

**Understanding The Roots of Daesh Ideology:
Between Islam and the Political Scene of the Middle East**

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Abstract

The U.S. Invasion of Iraq 2003 left nothing but a big security gap, increased anti-west feelings, And an escalated sectarian wave of violence, on the other hand, the so-called “Arab Spring” and the governmental reactions in response to it resulted in a widening this security gap caused by the struggles between rebels and government forces and awakened a sleeping sectarian conflict in Syria.

Such circumstances created the perfect environment for the "Global Jihadist" to find new war zone, and to facilitate its developments in terms of logistics, strategies, narratives, and even Ideologies, Daesh thus was appeared as an expression of a unique "fourth generation" of jihadist, in which it includes having a mixture between semi-governed state, a terrorist armed militia, and an international terrorist cells.

The Ideology of Daesh is certainly, not the result of coincidence or just appeared in one moment, but this Ideology had been developed and formed since the fall of the Ottoman caliphate and has evolved continuously to this day. This paper will focus on the ideology of Daesh and its Roots, taking into consideration all the major political transformations in the region.

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1. What Makes Daesh Dangerous?

At its peak, Daesh became a real threat that terrifies both the regional and international society, as it appears to be the most developed form of terrorist organizations. Since “*ISIS destroyed the boundaries of contemporary nation-states and proclaimed itself the restorer of a lost Islamic empire*”. (Weiss & Hassan, 2016, P.5) The organization got successful in terrifying the world because following Al-Qaeda Style of focusing on communication and propaganda while performing their operations, Daesh operations include executions, genocides, fighting guerilla battles against official and non-official armed forces and, likewise performing overseas terrorist operations.

Despite all the opposed theories regarding the establishment of the organization, and its goals, many opinions argue that Daesh fighting doctrine is strong, these opinions claim that the religious Ideology through which Daesh attracted, recruited, and lead new fighters with such diversified background is solid and well-rooted.

Other opinions, however, argue that this doctrine is not as strong as it appears and does not have this deep ideological roots, supporters of this theory assume a correlation between Daesh efficiency and many other variables some of these variables are associated to the post-colonial political scene in the middle east, others are related to the geopolitical regional and international rivalries within the Iraqi-Syrian war proxies.

Additionally, there are some economic factors. All of these factors are study-worthy; some factors, however, are hard to be examined due to lack of information availability.

Therefore, Daesh real danger does not only come from its role in complicating the *Syrian Question*, but also from its propaganda that creates justifications for the rise of religiously related violence, and it uplifts the hate feeling towards Muslims around the globe as a reaction to Daesh propagated behaviour.

Thus, It is inaccurate to mix between modern Islamism with the extreme jihadism, in the same context, and with taking the colonization effect and the post-colonialism environment, it is unfair to consider radicalism as a purely ideological phenomenon, therefore this article will seek to analyze the development of Daesh Ideology, and at the same time will try to list other factors that helped the radicalism phenomenon to grow in the minds of Daesh recruits or targeted audience.

2. Islam Between Theology and Ideology:

Many Western scholars set all of the Islamic movements in the same categories because the Islamic movements claim to take their rules and determinations from the same sources “the holy texts of *Quran*, and the *Hadiths* of the Prophet *Muhammad Sall-Allahu 'Alayhi Wa Sallam*. Such as classification, however, can never be right, because, this unified classification, indeed represents a very narrow and biased perspective, because, each of the Islamic movements uses

distinguished interpretations of the holy texts, and act accordingly. Some of the major interpretations might also be a subject of dissimilar sub-interpretations, whereas these differences can be created through to time due to the changes in the circumstance.

All of the “*Islamic political Movements*” are taking the Islamic themes due to its claims of using the religious texts, but these movements can never have an identical ideology, because each of these movements has its’ own understanding of this religious texts, and might employ it to serve its goals and objectives according to the historical and political needs. This explains why the Iranian Islamic revolution did not create an identical regime to that in the Islamic monarchy of Saudi Arabia. And why more tolerant Islamist movements such as Ennahda in Tunisia (Marks, 2015, P.11-12). or Pro-Islamist political party such as Turkey’s AKP (Karakas, 2007, P.41) do not follow the same Ideology adopted by Daesh, or Al-Qaeda. The discussion here arises the need for an in-depth study to distinguish between ideology and religion, this could be hard because although they are separate, both phenomena are closely intersecting.

It is essential to understand the differences between the Islam as a religion and the Islamism as an Ideology, the Ideologies phenomenon took place during and after the French revolution, it could not take religion role in life, but instead both religion and ideology intersected with each other, and were able to develop a formula of understanding and coexistence, further each of them was able to employ the other when the circumstances created a necessity for such an employment.

The Ideology, however, is defined by Antoine Destutt de Tracy as “*a new discipline a general science of our intellectual faculties, their principal phenomena, and the more remarkable circumstances of their activities*”, (Richards, 1993, P.103). this definition introduces de Tracy’s understanding of the Ideology by its physiological determinations, while Karl Marx following work focused on seeing Ideology from a cultural perspective.

This indeed, opens the floor for analysis, because introducing the Ideology was linked strongly to Secularism, Science, and Scientifically proved phenomenon’s, but the later research shows strong debates whether Ideologies are Secular and purely scientific-related phenomenon, or does it take from cultures and religions. In his paper, Richards argues that there is a distinction between ideology and real science (Richards, 1993, P.107).

Carl Schmitt, on the other hand, argues in Political Theology that “*all key concepts of the modern doctrine of the state are secularized theological concepts, which suggests that a political theory that continues to use these concepts needs a theological foundation*”.(Schwab, 2005, P.36–52) This indeed supports the argument of Affan’s, That Ideology is not purely secular, and it intersects with religion (Affan, 2015, PP. 6-7).

Additionally, considering the nature of Islam as a political religion, along with the history of the region, will enable scholars more to reach a clear definition for Islamism, which indeed is a set of political ideas and visions, related to political power, its functions, and relations to the society. This Islamism was divided into three distinguished schools The first one is focusing on “religious reforms” this school have many branches including the *Salafism*, and the second school was focusing on “*civilizational and scientific advancements*”, while the third and was

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focusing on the “*political reforms*”, this schools started with *Jamal Al-Deen Al-Afghani* and developed after his death with the rise of some groups such as Muslim Brotherhood. (Affan, 2015, P. 8).

3. From Islamism to Radicalism

These “political schools” are labelled as Islamist movements; however, the degree of radicalism also varies between each of these schools’ followers. Some Authors, for example, link Al-Qaeda directly to the Wahabism of Saudi Arabia, but Saudi Arabia, in which the monarch follows Wahabism School, had suffered itself from Al-Qaeda Terrorism (Hegghammer, 2010, P. 10).

The progress of “Jihadism” concept did not only witness a development in the Ideology and organizing levels but also got developed its communication strategy, as it developed from the so-called *first generation* being “*social revolutionary political Islam* appeared in the Jihad of Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Syria, passing through the *second generation* “classic jihad” where Muslims Jihadists found themselves fighting Soviets in Afghanistan, the third generation of Jihad was the “Ideological Jihad”, it expanded the geographical zone of the fight to be global with the rise of bin Laden (Hegghammer, 2010, PP. 38-58). The last development opened the platforms for more usage of communication because the Jihadists aimed to send messages through actions to force their ideology and this required mastering the professional usage of mass communication because the strategic goal of terrorist attacks, such as 11th of September was not to create casualties and destruction, but rather it aimed to create a panic amongst the mass population of the “*Enemies*” as “*On 9/11 just under 3,000 died, but more than 3 billion were influenced*” (Laity, 2009, P. 12)

Al-Qaeda thus can be the most notable generation of terrorists for more than one reason, first is the “*developed Ideology*” that changed their narratives, and enabled them to recruit more Jihadists through their recruitment propaganda, the second reason could be the scale and strategic depth of their operations, allowing them to create attention and generate more newsworthy events. Thirdly and most importantly is their ability to use the new communication platforms such as broadcasting, and the Internet to spread propaganda and recruit new members.

4. Is Daesh The Fourth Generation?

The previous discussions arise the question whether is it correct to call Daesh Jihadists as the fourth generation of Jihadists? Since the rise of Daesh represents a new wave of development, and it might be correct to consider them as the fourth generation of Radical Jihadists or as described “*the latest front in a bloody culmination of a long-running dispute within the ranks of international jihadism, with a reliance on core of truth and awkward geopolitical realities to describe an evil global enterprise ranged against it*” (Weiss & Hassan, 2016, P.4).

The Developments of global Jihadism have not been limited to updating the means of communication “*Especially Twitter Usage*”, but have been also extended to include the desired message beyond the communication, as Daesh is pretending to be a real state, which has borders

and considers itself thus the legitimate heir of the Caliphate and the leadership of the Islamic world.

On the technical level, the usage of twitter is a trans-generational jump in the means of communication, As twitter became another Propaganda war zone, one report analyzes the usage of twitter as a propaganda tool by Daesh, the report shows that the number of Daesh opponents exceeds the number of supporters worldwide, with a “6:1 ratio of opponents to supporters” some events presented a real change in these ratios such as the radical upsurge in Daesh opponents numbers/activity following the broadcasted tapes of burning of the Jordanian pilot *Moath al-Kasabeh*. The same report indicates that Meta-communities considered Daesh as opponents in *Egypt, Saudi Arabi, and GCC* (Bodine-Baron, Helmus, Magnuson, & Winkelman, 2016, P8) exceeds those who support Daesh.

The message of communication has also changed as Daesh, is aiming to create a hybrid model of a radical movement, because, on one hand, they copied some of Al-Qaeda tactics and maybe strategies, by establishing an extreme organization that perform terrifying operations and propagate it on media, on the other hand, they are trying to make a government ruled by their understanding of *Shari'a* (The Islamic law). In a try to copy some pre-existing models such as Taliban, Saudi Arabia, and the Islamic Republic of Iran, they even started to change the school's Curriculums(NIQASH, 2015). This cannot be found within the previous generation of Jihadists, even after taking Al-Qaeda – Taliban strong ties into considerations(Marshall, n.d). This might be enough to justify the debate on whether Daesh could be considered as the fourth generation of Jihadism.

Indeed Daesh as a project could be the translations of decades of struggle against secularism. This struggle is not only a struggle of powers but also an ideological struggle, the roots of this started with losing the “*Islamic Caliphate*” with the fall of the ottoman empire, which was followed by many intellectual attempts to recreate the *Islamic Caliphate* and resulted eventually with similar ideological movements.

5. From Caliphate to Jihadism (Thinkers and Ideologies):

Starting from (1922) with *Rashid Rida* Thoughts about the Caliphate as a spiritual and governmental position (Haddad, 1997, PP. 275-277) this ideology places the Islamic superior identity/Macro identity above all the national minor identity /Micro identity. *Rida's* thoughts created the initial bridging efforts by which a strong bonding and intersection were created between the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, and the Wahhabism of Muhammad *Ibn Abd al-Wahhab*, While when moving further in history the next development was found with the thoughts of *Sayyid Qutb* in his book in the Shade of the Qur'an or (*Fi Zilal al-Qur'an*). His thoughts show the utopian perspective of life, through which *Qutb* highlighted that taking Islam as the source of all the laws and behaviours regulating the community daily lives is the only way to recall the lost prestige of the Muslim nation(Qutb, 1977, PP.1-15, 530, 590, 630- 670, 737-765, 820, 834-852). Many scholars claim that Qutb books provided a common ground for terrorism justifications and the extreme ideologies behind the terrorist actions (Loboda, 2014,

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PP. 17-25, 30-34). Others claim that the interpretations of his texts are used out of context, indeed the reason for that could be the sophisticated literary of Qutb's language which tolerates more than an explanation, the important thing to be known about *Qutb* is the symbolism accompanied to his death, because he was executed by the Abdul Nasser's Egyptian regime, and this gave his death big symbolism (Bashir & Ahmad, 2017). and this might be the reason for his huge value among the other Islamic scholars. This value might be the reason behind the admiration of his work by *bin Laden*.

It is worthy to mention, that many scholars, especially those who are Islamist or pro-Islamist always accuses the radicals and Jihadists of using parts of texts out of its normal and logical context, and without looking for the reasons or the historical stories behind these texts, thus it should be noted that Daesh and similarly, the previous generations of terrorist organizations such as *Al-Qaida* are depending on two things; first, a narrow perspective of the Arabian history, and secondly, some interpretations of religious texts coming from the Sunni Islamic faith, (mostly the books of the famous scholar *IBN TAYMIYYAH*), there is, however, many counter-interpretations using the same texts explained by well-known Muslim scholars (Ali, 2010) to reject the radical's myths and justifications.

In the same context, there is one book called the Strategic Note or as pronounced in Arabic "*Al Muzakkara Al Estrategiyah*" written by an author called *Abdullah Bin Muhammad*, this book appears to be a strategic guideline sent by the author frankly to *AL-Qaeda*, the book was written in 2011, and it shows many strategies which were adopted by Daesh, later on, one of these strategies is taking the Levant - or as it is called in Arabic (*AL-sham*) - which refers to basically to (Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestinian Areas including Israel) as the Base of Jihad, the other content is discussing the author's vision on the geopolitical strategies, the strategic communication, the propaganda styles, the publicity approaches, and the economic strategies (Bin Muhammad, 2011, PP. 15-30), the interesting thing in this book, however, is the degree to which the tips in the book matches the practical strategies of Daesh.

Studying all of these thoughts from *Rashid Rida* to *Bin Muhamad* opens the platforms for an important question, whether these texts are inspired from the bloody nature of its' authors ideology, or did these texts come as a result of the living conditions after the colonization (Hammoura, 2014).

Indeed the question can be subject to expansion and generalization, to become like the following; Is radicalism a result of religious-related Ideology, or a result of employing religion to adapt to the surrounding variables?

In the journey of finding the answers, a brief historical analysis should be done, along with a brief analysis of the latest events, which are related to Daesh appearance.

6. The Post-colonialism Environment in the MENA Region

After the fall of the Ottoman Empire, Both Great Britain and France found the opportunity to divide the so-called "the heritage of the sick man", this heritage included Egypt, Levant, Iraq,

Tunisia, Algeria, the two imperial powers then divided the area into new countries and created new borderlines, thus Great Britain gifted the rights to establish the state of Israel on Palestinian lands. All of these interventions left big disappointments for the Muslim population, especially in MENA, however, the negative effect of colonization did not stop there but instead the region continued to be pulled backwards by the economic, social and even cultural domination of colonialism, these effects were described by the terminology “orientalism” which was a key concept in The “post-colonialism” perspective of international relations. Edward Said as a pioneer of this school defined orientalism as a “*systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage – and even produced – the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period*’ (Said, 1979, P.25).

The effect of this orientalism can justify to a large extent the feelings of discontent and resentment that dominated among the thinkers of that era, specifically those Islamists who established three schools of Islamism mentioned in Affan’s paper.

On the other hand, Arabian nationalism was following the Kemalist Model (*Mustafa Kemal Atatürk*) who started to enforce secularism to build a modern state similar to the European paradigm (Karakas, 2007, P.11). Thus some shy attempts for building a modern state started in the Arab world. The similarity of most of these Middle Eastern rulers was using the Army to reach power such as Abdul Nasser in Egypt, Qaddafi in Libya, Assad in Syria, Saddam Hussein in Iraq, the other Arab states, however, things on the Arabian Peninsula took a different path, as the elite families, entered into protectorate agreements with Britain to secure their own rule, and established monarchies (Volk, 2015, PP.66-67). Although some of the attempts for building modern states appeared promising (theoretically in the beginnings), these attempts were not enough to meet the aspirations of the masses and thus aroused resentment among the masses.

The other theme of this era of the MENA history was the rise of Islamism, especially with Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, and then later in Syria, those Islamist movements, started to oppose the nationalist rulers, this opposition was caused by different reasons, one of them is the ideological conflict between the nationalism, and Islamism, the second possible reason might be the nature of those so-called nationalist regimes which was centralized, totalitarian, dictatorial, and did not allow any political participation, this indeed might be the reason behind the violent approach used by the Brotherhood in more than one occasion not only in Egypt but also in Syria. The clashes between the Brotherhood and those nationalist regimes resulted eventually in banning the organization from both countries and escalated the violence in Egypt (when Qutb was executed and turned into an icon), and (the event that was later called Hama massacre in Syria).

It is hard to tell who started this wave of violence, as the Muslim Brotherhood documents make them appear as victims of the dictatorships, the official stories of both Egyptian, and Syrian regimes, and even sometimes the western media shows that the Muslim Brotherhood started these waves of violence.

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A. Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt

Many incidents happened in Egypt and were linked directly to the so-called *AlNizam AlKhas* the special organization whose members were a well-chosen group of youth to be having special characteristics. *Hassan Al-Banna* who prepared this group through a special training program established this organization. *Al-Banna* faced the public opinion with logical justifications to explain the reason for creating this force, his justifications were fighting against British colonization and Israel. While this organization engaged in many incidents inside Egypt including the assassination of *Al-Nokrashi Pasha* (the prime minister at the time during the monarchy in Egypt) who decided to resolve the brotherhood after a long indictment, and arrested most of the well-known members (except for *Al-Banna*), and closed all of the brotherhood branches, and headquarters, confiscated all papers, documents, publications and funds owned by the brotherhood (Umran, 2013, Part.1).

When *Abdul-Nasser* became the president, his relation with Muslim Brotherhood was relatively good, but their increased influence made him uncomfortable, and within a short period some rumours about an organized attempt of assassinating Abdul Nasser was spreading, with rumours about the so-called conspiracy of the attempted coup. This gave Abdul-Nasser sufficient justifications for punishing the leaders of brotherhood. The brotherhood claimed that they do not have any information about this conspiracy, even though if any of their members were involved, they claimed that they did not give any orders. Thus the so-called People's Court was formed, which was described as a real farce. The trial resulted in many adjudications. One of the most notable was the execution of Abdul Qadir Awdeh, which started several demonstrations in many Arab countries. In 1966 the government started to release some of the brotherhood members from prisons, including the thinker Sayyid Qutb, and the Supreme Guide of the brotherhood, these releases, however, were followed again with rumours about a new conspiracy for assassinating Abdul Nasser, which lead to the Judgment on the Qutb and others with death. The execution could not be stopped, even with the interference of many Arabian and Islamic countries (Umran, 2013, Part.2).

B. Muslim Brotherhood in Syria

The Struggle in Syria, however, has different determinations, in fact, the nature of the struggle was not only sectarian but also social, and ideological, whereas *Hafez Al-Assad* the new leader was representing not only the Alawites sect, but also the revolutionary peasant forces against feudalism, and Ba'athist Arabian nationalism against what they saw Islamic traditionalism. Alawites sect according to many Sunni scholars is not considered a sect of Islam. Thus, when the events of the artillery school massacre of Aleppo happened in 1979, the Brotherhood was already having religious justifications moving toward obvious and direct struggles against Alawites and started an open war with the regime and the government. This struggle was rapidly escalated with the assassination of members of Al-Baath Party, and Alawites notables, the number of the assassinations was up to 70 operations. This indeed opened the platform for huge efforts to gain public support not only by the brotherhood but also by the political regime. The brotherhood was able to establish many cells in almost all the Syrian Cities but mostly

concentrated in Hama and Aleppo 80%. But the most important cell was indeed was the “fighting Vanguard” in 1980, which is similar to the special organization of Egypt (Carnegie Middle East Centre, 2012). The vanguard leader was *Marwan Hadid* who believed in fighting against the current regime by creating a radical wing in the brotherhood as the only solution to reach the bigger goal of establishing an Islamic State. It should be noted that not all of the brotherhood members were agreeing on the vanguard approach. Another important name in the struggle was one of the most well-known leaders in the vanguard *Adnan Ukleh*. This fight included the many attempts of the assassination of *Hafez Al-Assad*, who by his turn responded with a campaign of executions and arrests, followed by issuing a law consider death is the “martial law” punishment for any citizen proves to be a member of the brotherhood.

Many resources refer to the fact that Al-Ba’ath Party took revenge from the brotherhood as a whole, not only the vanguard. The revenge was so big, it included what is known as the bloody events of *Hama* and the events of *Tadmur* (Palmira) Prison as the government arrested thousands of Brotherhood in all Syrian governorates (Abu- Dawleh, 2015). Eventually, the Muslim Brotherhood was banned in Syria, this had led the leaders of the brotherhood to leave the country and work from outside Syria with keeping secret connections and cells within Syria (Al-Mesbār Studies and Research Centre, 2011 PP. 75-76). While Syrian official media started to broadcast propaganda of a multinational conspiracy with the involvement of Israel, United States of America, Jordan, and even Iraq.

C. From The Muslim Brotherhood to Daesh

Thus, violence was mutual between the Brotherhood and the nationalist regimes these were the first attempts of jihad which considered in Hegghammer’s book the (First Generation), the establishment of the brotherhood as the first generation of Jihadists could be considered as a reaction to the post-colonialism status in the MENA, or what Said’s called the orientalism.

Al-Banna thoughts for establishing the Brotherhood was inspired by *Rashid Rida’s*, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida Literature, the Brotherhood, however, participated later in developing the Jihadism doctrine with Said Qutb works (Abdul-Wahid, 2017).

In addition, some of those Jihadists of the early age were developing their Ideologies, and skills in prisons and work as recruiters, by mixing up and dealing with other prisoners. Some authors considered the prisons in the MENA region, and the later U.S. established facilities as “Jihad Universities”.(Weiss & Hassan, 2016, PP. 11-12).

One more correlation could be found between those early jihadists and the current fourth generation. as few fighters, who are fighting today with Daesh have participated in the first waves of jihad against the nationalist regimes, those I would call trans-generational jihadists such as *Abu Musab Al-Suri*, who witnessed all the generations of Jihadism, and worked as a strategist for *Al-Qaeda*, and most recently to Daesh. Some strong argument could be found about the role of *Al-Suri* theories in shifting from the third generation of *AL-Qaeda* towards the fourth one Daesh (REJ, 2016, P. 3, 14). These arguments built upon an analysis of his book *The*

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Global Islamic Resistance Call and finding an eerie similarity with the strategic and tactical thinking of Daesh. some media reports claim that *Abu Musab Al-Suri* was released from Syrian custody, to Join Daesh as a leader at a distinguished position, these reports, however, was not confirmed (ROGGIO, 2012).

Considering Daesh as a natural development of the Muslim Brotherhood is not accurate, and includes a lot of injustice, especially after the so-called Arab Spring, which showed the Brotherhood ability to work politically, according to the constitution when the opportunity became available in both Tunisian *Ennahda* and Egyptian *Freedom and Justice Party*.

However, the most radical wing of the Muslim Brotherhood and similar organizations may have taken a different path and moved from one jihadist experience to the another, to reach the last generation of Jihadism in Daesh.

7. The Afghani Experience (Moving Towards A New Generation)

As the Muslim Brotherhood started as (revolutionary Movement of Islamism), and despite its intellectual contributions to Jihadism movement, it was considered as a shy beginning in comparison to what happened in Afghanistan. Since Wahabism was a strong movement in Saudi Arabia; (previously mentioned Affan's first type of Islamist schools), it was too traditional and carried anti-western thoughts. Moreover, its Ideological dimensions were against any attempt for modernization, against the Shiites faith. This has contributed to creating the new wave of thoughts within the Jihadi movement.

A. The Second Generation “The Classical Jihad”

The Afghani experience started when organized humanitarian relief campaigns from the Arabian Gulf region started to go to *Peshawar*, in Pakistan, close to the Afghan border (for logistical support) to relief those affected by the Soviet-Afghan war, and there was a starting point. With these campaigns there was a teacher called *Abdullah Azzam* (He taught at *King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah*), among his students there was a rich Saudi student called *Osama Bin Laden*, together they planned to start a recruitment and liaison office called *Al- Maktab in Peshwar, Pakistan*, to take care of the Jihadists transferring into Afghanistan. “*Azzam published The Defense of Muslim Lands, in which he called for a religious war to liberate Muslim lands from foreign occupiers. Fighting such a war, Azzam believed, was a “Fard Ayn, a compulsory duty upon all [Muslims]*” (Counter Extremism Project, n.d). This can be the real birth of the second generation of Jihadism, which did not last much because soon a disagreement on the approach started between *Azzam and his student Bin Laden who chose to ally with Ayman Al-Zawahiri* for the goal of waging jihad in Afghanistan, *Azzam's* main disagreement was due to the idea of “*Muslims to kill other Muslims*”(Ahmad, 2010). as he preferred to remove the Jihad zone into *Palestine* and fight against Israel. However, *Azzam* soon was assassinated (Baker, 2009). This assassination put the second generation into a stop, *Azzam* represents a school called the “*Classic Jihad*” which could

be considered the bridge between the first generation (revolutionary Islamism), and the second one (global Jihad).

B. The Third Generation “The Global Jihad”

This Coalition between *Al-Zawahiri* and *Bin Laden* was a beginning of a new era as in February 1998, *Al-Qaeda* stated the banner of "The World Islamic Front for Jihad Against the Jews and Crusaders" saying it was the duty of all Muslims to kill US citizens-civilian or military-and their allies everywhere. *Al-Qaeda* would merge with Egyptian Islamic Jihad (*Al-Jihad*) of *Ayman al-Zawahiri* in June 2001 (Public Broadcasting Service, n.d). In an al-Qaeda house in Afghanistan, New York Times reporters found a brief statement of the "Goals and Objectives of Jihad" *Establishing the rule of God on earth, Attaining martyrdom in the cause of God, and Purification of the ranks of Islam from the elements of depravity*". (Global Security Organization, n.d)

The ideologies of the third generation the "Global Jihad" was developed in parallel with the change of the international environment, thus it started with the "New World Order" announcement made by U.S president Bush claiming to bring the Cold War to an end, with the start of the Gulf war, it was painful for Islamists to watch U.S army interfering in brothers conflict (Muslims against Muslims), moreover, the spread of U.S. Army's bases in the region meant the hegemony of the infidel Western countries over the Muslim countries, and this created the initial justifications of *Bin Laden's* ideology, in these justifications they claim that Muslims who collaborate with infidels are not Muslims anymore and should be killed, (this Idea is the base of Takfirism), thus the jihad as a duty was not only to the Western countries but also their allies among Muslims especially Saudi Arabia. Combined with this Ideology there was an expansion in the Jihad zones as it was confined in Muslim countries as a defensive strategy, and it became international including non-Muslim countries as an offensive strategy especially against American citizens around the globe (Hegghammer, 2010, PP. 140-160).

The increased wave of this third-generation translated with their biggest terrorist operation happened in 9/11. This third-generation showed an unprecedented interest in media, publicity, and propaganda. It was the real shift in the Jihadist's strategy, to use the mass communication, and depend on the media coverage of violent actions to enforce their ideologies. Such as the bigger goal of 9/11 was beyond creating casualties and destruction, but instead to create a panic amongst the mass population of the Enemies as “*On 9/11 just under 3,000 died, but more than 3 billion were influenced*” (Laity, 2009, P. 12). The attacks of 9/11 however, was a start for a new U.S. policy towards the Middle East, this policy was one of the reasons that lead to escalating extremism.

C. The U.S. Intervention

a. The Escalation After 9/11 and the War on Terrorism:

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Monitoring the U.S. Policy in prior to 9/11 attacks opens the question of whether the U.S. participated in giving Daesh justification to their Ideologies. As the U.S. president George W Bush started the narrative of the “War on Terrorism”. On the 20th of September namely, nine days after the terrorist attack. His speech was directed not only towards the U.S. Public opinion, but also towards the world, and moreover towards the terrorists themselves (Bush, 2001), this narrative created the justification and even the ground for many following actions, which changed the nature of the international relations system, this “new system” started with the U.S. military going back to Afghanistan, and the following invasion of Iraq, which resulted in leaving a big security gap to be later filled by terrorist organizations, moreover, created an atmosphere that encouraged terrorism, in fact, it is correct that U.S. invasion of Iraq was justified with the narrative of “Global War on Terror”; however, research shows that this war did nothing to end terrorism. On the contrary, it released a new wave of radicalism and terrorism (Arasin, Battaloglu, & Bensaid, 2017, PP. 18-20). Furthermore, since the *Al-Qaeda*, and Daesh terrorism is more linked to the Sunni Jihadist terrorism, some theories claim that it was the rejectionism of the Sunni population that turned them into jihadist extremism (Weiss & Hassan, 2016, PP.65-69).

b. Anti-US Feelings, Shiite Expansionism, and the lost Sunni Prestige:

In fact, the Anti-US feeling was increased due to many actions, especially among the “Sunni Arabs” in the Middle East, this might be a result of the lies accompanied with Iraq invasion’s narratives, and might be a result of Obama’s policies, and its' effect on the balance of the Saudi-Iranian regional rivalry, especially after the recent development in Iran’s nuclear program (Obama, 2015), and the U.S. empowerment not only to Iran as a “De Facto ally in combating terrorism”(Dergham, n.d.), but also to the Pro-Iranian Shiite Militias in combating the “Sunni Terrorism” even though some member of these Militias used to be on the U.S. wanted lists (France 24 English, 2015). Another possible reason for the U.S. lost credibility among the Sunni-Arabs in the Middle East could be the Machiavellian U.S. strategies in dealing with the Syrian conflict, especially after supporting the Kurdish Militias as another ally in combating Daesh in Syria(Engdahl, 2017).

Certainly, all of these events created increased Anti-U.S. feelings among the Sunni-Arabs especially in Iraq, and Syria, these feelings, could be a reason for taking a decision to join Daesh, either to fight America or to protect themselves from Shia expansionism. This opens the question, whether Obama’s administration participated indirectly in creating Daesh by allowing Iran to expand its geopolitical extents. As the former head of the U.S.-led coalition in Iraq, David Petraeus stated: “The current Iranian regime is not our ally in the Middle East, It is ultimately part of the problem, not the solution” (Petraeus, 2014).

c. Intelligence, Mercenaries and Pursuing Mafia ̅ Economy:

Since both Iraq and Syria, have a significant strategic location, rich natural resources, and complex regime compositions, thus it will be meaningless to ignore the role of the local and

multinational intelligence services breakthroughs, Mercenaries and prize hunter recruits, fighters who are seeking for financial benefits, those members might not follow any ideology or faith, but certainly, they have a goal or a combination of goals to establish during the fighting for Daesh. These categories of fighters, however, are not the concern of this study.

Conclusion:

Daesh could be considered as the fourth generation of Jihadists, due to the developments of its Ideology, strategies, and tools, since Daesh followed the third generation that took the approach of “Global Jihad” of *Al-Qaeda*, which itself was a development of the second generation of “Classical jihad” which started in Afghanistan, The first generation of Jihadism “Revolutionary Islamism” was created, however, as a reaction to the status of MENA in first decades of post-colonialism era, and it was more radicalized due to the systematic elimination of the Islamist from political participation, as a result of the dictatorial policies of the Arabian nationalist regimes.

As this paper took Affan’s classifications, it should be noted that the Islamic Ideologies are not alike they could be classified mainly into three schools, among each school; there are the radicals wing and the moderates wing. Daesh Ideology, however, could be a mixture of all the extreme and radical version of these schools.

Some of Daesh Ideologies are taken from a single-minded narrow interpretation of the holy Islamic texts, to ensure that it serves their advantages, other sources are single-minded narrow interpretation for the work of great authors such as *Ibn Taymiyyah*, and the work of modern thinkers such as *Qutb*, without ignoring the trans-generational thinkers and strategists such as *Bin Muhammad*, and *Abu Musab Al-Suri*.

Daesh, however, does not count only on its Ideology, but it rather uses many other justifications and takes the advantage of the increased Anti-US feelings among the Sunni-Arab, which came as a result of the U.S. policies and actions. Additionally part of Daesh narrative is the restoration of the lost Sunni-Arab’s prestige and the threats of Shia-Iran expansionism in the area.

Finally, it is not correct to consider that all of Daesh fighters have a strong doctrine, as some of them are intelligent agents, Mercenaries, and Prize Hunters, these groups worth focusing in any future studies.

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