaid, the qaid asks the amir ul fiya, etc" (*Elhadji & Foucher, 2022, p. 7).

Bukar, another ex-combatant of ISWAP, reinforced this: "Some people couldn't stand the Nur system. It prevented everything. Taking people's property. (...) They said that everyone must manage to support themselves, to work. Bakura allowed people to hold people for ransom" (Elhadji & Foucher, 2022, p. 7).

Moreover, in an interview with ISWAP's founder al-Barnawi that was published in Islamic State's Al-Naba' magazine, the leader made sure to emphasise that the group refrains from using indiscriminate violence in public places:

"The [Islamic] State has forbidden targeting the mass of people who belong to Islam, and it is innocent of that action (...) Building on that, we do not target the mosques of the mass of people who belong to Islam, or their markets" (Thurston, 2017, p. 273).

The references to ISWAP's policies by both civilians and combatants as 'Nur's camp', 'Nur's men' or 'al-Barnawi's faction' point to the importance of personal charisma to ISWAP's image (Elhadji & Foucher, 2022; Zenn, 2020). Aside from civilians knowing the founders by name, the combatants associating the monitoring of behaviour with ISWAP's founders points to a certain degree of personal legitimacy of ISWAP's leaders. However, ISWAP's propaganda videos do not further emphasise or glorify ISWAP's leadership. Aside from ISWAP contrasting its image to that of rival rebel groups to emphasise friendly relations with civilians, ISWAP seems to contrast to the LCB governments as well. The following section will elaborate on this.

As touched upon in the review of previous studies on ISWAP's legitimacy, members of the MNJTF, the governments' regional taskforce, have been involved in misconduct towards civilians of the LCB (Amnesty International, 2018; ICG, 2019). Whereas ISWAP is strengthening its image by publicly punishing fighters involved in raids, killings, or rape, the LCB governments previously denied accusations, failed to investigate misconducts, and failed to hold their members accountable until media pressure forced them to (Amnesty International, 2018; ICG, 2019). The contrast ISWAP's strict monitoring of combatant behaviour forms thus strengthens their image as more trustworthy than the LCB governments.

ISWAP's awareness of their contrasting policies is evident in a WhatsApp interview with an ISWAP commander who stated: "It would seem that the military, even at the height of their

control over these territories, did not present themselves as a value proposition to the villagers, [meting out only] injustice." (Anyadike, 2019, par. 14).

Therefore, it is possible that ISWAP reinforces its image by building their narrative on grievances concerning the LCB governments' affiliated misconduct and their inaction to punish those responsible for the civilian harm. To further examine this, the second part of the analysis will shed light on whether the 'myths' ISWAP frames the LCB governments as a common enemy to ameliorate discontent with the LCB governments.

Apart from distancing from the stereotype of violent rebels by monitoring combatants, ISWAP's propaganda videos further point to the aim of putting emphasis on their trustworthy authorities' image by contrasting itself to the LCB governments' shortcomings. As mentioned before, ISWAP has directed propaganda aimed at encouraging IDP's to return to the LCB by sending people to IDP camps and distributing videos that indicate that ISWAP's governance improved living conditions in the LCB (Hassan, 2018; ICG, 2019; Carsten & Kingimi, 2018). However, detailed analyses of such propaganda videos are lacking. It is, therefore, useful to analyse such a propaganda video as they form relevant primary sources to indicate whether the content aligns with the image the analysis has identified so far.

A propaganda video from 2021 illustrates the image ISWAP aims to portray, see Appendix B for screenshots. The video dedicates one minute and 42 seconds on extensively filming a tour of the various stalls on a local market in which ISWAP combatants and civilians chat and trade with each other. The tour shows well-stocked stands with apples, sodas, rice, colourful fabrics and clothes, pottery, and even toys. The revived trade is emphasised by a prominent focus on the exchange of money at the stands. The video puts further emphasis on the friendly relations between ISWAP's combatants and civilians by showing combatants, recognisable by the weapons they carry, handing out lollipops to a group of kids. Moreover, it shows civilians and combatants praying and celebrating Eid in peace. Furthermore, the video spends another minute and 43 seconds of material on the trade of a big group of goats. Additionally, the video spends a full minute to show the process of slaughtering the goats for Eid, as well as the preparation of the meat – clearly focusing and zooming in on bowls filled with rice, meat, and lemons. This is followed by a group of combatants enjoying the food and drinks. Finally, a combatant reinforces the deliberate focus on civilian relations as he speaks to the camera and calls for all Muslims to migrate to their Islamic State, where people are trading in markets and live peacefully under Islamic rule. The emphasis on markets is apparent in another video of 2017 as well.

Furthermore, a video of 2018 demonstrates farmers and herders can work safely in the LCB by interviewing a herder standing in front of a big group of cattle and by focusing on farmland, freshly grown vegetables, sacks of rice, and a large fish harvest. Screenshots of these videos are attached in Appendix B as well.

The analysis of these videos further points to ISWAP's aim to portray itself as trustworthy and reliable. First, as often focused on in previous studies, the videos emphasise ISWAP's capability to provide for LCB inhabitants by focusing on food resources. More importantly, the videos demonstrate the friendly relations between ISWAP and the LCB population, underlining that ISWAP focuses on military targets rather than civilians. The videos illustrate this by demonstrating that farmers and herders can move and harvest in peace, that combatants and civilians trade and get along in peaceful markets, and even pray and eat together during festivities. These friendly and peaceful images contrasts ISWAP to JAS' and BH's looting and use of indiscriminate violence and assures that ISWAP's rebel governance offers stability (Carsten & Kingimi, 2018). Aside from the contrast between ISWAP and other rebel groups, the image portrayed in this video contrasts to the instances in which the LCB governments failed to provide for or protect civilians as well, and its target audience is likely IDP's who used to live in the LCB (Hassan, 2018). As was elaborated on in the case background, this group has suffered from the LCB governments' counter-insurgency measures, the grave circumstances in IDP camps, and the misconduct by MNJTF soldiers (Amnesty International, 2018; Iocchi, 2020). The second part of the analysis, titled 'myths', will shed light on whether ISWAP specifically refers to and aligns with these grievances towards the LCB governments to further frame the governments as a common enemy.

The propaganda videos therefore clearly indicate that ISWAP aims to construct a trustworthy image by demonstrating the good relations they maintain with civilians in the LCB. Complementing these primary sources with various interviews indicates that this image forms a successful source of local symbolic legitimacy for ISWAP. Interviewees confirm that ISWAP's image among locals is associated with being (more) fair, just, and trustworthy than rival orders of either the LCB governments or rival rebel groups (Anyadike, 2019; Carsten & Kingimi, 2018; ICG, 2019). One of the main reasons listed for these positive characteristics being associated with ISWAP is their behaviour towards civilians. It has led to anecdotes about ISWAP, one of which interviewees described to Hassan (2018): "In ambushes, captured truck drivers have been taken to their camps, fed, and returned to the road unscathed" (par. 9).

Furthermore, ICG (2019) reports that civilians refer to the policies that dictate ISWAP fighters should refrain from using violence against civilians to explain ISWAP is on 'their side'. For instance, ICG (2022) reported that a civilian of the LCB told them he filed a complaint to ISWAP's commission after being robbed by the groups' members and received a compensation. ISWAP's behaviour towards civilians has thus allowed ISWAP to function as a fair overseeing authority that locals feel comfortable approaching for finding solutions to local disputes, indicating its local legitimacy (ICG, 2019). The selection of various quotes of these interviews will illustrate these points:

A herder interviewed by Reuters (2018) in the LCB illustrates that ISWAP succeeded in distancing itself from rival groups' violence against civilians: "If you are a herder, driver or trader, they won't touch you - just follow their rules and regulations governing the territory," (…) "They don't touch civilians, just security personnel" (Carsten & Kingimi, 2018, par. 3).

In line with this, a Fulani herdsman interviewed by ICG (2019) stated:

> *"Dawla [the Arabic word for "state", which is a reference to ISWAP] is trying to be friendly to people. They don't kill. … They insist that jihad is not against people who say* 'la illah illa *Allah' [the first words of the shahada, the Islamic creed]. Only against people in uniforms*" (ICG, 2019, p. 16)

This sentiment is reinforced by Aliyu, a farmer from Baga, who compares ISWAP's and BH's invasion of the city: "We were nervous because last time [Boko Haram] destroyed Baga (…) But they were telling us 'don't be afraid, don't run. We came for the military, we won't touch you'" (Anyadike, 2019, par. 4).

Adam, a tailor who spent time in Baga, confirms this: "[ISWAP members] were just watching everybody leave (…) You just paid your tax and went. It sounds so strange to us, but they weren't harming people. They have totally changed, you can't say it's them" (Anyadike, 2019, par. 9)

Besides confirming that ISWAP's image is associated with distancing itself from other rebel groups' violence against civilians, Anyadike (2019) refers to ISWAP's propaganda contrasting to the living conditions of the LCB governments and states:

> *"Adam said he gets regular phone calls from people he knows who chose to head to the islands controlled by ISWAP rather than Maiduguri. "There are so many there. They invite us to come, they say we're crazy to stay in Nigeria," he said. "They say when you pay [your taxes to ISWAP] you can stay safely in their daulah [Islamic state] and do your business"* (Anyadike, 2019, par. 12).

Finally, a quote of Anyadike (2019) concluding on his findings from interviews conducted in the LCB, illustrates the local loyalty that ISWAP has created with their image:

> *"(...) none supported jihadist violence. They all wanted this war to be over, had suffered too much in the name of religion, and enthusiastically hated Shekau. But when asked if they would support ISWAP if it was a political party that renounced violence but retained support for sharia law, there were near unanimous nods of agreement"* (Anyadike, 2019, par. 25).

Considering the various sources of the first part of this analysis indicates the clear image of fair and trustworthy authorities that ISWAP has created in the LCB. They reinforce this image by contrasting to rival orders in the LCB in two ways. First, they maintain friendly relations with civilians by strictly monitoring combatant behaviour towards civilians. Second, they offer good and stable living circumstances. The literature review concluded that rebel groups can reinforce their image and ultimately improve their legitimacy by constructing a narrative using myths. The following section will shed light on ISWAP's possible use of myths, and whether these align with the image identified thus far.

Myths

As indicated in the literature review, rebel groups can strengthen their image or narrative by building on myths to trigger common emotions or memories (Hoffmann, 2015). To indicate whether ISWAP makes use of such myths in its rhetoric, the second part of this analysis will use various primary sources: ISWAP's propaganda videos, a book written by ISWAP's founder and leader al-Barnawi that is dedicated to justifying ISWAP's motives for splitting from BH, and an interview with al-Barnawi that was published in the Islamic State's Al-Naba' magazine, to introduce and recognise ISWAP.

Al-Barnawi starts his book by explaining how his father Yusuf, founder of BH, became increasingly concerned with the Islam's position in the world (Jawad Al-Tamimi, 2018). Al-

Barnawi identifies this as a similar concern of ISWAP – after all, ISWAP only separated from BH once Yusuf's predecessor, Shekau, had wandered from the 'true Islam' by using indiscriminate violence against civilians. The following passage illustrates the expressed concern for the 'apostate' Muslims: "he [Yusuf] was frightened by the state of the Muslims in the land of West Africa, and their support for democracy and Western sciences (…) and the foreign colonialist schools" (Jawad Al-Tamimi, 2018, First Study section, par. 8).

After this statement, al-Barnawi clarifies that ISWAP blames colonisation by 'the West' for the current 'poisoned' Muslims. To strengthen this sentiment, al-Barnawi refers to the historic oppression of Muslims in Sudan:

> *"Their pronouncement of the apostasy of the Muslims after the fall of the Islamic state in Bilad al-Sudan at the hands of the occupiers, who did not leave the land except after they made the religion absent (...) and replaced them with what they deposited from their fatal poison that they spread among the Muslims, like their foreign schools"* (Jawad Al-Tamimi, 2018, Third Study section, par. 23).

Similarly, al-Barnawi refers to a historic event in 1992 which he perceives as humiliating in which Christians, referred to as Crusaders, committed violence against Muslims in Zangon Kataf, Nigeria. It is notable that Al-Barnawi emphasises the unwillingness of the police to protect Muslims,

> *"The Muslims fled to military barracks or police stations, for the Muslim women cried for help to the police station (...) So when Crusaders hurried to the station, the police pretended that they were afraid (...) and left the women (...) so the Crusaders came and besieged those women, and ordered them to say: 'Oob Jesus'- i.e. 'Jesus is the highest'. (...) [and] they asked them to dance as they sang the song of the church (...) And once they were tired, they bound them, poured petrol on them and burned them alive!"* (Jawad Al-Tamimi, 2018, Tenth Study section, par. 33).

Furthermore, Al-Barnawi refers to the war on terror following 9/11 as another example of "the state that the Ummah [the community of Muslims] had reached in all areas of the world, from division, loss, [and] humiliation", which illustrated "how far the Ummah had fallen after time-old glory" (Jawad Al-Tamimi, 2018, Second Study section, par. 5).

The book passages indicate the use of various myths. First, al-Barnawi refers to the Islam's glorious times. Second, al-Barnawi frequently refers to examples of perceived historic oppression and violence against Muslims, which has caused a humiliation of the once glorious and prominent Islamic identity. Finally, al-Barnawi frames the West and Christians as a common enemy who is responsible for the end of the glorious past, threatens the Islamic identity ever since. Complementing these book passages with the interview with al-Barnawi sheds light on how such repeated references to perceived humiliation and oppression of Muslims can lead to the construction of a grand narrative concerning a common enemy:

> "*Christianizing activity is very large in this country. It is easy for the Christians to seduce many Muslims' children, sometimes with money, and sometimes with the easy life in the West (...) they are seeking to Christianize the society by force. The apostate government helps them with that (...) They exploit the situation of refugees in the shadow of the blazing war. They provide them with food and shelter, and then they Christianize their children while they are unaware.*" (Thurston, 2017, p. 271)

This quote illustrates how al-Barnawi reframes historic oppression into a narrative that further triggers a perceived threat against Muslims. Doing so may be directed at revoking and aligning ISWAP's cause with previously existing religious grievances in the region. Furthermore, al-Barnawi frames the LCB governments as part of the common enemy in this narrative. Moreover, it is notable that al-Barnawi uses the narrative to undermine aid organisations by spreading fear about their intentions, which could encourage IDP's to choose living in ISWAP's territory over living in an IDP camp.

Aside from using myths to trigger common emotions and memories to frame the West and Christians as a common enemy, ISWAP frames the LCB governments as a common enemy as well. The following book passage concerning the state army may be aimed at further triggering a sense of victimhood and fuelling local grievances towards the army following their counter-insurgency operations aimed at halting Jihadi activity in the region:

> "*They [the West] are aided by the rulers and retirees from the army, for they are conspiring and marshalling secretly, then they intend for a Muslim land, eager to kill them, until when they become tired and drained, the army intervenes to prevent the Muslims from taking revenge*" (Jawad Al-Tamimi, 2018, Second Study section, par. 7).

Considering a propaganda video from 2018 demonstrates that the group uses myths to reinforce the narrative identified so far. The video, which Appendix C provides screenshots of, starts with beautiful drone shots of the LCB's landscape and a mosque. This might aim to trigger religious pride together with pride of the region. Next, the video shows a military truck and a plane in a sandy landscape with (white) soldiers running out of it. The video then shows various shots of bleeding bodies, people who are publicly set on fire, and other brutal executions, along with the text 'Crusaders crimes against Muslims'. After this, the video shows a computer screen which zooms in on a satellite map of Africa with the text 'Crusaders military bases West Africa'. The video then zooms in on the map and identifies France's and the United Nation's [UN] military bases. Later in the video, it first shows a military pilot sitting in a plane, after which the computer screen zooms in again on the satellite map, followed by a big explosion. The rest of the video shows fighting against the LCB governments army, along with shots showcasing confiscated artillery, and demoralising shots zooming in on Nigerian soldiers killed in battle (Zenn, 2020). The video aligns with the former primary sources as by showing historic wrongdoings of the 'crusaders' towards Muslims ISWAP effectively frames the West as a threat and thus a common enemy. ISWAP's use of this narrative likely aims to trigger and align with common emotions and memories of existing grievances between Christianity and the Islam and of a history of oppression related to colonialism and the LCB governments. By doing so, ISWAP justifies their use of violence towards the military forces later in the video as in this context they can present themselves as defenders of the Islamic identity from being under attack. The video, therefore, clearly illustrates ISWAP's use of myths identified above to justify its use of violence and trigger common emotions.

As mentioned above, ISWAP uses the narrative constructed by these myths to justify their cause and use of violence. In the interview, al-Barnawi's is asked how ISWAP will deal with the threats, and his answer illustrates that ISWAP presents itself as defender of the Muslim identity: "As for how we treat it, [we do so] by booby-trapping and bombing every church we can, and killing everyone we can among the subjects of the Cross" (Thurston, 2017, p. 271).

Aside from referring to the past and framing the West and the LCB governments as a common enemy, the literature review indicated that rebel groups may aim to build on existing grievances to offer the promise of a better future (Hoffmann, 2015; Schlichte & Schneckener, 2015). Several chapters of al-Barnawi's book are dedicated to the disapproval of BH, now known as JAS. As established in the first part of the analysis, this reinforces ISWAP's image. Yet the disapproval of JAS and BH also aligns ISWAP with local grievances against the group that

caused so much chaos and violence in the LCB. The final part of this analysis will illustrate that ISWAP uses its narrative of myths to align with grievances against JAS as another common enemy, while further framing the LCB governments.

The following book passage illustrates ISWAP's disapproval of the rival order of BH, now JAS. Aside from this, al-Barnawi aligns with grievances against the LCB governments by pointing to their failure to protect Muslims from BH's violence, while implying they *do* protect Christians:

> "*[Shekau] has directed the aperture of his weapons against the Muslims, killing them and taking their offspring captive (...) Since that time the Muslims have not prayed their feasts in peace, without an explosion or pursuit from al-Sheikawi while he threatens the Crusaders with empty threats (...) perhaps he has resorted to killing the Muslims while abandoning the Crusaders because they have strong resistance, enjoying strong bodyguard protection and protected by security apparatuses, while there is no difficulty to strike the Muslims, as no one stands in his face as soon as he considers them for his suicide bombing operations*" (Jawad Al-Tamimi, 2018, Qualities of the Khawarij section, par. 10).

This representation as the defender of the oppressed Muslims in combination with grievances against JAS is further reinforced by ISWAP's use of another myth previously identified in the literature review: martyrdom. In a propaganda video from 2018, ISWAP praises an ISWAP leader, Abu Fatima, as a 'Islamic hero', along with shots of him laughing with other combatants – see Appendix D (Zenn, 2020). Furthermore, al-Barnawi started his book with praising his father Yusuf, founder of BH, as a heroic figure and martyr who laid the foundation for ISWAP (Jawad Al-Tamini, 2018). However, this sentiment is not reinforced in ISWAP's other propaganda. Moreover, in another video from 2021, an ISWAP leader gives a speech to civilians in Sambisa following Shekau's death. In the speech, the leader emphasises ISWAP's mission to save civilians from JAS and praises combatants who died doing so by stating that their death increased their strength and faith – see Appendix D. The emphasis on the martyrs sacrificing their lives to save civilians further demonstrates ISWAP's aim to underline their commitment to defend civilians. Moreover, ISWAP justifies their use of violence by glorying these martyrs, which further improves their 'charismatic' legitimacy (Schlichte & Schneckener).

Finally, ISWAP's mission of uniting to eliminate this common enemy – the rival orders of either the LCB governments or JAS – allows ISWAP to state it will offer an alternative, better, Islamic order to civilians in the LCB. By doing so, ISWAP makes use of another myth by making the promise of a better future. The following interview quote illustrates ISWAP's promise that their Islamic State will restore the Islam's glorious times: "The Muslim community has known nothing but servility since the fall of the caliphate centuries ago, and its honor and glory will not return except with the return [of the caliphate]" (Thurston, 2017, p. 266).

Following the analysis of myths, it is evident that ISWAP builds extensively on myths to construct a legitimising narrative that reinforces they are representatives of civilians rather than perpetrators. Although ISWAP frames the LCB governments as part of the common enemy and emphasises their failure to protect Muslims, the analysis has not indicated any direct references to the aforementioned instances that ameliorated those local grievances – for instance, references to famine or sexual abuse.

Condensation symbols

The final part of the analysis examines whether ISWAP uses any condensation symbols that may trigger collective memories or emotions related to the myths and narrative established in the first parts of the analysis.

ISWAP's propaganda videos indicate various condensation symbols. The first condensation symbol evident in ISWAP's propaganda videos is a black flag that signals that ISWAP pledged allegiance to IS and aims to establish a province that is part of the Islamic State (Zenn, 2020). ISWAP's videos indicate that these flags are frequently used as they are evident in each video. For instance, they are prominently filmed in big gatherings and on vehicles and appear as a small sign in the right corner of the screen in ISWAP's propaganda videos – see Appendix E. Furthermore, ISWAP uses a logo that appears in the start of its videos and often appears in the right corner of the screen during videos as well. The symbol contains the previously mentioned black flag, with 'Islamic State West Africa Province' written in Arabic around it – see Appendix F.

Another symbol ISWAP uses is a sword, which reinforces ISWAP as the defender of Muslims and their military power to fulfil this role as it is symbolically "connected to the Prophet Muhammad (…), other early Islamic heroes, and their successful military campaigns" (Gråtrud, 2016, p. 1064). The symbolic importance of the sword is evident in a propaganda video from 2018 which starts with the sharpening of a sword (see Appendix G). Furthermore, the titles of

several propaganda videos of ISWAP refer to a sword: 'Flames of Sharp Swords' and 'A Book Guides and A Sword Conquers' (ISWAP, 2017; ISWAP, 2022).

Finally, ISWAP frequently includes jihadi songs, so called *nasheeds*, in their propaganda videos. Nasheeds are often described as messaging tools, as the lyrics often reinforce myths, for instance by referring to historic events, humiliation of Muslims, revival of glorious times, or by praising martyrs (Gråtrud, 2016). These nasheeds, therefore, play an important role in reinforcing the myths indicated in the previous section of the analysis. For instance, one such nasheed that is played repeatedly in a propaganda video from 2022, aligns with the narrative established in the second section of this analysis as it encourages violence towards crusaders – see Appendix H. Unfortunately, it is hard to identify the specific names, and thus the lyrics, of other nasheeds ISWAP uses in its videos.

Discussion

Taking together the findings from the analysis of various primary and secondary sources, it is possible to draw connections between ISWAP's image, their use of myths, and their use of symbols. The first part of the analysis indicated that ISWAP aims to portray itself as fair, trustworthy authorities who maintain friendly relations with civilians. Furthermore, interviews and reports clarified they deliberately established this image by closely monitoring combatant behaviour towards civilians. The analysis indicated that ISWAP's propaganda videos reinforce this message. In other words, the image frames ISWAP as competent to offer an order that seems like a legitimate alternative to the rival orders of both the LCB governments and of rival rebel groups. Additionally, the statements of combatants illustrated the crucial role of leadership and strict order for ISWAP's image construction. This reinforces the second approach of the literature review: rebel groups do not match the state-centred association of disorder, instead it can form an important source of legitimacy. The first part of the analysis, thus, shed light on ISWAP's aim to construct a positive image. As this image contrasted to those of the LCB governments and JAS, the second part of the analysis clarified whether ISWAP deliberately aligned itself with the local grievances against these actors or used any other myths in their rhetoric to improve their symbolic legitimacy.

Therefore, the second part of the analysis assessed various primary sources and indicated that ISWAP makes extensive use of myths to construct a legitimising narrative. These myths include references to a glorious past, historic oppression and victimhood, the promise of a better future

without struggles followers may currently face, religion, and the glorification of martyrs. alignment with local grievances. The overall returning narrative portrays ISWAP as the defender of Muslims from a common enemy: the West and the LCB governments. Aside references in relation to this narrative, for instance the framing of the LCB governments by putting emphasis on their failure to protect Muslims, the analysis found no direct alignment to grievances regarding instances that hurt civilians – for instance, the sexual abuse or the counter insurgency measures. ISWAP's alignment with grievances towards BH and JAS were more clearly evident, which makes sense considering ISWAP's need to distance itself from the violent rebels stereotype its parent group fulfilled.

These myths and the narrative they construct form crucial legitimising aspects for ISWAP's image. First, the narrative underlines ISWAP's friendly relations with (Muslim) civilians, moving away from the image of BH and JAS as perpetrators. Instead, it allows ISWAP to present itself as protector and voice of the oppressed Muslim community while simultaneously aligning with local grievances against JAS. This redirects the focus of ISWAP's violence towards it being against a common enemy – either the West and the LCB governments, or JAS – rather than towards civilians. Hence, this symbolic process ensures compliance of civilians in ISWAP rebel governance without the use of coercion. Second, the myths likely trigger collective emotions by referring to a history of colonialism, conflicts between Christianity and the Islam, and the governments' failure to protect Muslims. This allows ISWAP to justify their use of violence and creates the opportunity to build on these collective emotions by constructing a collective identity and popular support (Mampilly, 2015; Schlichte & Schneckener, 2015). Finally, it allows ISWAP to present their rebel governance, a province of the Islamic State, as an alternative order that will lead to (a return of) glorious times. As evident from the various interviews with civilians of the LCB, ISWAP's references to these myths and the overall narrative they have constructed around their rebel governance has, thus, successfully improved their symbolic legitimacy.

The third part of the analysis examined whether ISWAP uses symbols to reinforce their image and myths. ISWAP's propaganda videos indicate the use of flags, logos, songs, and references to a sword. These symbols reinforce ISWAP as the defender of Muslims and symbolise their territory as part of the Islamic State. However, beyond that, it is tough to draw any major conclusions concerning the extent to which these symbols have reinforced ISWAP's image and narrative, and consequently their symbolic legitimacy. Still, having established that ISWAP

does make use of such symbols further demonstrates the group's deliberate aim to draw on symbolic sources of legitimacy.

All in all, the analysis has clarified how ISWAP aims to present itself, as well as the various ways they reinforce this portrayal. Therefore, following the analysis of primary and secondary sources it is evident that ISWAP extensively draws on symbolic sources of legitimacy. Hence, the analysis has complemented the limited research on ISWAP's sources of legitimacy by clarifying the symbolic processes that ensure compliance of civilians in their rebel governance. By doing so, it has shed light on the ways that ISWAP fosters symbolic legitimacy for its rebel governance in the LCB since 2016. Moreover, it has demonstrated that ISWAP's sources of symbolic legitimacy align with the literature on this topic (Hoffmann, 2015; Schlichte & Schneckener, 2015).

Conclusion

The aim of this research was to examine the ways in which ISWAP fosters symbolic legitimacy for its rebel governance in the LCB. Former literature mainly approached ISWAP as a threat to the state, and by doing so limited the understanding of its rebel governance (Samuel, 2021; UNDP, 2018). This thesis has aimed to demonstrate that the focus on ISWAP's (state-replacing) provision of services overlooks the importance of ISWAP's symbolic sources of legitimacy. Aiming to fill this research gap, this thesis has aimed to contribute to the knowledge on ISWAP's symbolic sources of legitimacy by examining their image and possible use of myths and symbols. The examination of various primary and secondary sources clarified ISWAP's construction of a legitimising image and narrative. Using myths and symbols, ISWAP has legitimised its identity, rebel governance, and use of violence required to maintain it. These findings illustrate how the legitimacy of a rebel governance goes far beyond replacing the state by the provision of services. ISWAP's rebel governance illustrates that rebel groups can foster legitimacy from monitoring combatant behaviour and the related role of order and personal legitimacy of a group leader, the framing of a common enemy, participating in negotiations, and spreading and reinforcing a legitimising narrative to various audiences.

However, it is important to note some limitations to this research as well. First, a language barrier has limited the availability of ISWAP's propaganda sources: most were released in either Arabic or Hausa (a language spoken by many civilians of the LCB). This has impacted the ability to properly analyse the message converted through ISWAP's use of symbols, as the

nasheeds, symbols, and logos were written in Arabic as well. Moreover, it has limited the analysis of propaganda videos to the ones of which a translation was available, and the ones that had images for which no translation was required – for instance, shots extensively focusing on food.

The findings of this thesis come with several insights. First, this research illustrates that due to the limiting state-centred approach to ISWAP's sources of legitimacy, counter-insurgency operations in the LCB are thus far ineffective or even counter-productive as they unintentionally further alienate civilians (ICG, 2022; Iocchi, 2020). The LCB governments should complement their heavily militarised operations with local operations aimed at debunking the narratives that legitimise ISWAP. Moreover, they should monitor the civilian impact of the operations as well as the military's behaviour and presence in the LCB. Second, this thesis provides an important contribution to the limited research available on ISWAP's rebel governance and their sources of legitimacy as it illustrates that rebel groups' can assert a rebel governance that moves beyond coercion and the provision of services for compliance. Future research can benefit from applying these insights to other rebel groups to ensure a more comprehensive analysis of rebel groups' activities and rhetoric.

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Appendix A

Maps of the Lake Chad Basin

Figure A1.

A map of the LCB region
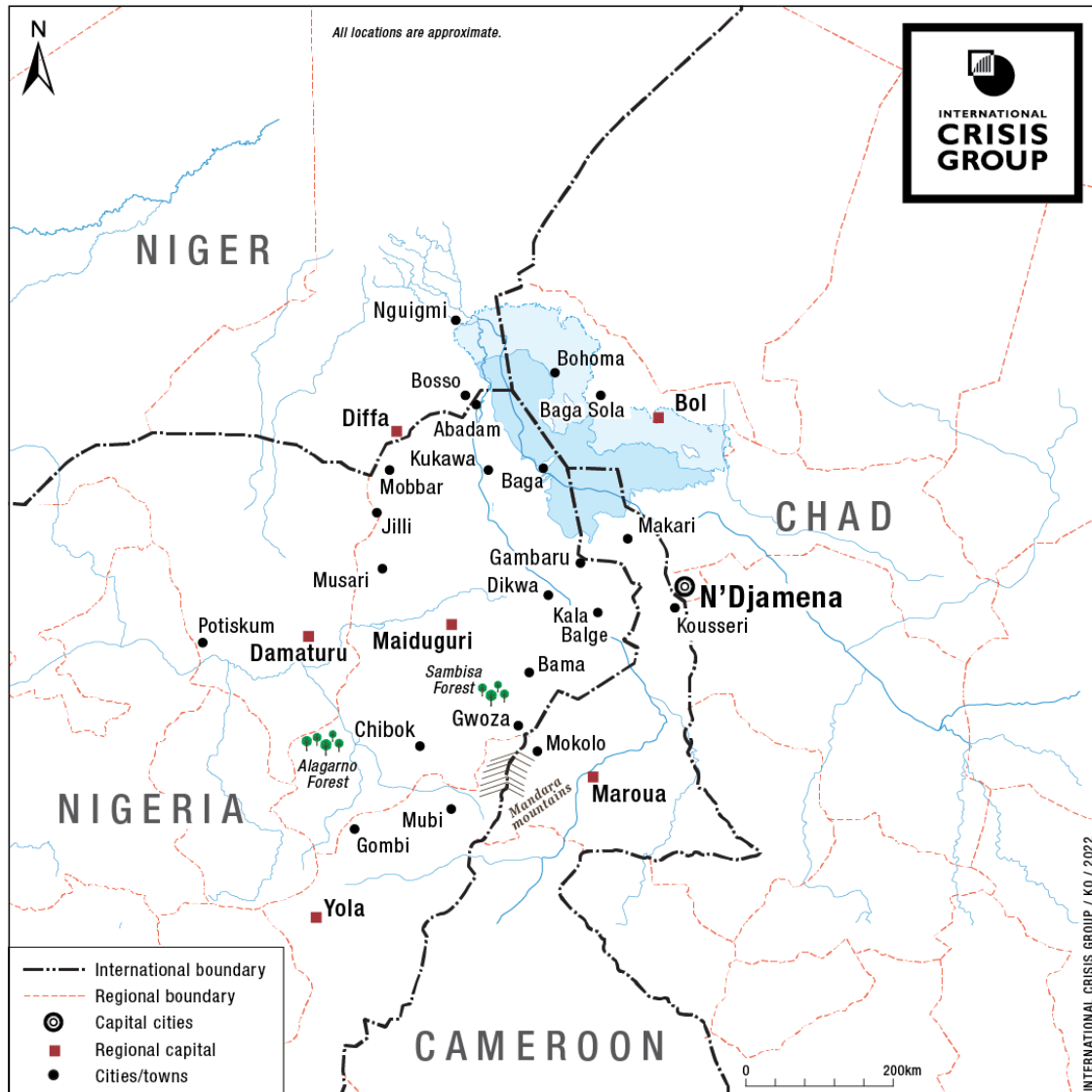
Note. Borno State (see Sambisa Forest and Algarno Forest) in Nigeria and the regions of Mayo Sava and Mayo Tsanaga (left of Maroua) in Cameroon. Retrieved from ICG (2022, March 29).

Figure A2

Map 2

Note. Borno State, Adamawa State and Yobe State. Retrieved from Samuel (2021, July 13).

Appendix B

Image Framing: Friendly Relations with Civilians

Figure B1.

Market Example 1

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2021, May).

Figure B2.

Civilians selling Soda

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2021, May).

Figure B3.

Fabrics Stand 1

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2021, May).

Figure B4.

Toys Stand

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2021, May).

Figure B5.

Focus on Exchange of Money in Market

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2021, May).

Figure B6

Combatant buys from Soda Stand

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2017, February 13).

Figure B7.

Book Stand

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2018, July 11).

Figure B8.

Civilians and Combatants Trade Goats

Note. Focus on exchange of money. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2021, May).

Figure B9.

Eid Meal Preparations Example 1

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2021, May).

Figure B10.

Combatants' Eid Meal and Soda

Note. The angle shows a clear focus on the meal and drinks. Screenshotted from ISWAP
(2021, May).

Figure B11.

Combatants Eating Eid Meal

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2021, May).

Figure B12.

Combatant Calls Upon Muslims to Come to the Islamic State

Note. Emphasising the good life of civilians in the LCB. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2021, May).

Figure B13.

Combatant Hands out Candy

Note. Combatant recognisable by weapon. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2021, May).

Figure B14.

Eid Gathering

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2021, May).

Figure B15.

Praying on Eid

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2021, May).

Figure B16.

Showing Farmland

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2018, July 11).

Figure B17.

Showing Vegetables Harvest

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2018, July 11).

Figure B18.

Farmer shows Rice Harvest

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2018, July 11).

Figure B19.

Interviewing Herder

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2018, July 11).

Figure B20.

Showing Fish Harvest

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2018, July 11).

Appendix C

Framing the West as a Common Enemy of Muslims

Figure C1.

Drone Shots of Landscapes Example
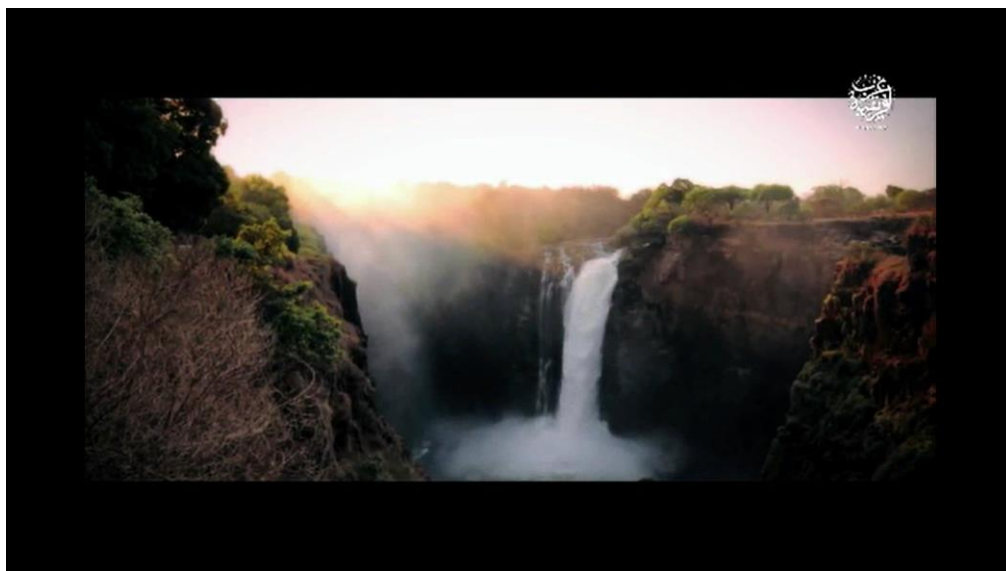
Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2017, February 13).

Figure C2.

People Praying in a Mosque.
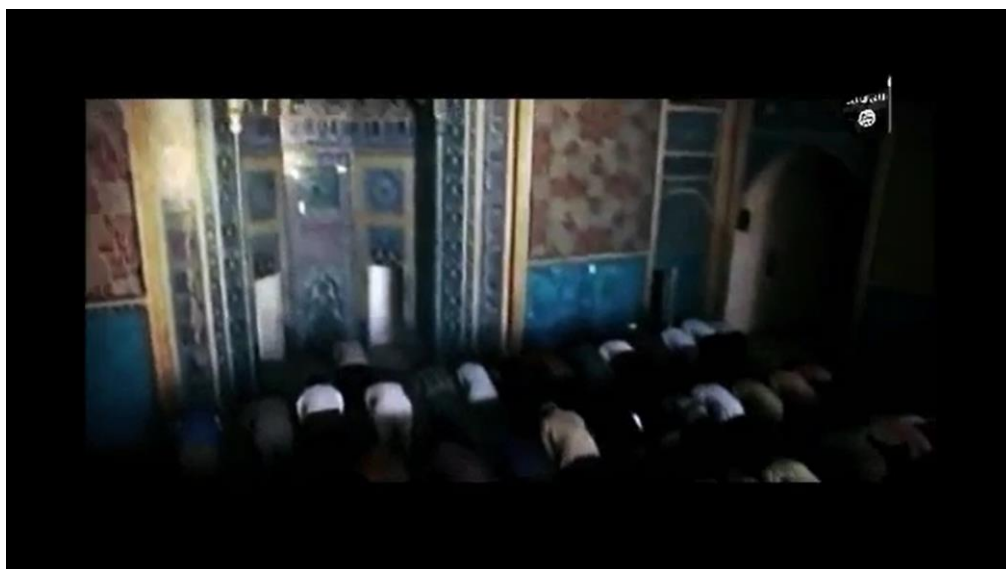
Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2017, February 13).

Figure C3.

Army Truck Driving By

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2017, February 13).

Figure C4.

Plane with (White) Soldiers Running Out
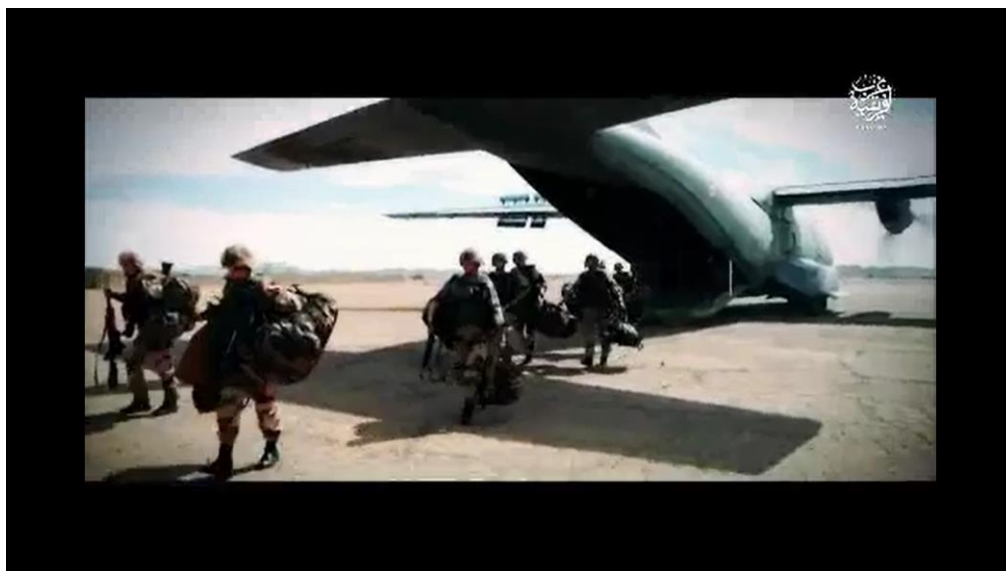
Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2017, February 13).

Figure C5.

Recalling Humiliation and Violence towards Muslims

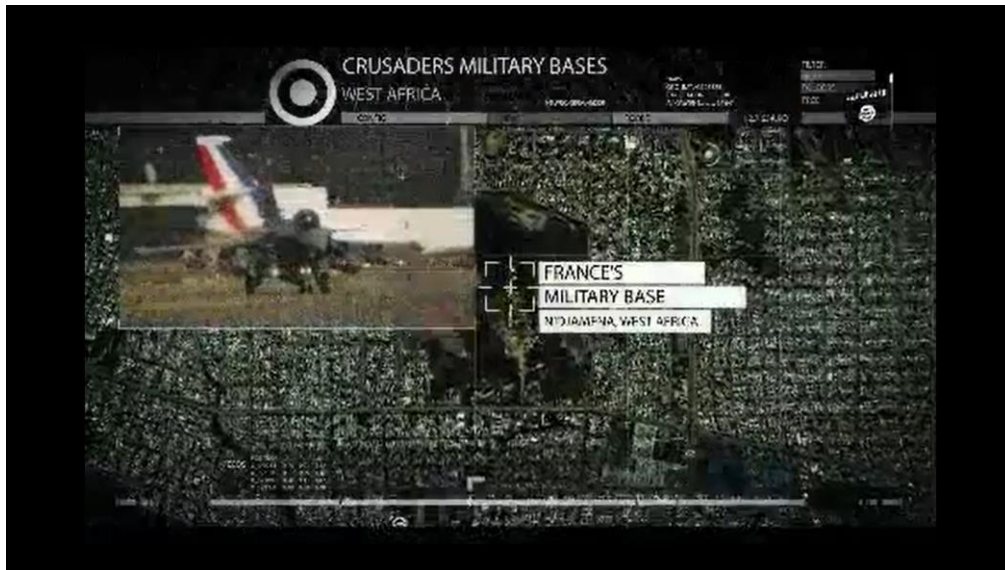*Note*. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2017, February 13).

Figure C6.

'Computer Screen' Satellite Map of Africa.

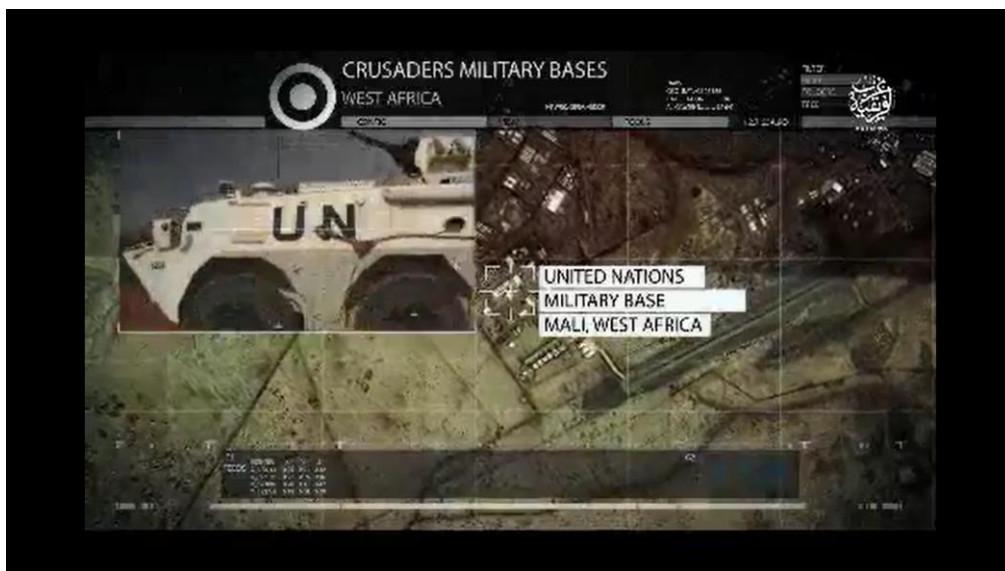*Note*. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2017, February 13).

Figure C7.

Zooming in France's Military Base.

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2017, February 13).

Figure C8.

Zooming in on the UN's Military Base

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2017, February 13).

Figure C9.

The Pilot

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2017, February 13).

Figure C10.

Zooming in on the Target

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2017, February 13).

Figure C11.

Screen Shows 'Explosion' of Target.

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2017, February 13).

Appendix D

Praising Martyrs

Figure D1.

A Martyr Memoire of Abu Fatima.

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2018, July 11).

Figure D2.

Speech part 1

Note. Praising martyrs for saving civilians. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2021, June 25).

Figure D3.

Speech part 2

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2021, June 25).

Figure D4.

Speech part 3

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2021, June 25).

Figure D5.

Speech part 4

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2021, June 25).

Figure D6.

Speech part 5

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2021, June 25).

Appendix E

Flags

Figure E1.

Islamic State Flag

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2021, May).

Figure E2.

Armed Combatants holding Flags

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2021, May).
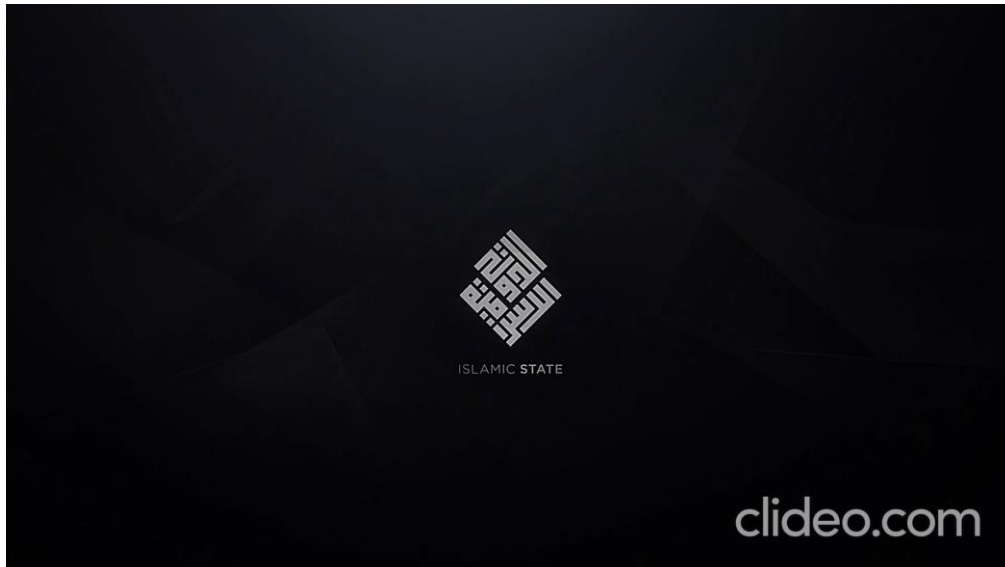
Figure E3.

Reading Quran in front of Flag

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2017, February 13).
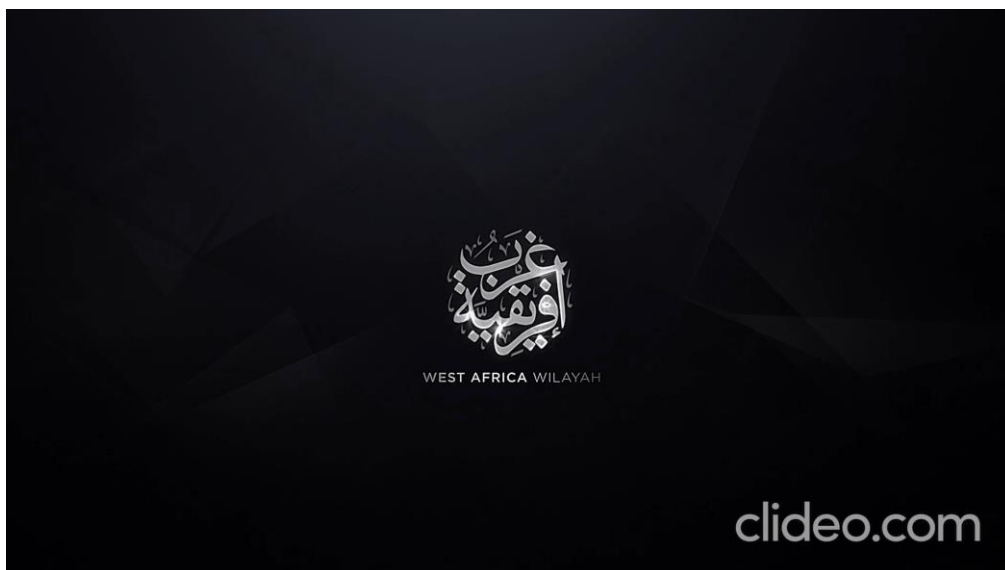
Appendix F

Logo

Figure F1.

Logo Side 1

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2021, May).

Figure F2.

Logo Side 2

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2021, May).

Appendix G

Sword Symbol

Figure G1.

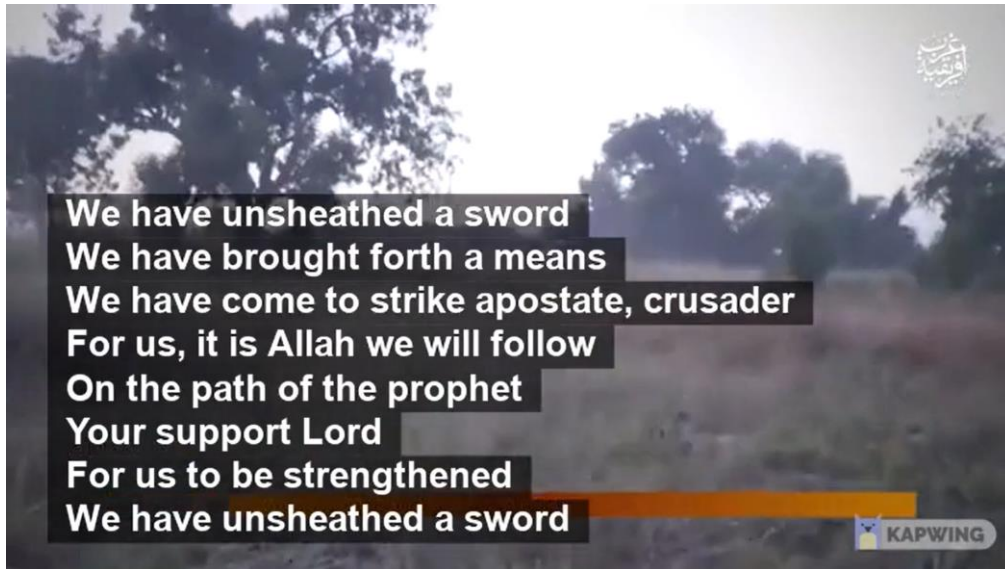The Sword being Sharpened.

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2018, July 11).

Appendix H

Nasheeds

Figure H1.

Translated Nasheed

Note. Screenshotted from ISWAP (2022, April 6).