

**Framing ISIS in Global Mainstream Media:
A Comparative Content Analysis of Television News from
Al Jazeera English /AJE/ and Cable News Network /CNN/**

Wibishet Fessha

A Thesis submitted to

The Graduate School of Journalism and Communication

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

The Degree of Master of Arts in Journalism and Communication

Addis Ababa University

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

June, 2016

Addis Ababa University

School of Graduate Studies

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Wibishet Fessha, entitled: Framing ISIS in Global Mainstream Media: A Comparative Content Analysis of Television News from Al Jazeera English /AJE/ and Cable News Network /CNN/ and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Journalism and Communication complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

Signed by the Examining Committee:

Examiner_____sig._____Date_____

Examiner_____sig._____Date_____

Advisor_____sig._____Date_____

Chair of Department or Graduate Program Coordinator

ABSTRACT

Framing ISIS in Global Mainstream Media: A Comparative Content Analysis of Television News from Al Jazeera English /AJE/ and Cable News Network /CNN/

Wibishet Fessha

June, 2016

The aim of this study was to investigate how ISIS is covered in the news reports of Al Jazeera English /AJE/ and Cable News Network /CNN/. Informed by Orientalism and Framing theoretical frameworks, the study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods to gather and analyze the data. The quantitative content analysis helped identify frames used in discussing ISIS in AJE and CNN; while the qualitative content analysis provided a ground to explain why the specific frames are selected. Purposive sampling was used to select the media and the news items for this research. The study revealed that both AJE and CNN used 14 individual frames in their news narratives about ISIS, which were further categorized into six umbrella frames: war, killing, outline, victim, intervention and protagonist frames. The analysis shows that these global media used the frames with different level of prominence and emphasis of angles in their news narratives. While the intervention frame was predominantly used by both AJE and CNN, the first reinforced regional military movements but the latter emphasized on western military support to defeat ISIS. Then, AJE used the victim frame to report civilian casualties of the conflict whereas CNN had less news about victims. The war frame was the second dominant frame CNN used to discuss the damages the terrorist group caused, where the broadcaster shed light on the ineffective regional resistance. The war frame was the third frame AJE widely used to show the Sunni rebel group as gaining victory but capitalized on the regional resistance. For CNN the outline frame was the third dominant frame used to narrate and explain about the group and its various aspects. AJE produced very few reports with the killing frame, covering ISIS' beheadings where it

sympathized with victims and their families. CNN had much more news about westerners' beheadings and soldiers' executions in which it showed how horrible and barbaric ISIS is. In the protagonist frame AJE portrayed Iraq as a country directly threatened by ISIS, whereas for CNN, it was the U.S under threat. The findings show how the media in fact belong to two distinct media hemispheres where CNN's narratives were shaped by oriental discourse about ISIS and related events in the Middle East and AJE news narratives primarily focused on providing alternative perspectives about the same phenomena. In conclusion, this narrative disparity further proved that AJE and CNN stand on two extreme media poles even on the issue of ISIS.

Acknowledgements

I have the deepest and the most sincere gratitude to the almighty God—Lord of lords, King of kings, Creator of all creation, Name above all names, worthy of all praise—for He has bestowed on me the knowledge, opportunity, patience and perseverance to start this research endure the challenges, add to my knowledge and ultimately finish the study. Thank the Lord for He is good!

My advisor Dr. Abdissa Zerai deserves all the credit for the honest opinion on my work, hard-to-swallow comments and makeovers that made the research meet this glorious end. I also admire his commitment to assist me with my thesis despite the long distance and detachment from his former job in Ethiopia.

I extend my thanks to Yemsrach Girma, a dear friend, for helping me acquire all the crucial data I needed for the analysis and always being there in the process of the study.

My thanks also go to my friend and classmate Tamirat Mechale for bringing to light the idea for this research and Dr. Zenebe Beyene for coming up with the idea.

I appreciate my uncle Mebrate Assefa, and my mother Meseret Ebisa who made this work, my education and my life possible.

*I dedicate this work to my sweet grandparents Assefa Negussie, Tayech Beyene
and Olana Tulu. Thanks for the love and the blessings.*

Table of Contents

Contents	Page No.
ABSTRACT	
Acknowledgements	
List of Acronyms	VIII
Chapter One: Introduction	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	3
1.3 Objectives of the Study	6
1.3.1 General Objective	6
1.3.2 Specific Objectives	6
1.4 Research Questions	6
1.5 Significance of the Study	7
1.6 Scope of the Study.....	7
1.7 Limitation of the Study	8
Chapter Two: Review of Related Literature.....	9
2.1 An overview of the Historical Evolution of ISIS.....	9
2.1.1 History of the Jamaat al-Tawhid wa-l-Jihad /JTWJ/ now ISIS and al-Qaeda.....	9
2.1.2 Rising Conflict between al-Qaeda in Iraq /AQI/ and al-Qaeda.....	11
2.1.3 The Rise of Islamic State in Iraq /ISI/ and al-Qaeda	11

2.1.4	The Syrian Conflict and ISIS	12
2.1.5	Events that led to the Creation of ISIS.....	13
2.2	The Arab World and the U.S.: Interaction	15
2.3	U.S. Media’s Orientalist Discourse.....	18
2.3.1	About CNN	20
2.4	Counter Narrative from the Arab Media	23
2.4.1	About AJE.....	24
2.4.2	Al Jazeera and Al Qaeda.....	25
2.5	Theoretical Framework	26
2.5.1	Framing Theory	26
2.5.2	Orientalism.....	36
Chapter Three: Methodology		44
3.1	Research Method.....	44
3.1.1	Quantitative Content Analysis	45
3.1.2	Qualitative Content Analysis /Textual Analysis/.....	47
3.2	Sampling Techniques and Procedure	48
3.2	International News Broadcasters of the Study	48
3.2	Time Frame and News Items of the Study	49
3.3	Unit of Analysis	50
3.4	Content Categories	50
3.5	Data Analysis Procedure	52

Chapter Four: Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion.....	53
4.1 Data Presentation and Analysis.....	53
Framing of ISIS by AJE and CNN News Media.....	53
4.2 Discussion of Findings.....	98
Chapter Five: Conclusions and Implications for Future Studies	109
5.1 Conclusions	109
5.2 Implications for Future Studies	113
References	
Appendixes	

List of Acronyms

9/11- September 11, 2001

24/7- Twenty four hours a day and Seven days a week

AJ- Al Jazeera

AJE- Al Jazeera English

AQ-al-Qaeda

AQI-al-Qaeda in Iraq

BBC- British Broadcasting Corporation

CNN- Cable News Network

IS- Islamic State

ISI- Islamic State of Iraq

ISIL- Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant

ISIS- Islamic State of Iraq and Syria

JTWJ- Jamaat al-Tawhidwa-l-Jihad

MSM- MajlisShura al-Mujahedin

NATO-North Atlantic Treaty Organization

U.S. - United State

UK- United Kingdom

U.S.A. - United States of America

WWI – World War I

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Background

The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria or Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham/ISIS/ is a recently emerging fighters group struggling to establish a single Islamic state. Also self-proclaimed as the Islamic State /IS/, ISIS is a 'Sunni Islamist Rebel Group' that mainly operates in Iraq and Syria where it has now acquired controlled territory. This territorial possession and expansion, Zelin (2014a) discusses, is an unusual form of resistance and state formation from the 'Sunni jihadist group' that has never been the case with previous Islamic rebels.

Although the self-proclaimed 'Caliphate' is not accepted by non-members i.e. 'most Muslims' including 'pro al-Qaeda Jihadis', the group is still moving forward with an aim particularly focused on 'overthrowing the Westphalian nation-state model and the post-World War II American international system' (Zelin, 2014a, pp. 1-2).

ISIS is also referred to by the name Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant /ISIL/. Bibarch (2006) states that Levant is a name applied to the geographical area that covers the eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea from roughly the Isthmus of Suez to the Taurus Mountains, including present-day Israel, Lebanon, western Jordan, the Sinai in Egypt, and that part of Syria defined by the Orontes Valley and the region of Aleppo. Countries in the Levant include (Cyprus, Hatay (province of Turkey), Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and Syria. According to Barrett (2014) ISIS can also be called by the transliterated Arabic acronym Da'ish or Daesh which stands for (al Dawla al Islamiya fi al Iraq wa al Sham) (p. 4). ISIS considers the name Da'ish or Daesh derogatory because it sounds similar to the Arabic words Daes, "one who crushes something underfoot," and Dahes, "one who sows discord." Although unsuccessful, the group is making efforts to rebrand itself as the Islamic State /IS/.

ISIS has caused a new form of threat for America and Europe. Unlike al-Qaeda, ISIS is using foreign fighters for a far advanced purpose than just using them as planners and executioners of attacks in the west or Arab countries (Zelin, 2014a, pp. 2-3). The fact that it is using Islamic fighters from the west as public executioners and public images of the group has an inclination that ISIS has its support even from people in the west. Besides mobilizing foreign fighters for its current fights in Iraq and Syria, ISIS might build up their capacities to help the expansion of the Islamic State on their return home.

By capturing territory, growing in military strength, winning over other 'radical militants' in Syria and developing its financial muscle—among many other significant growth and reformations—ISIS is determined to establish an Islamic State. It is firmly established to impose its will by any means necessary which supersede fundamental rights violation.

According to the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic (2014, p. 13) ISIS has committed all atrocities that range from suppression of freedom of expression, gender based violence, war crimes and ultimately crimes against humanity. These violations and violence against people across various countries including and particularly Iraq, Syria as well as those across northern Africa, Europe and the U.S. are strongly abhorred by international organizations and communities and are acts of terror.

It seems it is an issue that international media like AJE and CNN would treat in a more or less harmonious manner if not totally identical—showing the true inhuman acts committed not just on a small section of people but on the entire set of people living in the affected areas. ISIS' caliphate and its aspirations to include all of the Middle East, northern and western Africa and extending to some parts of Europe to homogenize and rule the world under one dominion will give these news providers more reasons to show what the group is

all about and the anti-democratic movements it carries out. It is in this prospect that this research set out to understand how CNN and AJE are representing ISIS in their transnational news reports.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Thanks to globalization, our world is becoming smaller by the minute. With various media of communication available, information travels faster than ever. Mainstream media, now with the help of new media technologies, extend their dominion of representing the world according to their world view. American and other European media like CNN have the lions share in representing various ‘world affairs’ and even ‘shaping news definition’ on other continents too (Ginneken, 1998). These media and their growing counters in the southern hemisphere, like AJE, report news from around the world from their respective regional orientation: political, social and/or economic.

These media also report terrorism, terrorist groups and their acts of ‘retribution’. Mogensen (2008, p. 32) states “the recognition of a special terror-related genre within journalism seems to be emerging. The purpose of the genre is to provide television news coverage of ongoing terror attacks and their immediate aftermath to viewers in a state of crisis.” Particularly after Al Qaeda and the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the media have continuously reported about terrorism.

In fact, AJE got its current place in the international news arena after it exclusively reported the Afghan war and aired videotape broadcasts from Al Qaeda. Zein (2012, p. 177) affirms that Al-Jazeera’s exclusive access to Al-Qaeda messages and terrorist leaders has increased Al-Jazeera’s fame in the international scene after September attacks in 2001. Although the channel, as Miles (2005, p. 382) states, was praised to be free even by American officials,

Zein (2012, p. 183) concludes that its broadcasts from the terrorist group and distinctive reference to terrorism as ‘so called terrorism’ has rendered it a supporter of AQ.

These accusations didn’t last and were not concrete enough to labeling the group as the voice of terrorism and deprive it of its unusually earned fame. According to a research by Gerhards & Schafer, AJ, like its western counter agencies CNN, BBC and German ARD, has in fact proved to be a media force against terrorism attacks (Gerhards & Schafer, 2014).

With the beginning of the Arab Spring in general and the rise of the terrorist group ISIS in particular international media have taken interest in the story. The rise in Tunisia, turmoil in Egypt, war in Libya and Syria have all been extensively treated one by one starting from the self-immolation of 26 year-old Tunisian Mohammed Bouazizi in December 2010. Ramadan (2014, pp. 4-5) states that, in reporting this phenomenon from the Arab world international news media have maintained impartiality though their frames of coverage have differed between reporting really important socio-political reformations and reporting about the roles of social media in the respective movements.

Can we say the same about reports of ISIS in the international media? It is a fact that both AJE and CNN have taken up interests and repeatedly reported about ISIS particularly after it started expanding territory in Syria and Iraq and announced a worldwide caliphate after mid 2014. Yet, it is crucial to understand whether ISIS’ extremist views, rights violations and atrocities are significantly and correspondingly reported in a polarized media hemisphere—Arab-centered media like AJE and western media like CNN.

What causes the concern here is the fact that, although these media have been reporting the issue of terrorism particularly in post 9/11 events, they don’t actually give the kind of picture that seemed coherent and clearly understandable. They tend to have developed distinctive frames that seem similar but lack condemnation. As Reese and Lewis (as sited in Gerhards &

Schafer, 2014, p.13) put it, CNN and Al Jazeera “portray them (terrorist attacks) as an expression of a geopolitical conflict in which the liberal Western democratic societies under U.S. leadership on the one hand are confronted with transnationally organized Islamist terror networks, particularly Al Qaeda, on the other:”

In an article Edge (2014) discussed challenges faced by editors from CNN, Al Jazeera and France 24 in reporting ISIS and related events. In the discussion Tony Maddox, executive vice president and managing director of CNN International discussed how the channel is trying to establish an editorial policy that prevents CNN from becoming a propaganda amplifier for ISIS (pp. 2-3). Maddox states:

...with each video CNN showed "less and less" images or footage (from the killings of American Journalists), and by the time the Henning (fourth victim) video was released the outlet "decided not to show anything at all because it was clear at that point that they [ISIS] wanted us to. (Edge, 2014, p. 3)

On the other hand, Edge (2014) quoted Ibrahim Helal, director of news at Al Jazeera Arabic who admitted by saying: "For our audience, we understand very well that ISIL would like us to reward extremism more than everyone else," (p. 4). This expectation can be traced and related with patters of reporting practiced by AJ that promoted AQ and were mouthpieces of its leaders. Yet, unlike this past practices, it seems practitioners at AJ have realized that they can no longer be tools for terrorist propaganda and magnifying terrorism. Helal affirm: “This organization (ISIS) wanted to show-off, to terrorize, and recruit. We will not allow them to do it because it's a threat for humanity” (Edge, 2014, p. 5).

A number of additional research can be found on how terrorism, war on terror and Al Qaeda have been framed in the events that followed the 9/11 terror attacks. On the contrary, as far as the researcher’s knowledge and research is concerned, except the testimonies of practitioners

in the earlier paragraph, there is hardly a well researched academic piece on how ISIS is framed in the news coverage of AJE and CNN.

It is important to establish the actual framing of ISIS in the news coverage of AJE and CNN to prove the above claims made by the respective media practitioners to not be a tool for the group's propaganda. Therefore, it was the aim of this paper to identify the kind of frames these media used in portraying ISIS; a group that has clearly set goals to establish itself as a powerful state in the Middle East, Europe and Africa despite lack of international recognition.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective

This research was aimed at identifying how ISIS is framed in news reports of AJE and CNN: two global mainstream media that stand on the southern and western media hemisphere respectively.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

This research particularly aimed to,

1. Identify the major frames used by AJE and CNN while covering ISIS
2. To compare how similar or different the framing of ISIS is by AJE and CNN
3. To explain the implications of the framing of ISIS by AJE and CNN

1.4 Research Questions

With the objectives in mind, the researcher forwarded the following research questions

1. Which frames are frequently used by AJE and CNN in reporting ISIS in their news reports?
2. How similar or different are the news frames used to report ISIS in AJE and CNN?
3. What are the implications of the news frames used to report ISIS in AJE and CNN?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This research has both practical and theoretical importance in the area of international media and communication and its research.

In practical terms this research could help third world countries' media and journalists like Ethiopia's to make informed decisions about sourcing international news. Since our media and journalists depend on such news sources as AJE and CNN to report about global phenomenon this research would be an important guide for them to be critical in picking media sources.

In theoretical terms it would add to the debate whether a polarized global-media reporting exists between western and non-western media. The study would also be a stepping stone for media and communication researchers who aspire to pursue further research on ISIS and its global media representation.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This research was limited to analyzing the news frames in the stories of two selected global mainstream media: AJE and CNN. The study particularly focused on the news coverage between June and December 2014—starting from June 29 when ISIS proclaimed a *worldwide caliphate*, started expanding its stronghold into Iraq and captured the attention of both AJE and CNN. The units of analysis for this research were news reports from AJE and CNN that have duration of up to three minutes.

It was limited to studying frames of the spoken discourse in the news devoid of the visual frames, headlines, sub-headlines, backdrop images, etc.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

Though this research would significantly contribute to the area of global media and communication research—ISIS in focus—the researcher believes it has its own shortcomings. The limitations of this paper are particularly due to the limited time for the research on one hand and the magnitude of the issue under discussion on the other.

- ✓ In selecting samples from both media's news reports—that sum up to 653 short and long videos—the researcher fears some concepts, ideologies or thoughts have been missed in those that are not selected for reasons mentioned above.

This research, bound by time restrictions, was limited to analyzing the textual frames particularly the spoken discourse used in the news reports of the respective media. It is important though for future researches to pay attention to visual frames, image backdrops, etc., which are equally important to have a holistic information and understanding of the subject matter.

The two global media selected for this research—AJE and CNN—are not a utopian representation of all non-western and western media. Everything may not be deduced to other respective global media. The findings of this paper about their frames of coverage and ideology may not holistically infer to their stand points about other issues they cover. Therefore, the findings of this research are substantively applicable only to AJE and CNN and their coverage of ISIS.

This research particularly dealt with studying the media messages of the AJE and CNN. It was not concerned with how it is perceived by the audience. As a result, with the appropriate time, budget and capacity making an audience analysis would help know the real effect of the framing and the reception of the audience.

Chapter Two: Review of Related Literature

2.1 An overview of the Historical Evolution of ISIS

2.1.1 History of the Jamaat al-Tawhid wa-l-Jihad /JTWJ/ now ISIS and al-Qaeda

ISIS was an inception after the infamous Abu Musab al Zarqawi started operating in Iraq in May 2013 after founding the group Jamaat al-Tawhid wa-l-Jihad (JTWJ) in 1999. (Zelin, 2014b, p. 1)

Both Bin Laden led al-Qaeda and Zarqawi led JTWJ came to existence particularly after the Afghan jihad against the Soviet Union in the 1980s. Although these two groups formed a merger in 2004 they have “distinct genetic material” which is attributed to their different background, leadership styles and aims. Specifically speaking a basic distinction between the two groups lies in the socioeconomic background of the groups’ leaders and cadre. Whereas Bin Laden and most of his leadership came from upper middle class and enjoyed University education, Zarqawi and his closest command came from less educated, poor families (Zelin, 2014b, p. 1). These differences were one of the several sources of problem when the leaders of the two groups for the first time met in Afghanistan in 1999. Bin Laden was not comfortable with the fact that Zarqawi had a criminal past. He also didn’t appreciate Zarqawi’s extreme views of *Takfir* (accusing another Muslim of heresy and thereby justifying his killing).

As Byman & Williams (2015, p. 2) argue, Bin Laden had an aspiration to conglomerate small jihadist fighter groups throughout the world to create a greater network of fighters and establish jihad worldwide. Consequently, it was only logical to accept Zarqawi and his group with all its flaws to attain a greater ambition. The same was true for Zarqawi. Although he had Bin Laden’s financial support to start his group, he was not happy to swear allegiance to

Al-Qaeda because he only shared some of Bin Laden's goals and wanted to stay independent (Byman & Williams, 2015).

For Bin Laden the collaboration meant also more than just creating a network of jihadists to run global jihad. It was a matter of survival and supremacy. For Bin Laden who was being hunted by the U.S. for bomb attacks on its embassies in Africa and 9/11 on American soil, it was no more possible to act in the open (Byman & Williams, 2015, p. 2&3). The U.S. was also determined to destroy all of al-Qaeda by obliterating its leaders and training camps, weakening its financial sources and communications and incapacitating its operations. In a period of growing demise for Bin Laden and his group, the rise of Zarqawi and his groups' growing strength was a dooms day call. It was important for Bin Laden to maintain his operation while in hiding from the U.S. For this to happen, Zarqawi and his growing operations in Iraq was crucial (Zelin, 2014b, p. 2).

Meanwhile, for Zarqawi everything was going according to plan. He and his group took the attention of the world particularly after his group exploded the UN Headquarters in Baghdad and started videotaping and transmitting beheadings on August 2003 and May 2004 (Barrett, 2014, p. 11). His brutality and hits on Shiite religious leaders and their submissive Sunni civilians among other factors attracted jihadists from all around the world to join Zarqawi's group (Zelin, 2014b, p. 2). For this to happen resources were crucial and this made it clear that Zarqawi needed the resourceful Bin Laden and al-Qaeda.

Accordingly, the differences these two groups had were not big enough to stop them from marrying. Both Al-Qaeda and Zarqawi had a lot to benefit from one another. Consequently, Zarqawi swore his loyalty to al-Qaeda and established his group as al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) in October 2004 to show the connection (Byman & Williams, 2015, p. 1). The conglomeration in fact turned out mutually beneficial: Bin Laden gained an ally when the group was at its

weakest and Zarqawi benefited from the reputations and connections of al-Qaeda to acquire recognition, pull together jihadists from all over the world and expand its operations.

2.1.2 Rising Conflict between al-Qaeda in Iraq /AQI/ and al-Qaeda

The differences between AQI and al-Qaeda discussed above among similar other factors are some indicators that the alignment was not meant to last long. The two groups had their differences even when it comes to fighting their so called ‘enemy’. Bin Laden and his second-in command Ayman al-Zawahiri believed that in order *to save the* “umma (global Islamic community)”, they drove their group towards fighting the “far enemy”—the U.S.—that is helping establish what they call “apostate” institutions and governances. Zarqawi and his group were determined to wage war and attack the enemy near home i.e. Shiite and Shiite based leaderships and their “apostate” Sunni allies (Byman & Williams, 2015, p. 4). For Al-Qaeda, Zarqawi’s political and religious interventions particularly those that target Shiites and their leadership among other things was an “over-the-top enforcement of Sharia [therefore] alienating Sunnis’ and hurting the long-term goals of the global jihadist project” where uniting all Muslims under one leadership is crucial (Zelin, 2014b, p. 3). These issues were made clear to Zarqawi in two warning letters written from Zawahiri, then deputy head of al-Qaeda in 2005. Regardless of the warnings Zarqawi kept up the brutality. Before Zarqawi was killed in a U.S. airstrike in June 2006 he united other Iraqi insurgent groups under Majlis Shura al-Mujahedin (MSM) under AQI.

2.1.3 The Rise of Islamic State in Iraq /ISI/ and al-Qaeda

After Zarqawi’s death, AQI’s new leader Abu Hamza al Muhajir pledged Baya (religious oath of allegiance) with a group named Islamic State in Iraq (ISI) under Abu Omar Baghdadi (Barrett, 2014, p. 12). As ISI started rising to power interventions from the U.S. military and

the government of Iraq supplemented with anti-ISI Sunni awakening significantly reduced the violence from the group.

In January 2009, Iraq Prime Minister Maliki turned on Sunni leaders and awakening groups. The premier set forth policies that appeal to the hearts and minds of his “Shia base” (Byman & Williams, 2015, p. 1). In the process, he succeeded in systematically eliminating Iraqi Sunnis from power. This was possibly because; the Premier supposed, weakening the source of ISI—the Sunni sect if not every member—is weakening the group. Yet, the assumption was actually counterproductive since it was unable to distinguish the reserved Sunni sects and those Sunni groups that were fighting against ISI. The move from the Premier led to increased sectarian tensions in Iraq and drove Iraqi’s in Sunni tribal areas to show hidden support for ISI later helping it gain strength. Having the breathing space it needs, just months later, in August 2009 the group bombarded Iraqi Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Finance killing hundreds (Barrett, 2014, p. 11).

Almost four years from his appointment, in April 2010, ISI leaders Abu Omar al Baghdadi and Abu Ayyub al Masri were killed in a U.S. led airstrike. Then the infamous Abu Bakr al Baghdadi took leadership of the group (Barrett, 2014).

2.1.4 The Syrian Conflict and ISIS

The Syrian conflict is yet another notable period in the rise of ISIS. As the war erupted in 2011 Baghdadi sent a group of fighters to Syria, after a recommendation from al Qaeda leader Zawahiri (Byman & Williams, 2015, p. 2). The group sent to Syria to establish ISI wing in the country acquired success due to the chaos and instability. It captured territories, mobilized resources and recruited jihadists that shared its dreams. On April 2013, ISI started calling itself Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) to announce its presence and hold in Syria.

2.1.5 Events that led to the Creation of ISIS

There are several explanations that try to purport how ISIS may have come to exist. Speaking in concrete and explainable sense, there are three basic perspectives to explain the come-about of ISIS. The first two, the religious and political roots are dominant. They seem to sometimes overlap in many writers and academicians explanation of the origins of ISIS.

ISIS a Product of Islamic Sect Rivalry

With respect to Islamic sect rivalry in the world today and their modern formations to leading countries under one Islamic rule, it would be possible to argue that ISIS is in fact a kin, next in line, to do its efforts of realizing an Islamic Caliphate. Its formal declaration to establish an Islamic Caliphate over Iraq and Syria and gradually incorporate the Arab World, part of Europe and Africa is evident of their proposal. Furthermore, their wins in almost all of Syria and their relentless fight that led to wins over cities in Iraq has made them practical and literal.

ISIS a Prodigal Child of the West and Its Middle East Allies

The War in Iraq

Some claim that ISIS is the adopted child of western countries themselves, particularly the U.S. and UK who secretly fed and nurtured it to fight against its own-likes, Ahmed (2014, p. 1). The author states that these western countries followed what he called a *red-against-red* policy when dealing with conservative movement by al-Qaeda during the Iraq war in 2003. *Red-against-red* is an intra-insurgency tactic that involves inciting conflicts inside insurgents and between enemies or military sects with the aim of weakening both enemies and also making them look unworthy and ultimately drawing them as having no use for the same people the insurgents say they are fighting for. The U.S. is implicated to have armed an insurgents group formerly known as “Ba’ath party”. It is a group handpicked and trained by al-Qaeda and ruled under Abu Musab al Zarqawi as al-Qaeda in Iraq /AQI/.

The Syrian War

For the west, involving in the matters of the Middle East has become pattern. According to Ahmed (2014) the west particularly the UK has its covert operations to thank in trying to remove the tyrant Assad regime from power by operations from within that later caused the Syrian Civil War (p. 1). On the other hand, as The Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic (2014) confirms, ISIS was among the many armed groups in Syria, fighting to topple the Assad government (p. 2). So it wouldn't be completely wrong to consider the following assumption.

The unrest in Syria has led to the creation of rebel groups from inside and outside Syria. Abu Mohammed al Golani was a leader of one of the fighter groups against Assad's government that operated from Northern Syria in 2011 (Barrett, 2014, p. 12). With the aim of controlling both Iraq and Syria, the infamous leader of ISI, Abu Bakr al Baghdadi made coalitions with Golani's fighters' in Syria and changed the group's name to Islamic State of Iraq and al Sham (the Levant) (ISIS).

This coalition in 2013 and other resistances in Syria were *officially and unofficially* supported by several countries that were against the Assad government (Ahmed, 2014). This anti-Assad coalition headed by American intelligence engaged Gulf States: Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Jordan as well as NATO and Turkey that financed the movement.

Once again a mainly western support turned against itself. Almost a year later in 2014, ISIS grown in military strength, financial capacity and territorial hold, shock the world by announcing an Islamic Caliphate and threatening the west if they were to intervene in any way.

This group was first armed by the west to create dissolutions in the number one terrorist group against the west (al-Qaeda) and the Assad regime. Yet, it did more than it was set out

to do. Particularly, after the death of al-Qaeda Central's leader, Bin Laden, the then AQI now ISIS turned the guns on its benefactors and as some media expressed, it is committing atrocities that even scare al-Qaeda itself.

This insight indicates that ISIS might be a backfire the west did not expect. It might be a repercussion against the ambitious plans of the west which is aimed at protecting their oil interest in the region, helping the expansion of Israel and eventually *re-drawing* the map of the Middle East for their interest (Ahmed, 2014, p. 2).

ISIS another Historic Phenomenon

For others, ISIS merely originates from a complexity of socio-political and economic tensions in the Middle East and beyond (Barrett, 2014, p. 58). In fact, to use the words of the author precisely, it is “an accident of history”. This assumption which seems short sighted undermines the contribution of U.S. and particularly the UK imperial interventions since the early eighteenth and recently the early twentieth century that started during the Gulf War and now the war against Syria. Edward Seid, in his 1997 book entitled *Covering Islam*, states:

In the case of Libya and Iraq, the former was bombarded by the united states in April 1986 during the prime time evening hours and the latter was the target of a full-scale war and subsequent United States air attacks in 1993 and 1996 (most of which were broadcast on CNN). People in the west felt that the strikes were justified even though huge numbers of innocent civilians were affected. (Page xiv and xv)

2.2 The Arab World and the U.S.: Interaction

There are various assumptions and explanations about the relationships of the “Muslim Arab world and the Judeo-Christian West”¹. For Brzezinski (2004) the relations between the Muslim world and the U.S. must be viewed from a purely political point of view where any

¹ Terms from (Friedman, 2004)

feud between these parties is a result of their treatment of one another according to the respective policy they have. The root cause for the hostile relation between different Arab nations and the U.S. is the fact that the U.S.: favors Israel, a Judeo-Christian Nation that has been threatening Arab countries around it in a long-standing historical antagonism; supports the Shah against the Islamic Republic of Iran; and helped India against Pakistani (Brzezinski, 2004).

On the other hand, scholars like Friedman (2004) places emphasis on religion based causes to explain, specifically, post 9/11 tensions between the Judeo-Christian Western and the Muslim East. As the 9/11 deadly attacks unraveled the U.S. media in particular played its part in making judgment calls that attributed the attacks to religious retaliation. They clearly claimed Islam, Muslims and Muslim doctrines responsible for killing civilians and waging a war on the U.S. Seib (2004, p. 74).

Edward Seid proposes various explanations in determining why Islam, Muslims—mostly Arabs—and their culture are considered as a source of threat and associated with terrorism, violence and fundamentalism—an attribution which he says is loosely defined. He states that, this kind of generalized labeling which is replicated and capitalized by western media like CNN is actually a cover for Islam's major opponents, the U.S. and Israel, to divert attention from what they have been doing against the religion or the way of life (Seid, 1997, p. xxi). It is a way of creating a layer of information that misleads people to overlook actual causes and concrete circumstances that explain why and how events are happening; be it attacks, wars, etc.

In posing this theory Seid intends no absolution for Muslims who wage war and attacks on Israel and the west in the name of Islam. What he is up against is the fact that Islam is considered as a source of aggression and covered by western media as a religion of hostility.

“... covering Islam is a none-sided activity that obscures what “we” do, and highlights instead what Muslims and Arabs by their very flawed nature are.” Seid (1997, p. xxii)

True, as Buruma & Margalit (2004) write, “Radical Islamists no longer believe in the traditional Muslim division of the world between the peaceful domain of Islam and the war-filled domain of infidels. To them the whole world is now the domain of war. . . . The West is the main target” (p. 126). Radical Muslims, in particular, view the U.S. as an enemy of Islam that threatens its expansion if not existence. By trying to introduce and inject western way of life—democracy, Christianity, among many others—into its Middle East counter parts U.S. is asserting to be an enemy of Islam.

Due to several reasons, be it religious socio-political, or economic, U.S. led western powers carryout several military interventions in Muslim countries. These interventions always find a way to be justified regardless of the causalities they result: the countries thorn apart and especially the lives lost. (Seid, 1997) states;

No one seemed to object to the 1992 humanitarian intervention by the United States in Muslim Somalia, which, like the Lebanese expedition a decade earlier, ended in disarray. The Iraqi, Libyan, Chechnyan, and Bosnian cases are all different; but what they do have in common in the eyes of Muslims throughout the world is that it is western, mostly Christian powers and peoples who are mobilized to fight a continuing war against Islam. Thus the polarity is deepened and the chance of dialog between cultures is postponed. (page xv)

The U.S. has not seized to resist and strikeout groups that set out to get America. It is taking the battle to their doorsteps before they spread and reach homeland like they did in 9/11. Buruma & Margalit (2004) affirm that, in order to eliminate the radical Islamists’ felt-obligation to conquer and destroy the *infidels* or non-believers, “the fiercest battles will be

fought inside the Muslim world” (p. 147). In this process, the U.S. also makes an effective use of its media to persuade its own public to support legislations and intervention and legitimize its actions.

Seid (2007) states, *fundamentalism* has come to be “associated almost automatically with Islam, although it has a flourishing, usually elided, relationship with Christianity, Judaism, and Hinduism.” (page xvi). Such recklessly gross depictions and generalized applications of terms such as Terrorist, Radical, fundamentalist to the wide Muslim community “to subordinate, beat down, compel, and defeat any Arab or Muslim resistance to United States-Israel dominance” (Seid, 1997, p. XXXV), is a sure way of buying more enemies and at least rising the level of hatred to the respective countries believed accountable by Arabs and Muslims.

International relations scholar Charles Kupchan has a different perspective about the ever increasing struggle between the U.S. and Islamic radicals (Seib, 2004, p. 74). For Kupchan this conflict does not represent or imply a clash that results from what the West is doing against the Arab world, Islam or Muslims. He believes the struggle is a result of ambitious extremists who long for instability in Islamic states. By doing so, he states that, they will establish their territories in the borders of which they will have ultimate power to protect their political and economic interests.

2.3 U.S. Media’s Orientalist Discourse

The west in general and the U.S. in particular have its way of maintaining supremacy in the modern world as it did in the events of the two world wars when the U.S. and its allies secured victory of both the battle and the war. As (Mora, 2009) puts it;

By placing itself at the center of the world with a Eurocentric point of view, the West exploits other countries and communities through inflicting cultural change and

transformation on them either from within via colonialist movements or from outside via ‘Orientalist’ discourses in line with its imperialist objectives. (p. 418)

Orientalist discourse originally attributed to Edward Said (1995), “refers to a network of interlocking discourses about the ‘orient’ constructed in western civilization.” (as cited in Television and Orientalism, n.d., p. 1). The orient is the non-western world devoid of western civilization. Though it has broader interpretations [discussed in the frameworks section], in one aspect orientalist discourse is a discourse upheld by the U.S. about the Arab world. It is what the people and state think of the middle east.

Little (2008) discusses, Orientalist discourse is what the U.S. believes of the orient: “Arabs, Africans, and Asians are backward, exotic, and occasionally dangerous folk who have needed and will continue to need U.S. help and guidance if they are successfully to undergo political and cultural modernization.” (p.10). Accordingly, this gives the U.S. the right to police and the felt-obligation to come up with westernized ideologies and cultural practices the orient could salvage from.

Here is where mass communication comes in. As İnceoğlu explains it, the people with power, the ones that have taken an assumed responsibility use media as an “instrument” to spread the “philosophies, cultures and ethical values” that are assumed to benefit the orient (as cited in Mora, 2009, p. 420). Consequently, in these terms media is a means for the west to assure control and supremacy over the Arab world, Africa and Asia.

“‘Orientalist’ discourse reflects the Eurocentric point of view” (Mora, 2009, p. 424). For Mora (2009) media is another tool the government manipulates to disseminate its ideology:

media which serves the purpose of sustaining the capitalist order is covered and hidden universally by the dominant bourgeoisie ideology. In this way, the ideology of

the dominant class is ensured to be placed in the minds. Accordingly, the elites who hold the power/authority act together due to the common interests among themselves, their social origins and their viewpoint on the world. (p. 424).

For Said, who came up with the theory of Orientalism, international mainstream media owned by western nations; particularly those under the U.S. disseminate oriental ideologies. On his book Said (1977) describes media such as CNN and Fox that contribute to glorifying the United States of America against “foreign devil” by “re-cycling unverifiable fictions and vast generalizations” (“Preface” section, p. XV). He affirms; “instead of scholarship, we often find our journalists making extravagant statements, which are instantly picked up and further dramatized by the media.” (xvi)

2.3.1 About CNN

CNN is short for Cable News Network. It is an American news network; a pioneer and a pathfinder in broadcast news transmitters at an international level on a 24 hour basis. It is an incorporation and the first 24/7 all news providing network in the history of broadcasting (Erickson, 2014, p. 1). The expansion of technology and the vision of Ted Turner led to the innovation of a global news network that was the first of its kind (Whittemore, 1990). Turner was a maverick broadcasting executive who created CNN as part of his Turner Broadcasting System (TBS) for the principal reason that he needed to prove-wrong the people who were not convinced about his idea of a 24 hour news channel (Erickson, 2014). CNN was live on air after four years of inception on the 1st of June 1980. The first “news telecast” was presented by a husband-and-wife team of anchors Dave Walker and Lois Hart from its headquarters in Atlanta, State of Georgia of the U.S.A.

The initial five years were an uphill struggle for CNN. It has to come up with means to win the hearts and minds of the audience particularly in the U.S. against its richer competitors like

the Chicken Noodle Network (Erickson, 2014). After covering the Challenger space shuttle disaster² in 1986, live as it unraveled, CNN took a few steps ahead of its competitors. Then the Gulf War³ between 1990 and 1991 made CNN an international phenomenon (Gilboa, 2005, p. 27). As its reporters covered the war from both sides of the conflict the channel started establishing its current stature in the international media arena.

Its 24/7 news from around the world and its reach to several world countries through satellites and cable television have made CNN a global news channel (Gilboa, 2005). It has set the trend for international channels like the BBC and has become an inspiration for the creation of other international news providers like AJ that despised a homogenized perspective or representation from western media.

The CNN Effect

Academicians use the term the CNN effect to describe the media's ability to influence and shape government interventions particularly when it comes to shaping foreign policies and relationships with other countries Robinson (2000). This particular influence and name is used because of the strong position the renowned CNN International news station had during the times that followed the Gulf War after 1991.

The dominion of CNN and the formation of its international wing—which was the initial aspiration of the channel expressed in its policy⁴—has influenced various forms of global

² This unfortunate event in American space science history marks the explosion of Challenger on January 28, 1986. It was the second shuttle to reach space, in April 1983. It exploded 73 seconds after liftoff, killing the seven crewmembers (Howell, 2012).

³ Also called Persian Gulf War is an international conflict triggered by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990. After an authorization from the UN Security Council, an allied coalition against Iraq was led by the U.S. and several military personnel from Britain, France, Egypt, Saudi, Syria, and several other nations involved to free Kuwait from the invasion (Britannica, 2014).

⁴ Even at the early stages of broadcasting CNN aspired to accommodate its worldwide audience that it even had a policy which dictated the exclusion of words and phrases as “foreign” and “here at home” from its newscasts (Erickson, 2014).

communication and international relations⁵ (Gilboa, 2005, p. 28). The emotion-laden and highly critical coverage of CNN about the feud between the Kurds and Saddam Hussein as well as the reports on Somalia that called for quick measures to rescue the people of Somalia and bring hope to the Horn have played a direct role in persuading the U.S. government into taking action (Robinson, 2000). Foreign policy experts have expressed their concern for the need to reduce and control such unwarranted intrusions by the fourth estate. These influential abilities from the media are bound to create ill-thought interventions like in Iraq and Somalia; therefore, as critics would argue, there is a need to place elites who will be watching over the foreign policy making process (Robinson, 2000). Several political leaders and statesmen like Former British foreign secretaries Douglas Hurd and David Owen have admitted the CNN Effect (Gilboa, 2005). Former U.S. Secretary of State James Baker III and ex-UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, have shared their concern about the true effect of the media. (Gilboa, 2005) states: "In Iraq, Bosnia, Somalia, Rwanda, and Chechnya, among others, the real-time coverage of conflict by the electronic media has served to create a powerful new imperative for prompt action that was not present in less frenetic [times]". (p. 28).

Meanwhile, those on the other end of this theory believe that CNN or the media factor was just one set among many others that influenced foreign policy and relations. Anthony Lake, a scholar and Bill Clinton's first national security adviser, acknowledged that the *public sphere* driven by *televised images* have played their part in ruling for interventions in Iraq, Somalia or elsewhere discussed above; yet he emphasized that other factors such as cost and feasibility were as important (Hoge, 1994, pp. 136-144).

⁵ (Gilboa, 2005) list the set of global communications and international relations as technology, economics, culture, law, public opinion, politics, and diplomacy, as well as warfare, terrorism, human rights, environmental degradation, refugees, and health.

2.4 Counter Narrative from the Arab Media

According to Ginneken (1998) about seven major industrialized nations that comprise less than 10 percent of the world population, cater for the information need of about 90 percent of people in the world. In such a world of increased western media domination where most of the media are carriers of oriental discourse, it only seems reasonable to have an alternative narrative that provides a different angle if not challenge the traditional monotonous west-to-east (to Asia and Pacific and The Middle east) and west-to-south (to Africa and Latin-America) information flow.

Painter (2008) states that, in terms of countering the oriental disposition of western media like CNN several news providers were established (p. 1). AJE is one of these news providers that have actually succeeded in receiving a great range of audience who enjoyed the alternative narrative. Josh Rushing, AJ's U.S. defense and military correspondent was once quoted in the Financial Times issue of 4th August 2007 saying; "I tell people that Al-Jazeera provides different perspectives to CNN but an equally valid one. CNN films the launch of the missile. Al-Jazeera films what happens when it lands." (as cited in Painter, 2008, p. 17).

More importantly, in the practical sense, as el-Nawawy & Powers (2010) put it AJE is free from resource-related dependency that might result in accountability to a higher power that has political and commercial interests thus influencing decisions like who is what as well as what, where and who to cover or not in the news:

...AJE's model of journalism offers an alternative to today's mode of news journalism that continues to encourage stereotypical attitudes towards cultural 'others'. Not only has AJE's programming represented a fresh break from the traditional news agenda, but audiences around the world found AJE to work towards a conciliatory function, based on a typology of a conciliatory media developed here.

These findings point to the possibility of a global news broadcaster that can bring diverse audiences together and encourage dialogue, empathy, responsibility and reconciliation. (p. 61)

In order to assure its aim of an alternative mode of covering the world AJ and its practitioners had their head on what the practitioners call a “different perspective”. As (Painter, 2008) discussed it, AJ practitioners are determined to covering international events in an “alternative perspective” which is actually different from the “western perspective” CNN and BBC use; and also covering the parts of the world that are rarely covered; as well as those ‘developing countries’ that are not originally reported influenced by stereotypes and the like (p. 18).

2.4.1 About AJE

Having successfully covered the events of the Gulf War CNN emerged as a “global actor in international relations” thus inspiring other broadcasters like BBC, NBC and Star to cross international boundaries and make their news-reach global (Gilboa, 2005, p. 1). In a similar manner BBC-trained Arab journalists, inspired by CNN’s international coverage of the war, started to work on news reports for transnational audience. Schleifer (2007) declares that private owned satellite network, Orbit and then BBC Arabic Television Services started to broadcast news from London, both of which were an apparent “short-lived experiment” (p. 14).

Then all the efforts here and there were realized when an Arab based 24/7 news provider—Al Jazeera—was established. Although Al Jazeera , it was a pioneer in taking Arab broadcasting to a new level of influence starting just five years later. Particularly speaking, AJE has hit the jackpot when it comes to receiving international audience and recognition for delivering

unique perspectives in covering international events in its 24/7 news channel (Seib, 2004, p. 80).

Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, Amir of Qatar injected \$140 Million into forming AJ. This investment from the Emir was a proof of his free will to create a “progressive Islamic state” of Qatar that was willing to entertain western ideologies and formations (Seib, 2004, p. 79). Accordingly, the Sheikh was tolerant of the liberal and independent coverage. Yet, fair media practice can’t be realized at AJ because it has its reservations when it comes to showcasing if not scrutinizing Qatar’s regional and political connection and agenda (Affaya, 2011).

Unlike, the case in Qatar, other Arab countries were not willing to swallow the relative independent operations of AJ which was a threat to their interest (Seib, 2004). Consequently, they have repeatedly shut down AJ offices in their respective countries. The current prestige of AJ is evident that the Emir of Qatar has maintained his position to keep the station more or less independent.

2.4.2 Al Jazeera and Al Qaeda

After the expansion of Arab broadcasters, although, there were a number of television channels in news transmission, it was AJ that was able to impress transnational audience including the western world. It has out-smarted its then strong counterpart Al Arabiya (Schleifer, 2007). It got recognitions for having a different orientation in presenting post 9/11 retaliation and offensive interventions from the U.S. Its shining moment that led to its worldwide acceptance and recognition is attributed to its coverage of the U.S.-Afghan war that followed the terror attacks on the New York Trade Centers and Pentagon in 2001 (Seib, 2004). AJ was granted an exclusive coverage of the war and its aftermath even after all western media were evicted from Taliban-controlled territories in Afghanistan.

Furthermore, when AJ started receiving and transmitting videotape messages of Osama bin Laden, it became a common media of attribution in newscast footages of other media (Seib, 2004, p. 79). Its relentless effort to show an Arab perspective in its news, like reporting about Israeli-Palestinian conflict though with a pro-Palestinian slant, has also bought it credibility and a range of audience both from Arabs in the Middle East and those found in every corner of the world (Seib, 2004). AJ will equally be valued and credited by audience of the third world and those who are just fed-up with single story discourses that are tuned by western interests.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

The most important theoretical frameworks that help answer the research questions of this paper are the framing and Orientalism theories. Accordingly, the researcher has first discussed the framing theory and then covered various aspects of the theory of Orientalism.

2.5.1 Framing Theory

According to Baran & Davis (2012) the roots of framing theory can be traced to symbolic interaction—a theory that attributes individual interaction in the creation of reality—and social constructionism—a theory that treats reality as a social construct (p. 330). Framing is one theory that conglomerates these two potentially distinct views about how reality is created. For sociologist Ervin Goffman, framing is an “interpretive design” that humans use in their everyday life to understand what is going on around them i.e. the social world (Littlejohn & Foss (2009). This cognition process happens as individuals interact to make meaning or create their reality about a social world that has already been defined and instituted. For Baran & Davis (2012) “Frame analysis theory as developed by Goffman is a micro-level theory focusing on how individuals learn to routinely make sense of their social world” (p. 335).

People can use framing to make meaning of the world around them and reestablish a reality which is true according to them and their respective view of the world: “Frames help to reduce the complexity of information, but serve as a two-way process: Frames help interpret and reconstruct reality” (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009, p. 407).

Framing emerged as a media theory in the 1970s. In the United States, with the rise of the mass media as a powerful public opinion influencer not only in political issues but also other world views, framing research became a house-hold name with researchers (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009).

With the increased influence of media it was important to understand how media presents the unknown. As Hailesilasse (2013) describes, framing is a result of the media’s continued dominion in constructing reality for people who live far apart from one another (p. 24). The media do have the power to create images and stories about one society or social group in one corner of the world to share with other people in another corner of the world; neither of whom may have no the acquaintance or knowledge about one another. In this process of putting a face on the oblivion, media use different frames they believe is convenient. This subjective representation involves a “journalistic process that includes selection, prioritization, inclusion and elaboration” (Hailesilasse, 2013, p. 24).

Consequently, in understanding the media’s role of defining the world, people of different countries, political and socio-economic realities the framing theory found its way into communication and media research. The framing theory came into picture the same time Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw developed the agenda-setting approach to research how much a certain issue is reported and its consequent level of influence on how much people think of it as important (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009, p. 408).

Various scholars have contributed their definition of framing theory. Entman, one of the prominent names in the study of framing, states that framing is about picking a certain aspect of an issue and making it more prominent than others. For Entman (2007) framing is “the process of culling a few elements of perceived reality and assembling a narrative that highlights connections among them to promote a particular interpretation” (as cited in Groshek, 2008, p. 316). Accordingly it is about shading emphasis on what the media believe is the appropriate representation of a situation. Influenced by the media house rules, owners or subscribers, practitioners pick and emphasize on certain aspects of issues by repeatedly mentioning and incorporating it in their coverage. They make issues as important and appropriate as deemed necessary. By framing certain aspects of issues prominently, media elicit the kind of interpretation they seek in their audience thus bringing about the desired feedback. The function of such a subjective “selection” and “salience” is to define a particular problem, understand and pass a moral judgment that will help make sense of the events taking place:

frames...define problems—determine what causal agent is doing with what costs and benefits, usually measured in terms of common cultural values; diagnose causes—identify the forces creating the problem; making moral judgments—evaluate causal agents and their effect; and suggest remedies—offer and justify treatments for the problems and predict their likely effects (Entman, 1993, p. 52)

Entman puts these four functions of framing in perspective of the “cold war” frame which was a common news frame in the international news items of U.S. media until recently. Accordingly, for example, the media dealt with issues of civil war (the problem), caused by communist rebels (the cause) that is believed to be an “atheistic aggression” (the moral judgment) which will be averted by U.S. support to the anti-thesis (the remedy).

Another communication scholar Griffin (2012) defines framing as “the selection of a restricted number of thematically related attributes for inclusion on the media agenda when a particular object or issue is discussed.” (p. 381). In this definition Griffin capitalizes on making a consistent appeal to a certain aspect of an issue in every viable and related discourse in order to acquire the kind of feedback solicited from the audience. Fiske and Taylor (1991) state that, this process involves “making a piece of information more notable, meaningful, or memorable to audience” to increase the possibility that receivers will recognize the information and make meaning of it (as cited in Entman, 1993, p.53).

Dimitrova and Strömbäck (2005) state that the study of framing is concerned with understanding how media put together information about an issue or event and present it to the public (as cited in Groshek, 2008, p. 316).

For Gitlin (1980) frames have a generic definition: they are “persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation of selection, emphasis and exclusion by which symbol handlers routinely organize discourse.” (as cited in de Vreese, 2005, pp.52-53).

Although it is unlikely to establish a universal definition of framing it is possible, however, to realize that all definitions have basic components in common thus suggesting an idea shared by all of them in some aspects if not all. For the purpose of this study there is an established operational definition for framing which is constructed by extracting and using common ideas in each of the above definitions. Therefore, Framing is a process of interpreting and organizing issues or ideas by consistently selecting and focusing on certain aspects of interest to help the audience understand and interpret the social world.

Framing in Communication Process

Entman (1993) identifies framing in at least four “locations in the communication process: the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture” (p. 52). First of all, for

communicators their thought process influences what they say thus enabling them to consciously or unconsciously frame or represent the world around them. Then, framing in texts is demonstrated by “the presence or absence of certain keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information and sentences” that imply a certain theme or aspect of a “fact or judgment” (Entman, 1993, p. 52). Thirdly, framing with the receiver implies how the audience perceives and interprets i.e. decode issues discussed over certain media content; their frame of reference may be subject to their own point of view or influenced by the frames of the communicators and the text. Finally, the culture frame refers to what is usually expressed as right or wrong, good or bad, acceptable or unacceptable in the discourse and thought process of a group of people in a certain domain i.e. the audience. In all four communication processes framing is about what is being selected and frequently discoursed. As (Entman, 1993) puts it; “Framing in all four locations includes similar functions: selection and highlighting and use of the highlighted elements to construct an argument about problems and their causation, evaluation and/or solution.” (p. 53).

After conducting an experiment on framing Kahneman and Tversky (1984) showed how framing has the power to omit some features of reality by selecting and highlighting on specific issues (as sited in Entman, 1993, p. 53). Their finding indicates that by selecting and focusing on certain aspects of an issue framing has the capacity to withdraw focus from other features of the same issue.

News Frames

For Entman (1991) News frames are identified from and expressed in the “key words, metaphors, concepts, symbols, and visual images emphasized in a news narrative” (p. 7). Framing in news can be identified by looking for words or pictures that are repeatedly used to convey some sort of monotonous theme.

Every news organization is bound to practice a certain framing style influenced by its organizational structure, ideologies, owners and subscribers, audience or all. For Mellese & Muller (2012) due to the reasons above framing is an “inevitable step in news production” and crafting “audience perception” (p. 195). Implementing framing in the news is a way of making some ideal prominent, others less significant and even some totally irrelevant: “... through repetition, placement and reinforcing associations with each other, the words and images that compromise the frame render one basic information more readily discernable, comprehensible, and memorable than others.” (Entman, 1991, p. 7). This practice leads to “predictable and recurring motifs” (Mellese & Muller, 2012) or an identifiable design which is usual implemented and can be understood by analyzing contents of a certain period. Such kind of a research is called a media frame research—which is actually the focus of this study.

Media frames and individual frames are the two types of news frames research that apply to two different components of the communication process i.e. the media and the audience respectively.

For Gamson and Modigliani (1987) media frame is the dominant and recurring discourse in a news story that explains an event as it happens by defining conflicts or interactions and what the really implication of the issue is (as sited in Scheufele, 1999, p. 106). According, to (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009) these frame is a “macro level” components that focuses on how issues are presented in the media and resonates to agenda setting theory because it is about how certain aspects of an issue are selected and presented on the media to influence audience interpretation (p. 408). For Tuchman (1978) news frame is an essential features of news; it organizes everyday reality by turning “meaningless and no recognizable happenings into discernible events” (Scheufele, 1999, p. 106).

The second type of frames i.e. individual frames or audience frames are “micro level” component of research in political communication. Individual frames also known as audience frames are defined as “mentally stored clusters of idea that guide individuals’ processing of information” (Entman, 1993 as cited in Scheufele, 1999, p. 107). They are cognitive level frames used by audience to comprehend the world. As (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009) puts it individual frames

... relate to the way the audience uses this information as they develop attitudes toward certain issues that overlap with priming processes. Priming refers to the way media offer a prior context by which an audience will interpret subsequent information, thus creating frames of reference for audiences. (p. 408)

Identifying News Frames

Just like the definitions of framing, various scholars propose and use distinctive approaches in conducting a research on framing. There is no universal standard and steps to follow to identify frames in news; however there are two approaches—*inductive* and *deductive* in nature—widely pursued by scholars (de Vreese, 2005, p. 53).

According to de Vreese inductive frames researches depend on the news contents to establish the dominant frames of the discourse. During the course of analysis the researcher establishes the frame he/she believes is common in the news. However, according to Hertog & McLeod (2001), since the research depends on the researcher’s subjectivity, the study scarcely relies on what the sample data could bring to the table (as cited in de Vreese, 2005). They also criticize the approach for being difficult to replicate for the same reason of subjective. Accordingly, in inductive research, the strength of the analysis, the depth of the results and the sensibility and applicability of the recommendations are as good as the knowledge,

academic experience, analytical skills, and world views of the researcher; none of which guarantee a replicable research in the exact same way.

Another alternative is the deductive approach to frames research. This approach commends investigating news frames by establishing and providing a working definition before the study is carried out (de Vreese, 2005). Several scholars are pro deductive approach. Establishing a frame prior to an investigation may be ideal to reproduce the research under different variables. Yet Cappella and Jamieson (1997) argue that there needs to be a set of criteria in establishing the frames because otherwise they may be based on mere hunches and imaginations which might turn up too broad and even overlap. They propose the following criteria;

1. A news frame must have identifiable conceptual and linguistic characteristics.
2. It should be commonly observed in journalistic practice.
3. It must be possible to distinguish the frame reliably from other frames.
4. A frame must have representational validity (i.e. be recognized by others)

(as cited in de Vreese, 2005, p.54)

In this regard, frames can be identified from textual clues that can be identified from different components of a news discourse. Tankard (2001, p. 101) suggests headlines, subheads, photos, photo captions, leads, source selection, quotes selection, pull quotes, logos, statistics and charts, and concluding statements and paragraphs, all components of a news that will help identify and measure frames (as cited in de Vreese, 2005, p.54).

Types of Frames

In terms of magnitude framing researches are of two type; they deal with either specific areas or general topics that transcend time and space. de Vreese (2002) states, such topics that pertain to specific topics or events are labeled as “issue-specific news frames” while those

that have greater thematic application beyond cultures and certain era are known as “generic news frames” (as cited in de Vreese, 2005, p.54).

(Littlejohn & Foss, 2009) identify two kinds of generic news frames in early studies of framing research in television news: an “episodic frame” and a “thematic frame” (p. 408). Iyengar (1990) states episodic frames explain news frames of an isolated event, for example frames of conflict, while thematic frames discuss issues in wider context of social and institutional factors like diagnostic/analytical and prognostic/predictive frames that show cause and effect of an event (as cited in Hailesilasse, 2013, p. 28).

Both issue specific and generic approaches of identifying news frames have their strengths and shortcomings. For (de Vreese, 2005) the issue specific approach is favored for its “profound level of specificity and details relevant to the event or issue under investigation” while at the same time lacks the ability of being generalized, applied and compared to other issues as well as used as an evidence in theory building (p. 55). For instance, Shah et al. (2002) conducted a research to identify recurrent frames in news about the final stages of the Clinton presidency. He identified three frames, namely “Clinton behavior scandal”, “Conservative attack scandal”, and “Liberal response scandal” (as cited in de Vreese, 2005). The frames identified in this investigation are very specific and innate to the issue under discussion. This being a good quality of the research, it also makes it impossible to generalize. These frames cannot be used in other post presidency election coverage. It also has restricted frames that make it impossible to compare with other post election situations and also establish a theory about frames of post presidency election news.

On the other hand, the weakness of the issue specific approach is actually the strength of the generic approach. It can vividly be generalized and compared to other issues. It also can provide a ground in theory formulation. In this regard Iyengar (1991) conducted a research on

the U.S. network coverage of social issues such as poverty, crime, and unemployment from 1981 to 1986. The kind of generic news frame used in this research can be used to conduct the same investigation in a different country which can then be compared accordingly. The investigation showed that the media used episodic interpretation where they focused on discussing the social issues from certain events instead of placing them in broader context i.e. socio-economic and political factors (thematic frames) (as cited in de Vreese, 2005, p. 56). This kind of discourse and conclusion can create an oversimplification of complex issues like the ones under discussion. It leads to a topical, disorganized, and isolated understanding of public affairs and issues (de Vreese, 2005).

For the purpose of this research, the issue specific approach is favored because it results in an organized, focused and detailed discussion of frames about a particular phenomenon: ISIS. The frames identified in this investigation are very peculiar and inherent to the issue under discussion, that is, a rebel or terrorist group in the Middle East based in Iraq and Syria. The inductive method is used to identify these issue specific frames implemented by AJE and CNN.

As Entman (1993) states framing is about what is being selected and frequently discoursed by a media. One of the factors that determine what kind of discourse is selected about any particular subject matter is the disposition of that media or its origin towards what is reported. In light of the subject of this research, i.e., ISIS and the Arab world it emanates from, one theory comes in handy to describe various disposition and media's shared responsibility in framing the non-west and events in these parts of the world. Edward Seid's, Orientalism is very relevant to the research questions of this study that concern a western media and an Arab both of whom are reporting a Middle Eastern phenomenon.

2.5.2 Orientalism

In the broader sense, Mora (2009) explains Orientalism, Oriental studies or Oriental science as a name given to the field of western-based social science that studies languages, religions, cultures and people of the Near and Far East communities, i.e., that of the Arab World including Egypt, Asia, and parts of Russia. Particularly speaking, “Orientalism refers to the external, isolating, discriminatory and prejudice-filled opinions of the Western European white man on the Eastern people and cultures” (Mora, 2009, p. 419).

Contrary to this rather generic definition of Orientalism, Seid (2003) discusses three different level explanations of Orientalism which supplement each other. First, he discusses the academic meaning of Orientalism. It is a study, teaching or discourse—written or spoken—of the Orient conducted by any of the social sciences like sociology, history, or philology; Seid (2003) refers to the scholar or researcher as Orientalist. He declares that the term in this particular context is not preferred because it is a more generic concept or area of study compared to *oriental studies* or *area studies*—more specific and clearer areas of study. It also holds a sort of connotation that alludes to nineteenth-century and early-twentieth-century “high-handed executive attitude” of European Colonialism. This means, in this particular instance, it positions the Orient as an inferior subject of study to be understood by a more advanced culture of study in Europe or America that uses different subject areas of its own.

Secondly, Seid (2003) deals with yet another generic explanation of Orientalism which is more imaginative. It involves explaining, writing about and constructing facts and statements about the Orient, its people, customs, attitude and knowledge, destiny, etc. based on a contrast made between the origin and characteristics of eastern (Orient) and Western (occident) divisions. Here, the fundamental assumption is that, these two worlds are believed to have basic differences.

Thirdly, there is the last definition which, for (Seid, 2003, p. 3) is a ‘more historically and materially’ clearer explanation than the previous two.

Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient—dealing with it by making statements about it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a western style of dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient.

It is comprehensible why this last definition is more holistic than the first two. True, there are commonalities such as how the west is seen—as a giant shadow in the whole Orientalism and Orientalist approach as well as its seemingly weaker counterpart. Yet, none of the first two definitions clearly identify the sort of definer and defined relationship between the Occident and the Orient respectively.

In this regard, Seid (2003) prefers to use Michael Foucault’s notion to treat Orientalism as a discourse. He states that Orientalism should be seen as a discourse set in place by European culture in the post-enlightenment era. This discourse defined the Orient’s political, social, rational, ideological, military, scientific and imaginary attributes thus influencing, if not limiting, up-coming literary pieces, messages, researches or efforts to understand the Orient: “Orientalism can thus be regarded as a manner of regularized (or orientalized) writing, vision, and study, dominated by imperatives, perspectives, and ideological biases ostensibly suited to the Orient” (p. 202).

The central assumption of Orientalism is that the orient has no “natural” reality and identity to be researched and identified. In fact, it is a result of the “construction and imagination” of western historians, intellects and enlightenments who hold the knowledge to make the face of the orient which is an extension of “European material civilization and culture” (Television and Orientalism, n.d., p. 1).

The Orient

For the west, orient, represents the section of the world that is not quite civilized and is not part of the “the collective imagination of the civilized west” (Television and Orientalism, n.d., p. 1).

Seid (2003) picks up an interpretive approach to understand and explain the Orient. He based his scholarly rationalization of Orientalism and the Orient in light of the assumption that the Orient is not a natural phenomenon that has inert characters of its own. It is the making of its people; what they did and didn't do, believed in and stood for or against. He states that;

It [Orient] is not merely there, just as the Occident itself is not just there either. We must take seriously Vico's great observation that men make their own history, that what they can know is what they have made, and extend it to geography: as both geographical and cultural entities—to say nothing of historical entities—such locals, regions, geographical sectors as “Orient” and “Occident” are man-made. (p. 5)

He explains that as much as the West takes an outright stand in just representing itself, its values and existence rather than explaining its subjective ways—like it does the Orient's—the Orient too holds reasonable stand point to portray its own ‘history, tradition of thought, imagery, and vocabulary’ without any comparative condescendence from the West. Just like the West has a place in the making of the Orient, for example, colonial intervention; so does the Orient in the making of the West; for example, early eight-to-sixteenth century heyday of Islam and Arabs in the East including in Europe. Therefore, Seid (2003, p. 5), concludes, the ‘two geographical entities thus support and to an extent reflect each other.’

As Hall (1992) states, at first the orient and its implied sets of ‘us and them’ was applied to Europe and the Islamic world, yet in the course of time the reference has taken a more

generic application between first world, developed countries and stereotyped underdeveloped and developing countries—“the rest of the world” (Television and Orientalism, n.d., p. 1).

For Edward Said, the academician who proposed Orientalism, western institutions contribute to the global images of the orient by creating their version of historical and cultural representation of the non-west (Television and Orientalism, n.d.). In tracing the grounds why the west assume the responsibility to define the east, Parla (2001) states that in early times, when less was known of the world, European travelers, missionaries, merchants, soldiers, artists and scientists made travels, researches, expeditions, etc., that enabled them to compile “texts” according to their “perceptions”; as a result;

... many reproduced “images of the Orient” were fictionalized, which were researched in the universities; written as stories; handled in the ateliers of the painters; and exhibited in the museums and this fictionalized “image of the Orient” was placed against the real East and the Orient fictionalized by Europe increasingly replaced the real East (Mora, 2009, p. 419).

Parla concludes that the west use this early advantage as rights to “fictionalizing and reproducing” facts about the East based on “texts” which are actually biased due to the fact that they were produced by western people who are not indigenous of the culture and history they produce a record of.

Knowledge about the Orient

For Seid (2003, p. 10) it is almost impossible to separate the scholar from his life circumstances, i.e. set of beliefs, social status, or ‘the mere activity of being a member of a society’. He (the scholar) is, consciously or unconsciously, influenced by these involvements. These attachments directly or indirectly influence the professional work of the individual although he/she tries to adopt as much objectivity as possible in dealing with the study

subjects. He States, “For there is such a thing as knowledge that is less, rather than more, partial than the individual (with his entangling and distracting life circumstances) who produces it” (Seid, 2003, p. 10). The author considers such knowledge political rather than pure knowledge.

Knowledge about the Orient that is investigated, managed and produced by a westerner is political for it will have a political effect and attract a government interest (Seid, 2003, p. 9). Such knowledge is different from what the author calls pure knowledge, which is relatively free from political influence, charge or any possibility to be picked up by the political interest of governments. They include such knowledge about Shakespeare or Wordsworth which is relatively free from political discourse compared to political knowledge such as discourse about Orientalist countries.

Modern Orientalism

Seid (2003) discusses that Oriental stereotypes have been reinforced in the postmodern electronic world. He states that all television, films, and other media resources have helped establish standardized information about the Orient.

So far as the Orient is concerned, standardization and cultural stereotyping have intensified the hold of the nineteenth-century academic and imaginative demonology of “the mysterious Orient.” (p. 26)

As anthropologists Catherine Lutz and Jane Collins have suggested Orientalism made its way into the “popular culture” of the U.S. through subliminal messages in a widely circulated magazine—National Geographic—which came out with “oriental images of the middle east and the third world. It presented Arabs, Africans, and Asians as backward, exotic, and occasionally dangerous folk who have needed and will continue to need U.S. help and

guidance if they are to successfully undergo political and cultural modernization.” (as cited in Little, 2008, p.10).

Islam, Arab and Orientalism

In both the works of Edward Seid and other scholars, the theory of Orientalism is particularly discussed with respect to the Islamic world as well as the Arab world; the middle east in focus.

In a seminar Edward Seid described the long history of the West and the Middle East and how Western interest in the region is increasingly intensifying and leading to more and more tension between the two sects; a rivalry, that he states, is part of a ruthless, longstanding clash of civilizations that requires a solution (Youtube, 2009). This clash is reflected in the media representations; especially that of the western media about the Middle East. Even the simplest representations of Arab and Islam are scrutinized, politicized and harshly treated. According to Seid (2003, pp. 26-27) three things in particular have contributed to ‘making even the simplest perception of the Arab and Islam into a highly politicized, almost raucous matter’

The history of popular anti-Arab and anti-Islamic prejudice in the west, which is immediately reflected in the history of Orientalism;

The struggle between the Arabs and Israel Zionism, and its effect upon American Jews as well as upon both the liberal culture and the population at large;

The almost total absence of any cultural position making it possible either to identify with or dispassionately to discuss the Arabs or Islam

He goes on to state that since the Middle East is frequently discussed and related with ‘Great Power politics, oil economics, and the simple-minded dichotomy of freedom loving,

democratic Israel and evil, totalitarian, and terroristic Arabs, the chances of anything like a clear view of what one talks about in talking about the near east are depressingly small' (p. 27).

Criticism on Orientalism

Academicians like Bernard Lewis believe that Edward Seid's use of Orientalism in his book in 1978 had a negative sense in that it discredits the possibility of a rich "intellectual, scientific and cultural" west to help understand untouched corners of the world and make sense of it (Mora, 2009, p. 419). In fact, (Television and Orientalism, n.d.) expresses that Seid's theory of oriental disposition from the west gives nationalists a right to demonize the West (p. 1).

In his defense, as well as, in the mist of all this explanations that, for some, might seem to be a conspiracy from the west against the Orient, (Seid, 2003) takes time to explain what Orientalism is and what it is not:

Orientalism is not a mere political subject matter or field that is reflected passively by culture, scholarship, or institutions; nor is it a large diffuse collection of texts about the Orient; nor is it representatives and expressive of some nefarious "western" imperialist plot to hold down the "Oriental" world. It is rather a *distribution* of geopolitical awareness into aesthetic, scholarly, economic, sociological, historical, and philological texts; it is an *elaboration* not only of a basic geographical distinction (the world is made up of two unequal halves, Orient and Occident) but also of a whole series of "interests" which, by such means as scholarly discovery, philological reconstruction, psychological analysis, landscape and sociological description, it not only creates but also maintains; it is, rather than expresses, a certain will or *intention* to understand, in some cases to control, manipulate, even to incorporate, what is a manifestly different (or alternative and novel) world; it is, above all, a discourse that

is by no means in direct, corresponding relationship with political power in the raw, but rather is produced and exists in an uneven exchange with various kinds of power, shaped to a degree by the exchange with power political (as with a colonial or imperial establishment), power intellectual (as with reigning sciences like comparative linguistics or anthropology, or any of the modern policy sciences), power cultural (as with orthodoxies and canons of taste, texts, values), power moral (as with ideas about what “we” do and what “they” cannot do or understand as “we” do) (p. 12).

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1 Research Method

In order to attain the objectives of this study a combination of both quantitative and qualitative content analysis was used. It was supplementary to use a mixed method to adequately respond to the research questions of this study. As Thomas (2003, p. 6) puts it, unlike traditional controversies that existed between using either one of qualitative or quantitative methods of research, modern academicians and researchers prefer and suggest using them complementarily. The quantitative content analysis helped identify frames used in discussing ISIS in AJE and CNN. On the other hand, the qualitative content analysis that required analyzing the textual component provided a ground to explain why the specific frames are selected. It also supported the argument by comparing and contrasting news frames between AJE and CNN. Blessing & Chakrabarti (2009, pp. 103 & 108) state that, this strategic mix of qualitative and quantitative methods to identify similar data through different means to strength the evidence and verify the finding is referred to as Triangulation.

In identifying news frames in international news the quantitative method will help establish a pattern in the selected news. As Mack, et al. (2005, p. 3) describe it, this method is a means of “quantifying variation, predicting causal relationships and describing characteristics of the population” under study. Quantitatively identifying, recording and organizing the samples of news under established frames gives a permissible ground to establish common themes consequently setting a shared account to similar news in a set. However, this does not provide a complete sense of why the exact frames were implemented and provide an explanation about factors that led to the use of such frames. Here is where qualitative method comes in handy. Qualitative research involves interpretation to make sense of events and understand their social meaning: what people make of them (Thomas, 2003, p. 1). As a result, by

implementing qualitative method to the investigations of this study, an attempt was made to explain the possible factors that led social institutions, i.e. media houses, media owners, journalism practice and practitioners, etc., to influencing the choices or choosing the frames used in presenting ISIS. This interpretive approach was also helped to identify similar and variant frames implemented in reporting ISIS in a southern/non-western media (AJE) and a western media (CNN).

Televised news with the duration of up to three minutes was considered for analysis from both AJE and CNN. These televised news stories were downloaded from their online streams over YouTube.

3.1.1 Quantitative Content Analysis

Although not as old as the practice of social science or social science research, content analysis has been in practice since the mid-nineteen's. It has been applied on studies of politics and most widely communication. Riffe, et al. (2005, p. 3) identify this methodology applied in various areas of research to achieve distinctive goals as quantitative content analysis: "the systematic assignment of communication content to categories according to rules, and the analysis of relationships involving those categories using statistical methods." This definition shows that in early research practices, content analysis was generally assumed to be quantitative thus implying that research findings were numeric and general statements that describe specific patterns and identified relationships between the subjects studied in the analysis.

When it comes to communication research in particular, content analysis as Kerlinger (2000) (as cited in Wimmer & Dominick, 2011, p. 156) defines it is "a method of studying and analyzing communication in a systematic, objective, and quantitative manner for the purpose of measuring variables.". It required the establishment of guiding rules applied identically to

all study entities, with the researcher's subjective analysis and interpretation put aside. The results are bound to be quantified for reasons related with precision, generalization and interpretation and analysis (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011, p. 157). The statistics will help make more precise data conclusions like "Seventy percent of all prime-time programs contain at least one act of violence" instead of scant ones like "Most shows are violent." which will later on also help make the data interpretation and analysis part easier.

Content analysis has five purposes to serve in media and communication research (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011, p. 157). It is used to describe communication contents; study what might have caused media messages to have the characteristics they have; compare the compatibility of media contents with the real world and investigate representation of certain groups in the media. Finally, content analysis is used as a starting point where other researchers could build on the statistic findings to carry out further investigation like conducting media effects research that explain the impact or consequence. With respect to this research, quantitative content analysis is used to investigate the frames used to represent ISIS in global mainstream media, i.e., AJE and CNN.

Quantitative content analysis has several advantages among which a reliable measurement technique and longer shelf value are listed (Riffe et al., 2005). It follows an unmistakable step that can be replicated and guarantees a purposeful result backed by sufficient statistics. Also, it can outlive the time it was conducted thus making longitudinal studies possible "by using archived materials that may outlive the communicators, their audiences, or the events described in the communication content" (Riffe et al., 2005, p. 38). According to Babbie (1979, p. 252) content analysis has additional advantages that make it favorable for research: in relation to other data gathering methods, it is not time or money consuming, it is safe in case the researcher is required to repeat the investigation and it has limited or no effect on the subject being studied. In case a certain study is bound to be repeated, it is easier to redo those

that use content analysis compared to other methods like a survey or an experiment. In addition, since the researcher applies objective analysis during the course of his/her study, content analysis doesn't directly affect the text or image by inflicting some sort of analysis and interpretation.

On the other hand, content analysis has its shortcomings. A content analyst depends on an oral or written text, image, etc., to make analysis. Accordingly, content analysis is limited to examining recorded communication only (Babbie, 1979).

Even if the researchers achieved a high degree of validity in their coding of value orientations in the underground press and mainstream magazines, there's still a question of whether they had valid measure of the *cultures* those media were taken to present (pp. 252-253).

Due to the limitations discussed above, a researcher cannot achieve a perfect coding system thus affecting the validity of the codes.

3.1.2 Qualitative Content Analysis /Textual Analysis/

In the case of this research in particular, identifying the major frames AJE and CNN used in portraying ISIS was not enough. Explaining the reason behind such a representation would make the research sound and trustworthy. As Jensen (2002, p. 255) extensively explains it, adding qualitative analysis to a statistic finding is showing the process of a product.

Jensen & W. Jankowski (1991) state that German sociologist and cultural critic Siegfried Kracauer is believed to have laid the foundation for qualitative content analysis in 1953 (p. 121). Kracauer believes quantitative methods are inadequate because they try to establish the meaning of texts by breaking down words, expressions, statements, etc., into quantifiable units:

... analysts in fact destroy the very object they are supposed to be studying, since the atomistic character of the resulting data precludes a relevant examination of the relations within each text as a meaningful whole. Though, in quantitative research, the textual units are often rated with reference to various graded scales, still the initial segmentation of the text, the choice of scales, as well as the rating of textual units tend to be based on tacit categories of a fairly primitive kind, which, furthermore, originate outside the text (as cited in Jensen & W. Jankowski, 1991, p. 122).

Accordingly, Kracauer suggests that it is crucial to understand the “meaningful whole” text by making an interpretive analysis. Textual analysis is the name of the method implemented here to study the “meaningful whole”, i.e., the text. According to Frey, Botan, & Kreps (1999), this qualitative method is used to describe the content, structure and function of the messages in the texts.

Consequently, qualitative content analysis also referred to as textual analysis has helped provide evidence in explaining why AJE and CNN frame ISIS the way they do. It was also an ideal means to compare and contrast the frames between the two global news providers.

3.2 Sampling Techniques and Procedure

Purposive sampling was used for the purpose of attaining the aims of this research. For Mack, et al. (2005, p. 6), it is a form of sampling where samples are selected based on predefined criteria.

3.2 International News Broadcasters of the Study

Purposive sampling was used first to pick the two global media, i.e., a non-western AJE and a western CNN. The criteria set to pick these news providers were primarily early foundation and popularity and distinctive world views and representation.

When discussing ISIS, a group from the Arab world and one that provides Islamic grounds to define and justify its deeds, it was important to consider how a transnational media from that particular region would represent it compared to a western media that holds Orientalist dispositions towards the Middle East. Accordingly, AJE, the pioneer and leading Arab based global news provider that is successful and popular for its counter narratives against western oriental discourses is the convenient choice (Painter, 2008). AJE is a Qatar based 24/7 news provider that began broadcasting in 1996. It has received international audience and recognition for delivering unique perspectives in covering international events (Seib, 2004).

On the other hand, from the list of western transnational news provides, CNN was a fitting choice. It is a pathfinder in international news production and dissemination. It is also one of the many U.S. based news providers famous for disseminating oriental discourses about the Arab world (Painter, 2008). CNN is an American news network that started broadcasting on 1st of June 1980. It is a pioneer international broadcaster to transmit 24 hour news in the history of broadcasting (Erickson, 2014).

3..2 Time Frame and News Items of the Study

Purposive sampling was also applied in selecting the news items for this study. After the Syrian Civil War when ISIS grew in strength and especially starting June 29th, 2014 when it proclaimed a *worldwide caliphate*, both AJE and CNN have taken interest in reporting about various aspects of ISIS in their television news, documentaries and different programs. There are, over 218 AJE and 435 CNN televised news, special reports, programs, documentaries, etc., posted on the YouTube channels of these respective media. This number is only the number of news stories for the year 2014—between June and December 2014. Due to time limitations, for the purpose of this research, the researcher has considered analyzing all televised news from AJE and CNN of only up to three minutes duration. This domain

consists of about 167 news items from AJE (53.2 % of the total number) and 191 news reports from CNN (59.2 % of the total number). All these videos have been downloaded to listen to the spoken discourse as often as the researcher want, to have a clear and irrefutable data compilation. The headlines and sub-headlines as well as the spoken discourse were carefully studied. At the initial stage, the YouTube video name each news piece was uploaded under was also taken into consideration while deciding on the frame categories the news belonged. The news videos are attached in a DVD Copy as an appendix.

3.3 Unit of Analysis

In implementing a quantitative content analysis as a method of research it is important to define the units of analysis. Babbie (1979, p. 235) defines units of analysis as the “individual components about which or whom descriptive or explanatory statements are to be made.” The units of analysis for this research were news reports from AJE and CNN that have duration of up to three minutes. This unit does not include news that are speeches, addresses to the public and the congress or senate, clippings of extended interviews with authorities and news commentaries from the beginning to end without any comment and involvement from the anchor or reporter.

3.4 Content Categories

After identifying the units of analysis in the content analysis, the next step was establishing and defining the categories under which the texts are organized. There are two ways of establishing categories in content analysis: Emergent coding and priori coding (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011, p. 165). Emergent coding involves establishing categories after studying the test—it is the coding mechanism implemented on this research. On the contrary, prior coding required establishing the categories before the data are collected and studied. Prior coding required “some theoretical or conceptual rationale” to define the categories.

Wimmer & Dominick (2011, p. 166) propose that “system categories” should be mutually exclusive, exhaustive, and reliable in order to be functional. First, mutually exclusive implies that no unit of analysis should fall to two systems categories. The categories must be specifically defined to be exclusive of one another. Babbie (1979) substantiates that a newspaper editorial for instance can’t be considered as both liberal and conservative, though in some occasions there might be such editorials that portray liberal perspectives towards some issues and conservative towards others. Second, in determining categories researchers should also keep an exhaustive list that incorporates every unit of analysis thus leaving none of them unclassified or unaccounted.

If one or two unusual instances are detected, they can be put into a category labeled “other” or “miscellaneous.” (If too many items fall into this category, however, a reexamination of the original category definitions is called for; a study with 10% or more of its content in the “other” category is probably overlooking some relevant content characteristic) Wimmer & Dominick, (2011, p. 166).

Wimmer & Dominick suggest pre-testing a categorization system on a sample of contents to establish whether they are exhaustive. Consequently, in case there are contents that appear to be unaccounted for the “original scheme requires changes before the primary analysis can begin” (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011, p. 166). In addition to being mutually exclusive and exhaustive, the category system need to be *reliable* which means different coders should be able to categorize the media contents and have the same result. A researcher should propose clear operational definition that would help himself or any other coder to understand the system of categorization. In fact scholars recommend an intercoder reliability check that involves conducting a pretest where two coders are presented with the same contents to independently classify them under established categories (Babbie, 1979, p. 241). Reliability of the category systems is assured if the independent coders have primarily similar coding

result. No reliability test was applied on this research because the researcher was the only coder involved in the process. However, in order to insure exclusive and exhaustive as well as reliable categories and coding, the researcher has established the categories and categorized the news stories twice; the second coding process taking place two month after the first thus having adequate time interval to seek and maintain consistency in the categories.

As many researchers would prefer, too many initial categories are better than too few categories (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011, p. 167). It is easier to create an umbrella category for smaller categorize instead of subdividing a larger category into smaller ones after all units are categorized. Krippendorff (2004) explains this as a method as reducing data to manageable frames to help the research not to have scattered findings.

3.5 Data Analysis Procedure

This study examined the coverage of ISIS by AJE and CNN. With the help of the framing model, the researcher has conducted quantitative content analysis on the televised news from the selected transnational news media. As well, the study implemented textual analysis in order to provide supportive arguments for quantitative findings of identified frames in the prior content analysis.

The data analysis process of this study began by providing the findings of the content analysis supported and accompanied by textual evidence and substantiating remarks identified by doing a textual analysis. The frames which are inductively constructed from the news reports were discussed together with precedent opinion from news casters, journalists, invited experts, etc. to show the extent of the frames. Then an umbrella frame categories were established to make rational associations and avoid scattered findings. Lastly, the researcher tried to show how various assumptions of the theory of Orientalism are actually in effect when discussing how the mainstream news media used the identified frames to cover ISIS.

Chapter Four: Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Data Presentation and Analysis

This research is set out to identify how ISIS is represented by Al Jazeera English and Cable News Network, two global mainstream media from the Arab world and the West respectively. In order to fulfill the aims of this research, by identifying and investigating major frames these media used to cover ISIS, the study uses an inductive approach of frame classification. It is limited to examining how AJE and CNN framed Islamic State of Iraq and Syria between June 2014 (when it proclaimed an Islamic caliphate) and December 31, 2014.

In the process of this research every news piece, i.e., the headlines and sub-headlines as well as the spoken discourse was analyzed. This initial analysis was made by implementing emergent coding to establish system categories to catalog similar-toned news. These frame categories—except one—are areas both global media reported on in relation to ISIS. Then, in the second step, textual evidence was identified using the qualitative analysis. Finally, overarching categories, which were broad enough to include all textual sub-frames, were established. This helps to reduce data to a manageable size and come up with a concentrated finding.

Framing of ISIS by AJE and CNN News Media

After analyzing about 167 televised news reports about ISIS on AJE and about 191 news reports about ISIS on CNN, i.e., the headlines and sub-headlines and the equivalent YouTube names the news videos were uploaded under, as well as the spoken discourse, the following 14 sub-categories of frame were identified. All the frames were identified and defined after all the coding process was complete.

Table 4.1 News Frame Sub-categories in AJE and CNN

Types of Frame Sub-categories	News Media			
	AJE		CNN	
	No. of Stories	%	No. of Stories	%
Advance	21	12.6 %	21	11 %
Beheading	4	2.4 %	12	6.3 %
Execution	1	0.6 %	7	3.7 %
Profile	5	3 %	28	14.6 %
Propaganda	3	1.8 %	21	11 %
Sympathizers	1	0.6 %	7	3.7 %
Western Fighters	3	1.8 %	4	2.1 %
Threat to Civilians	25	15 %	5	2.6 %
Threat to Christian Civilians	3	1.8 %	3	1.6 %
Regional Military Intervention	61	36.5 %	19	10 %
Western Military Intervention	20	11.9 %	40	20.9 %
Threat to U.S. and Its Western Allies	-	-	7	3.7 %
Impact on Iraq Politics and division	4	2.4 %	5	2.6 %
Others	16	9.6 %	12	6.3 %

ALJAZEERA ENGLISH

The Advance Frame

In the *Advance* frame AJE presented both sides of the war between ISIS and the respective countries it is fighting to control, i.e., Iraq and Syria. Out of 167 AJE news reports about ISIS, 21 (12.6 %) used the Advance frame. AJE portrayed the group as a *Sunni rebel group* pushing towards Iraqi capital, Baghdad and Syrian Capital, Damascus as well as capturing several provinces, towns and villages in its way. Stories that used the Advance frame were published under such YouTube heads as “ISIL closes in on besieged Syrian town”, “ISIL advances towards eastern Syria airbase”, and “Syrian Kurds desperate as ISIL advances in Kobane”. For instance, in October 19, 2014 AJE published a news story under a YouTube title “ISIL advance brings fear to Baghdad”. The quote from the journalist narrating the story reads, “ISIL fighters are now on 3 sides of this city [Baghdad]. ... and they show no signs of slowing down.”(AJE, Oct. 19, 2014, 01:41-01:48 Min.).

AJE reports how ISIS is strong and how it is taking over various government facilities and increasing its territory. In the following report titled “ISIL advances towards eastern Syria airbase”, for instance, the group is reportedly taking over an ammunition depot;

...but now it is ISIL that is fighting for ascendance. One of the main targets is the *Iash* ammunition depot which supposedly contains a large number of heavy weapons and government soldiers. (AJE Dec. 5, 2014, 00:59-01:11 Min.)

Although the *Sunni rebel group* is portrayed as gaining victory and pushing forward, AJE news reports capitalize on the resistance from Kurdish and Iraqi forces that are putting up a fight to protect their land and people. A pull out from “Iraq conflict threatens neighbours” reads, “The American military had a hard enough time fighting Al Qaeda in Iraq. Now the Iraqi army is battling much more sophisticated fighters with minimal American help.” (AJE, June 25, 2014, 01:18-01:27 Min.). In this extract, AJE makes an allusion to the U.S. fight against Al Qaeda in Iraq and how much difficult it was for the U.S. to defeat the group. In fact, it makes an implicative statement on the last line about how Iraq could have managed Al Qaeda on its own since it is actually battling and resisting a much more sophisticated group all on its own with no help from America. Essentially, the reports further understate the contribution the west, particularly the U.S. led coalition and its airstrikes, could play in defeating the current foe: ISIS. One news item stands out; it is presented under the YouTube headline, “ISIL advances in Kobane despite US-led air strikes”. Another report, “Exclusive Inside an ISIL offensive” also declares, “The coalition airstrikes don’t seem to be making a dent in the group’s ambition, leading many here to wonder whether international ground assault isn’t needed.” (AJE, Oct.15, 2014, 01:39-01:48 Min.)

On the contrary, AJE news under the advance frame blames western powers—especially the U.S. and its prior intervention in the Arab region, particularly, Iraq—for contributing to

various attributes in the group's progress. In the previous news item the journalist actually states, "... Using captured Iraqi humvees as cover, they stand their ground. They are in effect using U.S. made weaponry and armor against Iraqi forces." (AJE, Oct.15, 2014, 00:42-00:56 Min.). In fact in one report, "Peshmerga critical of air-strikes strategy", AJE quotes Kurdish militants on how the airstrikes from U.S. and its allies are helping the group advance: "... and Kurdish commanders say they are not getting the support that they need. They even accuse the U.S. of having a certain tolerance towards ISIL's advance." (AJE, Nov. 23, 2014, 00:42-00:50 Min.)

Straying back to how the group is portrayed, ISIS is framed as *soliciting a sectarian war* between Sunni and Shiah in the region. It is characterized by *extremism and rebellious military intervention* against the Shiah and the Iraqi Shiah-led government. AJE presented the Vice President of the SOUFAN group—that provides strategic security intelligence services to governments and multinational organizations—as a trusted source to the claim that ISIS is seeking sectarian conflict. He said, "... Their stated goal is, they want to take this fight... They want to make this sectarian. Take it from the Sunnis to the Shiah." (AJE, Nov. 28, 2014, YouTube headline: ISIL consolidates its grip over Raqqa, 00:36-00:45 Min.).

The Beheading Frame

The next frame is the *Beheading* frame which AJE used to report western citizens who have been beheaded by ISIS. These westerners are reported as civilians that are aid workers serving some Syrian people in crisis. Between June 2014 and December 2014, AJE reported about only two of the victims: one Peter Kassig (an American aid worker) and another Allan Henning (a British, also part of an aid convoy). The news media reported these beheadings in about 4 (2.4 %) of its 167 news reports about ISIS. AJE refrained from emphasizing on and heavy labeling ISIS' act in any sort of way. Even the word 'beheading' was used once in one of the news stories: "Peter Kassig is the fifth western hostage since mid-august whose life has

been directly threatened by ISIL. (AJE, Oct. 16, 2014, YouTube headline: Ex-ISIL hostage appeals for US man's release, 02:14-02:20 Min.).

The presenter and the reporter in two of the news stories about the British victim Alan Henning quoted British authority in which the quoted authorities—in the case of the report above David Cameron, British Prime Minister—directly used the expression ‘Disgusting murder’ as well as the adjectives ‘barbaric’ and ‘repulsive’ respectively to describe the murder. In the following direct quote headlined in the video channel as “Video shows beheading of ISIL hostage” Cameron is referred:

In a statement the British Prime Minister said, ‘the brutal murder of Alan Henning by ISIL shows just how barbaric and repulsive these terrorists are ... we will do all we can to hunt down these murderers and bring them to justice’. (AJE, Oct. 3, 2014, 00:35-00:54 Min.)

However every news piece sympathized with the victims as human beings who intend to do good for people. For a start, in the news item the reporter talks with Pierre Torres, a French photographer who was a former hostage of ISIS captivated with Kassig. Pierre calls for ISIS to free Peter Kassig, in the process telling the kind of good and humanitarian person Kassig was. The reporter also makes an inference to how U.S. and U.K. governments’ policy of “no negotiation with terrorists” is putting the lives of its citizens at risk. The photographer is quoted saying,

The situation of the Syrian refugees touched him [Kassig] very much. He would talk about his friends in the U.S. but mainly about the Syrians he met in Lebanon, Syria and Turkey. He started his journey towards Islam before being captured. It started when he was still providing humanitarian help for the Syrians. (AJE, Oct 16, 2014, YouTube headline: Ex-ISIL hostage appeals for US man's release, 01:33-01:50 Min.)

A second news report headlined on YouTube “ISIL beheads Syria troops and US aid worker”, prepared after Kassig was beheaded, also sympathizes with Peter Kassig who is a peoples’ person and went to Syria out of humanity, to help those in need. In fact, the AJE report presented what his Syrian friends have tried to say and do to get Kassig back. One close friend, who is Syrian, expresses his condolence for losing someone so good. He says,

What I should say to his family is that we are sorry because your son die in my country and he came to my people and who killed him, the people they say ok I protect Islam... I don’t know, they are not even Muslim. (AJE, Nov. 16, 2014, YouTube headline: ISIL beheads Syria troops and US aid worker, 00:40-01:01 Min.)

Mentioning the efforts the Syrian aid workers made to get back their British friend is a way of venting possible tension between people, i.e., Syrians and British people or other respective communities and groups. Similarly, the testimony from the personal friend—his denouncement of ISIS as a legitimate Muslim—is a means of easing hatred against Muslims. So, in a way, AJE is making an effort to mend bonds between people and cultures despite the chaos. This is the same case in the third news item headlined on YouTube, “NGO head talks on local reaction to ISIL killing of British hostage”. The reporter had a telephone interview with Mohammed Shafiq; Chief Executive at the Ramadan Foundation (an Islamic Foundation) in Manchester, U.K., in which he expresses concern with the Henning family and denounces ISIS’ claimed Islamic intent. He is quoted saying,

Well obviously my thoughts and prayers and condolences are with Alan’s family, particularly his wife Barbra their children, the community. I am actually in the community in Salford. There has been an outpouring of support for his family over these past few weeks. From the Muslim world, Muslim scholars; everybody is united... (AJE, Oct. 3, 2014, 00:22-00:42 Min.)

In this same interview, the Chief Executive from the Muslim foundation calls ISIS “an evil organization” as well as a “cancer” that has “no regard for human life”. He also speaks on behalf of British Muslims and states how different Muslim community members have shown solidarity with the Henning family. An extract from the YouTube video “Video shows beheading of ISIL hostage” story reads,

Alan Henning’s story had touched the lives of many people. Pleas for his release were universal. More than a hundred Muslim leaders in the U.K. had urged ISIL to immediately release him. (AJE, Oct. 3, 2014, 00:54-01:08 Min.)

This fourth news report about Alan Henning also profiles and focuses on the kind of person Henning was. It goes on to detail how the Muslim community in U.K. has been pleading for his release.

The Execution Frame

The *Execution* frame is next. Out of the 167 news reports AJE made on ISIS in the time frame of this study, only 1 news story (0.6 %) dealt with suicide bomb attacks which are a result of the fight against ISIS. In describing the attack, the reporter made no specific depiction about how brutal ISIS can be in its fighting. Rather, he reflected an opinion that showed that the suicide bombings were part of a war fought against a *war enemy*. In this news story bannered on YouTube, “Triple suicide attack hits Kurds in Iraq”, the reporter states,

The bomber struck the government compound of Qara Tapa. This was a facility with both Kurdish Peshmerga soldiers and members of the political party: The patriotic union of Kurdistan. It is further evidence of how bloody the battle against ISIL is; not just in Diyala but across Iraq. (AJE, Oct. 12, 2014, 00:09-00:25 Min.)

Rather than dwelling on ISIS this report focused on the devastation, destruction and casualty caused on the people and the towns of Iraq. It relates to the human aspect of the story, specifically the influence on civilians.

The Profile Frame

Next to the *Execution* frame, AJE used the *Profile* frame to discuss the background of ISIS: what it is, its ideology, and financial means. In seven months of this study AJE has used this frame in five incidents (3 % of the total coverage). In these reports the media framed ISIS as a ***powerful fighting group***, with leadership hierarchy and physical territory control, which carries out attacks on Iraq cities. In this particular news report headlined on YouTube, “Who are the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)” a Middle East analyst explains the group: It [ISIS] is one of the most extremist militant organizations in the Jihadist family. (AJE, June 10, 2014, 00:55-01:03 Min.). The journalist or reporter refrains from restating the expert’s description of the group, i.e., extremist, before or after the expert’s opinion. Rather, in this news story in particular and other reports in the category in general, ISIS is portrayed as a militant group gaining strength in Iraq. More importantly, AJE shed light as to why ISIS came to exist i.e. its motives and intents. In one report headlined “WWI Centenary: Empires Ended by Conflict”, AJE traces possible historical phenomena that could possibly have contributed to current conflicts in the Middle East. In a way the reporter implies how indecisive post-WWI border demarcations by western countries could have led to the creation of ISIS that is determined to redraw the borders of the Middle East. The reporter states,

ISIL believes geographical boundaries of the Middle East need to be redrawn. Those borders were created in the aftermath of the First World War: after the fall of the Ottoman Empire. (AJE, June 29, 2014, YouTube headline: Empire - The 'Sykes-Picot' borders ISIL wants gone, 00:14-00:25 Min.)

In this report the reporter states that Europeans are responsible for such movements. He presents a Middle East analyst to prove the proposition that,

Europeans used straight lines on maps to demarcate areas; often with no ethnic or tribal considerations. And some modern analysts believe: decisions by the French and British then created the conditions for the battles of today. (AJE, June 29, 2014, 00:47-01:03 Min.)

In another news item headlined on YouTube as “ISIL declares Islamic Caliphate”, the reporter makes an allusion in describing the old-fashioned plans of the Islamic group to establish itself as a caliphate, like it was in the early 19th century: “It intends to unite areas from Aleppo, Syria to Dialah, Iraq under its black flag. The last time a caliphate existed in the World, It was 1924 and the Ottoman Empire was in its final days.” (AJE, Jun. 30, 2014, 00:23-00:34 Min.). These presentations, which show historical conditions for the creation of the group as well as its explainable intents of establishing itself as a caliphate, were all means of explaining, possible drives for the group and why it is carrying out such a self-serving movement as marking a territory for itself.

Under the *profile* frame another news report focused on profiling Jihadi John, a mysterious murderer who is the face of ISIS beheadings. The reporter discussed him with other western fighters fighting for ISIS; those especially in the U.K.—the same country Jihadi John is believed to be from. “He is nick named Jihadi John. He is British; an ISIL fighter with Middle East ambitions and a western background. And he is not the only one.” (AJE, YouTube headline: UK moves to stop ISIL recruitment, Nov. 14, 2014, 00:01-00:10 Min.). It purports how radicalized youngsters are threatening the country’s security from inside and out. The report discussed how the U.K., whose young citizens are believed to make up several ISIS ranks, is reacting to the situation. The reporter said: “But now there are going to

be more measures to stop them. Suspects will not be allowed to leave the UK. Those who are already abroad could have this crucial document—their passport—cancelled” (AJE, Nov. 14, 2014, 00:56-01:08 Min.). However, the report also reflects concern in terms of this measure. The journalist mentions how this decision could affect other British citizens abroad. He shares the concern of one citizen who believes this could possibly contribute to the “extremists’ narrative: if you are a Muslim you are treated differently” which he believes is dangerous.

The word terrorist is rarely used and loosely applied to describe ISIS. In fact, in the profile frame in only one of the news items with a YouTube headline “US Treasury plan to end ISIL access to money”, the reporter used the word terrorist by making clear implication that it was applied by the U.S. government. She said, “The U.S. and other countries say ISIL is a powerful terrorist organization not just because of the weapons it has, but also because of its financial strength.” (AJE, Oct. 24, 2014, 00:01-00:09 Min.). This news story focused on how ISIS builds up its financial capability. At the same time, it discusses a campaign the U.S. is carrying out to captivate the group’s finances and thus leading to its weakness and eventually fall.

ISIL sells oil stolen from Iraqi and Syrian refineries on the black market. It takes hostages and collects millions of Dollars in ransoms. It extorts fees from local communities and it raises money from sympathizers in the Gulf and around the world. ... Washington wants those revenues stopped. ... Some of the tools the U.S. government is using includes, asset freezes, travel bans and even fines and prison time for people who are supporting this and other enemy organizations. (AJE, Oct. 24, 2014, 00:10-00:45 Min.)

In news reports under the *profile* frame, AJE loosely applied the terms extremist, jihadist and terrorist in describing ISIS. These words are mentioned either as part of a statement from an official, like the British Prime Minister or the U.S. treasury secretariat, where they used the word extremist or terrorist to describe ISIS and its fighters; or as a restatement from interviewees who commented on the issue at hand.

The Propaganda Frame

In another frame, i.e., the *Propaganda* frame, AJE reported about how ISIS uses televised video productions and online media outlets to advance its cause and scare its adversaries. AJE reported about ISIS propaganda in 3 (1.8 %) of its stories. The media made no precise depictions of the group that can be identified by the audience. AJE remained objective when reporting ISIS committing what is considered a violation of international convention—the manipulation of children for war or armed conflict. In this news story titled “Syria ISIL video shows children in arms”, the reporter presents a propaganda video in which ISIS shows off child trained to be soldiers in Syria who are ready to carry on its legacy. The reporter states,

A group of Syrian children head for a summer camp, but this is not a school based trip. These boys are learning how to fight for the group known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant. (AJE, Jun. 21, 2014, 00:04-00:14 Min.)

This news item also showcased a propaganda video from ISIS in Iraq where it is mobilizing western fighters to further its ambition. This latter strategy is a means for ISIS to show its reach and strength. Involving western citizens in its fight and propagating it through various media is a way of stating that its cause is international and its composition diversified and mighty; thus proving it a formidable force in Syria and Iraq which will eventually realize its ambition to establish an Islamic state. However, in this same report, AJE also presents an analyst that argues otherwise. He said,

Most Syrians, actually, they view the ISIL as a very extreme group on the fringe of Islam that most of the time is actually acting in un-Islamic way compared to Al-Nusra. So this is why I don't really agree that ISIS is more successful in Syria. (AJE, Jun. 21, 2014, 01:42-01:58 Min.)

The other propaganda video covered by AJE is from a rebel group which operates in the Sinai Peninsula. This group, formerly known as Ansar Bait al-Maqdis, was presented in AJE news because it pledge allegiance to ISIS. This story, YouTube headlined, "ISIL-affiliate posts 'video of Sinai attack'" states,

... it is said to show the attack on the Egyptian army in the Sinai Peninsula last month that killed at least 30 soldiers. The video shows the groups fighters killing some of the soldiers; shooting them in the back of their head. (AJE, November 15, 2014, 00:15-00:27 Min.)

This groups' attack on Egyptian security forces is ISIS inspired and goes hand in hand with ISIS' ambition to establish an Islamic state in the region. By producing and publishing the video it made about the attacks on the Egyptian soldiers, it is following the same scare-tactic through its propaganda videos just like ISIS does.

The last news report in the propaganda frame discussed how ISIS is effectively manipulating social media like Facebook and Twitter. It is taking advantage of the fact that most of its fighters belong to the information and technology age, to bring the cyber war of propaganda to the doorsteps of its opponents. The report YouTube headlined, "Tech firms 'in denial' over ISIL propaganda" had a journalist presentation that stated,

.. ISIL, for example, is able to get its videos online within minutes using just a computer with an internet connection or even just a smart phone.... and for every

twitter account [ISIS account] that is taken down by the officials another dozen spring up almost immediately. (AJE, Nov. 5, 2014, 00:30-01:06 Min.)

The report also showed how tricky these media are to track and how this affected the possibility of controlling ISIS message through these media.

The Sympathizers Frame

AJE used the *Sympathizers* frame while discussing western and eastern citizens that support ISIS' cause by publishing various posts in new media as well as providing financial and material mobilization. It has reported only one alleged eastern sympathizer who is suspected to produce and promote pro ISIS discourse through a twitter account. In this news report headlined, "India holds man over pro-ISIL Twitter account" the journalist recounts the situation:

Police in India say, this is the man whose extreme posts had attracted almost 18,000 twitter followers. They say Mehdi Mesru Beswan was leading a double life: working as a marketing executive during the day, while operating a pro-ISIL twitter account by night. (AJE, Dec. 13, 2014, 00:01-00:19 Min.)

ISIS is not directly defined or labeled. However, the allegations against the Indian man i.e. posting *extremist* pro-ISIS tweets, sort of defines the characteristics of the group as extremist.

The Western Fighters Frame

AJE used the *Western Fighters* frame while discussing Americans, British, French, Australian and other western nation citizens who are actually involved in combat for ISIS in Iraq and Syria. There are only 3 news reports in AJE that used this frame to discuss ISIS. This is only 1.8 % of the total 167 televised news reported about ISIS in the time frame of this study. In these news items AJE presented ISIS as a *radical fighting group* that is referred

by officials as a terrorist. For instance, in one report Kerry is quoted talking about ISIS after one Australian ISIS fighter released a photo of his child holding a severed head; “This is utterly disgraceful and it underscores the degree to which ISIL is... so far beyond the pale with respect that any standard by which we judge even terrorist groups.” (AJE, Aug. 12, 2014, YouTube headline: Australia moves against fighters in Syria, 00:14-00:28 Min.). The report showed how much this act is despised by various governments and even Islamic leaders in Australia. It discussed what the Australian government is doing to control its citizens who are and aspire to fighting for ISIS in Iraq and Syria. The reporter stated,

Australia’s government says the barbaric actions of its citizens fighting for the Islamic State group is why it is pushing a range of laws targeted at Australians who travel to fight. Proposed is the suspension or cancelation of passports. (AJE, Aug. 12, 2014, 00:46-01:00 Min.)

The journalist discussed the joint efforts of Australia and the U.S. to stop western fighters from traveling to Syria or Iraq to fight for ISIS. This is a serious measurement not only to stop westerners joining ISIS, but also out of fear that they might bring the extremism and fight back home to the western countries. The other news report covered by this frame headlined “ISIL's British recruits worry UK”, discussed similar concerns. It took off discussing youngsters from UK who are joining the ranks of ISIS and its rival in the Syrian war. It mentioned how western fighters for ISIS who return to U.K. or other western countries could bring violence back home with them. The journalist states,

For those who monitor these radical groups there is a real concern that fighters like those of the Islamic State group, which is also known as ISIS, could come back battle hardened, with new skills and a grudge. (AJE, Aug. 21, 2014, 01:19-01:33 Min.)

In both these news stories under the western fighters frame AJE presented Islamic leaders and Islamic foundation representatives who disavowed ISIS as an Islamic group. They labeled ISIS, its cause and its fighters non-Islamic and unorthodox. Both the reports also focused on how western fighters of ISIS could bring the violence back home.

Another report headlined “Concern as young Georgians fill ISIL ranks”, discussed foreign fighters who abandoned their home in Pankisi, Georgia in Europe to join ISIS. It declared how an increased sense of extremism, in youth in one particular town of Georgia is driving them to join ISIS and even bring up conservative Islamic ideologies at their town: “... by Omar’s [an Islamic leader] own admission the young are not hearing his message. Many go across town to a new mosque which preaches a more conservative Islam.” (AJE, Nov. 7, 2014, 01:36-01:46 Min.). The reporter tries to assert how this province of Pankisi in Georgia, which is considered the “hot bed of Islamic radicalism”, is in fact economically deprived and thus forcing the youth to leave home due to scarce employment opportunities.

The Threat to Civilians Frame

Next, AJE used the *Threat to Civilians* frame to cover how ISIS is reported causing civilian displacements in various provinces of Iraq. About 25 (15 %) of the 167 televised news items portrayed ISIS as a destructive force with military and expansion ambitions causing displacements, flight and migration of Iraqi or Syrian civilians as well as disruption of normal routines of life. It is described as a group taking brutal measures to instate its supremacy thus causing people to flee their neighborhoods and cities. One news report headlined, “Civilians bear the brunt of Syria air strikes” states, “More than 3 million people have fled the conflict in Syria; an estimated 6.5 Million people are internally displaced.” (AJE, Dec. 26, 2014, 01:39-01:47 Min.).

Another news report reads:

ISIL's advance across Iraq and Syria has seen nearly 2 million people displaced. Half of those have landed in the Kurdish region of Iraq. (AJE, Dec. 6, 2014, YouTube headline: Iraq's displaced Yazidis face harsh winter, 00:01-00:11 Min.)

In fighting the illegitimate force the Syrian government carries out military interventions that are causing severe collateral damage on civilians. The airstrikes from the Syrian government, which the government believes are directed at ISIS, frequently target civilian areas. These attacks are reported to have killed and injured civilians. In one news report titled "Fighting in Syria traps civilians", the journalist states,

Buried here is a little boy and he is still alive. He cries as the men try to free his little legs. ... Activists say this is the aftermath of an airstrike on Aleppo. Here, the Syrian government is trying to force out fighters from the Islamic State. (AJE, Aug. 11, 2014, 00:09-00:32 Min.)

This situation is similar in Iraq where the government takes the airstrike offensive to the Sunni armed groups like ISIS. In this retaliation that targets Sunni areas, civilians are also affected. In "Iraq civilians tell of indiscriminate killing", one Iraqi, Ahmed Mahmoud, displaced from a Sunni area confessed, "The attacks by the Iraqi air force have been indiscriminate. They are targeting civilian homes. Why are they targeting us? Why don't they target the Islamic State group?" (AJE, Jul. 16, 2014, 00:29-00:39 Min.). AJE reporters show how this fighting in the region has forced out Syrians out of their country. It emphasizes on how this chaos has severely disrupted the lives of these people and also threatened the future generation and its way of life: "Haji Alla is stranded in a transit camp with his children and grand children; desperately worried about his future. (AJE, Jun. 23, 2014, YouTube headline: Insecurity spurs displacement in Iraq's north, 00:05-00:11 Min.).

In these news items under the threat to civilians frame, AJE covered rivalry and conflict between the two Islamic sect in Iraq—Sunni and Shiah. It presented some Sunni Muslims, displaced due to the clash, who contend that the government is also targeting civilians in the name of fighting the Sunni extremist ISIS. In the news story under “Iraq civilians tell of indiscriminate killing”, a displaced Sunni Iraqi, Adnan Yousef, confesses: “We have a big Mosque called Sadam Mosque in Tikrit. It is used to house some displaced people; it was hit by military jets. I saw it with my own eyes that many people were killed.” (AJE, Jul. 16, 2014, 01:47-01:57 Min.). This ethnic conflict which also extends to Kurds is also witnessed in the way Iraqi government Soldiers treat Kurdish civilians. The Kurdish people face the fire from two sides. Not only do they encounter government forces who give them a hard time, they also live in fear that ISIS forces could catch and kill them. One news report headlined “Iraq taxi drivers face ISIL threat during work” reads, “There are fighters belonging to Shiah armed groups who officially operate under the military’s command.” (AJE, Oct. 15, 2014, 01:04-01:09 Min.). One taxi driver states “they [the fighters] make problems for the drivers, especially the Kurds. They blame them for the way the Kurds and regional government treat Arabs in their territory.” Also another report presents how civilians are avoiding this sectarian tension and war and move to less violence-prone areas: “The reason they [civilians] come here is of course for safety, but also because this is the only place in the entire country where there is no sectarianism.” (AJE, Jun. 18, 2014, YouTube headline: Iraqis flee violence to Kurdish areas, 00:55-01:02 Min.). In this and other news reports under the threat to civilians frame, ISIS is considered a deadly threat to Syria and Iraq and other neighboring countries in the region. The group is portrayed as a reckless killing machine and force of destruction for Shiah and even Sunni Iraqis—the religious sect it belongs to—as well as Yazidis, Kurds and neighboring Turks.

The Threat to Christian Civilians Frame

A bit similar yet a distinct frame AJE used in reporting ISIS and its consequence is the *threat to Christian Civilians* frame. In this frame, AJE included only the threat ISIS poses on Christians living in Iraq and Syria. News items that fall under this category discuss displacement, looting and killings of Christian civilians in particular. About 3 (1.8 %) of the 167 televised news stories about ISIS reported the group as a destructive force causing Christian civilian displacements in various provinces of Iraq. The Islamic ambitions and expansion of the group into Iraq as well as its brutal measures of instating supremacy is shown causing Christians to flee their neighborhoods and cities. One televised news item titled “Christians in Iraq seek refuge in Erbil” read,

400 Christian families, most of them from Karakush, are staying here. In comparison to the hundreds of thousands of displaced people facing winter intense, these families are more fortunate, for there is great fear and uncertainty there.(AJE, Oct. 27, 2014, 00:02-02:15 Min.)

In this news story the Christian civilians displaced due to ISIS attested how the group kidnapped young girls. By showing mothers and fathers who shared their grieving concern, AJE placed emphasize on how the illegitimate group is affecting the lives of everyday people. Also, the people expressed how the group is looting and destroying their property. In a news item headlined “Iraqi Christians ordered out of Mosul”, a Christian husband and wife from Iraq who fled their hometown in Mosul told the journalist,

... They took my Id and found out I was a Christian. ... They took all my money. ... I begged them that the money and gold I had was for my son’s wedding. They told us to leave or they would take our car. (AJE, Jul. 19, 2014, 00:18-00:37 Min.)

Another news report under the banner “Iraqi Christians take shelter in Jordan” restated,

Everyone here has a horrific story to tell. Most have to flee Mosul on foot, when fighters from the Islamic State fighters group seized the city. They say the group stole their homes, cars shops and jewelry. (AJE, Aug. 27, 2014, 00:44-00:57 Min.)

The reports focused on what kind of torment Christians received under the ISIS rule. It covered externally displaced Christians [civilians forced to move out of their country] and what neighboring countries like Jordan are doing to protect and provide for refugees.

The Regional Military Intervention Frame

The majority of AJE news reports, about 61 (36.5 %), is presented in the *Regional Military Intervention* frame. In these news items AJE discussed movements of resistance and offense from Iraqi and Kurdish forces as well as military supports from Middle Eastern countries to combat the ISIS. In this frame ISIS is portrayed as a strong Enemy of war. In one news story headlined, “Iraq army launches offensive to retake Tikrit” the reporter describes the group as follows: “ISIL not only controls Iraq’s second biggest city of Mosul but has mounted yet another display of power and shows no signs of backing down...” (AJE, June 28, 2014, 02:30-02:37 Min.). The group is commonly referred to as a *Sunni extremist, tyrant or Rebel Group*. Reporters refrained from calling the group terrorist or even directly relating it with bombings and explosions. On the other hand, interviewee officials, soldiers, or civilians occasionally referred to the group as a *terrorist*. In the reports journalists tell the fight Iraqi and Kurdish forces are putting up to defeat a group—adoptable, rich, powerful, tactical and brutal—that is gaining power and strength. One report presents the hard combat in the following news item titled “Fighting rages in Iraq's Anbar province”: “... with large numbers of ISIL fighters in control of the two largest cities, Fallujah and Ramadi, taking back those areas represents a challenge.” (AJE, Oct. 2, 2014, 01:47- 01:55Min.).

The journalist described what ISIS counter forces are going through to retaliate and maintain their respective states. For instance, in the following news report titled “Inside look at Iraq's bomb disposal unit”, the reporter described Iraqi forces fighting ISIS in the following way,

For the bomb squad this is just one more day of frontlines; and this is one force that has proved to be crucial in the battle against ISIL. But ISIL fighters are nothing if not resourceful, leaving this men with no choice but to be ever watchful. (AJE, October 24, 201401:41-01:56)

The news reports under this category focused on how Kurdish forces, like the Peshmerga, are defending oil rich cities, like Kirkuk, to protect their interest as well as stop ISIS from taking over such cities and enrich its financial capacity. In a news item headlined “Exclusive the fierce battle for Iraq's Zumar”, the reporter stated how important it was for ISIS to retake the oil rich town of Zumar. Another news story stated how various government forces are battling to prevent this from happening, as well as limit the group in finance and ultimately military flexibility: “So far the Peshmerga lines have held, but ISIL fighters have been unrelenting in their operation to take oil rich Kirkuk.” (AJE, Dec. 30, 2014, YouTube headline: Battles rage for control of Iraqs Kirkuk, 00:35-00:44 Min.). AJE focused on how regional forces and even local militias are uniting against ISIS. In one news report entitled “Iraqi forces battle Sunni rebels for Ramadi”, the reported emphasized on how important it is for the allied groups against ISIS to recapture the territories: “The pro government forces are inching ever closer to Hadita and are confident of victory.” (AJE, Aug. 20, 2014, YouTube headline: Fighting rages in Iraq's Anbar province, 00:19-00:23 Min.). Regardless, AJE consistently acknowledged how this military intervention has been less than enough to combat ISIS, a group that has been build considerable force against the various regional governments in the Middle East.

The Western Military Intervention Frame

In a similar light AJE used the *Western Military Intervention* frame to discuss military support from the U.S., U.K. and other European and Western countries to Iraqi and Kurdish forces combating ISIS. These Reports include what is for example discussed in “UK assists Peshmerga in fight against ISIL” headlined news report;

These heavy machine guns have been given to the Peshmerga by the British military. ... It’s a boost for the poorly equipped Kurdish soldiers fighting ISIL along a frontline that stretches more than a thousand kilometers across Northern Iraq. (AJE, Nov. 5, 2014 00:12-00:29 Min.)

These news items that account for 11.9 % of the total 167 news items about the Islamic State also include reports about direct military interventions, i.e., U.S. led airstrikes against ISIS. In a news report titled, “Questions over Peshmerga capability against ISIL”, the reporter stated, “The U.S. military says it has hit ISIL fighters in Syria with 15 airstrikes, four of those in the town of Kobane near the Turkish border.” (AJE, Oct. 23, 2014, 00:01-00:10 Min).

In the reports under this textual news frame category ISIS is presented as a group that needs to be destroyed. This presentation however is not clear; it is highly understated compared to the urgency of the Issue and the damage the group is doing. The reporters and presenters refrain from stating, restating or setting a discourse that directly explains, ISIS. Instead, they focused on how the coalition against ISIS, particularly the lead country U.S. is congressing, deciding and working towards airstrikes. Sometimes, the reports stray focus from ISIS and instead scrutinize western policy against the Syrian war in general and their intervention in particular. AJE focused on Barrack Obama and his decision to order airstrikes and deploy military advisors to help Iraqi and Kurdish forces. The reports seem to hold Obama’s actions

against his opposition of the U.S. invasion in Iraq a decade ago. The news report headlined “Obama to deploy military advisers to Iraq”, contains,

Barrack Obama won the White House partially because he opposed the war in Iraq. Six years after taking office, President Obama is sending U.S. troops back to a country which is fighting a Sunni rebellion led by the group known as ISIL. (AJE, Jun. 19, 2014, 00:39-00:52 Min.)

AJE is keen on describing the war process as it happens; explain the regional politics as well as the U.S.-Arab interactions and coalition towards destroying ISIS.

The Impact on Iraq Politics and Division Frame

The next news frame AJE implemented in understanding and reporting ISIS and especially its effect on various administrative aspects of Iraqi is the *Impact on Iraq Politics and division* frame. About 4 (2.4 %) news reports between June and December, 2014 used this frame to report about ISIS and its various influences in Iraq. The media covered various anomalies in the Iraqi government, particularly its military—events that lead to the retaliation of its armed forces and the immense advancement of ISIS. These irregularities are not only creating a defenseless force against an external enemy but are also portrayed creating sectarian division in the country. In “Iraq's Sadr calls for emergency government”, the journalist interviews a Kurdish Regional Prime Minister who told him that what was happening in Iraq [the chaos] is a result of religious-sect based discrimination: “The Sunnis in Iraq felt that they were not part of the political process in the country.” (AJE, Jun. 26, 2014, 00:49-00:53 Min.). This reported discrimination against Sunnis from the Iraqi government is told, to cause Iraqi Sunni rebels to join forces with ISIS. In a slightly different report, AJE showed how, especially, Shia Muslims in Iraq are against the idea that the U.S. is taking part in the ‘alleged fight against ISIS’ which they believe is a new coalition, a new effort to control Iraq.

The Others Frame

Finally, in the *others* frame AJE has reported about 16 news items (9.6 %) to deal with generic news from the Middle East that relate with the creation and operation of ISIS, but don't necessarily present the group in any specific way in light of the previous frames.

AJE has not produced any significant news in the *Threat to U.S., and Its Western Allies* frame.

Cable News Network

The Advance Frame

In the *Advance* frame CNN portrayed ISIS as a **terrorist group** that is working to conquer Iraq and Syria. About 21 (11 %) of 191 CNN news stories, report the terrorist group growing in strength, territorial occupation and rapid wins over Iraqi and Syrian government forces. In a news report published on October 13, 2014, headlined "Baghdad airport at risk as ISIS advances", the reporter presents, "This is American fire power...and this is the ISIS response...and the terrorist group is still advancing." (CNN, Oct. 13, 2014, 00:03-00:14 Min.). In this reports, ISIS is shown as a terrorist group that is characterized by civilian displacement, looting and killings, brutal execution, and over all, acts of unlawful deeds and terror. On a news item published on June 11, 2014, the sub headline, "500,000 Flee onslaught by terrorists", expressed the aftermath of ISIS. This news story is also headlined "Terrorists gain ground in Iraq". The following news report headlined "ISIS moves closer to Baghdad", portrayed how the group is operating against internationally accepted protocols of treating captive soldiers in war. This presentation showed how the group is ruthless and moves against any acceptable moral or legal laws. The reporter describes one violation of international law as follows, "The radical Islamist terrorist group ISIS, apparently capturing dozens of Iraqi soldiers dressed in civilian clothes, lining them up for execution." (CNN, June 16, 2014, 00:10-00:19 Min.).

ISIS is also framed as an *Islamist militant group*. Although it is not used as frequently as the label terrorist, *Islamic militant* is a rather impartial presentation compared to the label terrorist. It is a similar representation as the one AJE used in the advance frame which presented ISIS as a *Sunni rebel group*. In the following extract from a news item titled “Terrorists gain ground in Iraq” CNN reporter stated, “After capturing Mosul, Iraq’s second largest city, Islamic Militants are boldly pushing on.” (CNN, June 11, 2014, 00:14-00:19).

CNN mainly focused on the devastation ISIS is causing in various Iraqi Towns. Unlike AJE, it didn’t focus on magnifying the resistance from Iraqi, Kurdish and other forces despite the aggressive advance from the group. The report belittled the efforts of Iraqi forces in particular in defending their territory. One news report headlined “Iraq desperate for options against ISIS”, held the journalist’s description of the resistance: “On the ground and from the air, Iraqi security forces in a desperate attempt to retake Northern cities now under the control of Islamic militants. Many Iraqi forces aren’t proving up to the task.” (CNN, Jun. 12, 2014, 00:02-00:17 Min.). By doing so the report turned to what seemed like a better alternative; help from the great States of America. It placed significant importance on the intervention of the U.S. against ISIS. In the above news story the reporter goes on to state, “Today President Obama acknowledges, the country needs more American help.” (CNN, Jun. 12, 2014, 00:37-00:42Min.) This statement is accompanied by a sound bite of the President’s interview that affirms it. He said, “It is going to need more help from us and it is going to need more help from the international community”. Furthermore, the reports present various Iraqi and Kurdish community members who are frustrated by ISIS advancing and crave for the international community intervention to defeat the terrorist group. The report titled, “ISIS advances on city near Turkish border” reads, “Kurds on both sides of the border feel Kobane will fall unless international airpower stops ISIS quickly.” (CNN, Sep. 28, 2014, 01:38-01:44 Min.). The international interventions, i.e., the airstrikes in this case are left to be decided by

the Pentagon although they are a coalition intervention from several other countries. Such news items as the following headlined “ISIS advancing on strategic fronts”, places the U.S. in the center of the crucial retaliation efforts. The correspondent stated, “The question now, maybe for the Pentagon, is can these airstrikes move fast enough. ... Pentagon officials say those airstrikes are working and that they are degrading ISIS capabilities...” (CNN, Sep. 30, 2014, 00:53-01:12Min.)

Some of the reports are mere field reports of an ongoing clash between ISIS and Syrian, Iraqi or Kurdish forces. The group is presented as a formidable enemy that is testing the military competence and resistance of forces in countries it is trying to take over and establish an Islamic State in, i.e., Iraq and Syria. In a news report headlined “ISIS in line of sight of Turkey”, the reporter describes the situation from the battle field: “There are coalition jets circling and for the last 48 hours they have been taking out ISIS targets in daylight. Still, ISIS has continued to advance.” (CNN, Oct. 10, 2014, 00:15-00:25 Min.).

The Beheading Frame

In the *Beheading* frame, CNN framed ISIS as an *Executioner* that is taking the lives of captured western citizens by specific means of cutting off their head. 12 (6.3 %) of 191 CNN news stories are reported using this frame. In these news presentations, the group is characterized by *barbarism and brutality*. The words beheading and execution repeatedly appeared in the headlines and sub-headlines of the news items, among the presenters and reporters frequent use of adjectives like barbarian, brutal and savage to describe the group as well as its acts of killing. The following extract from the news story headlined “ISIS executes American journalist James Foley”, shows this apparent presentation; “ISIS, the brutal militant rampaging through Syria and Iraq, say they killed Foley in retaliation for U.S. military operations in Iraq.” (CNN, Aug. 20, 2014, 00:43-00:54 Min.). These news items contained several messages; appeals from the Muslim-world leaders and community members and even

Imams who pleaded with the ‘terrorist group’ that proclaimed itself an Islamic caliphate. These failed attempts, which are presented as unaccepted messages by ISIS, show how the group is un-Islamic. By portraying this circumstance CNN showed how the group is simply a terrorist, with no religious values and moral committing atrocities. The following excerpt in the news item headlined “ISIS beheads American Steven Sotloff”, narrates the act of violence; “They have just released a video tape—ISIS—showing the execution of Steven Sotloff. ... and once again, a brutal execution; a beheading of this journalist.” (CNN, Sept. 2, 2014, 00:10-00:21Min.)

CNN also tried to present intelligence analysts who profile the masked killer or killers behind the beheadings. By doing so it tried to show whether it was all the same person or many; and also, where he could possibly be from. A news story that is headlined “Analysis of the ISIS beheading videos”, reads,

In each video the executioner wears black, keeping his face almost entirely covered. He has a gun and he holds a medium sized knife, which looks very similar, in his left hand. He has the same general body build, gestures and domineer. (CNN, Sep. 3, 2014, 00:21-00:37 Min.)

The beheading of the two aid workers is covered in a slightly different tone compared to the reports about the killings of the journalists. In these news reports, the reporters significantly lingered on the fact that both aid workers were killed while on a humanitarian mission to Syria trying to help people in distress. By presenting such angle CNN caters to the audiences’ judgment that ISIS is ruthless and inconsiderate to even humanitarians who are there to help the Syrian people it says it is fighting for. In a story titled “Alan Henning killed by ISIS”, the reporter stated that Alan was actually working with a Muslim charity, to which religion he is not a member of. By implication, this stands for the fact that ISIS is an unreligious outlaw to

have killed a humanitarian that is actually in the business of working with a Muslim charity helping Muslim in Syria. This cruelty portrayal is further magnified when the news channel presents the killing of an American Muslim-convert aid worker, Abdul-Rahman Kassig. This report headlined “ISIS beheads American Abdul-Rahman Kassig”, used the aid worker’s Muslim name in addition to his given name—Peter Kassig. By doing so it showed how ISIS is merciless to, not only aid workers but also, aid workers who share the same belief that it is basing to establish a Caliphate. Therefore, all these presentations clearly indicate that ISIS is simply a terrorist and its hostages are mere leverage to acquire money through ransom: “For ISIS Alan Henning was simply one more hostage for negotiation. (CNN, Oct. 3, 2014, Headline: Alan Henning killed by ISIS, 01:37-01:42 Min.).

The Execution Frame

In a resonating frame, CNN used the *Execution* frame to report unlawful killings of soldiers, mass executions, rampages and suicide bomb attacks at mosques and other public places. Out of the 191 news reports on ISIS in the time limited for this study, about 7 (3.7 %) of the news are presented using the execution frame. These news reports clearly showed and labeled ISIS as a *brutal executioner*. Such headlines as “ISIS executes dozens of prisoners” and “ISIS strikes back with new massacres” are examples of this depiction applied on the titles of the news items. In some of these news stories the group is identified as a terrorist, a terror group or an extremist. Only one of these news items that dealt with a shooting in a mosque didn’t clearly identify who was responsible for the attack. In a news report titled “ISIS executes 400 tribesmen in 48 hours”, CNN presents the group as follows, “45 Iraqi men executed on camera by the terror group on Wednesday and today hundreds more found in a mass grave” (CNN, Oct. 30, 2014, 00:35-00:43 Min.). News reports in the execution frame discussed how ISIS is against international conventions especially in treating captured soldiers, which the reporter stated are prisoners of war. The following is a statement describing the situation

from the news item “ISIS executes 250 Syrian soldiers”, “This grainy ISIS video that shows a pile of bloody bodies. Before the camera swings around to reveal this, an endless line of dead soldiers lying face down on the dirt” (CNN, Aug. 28, 2014, 00:18-00:30 Min). CNN strongly despises this unacceptable matter. In fact, in the above news alone, which has about a two minute duration, it has used about five adjectives like, bloody, barbaric, ruthless, abhorrent and medieval [to mean back warded] to describe ISIS and its act. The group is also characterized by cruelty, utter brutality and mercilessness.

The Profile Frame

Next came the *Profile* frame, which CNN used to discuss what ISIS is, how it came to exist, how it is operating, as well as talk about various aspects of the group including its leaders and fighters. From 191 broadcast news stories between June and December 2014 concerning ISIS about 28 (14.6 %) are presented using the profile frame. In these news items ISIS is portrayed as a *radical Islamist terrorist* group that is brutal and dangerous, working in violation of human right and international conventions. Two of the headlines that presented ISIS as an extremist terrorist group describing its economic status and current position, respectively, are “World’s richest terrorist group: Where does ISIS get its money” and “The Evolution of ISIS: Group now among world’s most feared terrorists”. The reports dealt with Baghdadi, the ISIS leader; who he is, how he came to dominate and coordinate such a group. Baghdadi, who is a former captive of the U.S. army in Iraq, is said to be a leader who met his making during his stay in the detention camp where he had ties with other ‘extremists and jihadists’. In other words as clearly stated in the headline “They went from inmates to ISIS”, Baghdadi and his fellow ISIS members are presented as simple felons who have found a way of legalizing their economic and political as well as social cravings by establishing a group and pledging to create an Islamic State. The reporter at a certain point in a news report headlined “Inside the camp where ISIS may have begun”, mentioned a quote from a Guardian’s journalist

interview with a senior ISIS commander; “it was a management school for ISIS leaders. If there was no American prison in Iraq there would be no I.S. now.” (CNN, Dec. 12, 2014, 01:38-01:46 Min.). This attribution of responsibility is immediately countered by arguments from the U.S. army that claims to have no direct contribution to the making of Baghdadi since the detention camp was an apparent component of the war in Iraq. Furthermore, the report refers to an intelligence authority who strongly states that the U.S. camp in Iraq was not “a turning point for Baghdadi”; meaning he was radicalized and waiting to strike even before the camp—quite possibly the same reason that landed him in prison in the first place. After showing how powerful and determinant Baghdadi is in the progress of ISIS, one report headlined “ISIS' enigmatic terror leader”, made a closing statement that decided the fate of the terrorist leader possibly in the hands of the U.S. just like previous terrorist figures: “All three of his immediate predecessors at the top jihadist leaders in Iraq were killed. And right now Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi has got a U.S. bounty on his head of 10 million Dollars.” (CNN, Jun. 12, 2014, 02:15-02:25 Min.).

These reports about Baghdadi are as many as those that detail Jihadi John, who is not in any significant administration hierarchy. CNN focused on the executioner instead of the leader because the first one is causing direct threat to western citizens. He is also a very famous personality that could represent the very true nature of the terrorist group. The reports focused on reporting and analyzing different traits that help to identify the masked person: ***Jihadi John***. These series of news items levitate towards and are keen on the fact that the fighter is possibly identified. This feels as though by identifying the executioner and where he came from there is much to benefit the Syrian and Iraqi people who are the primary victims; while, in fact, identifying the executioner will only help western countries like the U.S. to pin the blame of the execution of their citizens. In “Hunting ISIS executioner Jihadi John” headlined news report the reporter presents,

U.S. intelligence officials believe that the ISIS executioner, known as Jihadi John, is also responsible for the beheadings of Americans James Foley and Steven Sotloff and British Nationals David Haines and Alan Henning. (CNN, Nov.17, 2014, 00:00-00:13Min.)

Other reports, presented in the profile frame, showed how the group manipulates children by training them in extremist ideologies to fight its war. Some of these children are even reported to be kidnapped against their will. This is a way of showing how ISIS is in violation of various national and international laws that stand for children's rights, including the international convention on the rights of the child. This is also evidence that shows ISIS is committing war crimes. In a news story titled "Kidnapped boys brainwashed by ISIS", the reporter quotes a 15 year old boy who escaped from ISIS captivity: "They told us, if we tried to escape, they would chop our heads off." (CNN, Jun. 25, 2014, 00:01-00:05Min.).

The self proclaimed Islamic State group is also portrayed as an unworthy form of government or leadership. In the small towns and even cities it came to control it is presented as a tyrant practicing out dated and undemocratic forms of administration that is forcefully imposed on people. The following news item under the headline "Life under ISIS Judge, jury and executioner", reads, "...but ISIS is also implementing its harsh interpretation of Islamic law: obligatory prayers for all and banning women from movement outside their home without a male guardian." (CNN, Jun. 25, 2014, 01:52-02:03 Min.). According to the reports this practice is unpopular with people. ISIS is limiting several democratic rights and imposing difficult social conventions which people are conferring with only because the group holds the military power. A statement from "Life under ISIS rule in Mosul" stated, "The people of Mosul now live in fear of arbitrary arrests, punishment in death, with eye witness reports of a young man accused of adultery publically stoned to death." (CNN, Sep. 3, 2014, 00:45-00:55 Min.). This is followed by people's testimonies that defy ISIS as Islamist. Other reports also

present how the group is ostracized by even carefully watched terrorist groups like Al Qaeda for being too un-Islamic and ruthless to even Muslims. The group is also detailed in terms of what it possesses, the warplanes, financial resources, and artillery plants, which ISIS would mobilize to destroy its opponents. In detailing its extreme brutality the reporter in “Meet the terrorists who scare Al-Qaeda” stated,

...this is a jihadist group so extreme even Al Qaeda wants nothing to do with them. ... as this graphic photos show, in recent months the group has executed enemies in Syria and staged their deaths to look like crucifixions. (CNN, June 13, 2014, 01:22-01:40 Min.)

The reports in the profile frame make occasional reference about how the U.S. could possibly be responsible in the making of ISIS. When determining the rise and quick mobilization of the group for instance, the report headlined “Did intelligence community underestimate ISIS”, discussed how U.S. intelligence authorities could have overlooked the group. This is evident to the fact that, by implication, the U.S. is taking up the right to describe, understand and explain such phenomenon. In general terms, CNN reporter branched on U.S. intervention in Iraq, in the first place, to make the point that it has led to several undesirable outcomes—ISIS being one of them: “... so that America’s next push for democracy doesn’t help create the next insurgency.” (CNN, Sep. 19, 2014, 02:44-02:49 Min.)

The Propaganda Frame

The *Propaganda* frame is the other frame CNN used to report about how ISIS uses various televised video productions and online video streaming, social media and similar strategies to win the hearts and minds of its followers, to impose fear, terrorize the west and intermediate its adversaries. CNN has efficiently covered ISIS’ *Terrorist propaganda* in 21 (about 11 %) of its 191 total televised news reports. The group is depicted as a *Master of cyber war*, gaining upper hand in the global war of propaganda. It is shown carrying out effective

propaganda to *terrorize the west*, spreading fear and *intermediate its adversaries* to win the non-combat battle. The group is tagged as brutal and sophisticated, waging a new form of war over the social media. It is said to be a propagandists that uses high level video productions to raise money, and recruit followers. The propaganda videos covered in the news stories are scrutinized in light of who is appearing in the medium. CNN is keen on describing and identifying the western speakers that appear in the videos. The following extract from the news item titled “Is a North American featured in new ISIS video”, is a statement of the journalist talking about the English speaking ISIS fighter in the video, “He could be Arab and educated in the west. He could be American or Canadian.” (CNN, Sep. 19, 2014, 00:52-00:55 Min.).

As the propaganda videos increasingly became popular CNN started to break down the message of the propaganda and discussing them in terms of distinct issues. This was in a way, a means of degrading the videos and minimizing the harm they could cause. For instance, the show of force from the group that involves marching captured arms is labeled, ‘a terrifying display’. In this news story, YouTube headlined “Is ISIS winning the propaganda war”, the report further focused on the various violations of rights and laws that are exhibited in the propaganda videos. In news reports that contain messages from young men from the west fighting for ISIS, CNN explained why this videos are targeted at specific countries the young fighters were from. In the following news item, titled “ISIS aims to recruit French converts”, for instance, the journalist tries to tell why the propaganda video featured French ISIS fighters to address youngsters in France—a western country where there are many Muslims. It discussed various issues of migration and the absence of conglomeration between different ethnic and religious communities as a possible factor that would contribute to why many fighters join ISIS: A journalist that has had the privilege of working in ‘tough areas’ of Paris

affirms to CNN; “Thirty-Forty years of very bad immigration policy, very bad integration—there is no integration.” (CNN, Nov. 22, 2014, 01:00-01:08Min.).

Other propaganda video reports are also thoroughly examined and analyzed by various U.S. based initiatives and organizations as to what they mean and what they stand for. They are specifically dealt with in terms of the threat they make, i.e., it dealt with what the involvement of U.S. citizens, and westerners, in general, in the propaganda videos would mean to the security and welfare of people in the States. “ISIS audio tape: Attack the U.S.” is a headline for a news story that quotes an authority from the American Enterprise Institute who tells how these propaganda video could possibly affect the U.S. and Europe. She said, “It certainly could. Al Qaeda has tried it before and keeps pushing that message for individuals within the United States, within European countries to simply act out.” (CNN, Sep. 22, 2014, 00:51-01:25 Min.)

ISIS is also shown as taking maximum advantage of the new media like Twitter, Facebook, etc. to release video and audio messages. This could help the group to advance its ambitions to reach the west and scare governments from intervening with its expansion in the Middle East. The group also used the propaganda video to attract young people, especially those from western countries, to fight for a worthy cause. In the following news item titled “ISIS' power of propaganda and production”, a terrorism analyst describes the internet based movements from the group and how it is using real time access of the virtual world to mobilize western fighters: “ISIS is reaching out to people on social media in real time, interacting with them in real time.” (CNN, Oct. 27, 2014, 01:10-01:18 Min.). The propaganda frame also presented how ISIS fighters attracted fellow fighters from the western world by appearing normal and relatable in online platforms where they tweet and exchange thoughts to lure youngsters into joining the group. In fact, some of the propaganda videos are made in English language featuring young Americans, British citizens, etc. calling in their fellow

countrymen. In “ISIS recruiting Western youth with English-language video”, a representative from the New American Foundation is quoted saying, “It is very significant that ISIS is using English. That means they have ambitions to attack western countries.” (CNN, Jun. 21, 2014, 00:40-00:48 Min.). In these news reports, reporters discuss how effective and attractive ISIS’ online propaganda is. They provide actual events of young ambitions who want to join the group after being recruited by the group. For instance, “ISIS embraces modern technology” headlined news report discussed, “ISIS generates thousands of social media accounts, official and unofficial, reaching sympathizers, spreading propaganda, recruiting followers, raising money.” (CNN, Sept. 16, 2014, 00:25-00:35 Min.).

These various propaganda news items which are repeatedly recognized by CNN for having Hollywood like production techniques are considered brutal. They are viewed seriously by the U.S. government in particular, especially when it comes to those messages that call the youth to join the fight and also make every possible effort to launch attacks in the respective countries they live in.

The Sympathizers Frame

Out of 191 reports about ISIS about 7 televised news reports (3.7 %) were presented using the *Sympathizers* frame. News under this category discussed western citizens that support the *terrorist group* and *its jihadist causes*. All the news reports are about U.S. citizens who were arrested during the process of heading to neighboring countries near ISIS-controlled territories or communicating about the group over social media. In the news item “American accused of trying to join ISIS”, for example, the reporter explained the proceedings:

Today in Federal Court the 19 year old Illinois man stood silently as he was arraigned on charges of attempting to provide material support to a foreign terrorist organization; accused of wanting to travel to join ISIS. (CNN, Oct. 6, 2014, 00:00-00:13 Min.)

In the reports the journalists state how these sympathizers or supporters don't have direct links with the terrorist group but are arrested for communicating about it; sharing images of the group like its black flag, its leader, propaganda videos etc. The following news extract headlined "How are Americans supporting ISIS on social media", is evident of this fact:

...a college student in Texas has a webpage filled with ISIS banners propaganda videos and portraits of ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. He posted this picture of the ISIS banner next to a Quran and an American Flag. (CNN, Oct. 2, 2014, 00:29-00:42 Min.)

In another news report too, headlined "Authorities link Virginia woman to ISIS recruitment", the journalist clearly states that the woman who was accused of working as an ISIS recruiter didn't actually have direct communication with the group, which in the words of one analyst quoted in one of these news items could just simply be a 'fan'. The reporter responded to a question from the news anchor who asked if this woman was actually communicating with the group:

... She was communicating about them. But, what really concerned them [the authorities] is, as they went into the Facebook account, they began to look at the things she was saying; so she began to fancy herself as a recruiter. (CNN, Nov. 18, 2014, 01:26-01:37 Min.)

The alleged sympathizers are specifically active in using social media to talk about ISIS. Promoting the causes of ISIS and various messages from the group is almost synonymous with all alleged sympathizers.

The Western Fighters Frame

Americans who actually fought for ISIS in Iraq and Syria are covered by the *Western fighters* frame. Out of the total 191 reports about the group 4 televised news reports (2.1 %) discussed U.S. citizens fighting for the *Islamic fundamentalist terrorist group*. They are reported involving in various acts of combat and bombings. In the following news report headlined “Other Americans already within ISIS ranks”, for instance, the reporter stated, “Douglas McArthur McCain a young American killed while fighting with the terrorist group ISIS.” (CNN, Aug. 26, 2014, 00:00-00:06 Min.). The report profiled what kind of person McCain was, specifically, by going through his religious and criminal history. The journalist shed light on the fact that he was a Christian converted to Islam and had committed felony, both, big and small, ranging from driving with a suspended license to possessing narcotics. This is a way of showing a reality that Jihadis have corruptible behavior which could possibly explain why they take up bigger felonies like joining a terrorist group to create instability.

The Threat to Civilians Frame

After, CNN used the *Threat to civilians* frame to report how ISIS is causing danger to public welfare and peaceful way of life, especially in Iraq. About 5 (2.6 %) of the news items about ISIS on CNN reported ISIS and its acts of savagery and terror, causing civilians to flee their homes sometimes even when the group is just advancing to their towns. This phenomenon is covered by a news item titled as “Iraqi refugees flee from ISIS”, “Iraqi refugees risk all to escape ISIS” and the like. In “Iraqi refugees flee from ISIS” headlined news story the reporter discussed how ISIS is threatening the lives of civilians, both Christian and Muslim:

The Falis family, Christians from Northern Iraq, have lived here in Bagdad since June. They fled their home in Karakush near Mosul as ISIS over run the town. (00:08-00:19) ... They are Shebek, a Shiite minority from Northern Iraq; Just one of many

ancient communities driven from their land by ISIS. (Oct. 10, 2014, 00:48-01:04 Min.)

The reports show the harsh conditions the civilians had to go through to escape ISIS. They covered the lives this people have left back home, how they are now struggling for everything and how they are in a desperate need due to ISIS. In the news report headlined “Iraqi refugees risk all to escape ISIS”, a civilians fleeing ISIS controlled areas in Northern Iraq told the reporter, “We brought nothing. Not even cloth, just horrors.” The reporter tops it off by stating how severe the condition is: “So far some 23 thousand [refugees], and counting, have arrived (1:54-01:59) ... sadness etched in the elders’ faces’. A mother lost in thought as she stares at her youngest.” (CNN, DATE, 02:15-02:21Min.). The group is not only responsible for displacing civilians; it is also taking more drastic measures of executing men and kidnapping women in towns and villages it controls. The headline of one news item that reports this event reads, “ISIS storms town, captures 100 women”. A civilian who escaped from the town told the reporter how the group executed 80 men and kidnapped 100 women to have them as slaves and “sell them”. This grave humanitarian crisis is called out by the reporter as a “war technique” to divide and conquer the Yazidis.

The Threat to Christian Civilians Frame

In a more specific prospect, CNN used the *Threat to Christian civilians* frame to cover ISIS as a threat to Christian community wellbeing. There are 3 reports about (1.6 %) of the total 191 televised news reports where the group is attributed to extreme religious acts of savagery and terror, which are causing Christians to flee their homes. The headlines for these news stories are “Christian village evacuates ahead of ISIS”, “Christians forced to flee ISIS in Iraq” and “Iraqi Christians living in fear of ISIS”, all of which indicate how the group is specifically threatening Christians. In the first news item, the reporter quotes a Christian priest who tells how ISIS is forcing Christians to convert to Islam or pay a fine for living in

an 'Islamic' province. Besides the fines the reports showed how people are escaping from ISIS fearing they could be killed because they are considered 'infidels'. In "Christians forced to flee ISIS in Iraq" the news anchor stated, "Iraq's largest Christian city now seized by ISIS militants; Tens of thousands of Christians are now fleeing for their lives." (CNN, Aug. 7, 2014, 00:00-00:08 Min).

In general terms, ISIS is portrayed as a force of religious intolerance, savagery and destruction. After watching news reports under the Threat to Christian Civilians frame in particular, it is easy to understand that the group is not entertaining peaceful religious coexistence which is outdated and unrealistic.

The Regional Military Intervention Frame

Another frame used in reporting ISIS in the Middle East is the *Regional military intervention* frame. About 19 (10 %) of the 191 televised news reports about ISIS on CNN focused on how regional forces like Iraqi soldiers and Kurdish forces are putting up a fight against an extremist force, ISIS, that has the upper hand of the combat. In most of the news items in this category, the group is depicted as a strong enemy of war, considered an immediate threat and seldom labeled an *extremist Sunni group* or *a terrorist group*. In the news reports the group is synonymously presented with as an Islamist group with extreme brutality. In news items under such headlines as "Iraq claims key city recaptured from ISIS", "Critical battle against ISIS in Ramadi", "Kurdish fighters trying to keep ISIS at bay", "Live anti-ISIS firefight on Turkey border" CNN showed how regional forces are having a hard time fighting ISIS. In "Iraq claims key city recaptured from ISIS", the reporter stated, "A Hard fought victory for Iraq in its battle against ISIS. Iraqi television reporting the key town of Baiji has been retaken from the terror group." (CNN, November 11, 2014, 00:00-00:14Min.)

Although the various tribal factions of Iraq and Syria are presented fighting down ISIS and they are actually gaining support from the international community—countries like the

U.S.—one report uncovered how Gulf countries the so called the Gulf Corporation Council /GCC/—that includes big force countries like Saudi Arabia and Qatar—are not responding to the regional threat. They are reported having internal problems they disagree on and some of them are in fact portrayed as contributing to helping some undesirable forces that are creating chaos in the region. Later on, when some of these big Arab countries, who are told in the news stories to have ‘deep regional divisions’, come together to help fight an enemy in their region, it is referred to as ‘unprecedented’ in the news item headlined “The Arab coalition against ISIS”: “... an unprecedented regional response; five Arab countries taking part in the US-led airstrikes on ISIS in Syria.” (CNN, Sept. 13, 2014, 00:03-00:12Min.). In a similar effect, while discussing Iraqi forces fighting ISIS for instance, the reporter, in one of the news stories titled “Hastily trained Shiites take up arms in Iraq”, talks about new recruits of Iraqi Shiites forces who are joining the battle to defeat ISIS. As she presents the recruitment process and military procession she describes, “New Iraqi recruits learning the basics of military life. Although they can’t quite help themselves and the chant becomes a dance.” (CNN, Jun. 30, 2014, 00:05-00:16 Min.). In addition the reporter goes on to describe how the trainings are very short and unconventional. On the contrary, in the same report she also presents the great pride and enthusiasm and will to fight amongst these people. Such portrayal is rare. When the reports actually discussed Iraqi forces taking victory over ISIS, it was what we could consider unconventional. In the news item headlined “Old tanks defend Baghdad against ISIS”, the reporter describes, “Iraqi army soldiers celebrate a rare victory. Bodies are draped over the hood of their humvee.” (CNN, Jun. 25, 2014, 00:04-00:10 Min.). At the end of this report the journalist also makes the following remark that could possibly give away military status information about the soldiers protecting Baghdad: “If ISIS gets this far to the edge of Baghdad, with such a thin military presence in their way no telling where ISIS will stop.” (CNN, Jun. 25, 2014, 02:37-02:47 Min.). This kind of presentation

that shows the discrepancy and irregularity of the military is quite the opposite of how the enemy, ISIS, is presenting itself in the propaganda videos which CNN reported about even in news stories under this *Regional Military Intervention frame*. In the following extract from the news item titled “Iraq claims key city recaptured from ISIS”, the reporter talks about a propaganda video from ISIS: “... but ISIS is continuing to sell its battle field prouise. In its latest video ISIS shows a helicopter being shot down in Iraq.” (CNN, Nov. 11, 2014, 00:21-00:30 Min.). This elevated presentation could possibly tell that ISIS is winning the battle against dancing soldiers of Iraq who are ill trained. In this news story the U.S. intervention is significantly implied. Also, in another report headlined “Is an enemy of ISIS a friend of America”, the YPG, Kurdish fighters in Syria who are fighting ISIS to keep their land and identity, are referred to as the new “U.S. defacto allies”. This presentation begs the question ‘who is fighting whose war?’ The YPG who are fighting for themselves are the primary actor in this war; unlike the portrayal above that puts them as allies and the U.S. the principal actor. In addition to the reversed portrayal of who is fighting the war in Syria, the above news report is also evident to the fact that the U.S. is allying with such groups as YPG which is synonymous with PKK, a group that was treated as a terrorist by America. The U.S. is also suspected for creating unlikely ties with its counters in the Middle East to defeat ISIS. In the following news item titled “Is ruthless general Iraq's hidden hand”, the journalist discussed whether the U.S. is allying with an Iranian general who is suspected of helping forces in Iraq against the U.S. during the Iraq war and even mobilizing anti-American attacks across international borders. These reports are evident that CNN strays off the fight from primary governments and forces involved, i.e. Iraqi and Syrian governments as well as Kurdish and Peshmerga fighters, and focused more on the U.S. in the region. The news story “Stopping the ISIS advance” contains vivid explanation of this reality. The reporter stated, “As you can see the U.S. airstrike has completely destroyed the ISIS mobile artillery piece. But out here in

the open the militants are easy to attack.” (CNN, Aug. 12, 2014, 00:41-00:51 Min.). This show of U.S. significance in the battle against ISIS doesn’t stop here. As the journalists covered small towns and cities that are soon to be captured by ISIS, they interview resident who called out to the U.S. to help them keep their towns. In the headlined report, “Sunni youth fight ISIS”, Shaalan Al-Jibouri a resident of Dhuluiya, Iraq is quoted, “Mr. President please help us and send your plane to bomb or to attack this terrorist” (CNN, Sep. 16, 2014, 02:24-02:33 Min.).

In another prospect, CNN reported about the captured Jordanian pilot who is part of the anti-ISIS coalition. In this respect the news items generally focused on what the coalition, especially Jordan, is doing to recover the pilot. Yet, in terms of how the plane crashed the reports presented strong authoritative testimony that it was not shot down by ISIS, as the group claims. This event is also reported as a setback in the coalition and the fight against ISIS.

The Western Military Intervention Frame

The dominant frame CNN used in reporting about ISIS is the *Western military intervention* frame. About 40 (20.9 %) of the 191 televised news reports about ISIS fall under the western military intervention textual frame. In the news items under this frame category, CNN discussed political and military engagements from mainly the U.S. to defeat ISIS, a group that causes a serious threat to the region, America as well as the west in general. ISIS is seldom referred to as *a jihadist*, *an extremist* and/or *a terrorist*. CNN emphasized on the need to destroy ISIS, a group so infamous for beheading, massacre and killings—in general a menace for survival. In such news stories headlined “Airstrike kills ISIS-appointed governor of Mosul”, “Kerry argues for war against ISIS at U.N.”, “Coalition launches airstrikes against ISIS”, etc. CNN mainly dealt with several acts of cruelty from the group, which requires it to be destroyed.

There are a number of reports where U.S. and the coalition it leads are responsible for killing significant ISIS leaders. The following news item titled: “3 senior ISIS leaders killed in U.S. strike” not only portrays this fact, but it also shows how Iraqi ground forces have actually abandoned their posts as ISIS advanced. The correspondent reported,

We are told, three senior leaders—and these are people who are very high up in the ISIS organization, very close to the leader Al-Baghdadi ... I am told this were the results of multiple airstrikes going back to mid-November. (CNN, Dec. 18, 2014, 00:01-00:32 Min.)

Another news story headlined “Airstrike kills ISIS-appointed governor of Mosul”, also reads, “Coalition airstrike has killed ISIS appointed governor of Mosul in Iraq. He had only been in office for 25 days since the former office holder was also taken out by the U.S. led coalition.” (CNN, Sept.19, 2014, 01:32-01:49 Min.)

In reports under the *Western Military Intervention frame* CNN focused on how the U.S. is involving in the fight against ISIS by suggesting and trying to set the agenda for the government to further involve in Iraq and Syria against ISIS. The airstrikes are reportedly effective yet limited if they are not complemented by, especially, Iraqi forces fighting on the ground—which is an ironic reality with the forces ‘running away’. The news reports tend to levitate to implying U.S. troops on the ground could make a difference. The news story headline “Airstrikes hit these ISIS targets” contained a description of this set of events where the CNN journalist ends up concluding his analysis as follows,

... and there must be some kind of follow up on the ground. If the troops [Iraqi soldiers] can’t fight back more effectively and what we saw there, their leadership is not strong enough, there simply is no way airstrikes get the job done. Every military analyst says that. (CNN, Sep. 25, 2014, 02:02-02:14 Min.)

The U.S. intervention is not all state-side; CNN also reported about Americans fighting against ISIS with Kurdish forces. Although in the reports this ‘individual involvements’ are called illegal, that was not where the focus of the report was. In “American volunteers to fight with Kurds against ISIS” headlined news item the anchor asks an analyst whether this individual alignment with Kurdish forces—who she calls out are brave, but implies are not as reliable as the U.S.—was effective. The anchor also asks a Middle East correspondent whether the Kurds knew ‘two Americans’ were alongside fighting with them.

When it comes to reporting civilian casualties caused as a result of the airstrikes, CNN reported that the airstrikes have indeed caused some civilian deaths, but shifted the focus on how the U.S. is reconsidering its targets and attacking oil reserves in rural areas where there is less or no civilian causality and more damage to ISIS’ source of income. Compared to the five western citizens beheaded by ISIS who are possibly considered collateral damage in a war, the lives of the five civilians, in one of the many airstrikes on a daily basis seems to be totally undermined.

In a nutshell, the *Western military intervention* frame entertained how the U.S. and its European allies, especially the U.K., are working to prevent ISIS from consuming Iraq and Syria, and eventually stop it from bringing the terror to their door steps. The ultimate fear of ISIS reaching ‘Home’, in the case of the U.S., is every now and then accompanied by affirming concerns from senators and politicians; some of which are very dramatic. A Republican Senator, Lindsey Graham of South Carolina is quoted in the news story titled “Kerry building anti-ISIS coalition”, where he decisively asks for more intervention in the region to fight terrorism. He said, “... yet again this President needs to rise to the occasion before we all get killed back here at home.” (CNN, Sep. 15, 2014, 01:58-02:02 Min.). Although ISIS is portrayed as a great threat to Iraq, the Middle East and ultimately the whole world, CNN specifically capitalized on American firepower, air force capability, and air

strikes, as a means of defeating the terrorist group. It also repeatedly showed western nations and leaders meeting to discuss what they would do about the ISIS phenomenon in Iraq and Syria. There are also abundant senate hearings to discuss and approve interventions in the region against ISIS.

The Threat to U.S., And Its Western Allies Frame

The other news frame CNN used to discuss ISIS is the *Threat to U.S., and Its Western Allies* frame. This is the only news frame that AJE didn't use to report about ISIS. There are about 7 televised news reports which comprise (3.7 %) of 191 CNN news under this textual news frame. Except one news report that dealt with ISIS as threat to France, all other news reports discussed ISIS as a threat to U.S. welfare and peace. More than half the reports specifically frame ISIS as a *terrorist threat*. In one of the news reports titled "France against ISIS terror threats" the correspondent explains how security alerts have been raised in France after fears, related to terrorism, grow following the country's intervention to fight fundamentalism, meaning ISIS. The reporter interviews a foreign relations expert in France who suggests that the country's need to be a leading actor in the international phenomenon—as one civilian labeled it: 'wanting to be king of the world'—is what is making it a target by terrorists. This reflection is not applied to the U.S. in any of the news items under this frame or any prior frame in general that talk about the U.S. as a target to terrorist attacks. The apparent threat ISIS poses to Europe is also anticipated by the U.S. In one of the news stories, the reporter explained how a chain of terrorism events in Europe are indicating to the fact that ISIS is an imminent threat. The U.S. Deputy National Security Advisor is quoted in the news item headlined "Keeping ISIS out of the U.S."; "They pose a greater threat today than they did six months ago and we are taking it very seriously." (CNN, Aug. 23, 2014, 00:01-00:04).

CNN also conducted a poll that identified 90 % of the population who consider ISIS as a threat to the U.S. homeland and 71 % who actually believe there are ISIS terrorists in

America. This also showed 50 % of the population supporting military intervention in Iraq. The revelation of such information from CNN is coherent with what it has been bargaining in the previous *Western intervention* frame where we have seen evidence that it was pushing for ‘boots on the ground’—the need to step up the intervention against ISIS and engaging American soldiers in combat. In addition to this solicited interventions in the news items, the CNN reports under this frame also showed how the U.S. is stepping up its security to protect itself from foreign terror threats to the homeland.

The Impact on Iraqi Politics And Division Frame

The *Impact on Iraqi politics and division* frame is the other frame used to present ISIS on CNN. There are about 5 (2.6 %) of the total 191 CNN news reports, where CNN described how ISIS is creating chaos in Iraqi and its politics and how ISIS’ ambitions and acts of war could lead to smaller division within the country. In “Could partitioning Iraq save it” headlined news item CNN features a Former U.S. Ambassador Peter Galbraith who was advising Iraqi Kurdish leaders; he advocates dividing Iraq into three sections, split along religious and ethnic lines. These seemingly inevitable divisions are apparent, according to CNN because ISIS keeps on redrawing borders as it takes over more territory. This particular change is said to upset political leadership in Iraq:

This morning political chaos in Iraq! The Prime Minister of the country in crisis, Nouri Al-Maliki flexing military muscle amid fears of being ousted!... the U.S. says they back the new Iraqi President. (CNN, Aug. 11, 2014, YouTube headline: Amid ISIS fears, Iraq steps up security in Baghdad, 00:01-00:50 Min.)

In this same report, the correspondent covers political metamorphism in Iraq amidst chaos. In this internal political procession, the U.S. is there giving its blessing for the newly appointed President of Iraq. A responsibility beyond the call of duty; an involvement that,

although gently, affirms the U.S. and its power to determine governance and ‘democracy’ in Iraq.

The Others Frame

Finally, in the *Others* frame which consists 12 (6.3%) of the 191 televised news reports about ISIS, CNN reported socio-political and economic consequences and phenomenon that arise in the Middle East due to ISIS’ acts of violence. The group is portrayed as a negative force of destruction frequently referred to as *brutal* and *extremist*.

4.2 Discussion of Findings

We have seen how the two international media have framed the ISIS phenomenon. The presentation of the data previously showed that about 14 frames were used by the selected news providers. Cable News Network used all the 14 narrower frames the researcher established after analyzing the textual news. On the contrary Aljazeera English used 13 of the 14 narrower frames leaving out *ISIS Threat to U.S. and Its Western Allies* frame. Now, most of these frames may have been implemented by both news providers, yet according to the theoretical frameworks of this research, it is important to understand how these two media from the oriental world, i.e., AJE and the occidental world, i.e., CNN could have reported an oriental phenomenon in the Arab world. In order to make this comparative analysis and have a manageable finding, it is important to categorize smaller frames identified into similar themed frames from where it is easier to identify points for argument. In line with Wimmer & Dominick’s (2011) suggestion related to making an inductive frame analysis, the researcher has established smaller divisions of frames that were specific and detailed. Yet, in order to have a manageable research finding and presentation which would further be explained in comparison, the researcher has established broader frames which Krippendorff (2004) calls umbrella categories.

Accordingly, the 14 sub-category of frames are categorized under the War Frame, The Killing Frame, The Outline Frame, The Victim Frame, The Intervention Frame and The Protagonist Frames. These overarching frames were developed to encompass specific frames with similar attributes.

The War Frame

This frame constitutes the *Advance* frame that AJE and CNN used to report ISIS' progress in the battle field and the *Propaganda* frame that both news providers implemented in discussing the war ISIS declared through the use of conventional and social media. In AJE news items the *War Frame* is identified in (14.4 %) of the stories, from which (12.6 %) is the *Advance* and (1.8 %) is the *Propaganda* frame respectively. CNN has about (22 %) of its reports presented by the *War Frame*, for which the specific news frames equally constitute the aggregate percentile: (11 %) each.

In the *Advance* frame AJE clearly stated how the ***Sunni rebel group*** is pushing forward with its occupation; However, AJE emphasized on the resistance from Kurdish and Iraqi forces. On the other hand, in the same *Advance* frame, CNN mainly focused on the devastation the ***Terrorist group*** is causing in various Iraqi Towns. The report demeaned Iraqi forces in particular in defending their country from aggression. On the contrary, it portrayed people and authority of the Arab states calling out to the U.S. and its military might for help; a clear signification of an important western power to the rescue. As Little (2008) affirms, this emanates from a western attitude to stand guard for oriental nations in the Middle East, Africa and Asia who are considered “backward, exotic, and occasionally dangerous folk”. Thus, according to the author it is safe to say that America's involvement in this region in general, and in Iraq—this time to fight ISIS—in particular is a way of assuring transformations to a better political realm and cultural stand.

This felt obligation and military involvement from the U.S. is counteracted by the Qatar-based oriental media. AJE reports oppose the argument that the U.S. military intervention is crucial. In fact it makes an allusion to how the U.S. came to fight Al Qaeda, failed to do so and how Iraq could have managed Al Qaeda on its own since it is resisting a much more sophisticated group all on its own with no help from America. In the contrary, its news reports indicate how western powers especially the U.S., and its prior intervention in the Arab region, particularly Iraq, have contributed to the making of ISIS; An assertion which demonstrates that Iraqi and quite possibly the region is better off defining its own faith.

In the *Propaganda* frame with AJE, the propaganda videos reported about were few in number and the reporters were indifferent to labeling them in any particular way. While for CNN ISIS' videos and online activities are clearly defined as ***Terrorist propaganda*** which are believed to be directed at the West, especially the U.S. For AJE, since the propaganda activities are simply treated as just another phenomenon in the metamorphosis of ISIS, the news stories in this frame barely accounts for (2 %) of the total coverage. Yet, for CNN, treating a terrorist group and its 'planned' threat to the U.S. is a far more concerning issue, even more important than the immediate threat to civilians in Iraq and Syria which only account to (2.6 %) of total coverage compared to the (11 %) propaganda coverage. As primary as national interest could be for CNN, it is also possible to state that CNN actually is in what Said (1977) describes as a game of contributing to glorifying the United States of America. This manifestation would clearly define how other lives, like lives in the conflict areas in Iraq and Syria are possibly un-glorified and even left not understood and not helped.

The Killing Frame

The killing frame is a combination of the *Beheading* and *Execution* frames that AJE and CNN implemented in broadcasting news about westerners who have been decapitated as well

as soldiers and non-combatants killed by ISIS, respectively. In AJE reports, the killing frame accounts for (3 %) of the total news items about ISIS while (2.4 %) is for beheading and (0.6 %) is for execution. On the contrary for CNN the killing frame totals to (10 %) of the general news reports (6.3 %) for beheading and (3.7 %) for execution frames.

Unlike CNN, AJE put limited coverage on beheadings of western citizens and mass execution of soldiers from Iraq and Syria. It was conventional enough to report the beheadings of western citizens and the executions of soldiers on limited frequency but without labeling ISIS in any specific way. It also took no effort in capitalizing on the severity or cruelty of the acts as CNN did. For an audience that follows AJE, it would feel as though these casualties were collateral damage in a war that got out of hand. However, every news piece under the beheading frame sympathized with the victims as human beings. This type of presentation is a result of what (Painter, 2008) described is AJE's way of covering the world in an "alternative perspective".

CNN, on the contrary, provided picturesque descriptions and horrific portrayals of the killings, making it a principal mannerism of ISIS. The soldiers it kills are shown to be treated with cruelty. In the killing frame, CNN depicted the group as a simple terrorist with no religious values and moral. In other words, the group is not synonymously identified with Islam, a religion that used to be called a source of violence in western media. This is a rare deviation from Edward Seid's theory that even the simplest representations of Arab and Islam are scrutinized, politicized and harshly treated. In fact in its news pieces, CNN showed the hostages, the western citizens ISIS took, as mere leverage to acquire money through ransom. This, however, can be considered as an effort to divert attention from the fact that ISIS is actually killing U.S. and U.K. citizens as retribution for their military intervention against the group in the region.

The Outline Frame

This frame includes explicit frames that analyzed, described, or discussed the ISIS, its various entities, its composition or peculiarities. The *Profile* frame, which dealt with analyzing and presenting various aspects of the group i.e. its leaders, organization, fighters, socio-economic and political realms, *etc.*; the *Sympathizers* frame which is about individuals and groups that promote ISIS' ideology as well as support it; and the *Western Fighters* textual frame which profiles westerners fighting for the group; are all organized under the outline frame. AJE used the outline frame in (5.4 %) of its total coverage of the group, (3 %) for the *Profile* frame, (0.6 %) for the *Sympathizers* frame and (1.8 %) for the *Western Fighters* frame. While CNN has implemented the outline frame in (20.4 %) of its news reports on ISIS, the *Profile* frame accounting for (14.6 %), *Sympathizers* frame for (3.7 %) and *Western Fighters* frame for (2.1 %).

These AJE news reports avoid labeling the group in any form, but keeps to describing the group as a ***Sunni Rebel Group*** and its force as powerful. The reports barely raised the concept of radicalization. The broadcaster features Islamic leaders and Islamic foundation representatives who disavowed ISIS as an Islamic group. AJE fails to make a decisive point that ISIS is possibly a result of religion based intolerance and extremism. This is possibly because, as a counter narrator of western media, AJE is restraining from contributing to making a distorted image of Islam or Arabs as violent and uncivilized. It is important to show that, basically the religion may not be a source of violence. However, as sound as this point of view may be, it is equally important to also call it as it is; to show ISIS for what it is and its inhuman acts for what they are focusing on how the group is abusing the religion for its cause.

On the other hand, the CNN reports almost completely referred to the group as a *Terrorist*. The group is frequently related with religious radicalization. It is closely associated with ‘Islamic fundamentalism’ and consequent acts of distraction and threat to individual and societal well being. This unfiltered and generic means of relating Islam with fundamentalism as well as Islam with terrorism may be a result of anti-Islamic prejudice in the west. As Seid (2003) puts it, this is one of the factors that contribute to ‘making even the simplest perception of the Arab and Islam into a highly politicized, almost raucous matter’. This way of making vast generalizations about Islam and religious fundamentalism, in the words of Edward Seid, is the making of an ‘unverified fiction’. Attributing the brutal acts of ISIS as a consequent of mere Islamic fundamentalism is a practical example of Seid’s concern that, CNN is actually contributing to the perception of a ‘foreign devil’; in this case a religion: Islam. CNN is keen on understanding and letting its audience know about the ‘terrorist group’. This habit is evident of one of Edward Seid’s theoretical components, i.e. western ambition to define and understand the Orient. This Orientalist presentation is molded by what Mora (2009) calls a ‘Eurocentric Point of View’. It is an approach that is implemented by Europeans and—in Post Cold War period and in this case—U.S., to define the ‘less civilized’ Eastern and Southern nations in general and Arabs in this case.

The Victim Frame

The victim frame includes the *Threat to Civilians* and *Threat to Christian Civilians* news frames that portray the victims of ISIS. The first one generally discussed all non-combatants—regardless of religious orientation—that were affected due to the groups movement in Iraq and Syria, while the second was more specific to include sufferings inflicted on Christian people in the respective countries. AJE used the victim frame to report

about (16.8 %) of the news concerning ISIS while CNN employed the victim frame only in (4.2 %) of the total number of news on ISIS.

In these reports AJE refrained from labeling ISIS in any sense; particularly, relating it with acts of terror or extremism. It generally related the group to being a war enemy against legitimate governments and countries of the Middle East. ISIS is pictured as a destructive force; as a simple *Anti-Thesis in a War*. On the contrary, AJE placed much effort in reporting civilian casualties, displacement and killings in both Iraq and Syria. It even showed how the self proclaimed Islamic State was merciless to Christians. This is a true reflection of Josh Rushing, AJE correspondent who told the financial times that “Al-Jazeera provides different perspectives to CNN but an equally valid one. CNN films the launch of the missile. Al-Jazeera films what happens when it lands.” (as cited in Painter, 2008, p. 17). In the case of the victim frame AJE is interested in the people who are affected by the battle than why or who is fighting it. That is why it has used the victim frame in four times as much the news as CNN did.

In CNN civilian casualties, displacements and killings are not reported as often as it is in AJE, making the matter less important barely an international concern despite its true threat. More importantly, the reports gave distinct reports on how ISIS threatens Christian civilians in the region. ISIS is portrayed as a force of religious intolerance and terror. Such a report that intends to show religion based violence draws an implication that Islam—since the group is Islamic—could possibly be a source of violence. This inference is an evidence for Seid’s proposition that such media reports from the West are covers for U.S. and Israel, Islam’s major opponents, to ‘divert attention from what they have been doing against the religion or the way of life’ (Seid, 1997). It is a way of creating a layer of information that misleads people to overlook actual causes and concrete circumstances that explain why and how

events are happening. As a result, particularly from the point of view of reports from CNN, such violence from the ‘terrorist group’ and an uncertainty for Christian minorities requires the need to involve with the affairs of the Arab region once again; a felt-obligation to police the region. This brings us to the next frame category.

The Intervention Frame

This frame comprises of specific news frames that discussed individual, group and government military interventions; be it resistance, retaliation, etc. against the acts of war committed by ISIS on their people, interest and will. Two narrow textual frames, i.e., *Regional Military Intervention* and *Western Military Intervention* were categorized under this overarching news frame. The first one consists of news items that discussed military interventions—both defensive and offensive acts of conflict—against ISIS from Middle Eastern countries including Iraq, Syria, Turkey, etc. while the later included news reports that discussed western military support for Iraqi, Syrian and Kurdish forces fighting ISIS. It also holds news that report direct military interventions from the U.S., U.K. and other European nations—western countries in general—to weaken and defeat ISIS.

AJE focused more on regional military interventions while CNN gave more emphasis for western military intervention. By doing so, AJE sought to make a point where it went for advocating a regional solution for a regional problem. On the other hand, CNN talked more about western military intervention than focusing on how the countries under siege or regional forces are working to stop the group. Such a statement forces audience to make the conclusion that the region is at the mercy of U.S. and its western allies.

In AJE 81 (48.4 %) of the 167 televised news stories about ISIS between June and December 2014 focused on how regional and western military interventions are being carried out to terminate ISIS. In both the specific news frame categories ISIS is presented as a group that

needs to be destroyed. This presentation however is not clear, i.e., it is highly understated compared to the urgency of the issue and the damage the group is doing. When discussing news items using the *Western Military Intervention frame* AJE focused on scrutinize western policy against the Syrian war in General and their intervention in Iraq and Syria. AJE is also keen on describing the war process as it happens; explain the regional politics as well as the U.S.-Arab interactions and coalition towards destroying ISIS. This is what is discussed earlier, an alternative discourse about what is going on in the Arab region despite the westernized discourse from media in the U.S. and its allies that has been dominating the global communication about the Middle East among other issues. This can be explained as what el-Nawawy & Powers (2010) say is AJE's independence from resource-related factors that might result in accountability to a higher power that has political and commercial interests thus giving the broadcaster a liberty to cover whatever it wants. Yet, it is also wise to notice, however independent AJE may be, and however liberal it is in reporting what it wants, there are still factors like ownership that determine how it reports the issues it chose; after all it is owned by an Arab nation with its own interests. So, explaining this in respective of the issue at hand, the broadcaster couldn't possibly be completely independent when scrutinizing the role of Qatar, its base, and its friends, in working with or against ISIS or their activity in the region.

CNN has around 191 news reports about ISIS between when it proclaimed an Islamic Caliphate and the end of 2014. From these total reports 59 of them, about (30.9 %) seldom referred to ISIS as *a jihadist, an extremist* and/or *a terrorist* and focused on military interventions from regional forces as well as western countries to destroy this negative force. CNN emphasized on the need to destroy ISIS, a group so infamous for beheading, massacre and killings; in general a menace for survival. This act of emphasizing on the need for military intervention against the group could possibly have other reasons beyond destroying

the force. In the presentation, the intervention is sought from western powers because the Iraqi army is apparently “falling apart” and new forces against the group aren’t good enough even coming from other neighboring Arab countries. These Arab countries are reported failing to coordinate against ISIS; not only that, some of them are shown to allegedly help ISIS. This means of defining ‘who is not capable’ of defeating ISIS makes the audience question ‘who is’. That is where the western military intervention frame comes in; it advocates for the U.S. and other western countries’ intervention in the conflict. This kind of reporting coming from a U.S. media is evidence to what Mora (2009) believes is U.S.’ way of ‘maintaining supremacy during and after the cold war period’. As the author states, this is how the ‘U.S. and its allies secured victory of both the battle and the war’. Similarly, a U.S. led airstrike is the principal feature of the whole anti-ISIS movement, because for western powers, it is a means of maintaining their integrity to each other as a way of continuing to dominate the rest of the world and showing their will to continue making their viewpoints central and valid.

The Protagonist Frame

The protagonist frame includes the *Threat to U.S. and Its Western Allies* and *Impact on Iraq Politics and division* frames in which ISIS is shown influencing nations that can be considered the principal legitimate governance it is operating against. AJE has used the protagonist frame in about (2.4 %) of the total number of news reports about ISIS. While CNN has (6.3 %) of its news about ISIS reported using the protagonist frame.

AJE presented Iraq as the country that ISIS declared war against and is an immediate threat to. It explained sectarian division and various political tensions that are tearing-down the country, its military and its courage in the face of its enemy—war enemy, ISIS. This specific presentation is about defining fundamental problems that can be crucial points to understand

why ISIS is ripping-through Iraq. This oriental narrative from AJE feels about just right because it depicts the sectarian divisions that led to disintegration. On the contrary, CNN focused on how ISIS is leading Iraq into possible religious and ethnic based division and even features authorities that suggest disintegrating Iraq for the sake of peace. Keeping various sects divided so as to stop conflicts. This could be a modern passive movement to play the role of early European colonizers who in the first place took the entitlement to demarcate borders without any ethnic or demographic considerations.

CNN presented ISIS as more a threat to U.S.—which is actually threatened by ISIS if it was to involve its military to stop the group’s expansion in the Middle East—than Iraq. There are more news reports that discussed ISIS as a danger to the United States and Europe than there are about ISIS affecting Iraq, its sovereignty and more importantly its people. This shifted focus to the U.S. is a means of soliciting the American people to push the government to increase intervention in Iraq in the name of keeping the enemy far and thus preserving peace in the homeland. This is yet another effort of keeping the “not quite civilized” orient in order.

Chapter Five: Conclusions and Implications for Future Studies

In this chapter, there are general conclusions and possible implications for future studies.

5.1 Conclusions

This research was conducted to explore how international mainstream media covered the rise and expansion of ISIS. In light of this, two global media outlets were selected from both the southern and western media hemispheres: Al Jazeera English /AJE/ from the Arab world from the southern hemisphere to represent non-western media and Cable News Network /CNN/ from the western hemisphere to represent western media. The news contents of both media outlets were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative content analysis was first applied to identify and establish frames used by each news media outlet. Then, the qualitative context analysis (textual analysis) was used to identify textual evidences and supportive arguments for the news frames.

Based on the analysis, it was found out that the intervention frame was the most predominant frame used by both AJE and CNN. However, the coverage of AJE focused on regional interventions, i.e., efforts from Iraq and Syria, the countries and the people directly affected by the movement of the Islamic State group to protect themselves and destroy their enemy. On the other hand, CNN mainly had news coverage that bank on the help and support the U.S. and other western countries provide to defeat the terrorist group and also help Iraq and Syria free themselves from ISIS. Such presentation from AJE indicated that the broadcaster is keen on promoting a discourse of self-determination: the Arab countries' innate right and capacity to fight their own fight and eventually determine their own fate. CNN, on the contrary, promoted a classic Orientalist discourse. It put emphasis on the power of the west to dominate, restructure and have authority over the orient, in the case of this study, the Arab

countries such as Iraq and Syria. As a result, self-determination becomes an assisted self-assertion that rests on the will and help of a care-taker—U.S. and the West.

AJE applied the victim frame next to the intervention frame to focus on the human aspect of the conflict. The stories under this frame centered on the real damages ISIS is causing to human beings living in Iraq and Syria. The group was barely depicted in any outstanding label. Rather it was just presented as an enemy in a war. The reported casualty, which is as a result of the fight against this group, was presented victimizing any culture it came across, be it Christian or Muslim. AJE stories did not focus on victims from only one particular religious orientation. While for CNN, the victim frame was the least used in its news. The network barely emphasized on the principal injuries of any conflict and the conflict against ISIS—civilians; When it actually did, CNN treated distinct victims of the conflict—Christians. ISIS, which is accused of carrying out indiscriminate killings in AJE news reports, was actually repeatedly discussed on CNN for its religious extremism that caused a real threat to Christians in particular, beside the general public. This portrayal is a manifestation of what Edward Seid discussed in his theory of Orientalism: the mediated assumption that Islam, in the general sense, is a source of violence.

For CNN, the second dominant frame it used to report ISIS is the war frame. For AJE the war frame came after the intervention and victim frames. In the war frame, CNN gave equal weight to ISIS progressing with its military combat on the ground as well as the terrorist group's off-battle propaganda war over the media and the new media against the west, especially the U.S. CNN banked on capitalizing the doom and failure of various Iraqi and Syrian forces from stopping ISIS. By doing so, it directed the attention to the help these regional forces required from countries like the U.S. and U.K. amongst other western countries. This suggested intervention is further substantiated as ISIS repeatedly threatens the U.S. and European countries in its terror propagandas which are abundantly reported by CNN

for their stated threat to the United States. AJE has indeed reported about how ISIS is pushing forward, defeating the military and other forces from Iraq and Syria. Despite the rebel group's presented progress, AJE focused on appreciating and promoting the resistance from the countries. Such emphasis clearly showed that though AJE gave no regard to the group as a terrorist, it certainly showed its position in terms of showing ISIS as an enemy in a war. It also has reported how the group is disseminating propaganda videos which the broadcaster used as a source of information to talk about the war and the group's stated position in it. This frame showed the broadcasters counter narratives where AJE supported self-determination for the countries involved and CNN advocated for the involvement of the U.S. and European countries in helping Iraq and Syria due to their reported lack of efficiency to stop ISIS.

The outline frame came third for CNN. It was, however, more important than the victim frame which is the second dominant frame for AJE. For the U.S. based occidental media it was more important to understand the terrorist, ISIS, than it was to state the displacements, lootings and deaths the group caused. The portrayal was a gross realization of the group as fundamental Islamist. This was another manifestation of western ambition trying to understand an oriental phenomenon with occidental perspectives. These perspectives often stated and presented by journalists are considered 'extravagant statements', by Edward Seid (1977), which the media dramatized. For the oriental media AJE, on the contrary, defining the group was not as important as talking about the victims, which was a second priority in the process of framing the rebel group. Not only that, but the broadcaster maintained a lower coverage rate about explaining the group compared to CNN. When AJE actually applied the outline frame to explain the rebel group and its various aspects, it presented as much explanation and evidence against the self-proclaimed Islamic essence of the group. This effort was part of the principal aim AJE was established to fulfill; to provide an alternative

perspective for a global narrative dominated by western media. The broadcaster may be the right oriental media to define an oriental phenomenon, yet the presentation under the outline frame was an oversimplified depiction of the real danger the group poses.

The killing frame was also efficiently used by CNN to report about both beheading of U.S. and U.K. citizens as well as execution of soldiers from Iraq and Syria. For the U.S. media beheading was a primary focus in the killing frame which was recurrently reported. Through the beheading news CNN has implemented a demonstration which focused on horrific portrayal of the group than saying more about the victims. This discourse was complementary to what orientalist refer to as a prejudice-filled opinion of the West that harshly treats representations without duly explaining its background. However, when it comes to covering executions of soldiers CNN used the killing frame in a rather realistic manner. It was somewhat conventional compared to the passive presentation from AJE that portrayed the execution as nothing more than retaliation in a war. AJE has presented beheadings on limited frequency using the killing frame. It primarily focused on sympathizing with the victims and their families. It barely discussed any opinionated presentations about the group to the extent that it used the word killing instead of beheading (a less horrific suggestion). By doing so AJE is trying to get rid of stereotypes about the Arab world and Islam and the long standing tradition of relating them with radicalism, terrorism and barbarism.

In their use of the protagonist frame, the broadcasters reported about who they considered were the primary nations ISIS was a direct threat to. AJE talked about Iraq primarily as the country ISIS is seeking to destroy while CNN reports implied that it was the U.S. that was facing danger from ISIS. CNN used this frame less frequently to discuss Iraq which was actually a country directly threatened by the group. AJE had no relevant depiction of ISIS as direct threat to the U.S.

In general, it was found out that in the news reports of AJE and CNN the event of ISIS was framed in two narrative models, which (Kraidy, n.d.) stated as consistent with the ‘soccer game’ and ‘crusade’ metaphors. AJE used the ‘soccer game’ model of presentation to report the clash between two bodies: Iraq and Syria, the sovereign countries, and ISIS, the rebel group. It was obvious that the broadcaster is on the side of Iraq and Syria, promoting their victory showing that the defeat of these countries was leading to the rise of ISIS. Yet, it did not necessarily show consequent off-battle victories like victory over ideology or religious superiority. For CNN, however, the opposite is true. The U.S. based media implemented the ‘crusade’ model to report the fight the United States—through Iraq—is carrying out against ISIS. In its reports, CNN put into practice the ‘us’ and ‘them’ oriental discourse. It purported how the U.S. and its allies, ‘us’, have to win the war against, ‘them’, the enemy, ISIS. This victory was a defeat for ‘them’ and their ideology and implied ideological and religious superiority for the U.S. and its allies. In conclusion, this portrayal further proved that AJE and CNN stand on two extreme media poles even on the issue of ISIS.

5.2 Implications for Future Studies

The findings of this study clearly showed that AJE and CNN covered ISIS influenced by their origin and the orientation of their respective nations towards the Middle East and Middle Eastern phenomenon. AJE maintained a very light view of ISIS and the problems it caused in the countries and the region sometimes understating the real danger the group posed. CNN, on the other hand, had occidental dispositions that forced the media to carry out oriental discourse about ISIS and related political situations, which are highly opinionated and in most cases, an overstatement of what actually is in reality.

These observations were made based on an analysis that involved a particular set of textual news items, from a distinct period in 2014, about a typical issue, ISIS, in two particular media; AJE and CNN.

For the findings to be whole in all aspects of televised news however, the researcher recommends future studies to consider the images and videos presented with the textual news stories of this study. In television news the visual portrayals that cater for the eyes are as important as what is being discussed in the headlines and sub-headlines or the spoken discourse. In addition, short news reports were not the only means of framing issues in both AJE and CNN. There are special programs, documentaries, panel discussions, news features, speeches, interviews with authorities, news commentaries, etc. prepared around ISIS which the researcher didn't consider bound by the scope of the study. All of these program formats are as important as the news in this study to gather concepts, ideologies or thoughts and further understand the framing of the group. They require the attention of researchers with the exploration and application of additional conceptual frameworks in media and communication research.

In other aspects, to really explore polarized global media practice in the case of covering ISIS or the Middle East in general, it would be wise to study how other western and non-western transnational media like the BBC, Press TV, China Central Television [CCTV], etc. contribute to the global discourse. With the appropriate time, budget and capacity it would also be important to conduct a follow up study that covers the changes in news discourse over the years. More importantly, accompanying the textual frame study with an audience analysis research to understand the reception of viewers would help know the real effect of framing ISIS and related Middle Eastern phenomenon on a practical level.

References

- Affaya, M. N. (2011). *Contemporary Arab Affairs*.
- Ahmed, N. (2014, September 12-14). *How the West Created the Islamic State*. Retrieved April 16, 2015, from Counter Punch: www.counterpunch.org/2014/09/12/how-the-west-created-the-islamic-state/print
- Babbie, E. R. (1979). *The Practice of Social Research*. California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc.
- Baran, S. J., & Davis, D. K. (2012). *Mass Communication Theory, Foundations, Ferment and Future*. Boston: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.
- Barrett, R. (2014). *The Islamic State*. The Soufan Group.
- BBC. (2014, December 25). *About The BBC*. Retrieved December 25, 2014, from BBC Web site: <http://www.bbc.co.uk>
- BBC, Middle East. (2014, June 20). *Middle East*. Retrieved April 07, 2015, from BBC News: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-16047709>
- Blanchard, C. M. (2009). *Islam: Sunnis and Shiites*. Washington: Congressional Research Service.
- Boyd, D. A. (1999). *Broadcasting in the Arab world: A survey of the electronic media in the Middle East*. Ames, IA: Iowa State University Press.
- Britannica, T. E. (2014, 11 27). *Persian Gulf War*. Retrieved 4 3, 2015, from Encyclopædia Britannica: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/452778/Persian-Gulf-War>
- Brzezinski, Z. (2004). *The Choice: Global Domination or Global Leadership*. New York: Basic Books.

Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs. (2013, August 13). *U.S. Relations With Saudi Arabia*. Retrieved April 4, 2015, from U.S. Department of State: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3584.htm>

Buruma, I., & Margalit, A. (2004). *Occidentalism*. New York: Penguin.

Byman, D. L., & Williams, J. R. (2015). *ISIS vs. Al Qaeda: Jihadism's global civil war*. Brookings Institution.

Coulson, N. J. (2014, November 2). *Sharī'ah: Islamic Law*. Retrieved April 4, 2015, from Encyclopædia Britannica: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/538793/Shariah>

de Vreese, C. H. (2005). News framing: Theory and typology. *Information Design Journal* , 51-62.

Edge, A. (2014, November 17). Retrieved May 16, 2015, from journalism.co.uk: <https://www.journalism.co.uk/news/isis-in-the-news-lessons-for-coverage-from-cnn-al-jazeera-and-france-24/s2/a563156/>

el-Nawawy, M., & Powers, S. (2010). Al-Jazeera English: A conciliatory medium in a conflict-driven environment? *Global Media and Communication* , 61–84.

Entman, R. M. (1991). Framing U.S. Coverage of International News: Contrasts in Narratives of the KAL and Iran Air Incidents. *Journal of Communication* 41 (4) , 6-27.

Entman, R. M. (1993). Framing: Towards Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm. *Journal of Communication* 43 (4) , 51-58.

Erickson, H. L. (2014, August 10). *Cable News Network (CNN)*. Retrieved April 3, 2015, from <http://www.britannica.com>: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/87632/Cable-News-Network-CNN>

- Friedman, T. L. (2004, January 11). War of Ideas, Part 2. *The New York Times* , WK15.
- Gerhards, J., & Schafer, M. S. (2014). International terrorism, domestic coverage? How terrorist attacks are presented in the news of CNN, Al Jazeera, the BBC, and ARD. pp. 3-26.
- Gilboa, E. (2005). The CNN Effect: The Search for a Communication Theory of International Relations. *Political Communication* , pp. 22-44.
- Ginneken, J. v. (1998). Understanding Global News. London, California, New Delhi: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Griffin, E. (2012). *A First Look at Communication Theory*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Groshek, J. (2008). Coverage of the pre-Iraq War debate as a case study of frame indexing. *Media, War & Conflict* , 315-338.
- Hailesilasse, A. (2013). Ethiopian Print Media Coverage of the Arab uprisings: The Case of Addis Zemen, Fetehe, and Reporter. Addis Ababa: Unpublished.
- Hoge, J. F. (1994). Media pervasiveness. *Foreign Affairs* , pp. 136-144.
- Howell, E. (2012, October 16). *Challenger: Shuttle Disaster That Changed NASA*. Retrieved 4, 3, 2015, from Space.com: <http://www.space.com/18084-space-shuttle-challenger.html>
- Huntington, S. P. (1996). *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Information Office of the Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia. (2015). *About Saudi Arabia*. Retrieved April 4, 2015, from Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia: http://www.saudiembassy.net/about/country-information/laws/The_Basic_Law_Of_Governance.aspx

- Jensen, K. B. (2002). *A Handbook of Media and Communication Research*. New York: Routledge.
- Jensen, K. B., & W.Jankowski, N. (1991). *A Handbook of Qualitative Methodologies for Mass Communication Research*. New York: Routledge.
- Kraidy, M. M. (n.d.b). *Arab Satellite Television Between Regionalization and Globalization*. Washington, DC: Unpublished.
- Kraidy, M. M. (1998a). *Satellite Broadcasting from Lebanon: Prospects and Perils*. *Transnational Broadcasting Studies* , p. 1.
- Krippendorff, K. (2004). *Content Analysis An Introduction to Its Methodology*. California: SAGE Publications.
- Laughey, D. (2007). *Key Themes in Media Theory*. New York: Open University Press.
- Little, D. (2008). *The United States and the Middle East since 1945*. The University of North Carolina Press.
- Littlejohn, S. W., & Foss, K. A. (2009). *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*. California: SAGE Publications Inc.
- Lundsten, L., & Stocchetti, M. (n.d.). *The War against Iraq in Transnational Broadcasting*. Arcada.
- Mack, N., Woodsong, C., & et al. (2005). *Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collector's Field Guide*. North Carolina: Family Health International.
- Mahdi, M. S. (2014, April 1). *Islam*. Retrieved April 04, 2015, from Encyclopædia Britannica: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/295507/Islam>

McQuail, D., Golding, P., & Bens, E. d. (2005). *Communication Theory & Research*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Mellese, M. A., & Muller, M. G. (2012). Mapping Text–Visual Frames of Sub-Saharan Africa in the News: A Comparison of Online News Reports From Al Jazeera and British Broadcasting Corporation Websites. *Communication, Culture & Critique* , 191-229.

Miles, H. (2005). *Al Jazeera: The Inside Story of the Arab News Channel that Is Challenging the West*. New York: Grove Press.

Minear, L., Scott, C., & & Weiss, T. (1996). The news media, civil war, and humanitarian action. *The news media, civil war, and humanitarian action* , p. 4.

Mogensen, K. (2008). Television journalism during terror attacks. *Media, War & Conflict* , pp. 31-49.

Mora, N. (2009). Orientalist discourse in media texts. *International Journal of Human Sciences* , pp. 418-428.

Munson, H. (2014, December 4). *Fundamentalism: Religious movement*. Retrieved April 4, 2015, from Encyclopædia Britannica: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1191955/fundamentalism>

Nayyar, D. (2007). *Modern Mass Communication: Concepts and Processes*. Delhi: Oxford Book Company.

Painter, J. (2008). *Counter-Hegemonic News: A Case Study of Al-Jazeera English and Telesur*. Oxford: Oxuniprint.

Ramadan, W. (2014). *Media coverage of the Arab Spring and the new Middle East*. London: MEMO Publishers.

Riffe, D., Lacy, S., & G.Fico, F. (2005). *Analyzing Media Messages Using Quantitative Content Analysis in Research*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Robinson, P. (2000). The CNN effect: can the news media drive foreign policy? *Review of International Studies* , pp. 301 - 309.

Said, E. (1977). *Orientalism*. London: Penguin.

Schleifer, A. (2007). *Media and Religion in the Arab-Islamic World*. Philadelphia, United States of America.

Seib, P. (2004). The News Media and the “Clash of Civilizations”. *Parameters* , pp. 71-85.

Sreberny-Mohammadi, A., Dwayne Winseck, J. M., & Boyd-Barrett, O. (1997). *Media in Global Context*. London; New York: Edward Arnold Publishing.

Television and Orientalism. (n.d.). Retrieved from www.com.cuhk.edu.hk/project/eric/site/academic/tv.pdf

The Economist. (2013). *The Arab spring: Has it Failed*.

the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic. (2014). *Rule of Terror: Living under ISIS in Syria*. United Nations.

Thomas, R. M. (2003). *Blending Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods in Theses and Dissertations*. California: Corwin Press, Inc.

Whittemore, H. (1990). *CNN: The inside story*. Boston: Brown Little.

Williams, K. (2003). *Understanding Media Theory*. London: Arnold.

Wimmer, R. D., & Dominick, J. R. (2011). *Mass Media Research: An Introduction*. Boston: Wadsworth.

YouTube. (2009). Edward Said: Orientalism April 16, 2003.

Zein, H. E. (2012). The intersection of interests between Al-Jazeera and Al-Qaida in the era of “War on Terror”. *Online Journal of Communication and Media Technologies* , pp. 176-185.

Zelin, A. (2014b, June). *The War between ISIS and al-Qaeda for Supremacy of the Global Jihadist Movement*. Retrieved from http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Documents/pubs/ResearchNote_20_Zelin.pdf

Zelin, A. Y. (2014a, July 8). *Policy Analysis*. Retrieved December 30, 2014, from The Washington Institute for Near East Policy: <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/colonial-caliphate-the-ambitions-of-the-islamic-state>

Appendix A

Coding Sheet

Name of the news channel _____

Date of broadcast (date/month/year) _____

YouTube title of the news _____

Analytical category

Type of frame the news used

- Advance _____
- Beheading _____
- Execution _____
- Profile _____
- Propaganda _____
- Sympathizers _____
- Western Fighters _____
- Threat to Civilians _____
- Threat to Christian Civilians _____
- Regional Military Intervention _____
- Western Military Intervention _____

Appendix B

Coding Guide

Operational definition for the sub-categories of the type of frame used in the news

Advance: if the news covers ISIS as a group that is gaining territory and strength in Iraq and Syria.

Beheading: if the news talks about ISIS that threatens the life of western citizens in particular, by specific means of cutting off their heads.

Execution: if the news discusses mass executions, non-westerner killings and suicide bomb attacks.

Profile: if the news summarizes and explains ISIS background, socio-economic and political facts, traits, plans, strategies as well as describe its leaders and fighters.

Propaganda: if the news focuses on how ISIS uses various media, new media and other strategies to win the hearts and minds of its followers as well as to impose fear.

Sympathizers: if the news discusses western and eastern citizens that support ISIS' cause through media, financial and material support.

Western Fighters: if the news talks about western fighters fighting in direct combat for ISIS in Iraq and Syria.

Threat to Civilians: if the news deals with ISIS as a threat to the general Iraqi or Syrian public's welfare and peaceful way of living.

Threat to Christian Civilians: if the news is about the threat ISIS poses on Christians living in Iraq and Syria: displacement, looting and killings of Christian civilians in particular.

Regional Military Intervention: If the news deals with military interventions—both defensive and offensive acts of war—against ISIS from Middle Eastern countries including.

Western Military Intervention: if the news predominantly discusses western military interventions and support for Iraqi, Syrian and Kurdish forces fighting ISIS.

N.B. If a news story uses more than one type of frames, the dominant frame would be chosen. The term ‘dominant frame’ refers to the frame type that was repeatedly mentioned in a given story.

Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is my original work, has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all sources of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Wibishet Fessha_____

School of Journalism and Communication

June, 2016