



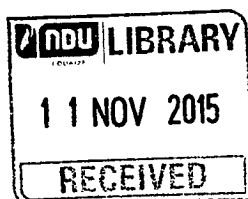
NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF THE ISLAMIC STATE RISE TO POWER: A CONTENT
ANALYSIS OF *THE NEW YORK TIMES*, *THE GUARDIAN*, AND *LE MONDE*

A Thesis
Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements of the degree of
Master of Arts in Media Studies

by
Francis Frem

Department of Media Studies
Notre Dame University – Louaize
Lebanon

Fall, 2015



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ISIS NEWSPAPER MEDIA COVERAGE COMPARISON 3

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ISIS NEWSPAPER MEDIA COVERAGE COMPARISON 4

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	5
Introduction.....	6
Literature Review.....	9
Theoretical Framework.....	16
Agenda-Setting Theory.....	16
Framing Theory	17
Research Questions and Hypotheses	20
Methodology.....	21
Media Outlet Sample: Sampling of Newspapers	22
Events: Before, During and After	23
Codebook Measures (<i>see Appendix A for Codebook</i>).....	25
Coder Training.....	27
Reliability.....	27
Results.....	29
Discussion.....	38
Conclusion	45
References.....	47
Appendix A: Codebook	51
Appendix B: Charts.....	52
Appendix C: Sample Articles	57

Abstract

Scholars have been increasingly concerned with portrayals of terrorism in mainstream and alternative media outlets. Although terrorism had previously received some scholarly attention, the political and policy ramifications of September 11 and subsequent terrorist threats or attacks on the European Union, The United States and the Middle East have prompted an even more immediate and voluminous response from scholars. Communication researchers have since focused on public response and reaction to terrorist attacks, definitions of terrorism, policy questions, media portrayals of terrorism, and framing across different media and nations (e.g., Greenberg 2002; Noll 2003; Norris et al. 2003).

This study undertakes a comparative framing analysis of media coverage of the Islamic State, as reported by prominent U.S. and European newspapers. This thesis investigates *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, and *Le Monde* newspapers coverage of the Islamic State phenomenon during pivotal periods since the rise of the group in 2011 until present date. In conjuncture with the framing and agenda-setting media theories, along with existing literature on media coverage of war and terrorist groups, the content analysis showed that the media reflect their respective national interests using a predominately subjective approach in the coverage of the Islamic State issue; however there is a difference in the treatment in the coverage and sources of information used.

Keywords: *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *Le Monde*, Content Analysis, Framing, Agenda-Setting, ISIS, War, Terrorist

Introduction

Throughout the years, the media have become trustworthy sources of information for individuals around the world. War, crisis, and conflicts such as the Vietnam War (1950's-1970's), the Salvadoran Conflict (1980) and the Gulf Wars (1991) and the deliberate manipulation of news reporting and information have been a feature of modern military conflict for quite some time and have provided some of the main topics of news coverage throughout the modern history.

Media have become so entrenched and correlated with modern warfare that military conflict can no longer be properly analyzed without analyzing the role of the press. In the age of global communication and international media, national borders no longer impede the messengers of hate and terror that can easily and rapidly spread powerful words and images around the globe.

With the growing importance of the international media in the beginning of the 1960's and the birth of global real-time news in the 1980's, there has been an increased focus on how the international flow of information could affect the perception of foreign phenomena as the technological revolution was assumed to change the role of media (Gibloa, 2005).

The world has become more integrated, with the result being the development of a global civil society and crises, and the emergence of a more competitive media environment that devotes more attention to recurring news of general interest.

However and despite the globalization of the media topics, many scholars have suggested that national interest, defined as "the set of shared priorities regarding relations with the rest of the world" (Nye, 1999, p. 23), still plays a central role in affecting media accounts of international conflicts (Dickson, 1994; Herman & Chomsky 1988; Kim, 2000; Lee & Yang,

1995; Yang, 2003) and have pointed out that the mainstream media have a tendency to legitimize the foreign policy and national interest of its government in covering international conflicts (Bennett, 1990; Dickson, 1992; Dickson, 1994) and terrorist organizations. As Yang (2003) notes, journalists select and prioritize the flow of international news and events from the standpoint of their country, ultimately framing these events on the basis of their own country's ultimate interest. An obvious example of such bias was the Tiananmen movement of China in 1989 that was treated differently by various media outlets according to the national interest of different countries. Lee and Yang (1995), who compared the Associated Press and Kyodo News Agency in Japan, found that the former emphasized the movement's ideological aspirations, such as freedom of speech and principles of democracy, while the latter focused on the Chinese leaders and their responses, given the economic concerns and interests of Japan in China, that made its news agency reluctant to challenge the Chinese authorities and government.

As per the above discussion, it is clear that the media have evolved into a global issue that faces some problems in term of objectivity since each and every recurring issue in the media is portrayed, discussed and analyzed based on a set of parameters, interests, and views relative to the media outlets and its country of origin's aspiration: crises are becoming global, covered and analyzed from different angles with the approaches to the same subject becoming different in style and contexts.

For the aforementioned reasons, the central research topics discussed in this thesis are the amount, the consistency, as well as the major topics highlighted in specific articles discussing important events that have occurred since the rise of the Islamic State in 2011 until March 2015, from different western media outlets.

The significance of this research lies in the information, which will be offered through

ISIS NEWSPAPER MEDIA COVERAGE COMPARISON 8

the results, providing a platform to better understand the processes used by international media outlets, in this case newspapers from different countries (e.g., U.S.A., London, France), in portraying foreign conflicts and terrorist organizations especially given the importance of the “Islamic State” phenomenon on the local and international political scene and its substantial impact on the delicate regional stability of the Middle East and its resource management scheme.

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Literature Review

Terrorism and terrorist attacks are part of an indirect strategy for achieving their political objectives by influencing an audience (Crenshaw, 1981). Media attention is an important vehicle by which terrorists communicate with their audiences, and thus a central goal of many terrorist groups is to influence the scale and tone of media attention to their attacks (Hoffman, 2006; Jenkins, 1975; Nacos, 2002).

Rohner and Frey (2007) found strong confirmation that terrorists and the media both benefit from high levels of media attention to terrorism making the media an extremely powerful actor in the dynamics of terrorist activity. Since terrorists gain from media attention to communicate their goals and reach a wider audience, many terrorist groups structure their operational actions accordingly. This perspective holds that terrorists and media outlets have a symbiotic relationship in which both can benefit from media attention to terrorism.

One of the most famous terrorist events taking full advantage of the media was the kidnapping of Israeli athletes by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) during the 1972 Olympics held in Munich. Through their perfectly planned act, the terrorists were able to “monopolize the attention of a global television audience who had tuned in expecting to watch the Games” (Robner & Frey, 2007, p.179).

Hoffman (2006), argues that “without the media’s coverage the terrorist act’s impact is arguably wasted, remaining narrowly confined to the immediate victims of the attack, rather than reaching the wider target audience at whom the terrorists’ violence is actually aimed” (p. 175). Despite the obvious relationship between terrorism and the media and the mutual benefit between the two entities the main problem remains whether terrorist groups are objectively portrayed in the media from an unbiased point of view given that many scholars have suggested

that national interest plays a central role in affecting media accounts of international conflicts (Dickson, 1994; Herman & Chomsky 1988; Kim, 2000; Lee & Yang, 1995; Yang, 2003). An obvious example is the pro-American slant of U.S. mainstream media of the U.S. interventions in Latin America in the 1980s, when news magazines portrayed U.S. policies in the El Salvador conflict as honorable and well-meaning and simultaneously depicting the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) as a violent communist group (Solomon, 1992). This anti-communist control mechanism was also used in the cases of the U.S. military interventions in Guatemala (1947-1954) and Nicaragua (1981-1987) (Herman & Chomsky, 1988).

During the Vietnam War, U.S. journalists were deeply steeped in this ideology (Hallin, 1986, p. 52). Thus, *The New York Times* often used phrases such as “the Communist threat” and “Red advance” (p. 53). As a result, the war was described as a conflict between a Western-backed regime and communist guerillas, although it could just as easily have been described as a war of peasant revolutionaries against a feudal social order or a nationalist struggle against colonial rule. As for the guerillas, nothing was said about their history, organization, or politics. Therefore, the progress of U.S. military efforts to block communist expansion was considered more important than the grievances of peasants against their landlords. This Cold War ideology made the fundamental questioning of U.S. policy unthinkable (Hallin, 1986).

In the beginning of the 1990's, the Gulf War was an international incident, which brought global interest and concern. During this war the American media coverage was often criticized for the tendency toward self- glorification, neglect for the destruction of war, and the call to rally around the flag.

For Hallin & Gitlin (1993), war is “the ultimate expression of ‘purposive- rational’ action: that form of human activity that involves the rational mobilization of means to achieve a

given end” (p. 414). They analyzed U.S. network evening news, local television news, and CNN coverage of the Gulf War and found that media coverage of the war focused on American prowess, the potency of American technology, and the bravery of American soldiers. Their content analysis found that images of tanks, planes, missiles, and U.S. soldiers took up the most percentage of television time. In particular local television promoted support of American troops. Thus, the war also was portrayed as a ritual that celebrated and affirmed the unity of the community. On the other hand, antiwar rallies seldom appeared in CNN/network or local television coverage.

During this first Gulf War, the United States tried to manage the words and images used to represent the battlefield. In his analysis of the Gulf War, Shaw (1996) argued that coalition governments against Iraq won not only a victory in the military campaign but also in the virtual realm of television: the war appeared to be virtually bloodless; fewer than two hundred coalition troops had been killed and the killings of tens or even hundreds of thousands of Iraqi soldiers had been conducted almost entirely out of sight receiving little or no western media attention.

With regard to the Kosovo War in 1999, a number of studies have been conducted with an attempt to discover the truth related to issues such as the legitimacy of the war and the role of media. Audrey Lustgarten and François Debrix (2005) took the case of the Kosovo War to examine the role of the Western media and concluded that the focus was solely on suffering and life loss in the Albanian community as well as the fear and hatred of the Serb political leader for his role in apparent human rights violations. Another study that is worth mentioning is Richard Vincent’s (2000) “A Narrative Analysis of U.S. Press Coverage of Slobodan Milosevic and the Serbs in Kosovo,” where he noted the four themes that captured journalistic attention: (a) Serbs as terrorists, (b) Serbs as evil, (c) Milosevic as a dictator, and (d) Kosovo refugees as

fearful victims of Milosevic and Serbs. In addition, international organizations like the Independent International Commission on Kosovo (1999) as well as Amnesty International (2000) offered very detailed information related to the Kosovo War, among which the role of media and NATO's operation were also examined and criticized.

As can be seen from the abovementioned studies, scholastic researchers perceive the Kosovo War from a very critical perspective especially concerning subsequent reporting of the war by the American media.

More recently, during the U.S. War on Afghanistan in 2001, the Pentagon attempted to make media events appear as bloodless as possible, excluding images of dead bodies and brutality to show the acceptability of the war (Louw, 2003). This strategy was used in order not to repeat mistakes made in the Vietnam War, during which televised images of blood caused the U.S. public to swing in favor against the war. Thus, U.S. coverage of the war focused on its goals not only to destroy terrorists' networks, but also to liberate Afghanistan citizens from the repressive Taliban regime. Dropping food into Afghanistan played a role in softening the American image and the purported aim of liberating women in Afghanistan became another important component of the PR repertoire for the war. All of which are examples of how the media tells its audience what and how to think about key issues in society; in other words, how the media sets the agenda and frames different topics of critical political and societal concern.

Brief History of the Islamic State

Today, one of the most serious threats that have engulfed a large portion of the Middle East, especially Syria and Iraq is the Sunni Muslim extremist group known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), that changed its name after capturing a sizeable territory in Iraq and Syria in 2013 to Islamic State. For the first time since WWI a highly visible armed organization

is redesigning the map of the Middle East, waging war of conquest and erasing borders. From late 2011, the Islamic State has shown itself both tactically and strategically adept. After years of surviving as a violent criminal/terrorist group, it managed to break out as a structured, well organized guerilla entity. Its rapid expansion on both sides of the Iraq/Syria border in the post 2011 period transformed it from a poorly organized terrorist organization to a well structured insurgency. Its underground cells and operational groups became full fledged military divisions and its tactics became campaigns to conquer and hold territory and strategic areas of military and economical interest, ranging from military airbases to natural resources extraction sites (Barrett, 2014).

The alarming pace at which the militant group is gaining control over large areas in Iraq and Syria has shaken up security establishments in an already war torn region and raised concerns for the local as well as the international community. The main objective behind the inception of this armed group was to establish a caliphate, or an Islamic state, based on Sharia law across the world, and on June 29, 2014, the Islamic State declared its leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi as the new caliph, or the “leader of the faithful” and by that time it was in control of territory stretching from North of Aleppo to South of Baghdad including the cities of Raqqa in Syria and Mosul in Iraq. About six million people on either side of the Syrian-Iraqi border were living under its strict rule (Barrett, 2014).

Right from its establishment the Islamic State, has followed unique and differentiating behavioral norms and strategies, which makes it different from other militant organizations operating in the region. It is known for its brutal tactics of insurgency, terrorism, and guerrilla warfare and also for its strict implementation of Islamic laws.

Economically, The Islamic State has revenue from oil sales, taxes on businesses and

individuals, sale of captured equipment, operation of stolen factories, and a variety of more traditional criminal activity, such as kidnapping for ransom, looting, extortion and protection money. The capture of large amounts of military equipment, vehicles, assets and fuel depots, also provide resources that help it to continue its campaign and reward its followers (Barrett, 2014). The Islamic State military capabilities are another important feature of the group since it has been successful in acquiring a few sophisticated weapons systems, of different origins. Large sums of funds that it has accumulated are used in buying military items, apart from those captured from the Syrian and Iraqi troops.

The media effort of the Islamic State is an integral and essential part of its operations, of the same importance of its military and administrative effort. Just as the Islamic State has used captured artillery against its enemies, it is using the West's media tools and techniques against western countries especially the United States and Europe (Barrett, 2014). The Islamic State media sophistication is something new in the terrorist/jihadist landscape, its media department is highly productive, producing and disseminating out a wide range of professional and well constructed media materials used to attract potential recruits, raise money, promote the image of the organization and spread fear among enemies and opponents. The Islamic State therefore shows a good understanding of both the importance and the use of media. In terms of targeting western supporters, Al Hayat Media Centre is key. It acts as a multilingual recruitment channel and provides a large selection of media material, aiming to attract potential foreign recruits. On another hand, the Islamic Sate has proved fluent and professional in using social media platform especially YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. Amateur as well as professional videos and images are uploaded daily, which are then globally, disseminated, both by ordinary users and mainstream news organizations in need for images of a conflict difficult for them to access. The

Islamic State's global media operation appears to have multiple key objectives: to provoke the U.S. and its allies, spread fear among its opponents and to recruit supporters (Barret, 2014).

The Islamic State is an alarming phenomenon creating major changes within the Middle East region and beyond, and the remarkable ability of a relatively weak and largely marginalized group of violent merely organized individuals to control a territory over a substantial area of two existing countries, in a record time frame, is unprecedented in the modern history of war and armed conflicts.

Theoretical Framework

The literature review has explored the complex relationship among media, terrorists and the audience. The theoretical framework will highlight two theories that explain what the media want the audience to know about terrorists groups and how to actually perceive the information about such acts. The agenda-setting and framing theories will be applied to better understand how the Islamic State is being portrayed in the international media outlets (e.g., newspapers) and the implications derived from the various exposures.

The power of the news media to set a nation's agenda, to focus public attention on a few key public issues, is an immense and well-documented influence. Not only do people acquire factual information about public affairs from the news media, readers and viewers also learn how much importance to attach to a topic on the basis of the emphasis placed on it in the news.

Agenda-Setting Theory

The agenda-setting theory is credited to two researchers Donald Shaw and Maxwell McCombs in the 1970s who studied people's reactions to election campaigns through the media. In the 1968 "Chapel Hill study," McCombs and Shaw demonstrated a strong correlation between what 100 residents of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, thought was the most important election issue and what the local and national news media reported was the most important issue. By comparing the salience of issues in news content with the public's perceptions of the most important election issue, McCombs and Shaw determined the degree to which the media sways public opinion. In this theory "it is assumed that the more attention the media give to a topic, the greater is the importance attributed to it by the news audience" (McQuail, 2010, p.548). This simply means that if the media give much air-time or space (in a repetitive manner) to an issue or event then it would be seen by audience members as a topic of importance (Baran, 2001).

To summarize the extent of this influence – and to facilitate comparisons from one research setting to another – social scientists frequently calculate the correlation between the ranking of issues on the media agenda and the ranking accorded those same issues on the subsequent public agenda. This quantitative measure provides a substantial degree of precision for this study's comparisons.

An obvious example of agenda-setting was depicted in the U.K. during the final decade of the 20th century (1990-2000) with a significant correspondence between public concern about international issues and the pattern of international coverage in *The Times* (Soroca 2001): whenever the media (*The Times*) focus on a specific topic, that topic became automatically a concern and a reference for the majority of the audience; the media can easily decide what is important and what is not and the relative audience will react accordingly.

The agenda-setting influence of the news media is not limited to this initial step of focusing public attention on a particular topic. The media also influence the next step in the communication process, our understanding and perspective on the topics in the news.

While agenda-setting answers the question of what news organizations want the audience to see by emphasizing an issue over others, it doesn't help explain the aspect of how the station portrays the stories; for that reason, framing theory is used.

Framing Theory

When studying the behavior of the mass media and the manipulation of public opinion, whether on the question of war/terrorism or any other public matter, the concept of framing has shown itself to be very useful. In recent years, framing has been an important approach for explaining communication phenomena.

According to Tankard (2001), media framing is important because it helps to identify the

ideology or media hegemony and has powerful effects on the audience. Much of the strength of framing comes from its ability to define the issues and to set the terms of a debate (p. 96).

Framing has been useful in understanding the media's role in political life (Reese, 2001). Framing is a broad concept utilized by several academic disciplines, but mostly centered in the fields of political communication and media studies. Several decades of framing research have resulted in a number of definitions of the concept. A classic definition utilized by many framing studies was compiled by Entman (1993) which states that "to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described" (p. 55). As an example, national interest became an important value that influenced the framing process of the Kosovo crisis, which began in March 1999 with NATO air strikes on Kosovo. Yang (2003) compared how U.S. and Chinese newspapers covered the crisis by analyzing the framing devices embodied in the sources, topics, and symbols of the news narrative. The results showed a contrasting attitude between two media systems toward the crisis. While the Chinese newspapers framed the NATO air strikes as an intervention in Yugoslavia's sovereignty, thereby challenged the legitimacy of using force to solve the Kosovo crisis, the U.S. newspapers framed the strikes as a humanistic aid to Albanians to stop the ethnic cleansing initiated by Serbians. The former used anti-strike terms such as "inhuman bombing" and "NATO's brutal attack" more frequently than the latter. The U.S. newspapers devoted much space to topics of air war updates and refugees depending on U.S. and NATO sources, whereas the Chinese newspapers devoted almost half of their coverage to protests and condemnations of the air strikes, citing Chinese and Russian sources. According to Yang, this contrasting coverage of two media systems reflects the two nations' different national

interests in Kosovo.

One of the most prominent models of media framing is the “Propaganda model” by Herman and Chomsky (1988) that emphasizes the fact that the American media frequently proclaimed their independence from government and other institutions, but in reality functioned virtually as an extension of state propaganda (p. 1). In addition, the media tended to “marginalize dissent and allow the government and dominant private interests to get their messages across to the public” in ways that promoted elite hegemony and suppressed opposition to the U.S. foreign policy (p. 1).

A study by Lehmann (2005) found differences in the way Iraq was presented in the U.S. media compared to the German media before the war began in 2003. While U.S. media as early as January 2003 reported that war was inevitable, German television news media was reporting on the UN’s ongoing inspections of Iraq. According to Lehmann, the German media was framing its antiwar stance along with other antiwar nations as the U.S. prepared for war (p. 85).

Scholars such as Beeman (2005), Ibrahim (2010), and Craft and Wanta (2004) have indicated that terrorism coverage in the Middle East changes over time. Definitions of terrorism vary between sources and activities that may not have always constituted terrorism by mainstream definitions now fall into such a category. Combined with a turbulent history, studying American elite newspaper coverage of Iran in relation to terrorism will provide insight into what has been a key issue in Iran’s recent history. These changes in use of words relating to terror may change the way issues are framed and may be confusing to the general public.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Media coverage of conflicts and terrorism may be determined by the journalists' ethnocentric bias and the national interests of the country to which they belong, as well as the ownership structure or editorial policy of the media (Downing, 1988; Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Iyengar & Simon, 1994; Kellner, 1993; Mowlana, 1992). For these reasons along with what past research has indicated, the following research questions and hypotheses are stated.

RQ1: Will there be a difference in the overall favorability toward ISIS among the three newspapers?

RQ2: Will the newspapers differ in the amount of space given to the subject?

RQ3: Will there be a difference in the mention of ISIS in the title among all three publications?

RQ4: Will the newspapers emphasize the same aspects of the War?

RQ5: Will the three newspapers include visuals to support their articles?

RQ6: What are the different sources of information for the different media outlets?

H1: The Western newspapers *The New York Times*, *The Guardian* and *Le Monde* will have a similar approach in treating and covering the IS phenomena especially during the critical events and turning points.

H2: Western media *The New York Times*, *The Guardian* and *Le Monde* will depend on similar source of information.

Methodology

The methodological framework of this thesis relied on quantitative content analysis, based on articles found through the database *LexisNexis* indicating keywords (e.g., Islamic States, ISIS) for the different mentioned periods, was conducted for the three selected newspapers. According to Riffe, Lacy, & Fico (1998), “Quantitative content analysis is the systematic and replicable examination of symbols of communication, which have been assigned numeric values according to valid measurement rules, and the analysis of relationships involving those values using statistical methods, in order to describe inferences about its meaning, or infer from the communication to its context, both of production and consumption.” Quantification by coding permits reduction to several categories of large amount of information or data. Because of these strengths, content analysis has been widely used in communication research. This approach is the most frequently used to examine news media coverage, especially the area of terrorism. This technique entails counting and statistically analyzing how terrorism is mentioned in the context of a particular form of communication (Holsti, 1969; Krippendorf, 1981), as well as allows the researcher the ability to examine the sources interviewed or quoted (Herman & O’Sullivan, 1989).

A content analysis was conducted to study the coverage of the Islamic State in three prominent international newspapers: *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, and *Le Monde*. All news articles regarding specific events involving the Islamic State were compiled from the database *LexisNexis*. The analysis gives an indication of how extensive the coverage of the IS has been within the defined timeframes of the analysis, as well as at what time the coverage was most extensive and when it was least extensive. The Islamic State news coverage will be examined based on several dimensions, including the extent of emphasis on the Islamic State

phenomena, the publications objectivity, to what extent the coverage is episodic or thematic as well as the terms, expressions and visuals used in the description of the Islamic State. In addition, an analysis of the frequency and range of sources that are present in the coverage will be examined. This is an important addition to the other analyses, as it gives a better indication of what type of sources may have been able to shape the coverage of the group, and what type of sources were dominating the coverage.

Media Outlet Sample: Sampling of Newspapers

As aforementioned, this study bases its analysis on the media's coverage of the Islamic State in three different newspapers from three countries (e.g., U.S.A., U.K., and France).

Newspapers were chosen as the media outlet of choice for this study given that they are still considered one of the most reliable source of information, they represent the information source of choice for opinion leaders (two-step flow theory); their structured format makes it easy for the reader to find the needed information. Experienced authors and experts and their access to critical information are an added value for any issue. Diversification into the online environment makes the publication widely available, and finally printed media is very adequate for a clear and accurate content analysis process.

The New York Times, *The Guardian*, and *Le Monde* were selected for their reputation as the most influential newspapers in the United States, the United Kingdom and France, respectively, and the important role they play in forming public opinion and influencing their audience, since they are considered the papers of record especially in regard to foreign news coverage. *The Guardian's* average daily sales are 187,000 newspapers and the average issue readership is 1,027,000. As for *The New York Times* the average daily sales are 220,472 newspapers and the average issue readership is 423,306 (NRS, April 2012 - March 2013). *Le*

Monde reports an average circulation of 323,039 copies per issue in 2009, about 40,000 of which are sold abroad. It has been available on the Internet since 19 December 1995, and is often the only French newspaper easily obtainable in non-French-speaking countries.

The newspapers are chosen because they have several important similarities, which is of great importance in order to compare the coverage between the different countries. The newspapers are all among the leading newspapers in their respective countries. As these newspapers are all prestigious national newspapers, they are part of setting the professional standard and influencing the daily news agenda in their respective countries of origin. It is also plausible to expect that these newspaper, in their role as leading press organization, will be read by the elite readership, influencers and decision makers, thus shaping opinion leaders' opinions and in turn the audience in their respective countries.

Below are turning point events selected for the analysis. The content analysis will include two days prior to the event date, the time of the event, as well as two days after the main coverage. Doing so will help the researcher assess the consistency of the coverage of the media during this specific period as well as the importance given to these different events that are of strategic importance concerning the conflict in Syria..

Events: Before, During and After

8 April 2013. After having expanded into Syria, the group Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) adopted the name Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham, this event is of an importance for our research since following this date the Islamic State began to rise in power as a major player in the Syrian conflict and it began its development into a borderless entity spreading its ideology into several conflict zones and areas of the Middle East and North Africa.

3 February 2014. Al-Qaeda's general command broke off its links with ISIL, following this date the Islamic State truly became an independent entity, regarded as having an independent well defined agenda away from the Al-Qaeda movement despite the fact that they both share some of the same ideology and aspirations.

8 March 2014. Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki accused Saudi Arabia and Qatar of openly funding the Islamic State making the issue a public concern and an attractive media materials, creating tension between the two countries especially between a Shiite regime and two Sunni Muslim countries.

9 June 2014. Mosul fell to the Islamic State control. The militants seized control of government offices, the airport, and police stations. Militants also looted the Central Bank in Mosul, reportedly absconding with US \$0.5 Billion. By capturing Mosul, which is a strategic city as it is at a crossroad between Syria and Iraq, the Islamic State seized a partial control of oil production. This event was a turning point in the development of the self sufficient funding of the group.

29 June 2014. The date marks the announcement of the establishment of a new caliphate. Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi was appointed its caliph, and the group formally changed its name to the "Islamic State".

7 August 2014. U.S. President Obama authorized targeted airstrikes in Iraq against the Islamic State, along with airdrops of aid. The U.K. offered the U.S. assistance with surveillance and refueling, and planned humanitarian airdrops to Iraqi refugees. This date was the beginning of the direct and public interventions of western countries in the fight against the rise and establishment of the Islamic State.

19 August 2014. The execution of James Wright Foley who was an American freelance

journalist and photojournalist of the Syrian Civil War when he was abducted on November 22, 2012, in northwestern Syria. Foley was the first American citizen to be killed by "jihadi John". James Foley's beheading by ISIL received wide condemnation in the United States and was heavily covered and analyzed in the international media.

2 September 2014. Steven Joel Sotloff who was an Israeli-American journalist for *Time* magazine and *The Jerusalem Post* who was held captive by Islamic militants appeared in a released video showing his beheading by "Jihadi John".

3 February 2015. The Islamic State released a video of the Jordanian hostage Muath al-Kasabeh being burned to death while locked in a cage, the execution photos that used advanced cinematic technique, were heavily used and disseminated by the media, and led to the direct intervention of the Jordanian Air force in targeting the Islamic State within the Syrian borders.

4 February 2015. The Libyan parliament confirmed the deaths of 21 kidnapped Egyptian Coptic Christian workers in Libya, after the ISIL English language publication *Dabiq* had released photos claiming their execution, this act led to the direct military intervention of Egypt in the war against the Islamic State.

5 March 2015. The Islamic State destroyed the ancient Assyrian city of Nimrud and its archaeological site, claiming that the city and its extensive collection of related antiquities were blasphemous, making the group an ever growing danger not only for the future of the region but also for its history and identity.

Codebook Measures (*see Appendix A for Codebook*)

Islamic State mentioned in the title. Indicating whether "Islamic State" words are mentioned in the title will help assess the importance of the issue, since using the words in the title is to attract audience's attention toward reading an article that the media.

Type of article. Defining if the article is an analysis or descriptive will inform whether the reporting is subjective or purely objective, focusing on stating facts or trying to analyze the issue based on the author point of view, interest or aspirations.

Length of article. Length of article will help define the importance of the issue and the professionalism in describing or analyzing an event, since whenever an issue is of an importance for an outlet the space dedicated for the story is larger. This variable will be categorized as short, medium, and long.

Sources (Western vs. Eastern, official vs. unofficial, staff vs. non-staff). Coders will identify whether the sources interviewed are Western or Eastern and whether they are official as in experts or unofficial. Also, source is broken down into a third category referring to whether the person who wrote the story is a staff member or a non-staff of each of the newspapers studied. Knowing the sources helps define the origin of the article; this can give some direction about the aspiration of the author.

Article (favorable vs. unfavorable). This variable helps determine whether the article was favorable or unfavorable towards the IS phenomenon.

Tone of article. Tone of article is defined by depicting whether the author is using a positive, negative or a neutral voice toward the issue, supporting or criticizing the facts.

Article (Objective vs. Subjective). This variable is operationalized by defining if the author is professionally stating facts and figures of the concerned issue from a neutral point of view away from personal perspective and interests.

Issue discussed. Issue discussed will help assess the importance and the recurrence of different issues related to the Islamic State coverage ranging from military and political to purely humanitarian and theological issues.

Use of graphics. The use of graphic or not will help define the importance of the article for the media outlets, as well as the effort that is invested to send a specific message to the audience; since graphics are more powerful than words in conveying a message and especially a defined point of view.

Coder Training

Content analysis, especially when performed by an individual researcher, is notoriously subjective. Tankard (2001) notes that the dangers of such “lone-scholar analysis” include coming up with an incomplete list of frames or producing overlapping frames. To avoid these pitfalls, the service of another coder was utilized in this study to ensure the validity of results and conclusions. Two experienced coders were responsible for coding the material including the primary researcher. The primary researcher provided the characteristics that were to be looked for when analyzing each news article with the second coder. The coding scheme that was used consistently throughout the entire project was used during the trial coding session. The coders examined the articles, and more precisely, the sentences and phrases in which the unit of analysis was found. Both independent and dependent variables were coded for each mention of the unit of analysis. During coder training sessions, raters worked together to reach agreement on the various variables, after which individual coding sheets were given to each coder to follow systematically. Some discrepancies showed up during the coding process and thus the coders reevaluated the variables (such as tone and sources) redefined the parameters and then coded accordingly (see Appendix A for final codebook scheme).

Reliability

To assess reliability of the study, 13% of the content (a subsample) was selected at random. According to Wimmer and Dominick (1991), 10-20% of the content is a sufficient

amount to be tested for intercoder reliability.

Thus, reliability was assessed for 30 articles by two coders. Intercoder reliability for the variables assessed are reported with percentage of agreement and with Krippendorff's alpha which accounts for chance agreement at a conservative level (Riffe, Lacy, Fico, 2005). For the variables which are more manifest, such as newspaper, length of article, mention of IS in the title, and visuals used naturally reliability scores reached 100% and 1. However, reliability is of greater concern with more latent variables. Type of article reached 90% agreement and .92, for western vs. eastern source, yielded 86.7% and .792, interview source as official or unofficial reached 96.7% agreement and .924, staff vs. non-staff yielded 90% agreement and .798, favorable vs. unfavorable reached 100% agreement and 1, tone of voice yielded 86.7% and .636, objectivity reached 90% agreement and .790.

Results

The expected findings from the analysis determine the similarity as well as the difference of the IS phenomena coverage in different media outlets for a total of 233 (*The New York Times* $n = 51$; *The Guardian*: $n = 176$; *Le Monde*: $n = 6$) articles assessed within the aforementioned time periods. The research questions and hypotheses, unless noted otherwise, were assessed using Pearson Chi-Square. This section reports data showing the fundamental characteristics of stories and testing the two hypotheses. In addition, it shows how the media portrayed and framed the IS issue.

RQ1: Article Favorable or Not to ISIS

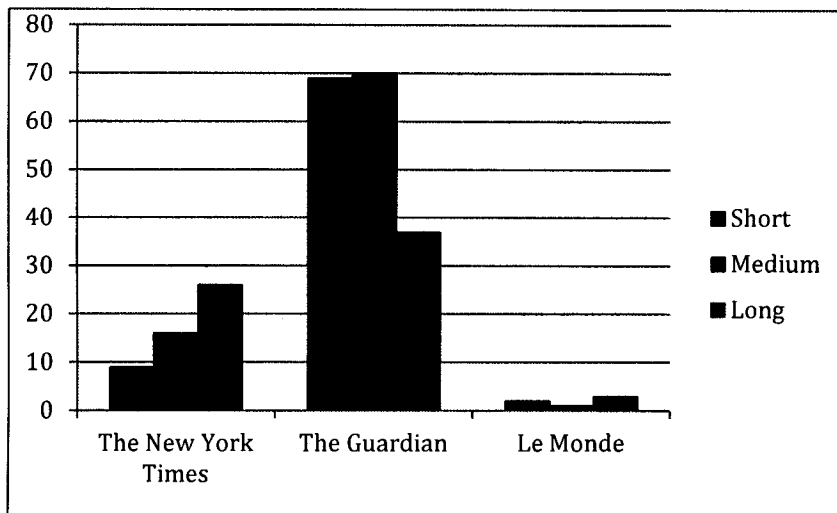
Results indicate that there was a significant difference among the newspapers ($\chi^2 (2) = 6.368, p < .05$). Most stories in the three newspapers assessed were unfavorable 89.3% toward IS whereas 10.7% were neutral. 98% of the 51 articles in *The New York Times* were unfavorable, 86.4% of the 176 articles in *The Guardian* were unfavorable and 100% of the six articles in *Le Monde* were unfavorable. To view an example of an article coded as unfavorable, reference Article 1 or 2 in Appendix C.

RQ2: Lengths of the IS Articles in the Different Newspapers

This research question was posed to analyze the importance given to the topic in the three media outlets. Results indicate a statistically significant difference among the three newspapers ($\chi^2 (4) = 20.355, p < .05$), such that 34.3% of the articles were short (<700 words), 37.3% of the articles were medium (between 700 and 1000 words), 28.3% of the articles were long (>1000). The division of length for each newspaper is portrayed below in Chart 1. An example of a long versus medium article can be found in Appendix C titled Article 5 for long and Article 6 for medium.

Chart 1

Length of Articles



RQ3: ISIS Mentioned in the Title

Descriptive analysis shows that in 56.2% (131 articles) of the total analyzed articles the word IS (and all its derivative) was not mentioned in the title, whereas the word was mentioned in the remaining 43.8% (102 articles) of the articles. Results indicate a significant difference among the newspapers ($\chi^2 (2) = 21.501, p < .05$). 84.3% of *The New York Times* articles have no mention of the word IS (and all its derivative) compared to 48.9% of *The Guardian* newspaper and 33.3% of the *Le Monde*. To view a sample of articles that were coded for IS or ISIS in the title, refer to the Article 11 (IS mentioned in the title) and Article 12 (IS not mentioned in the title) in Appendix C.

RQ4: Aspects of the War Emphasized

Descriptive analysis revealed that in 44.2% (103 articles) of the total analyzed articles the main issued discussed is of political nature, 34.8% (81 articles) were related to military discourse, 17.6% (41 articles) of the articles discussed humanitarian issues and 3.4% (8 articles)

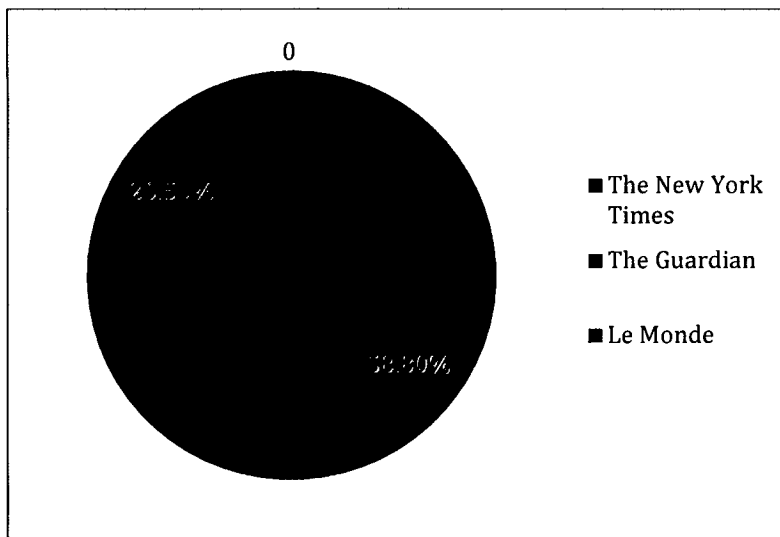
articles were of other topics. All of the papers were similar in the choice of topic emphasized ($\chi^2(6) = 12.225, p > .05$). For an example of an article coded as Humanitarian reference Article 3, unlike Article 4 which was coded as Military. Both articles can be found in Appendix C.

RQ5: Articles Coupled to Visuals or Info Graphics

Results indicated a significant difference among the articles ($\chi^2(2) = 31.107, p < .05$), such that 71.7% (167 articles) of the total analyzed articles did not include a visual/graphical support while only 28.3% (66 articles) of the articles include visual/graphical supports. See Chart 2 below for difference among newspapers. An example of an article with visuals as a support can be found in Appendix C titled Article 5, and on the other hand, Article 6 was coded for no visuals.

Chart 2

Visuals or Info Graphics

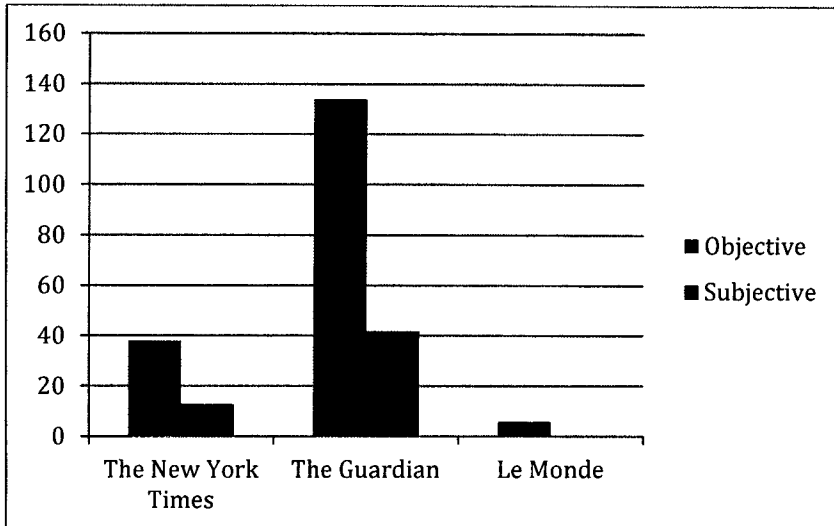


Hypothesis 1: Treatment and Coverage of the IS Phenomena

Hypothesis 1 was partially supported. The newspapers were similar in their objectivity level and in treatment as descriptive versus analytical piece (Objectivity: $\chi^2 (2) = 1.961, p > .05$; Type: $\chi^2 (2) = 1.965, p > .05$). However, results indicated a significant difference for tone of the article ($\chi^2 (2) = 9.908, p < .05$). 76.4% (178 articles) of the articles are objective whereas the remaining 23.6% (55 articles) are subjective. 76.8% (179 articles) of the articles are descriptive while 23.2% (54 articles) are analytical. See Chart 3 and 4 for a breakdown by each newspaper. As for tone of voice, 52.8% (123 articles) of the analyzed articles have a negative tone of voice, whereas the remaining 47.2% (110 articles) have a neutral tone of voice, none of the articles carried a positive tone toward IS. See Chart 5 for differences among newspapers. Article 7 in Appendix C serves as a reference for an article which was coded as objective; whereas article 8 was coded as subjective. Also in Appendix C, Article 9 is an example of an analytical article, while Article 10 is an instance of a descriptive article. Article 11 is indicative of a negative tone of voice, while Article 12 possessed a more neutral tone, both articles are also found in Appendix C.

Chart 3

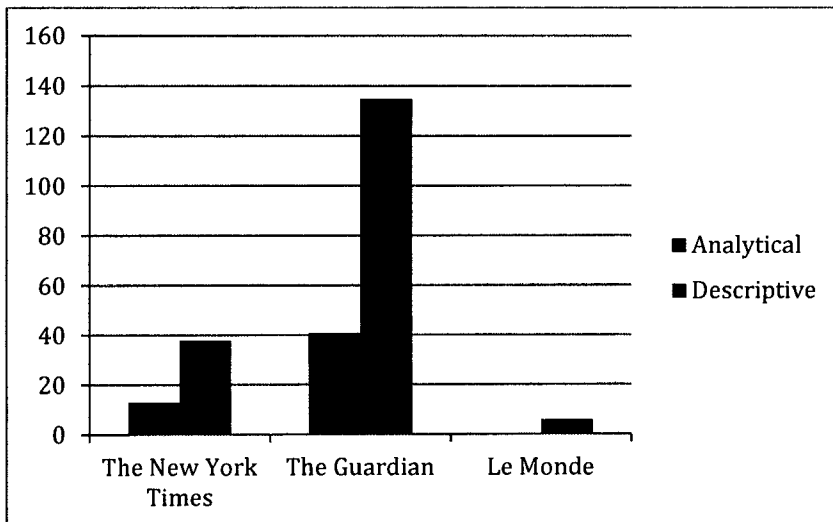
Objective vs. Subjective



Note: 74.5% of The New York Times articles, 76.1% of The Guardian articles and 100% of the Le Monde articles are objective.

Chart 4

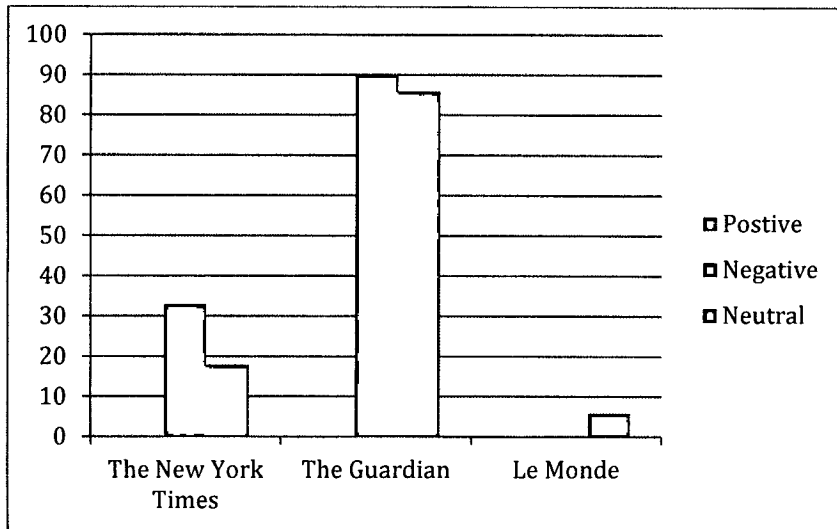
Descriptive vs. Analytical



Note: 74.5% of The New York Times articles, 76.6% of The Guardian articles and 100% of the Le Monde articles are descriptive.

Chart 5

Tone



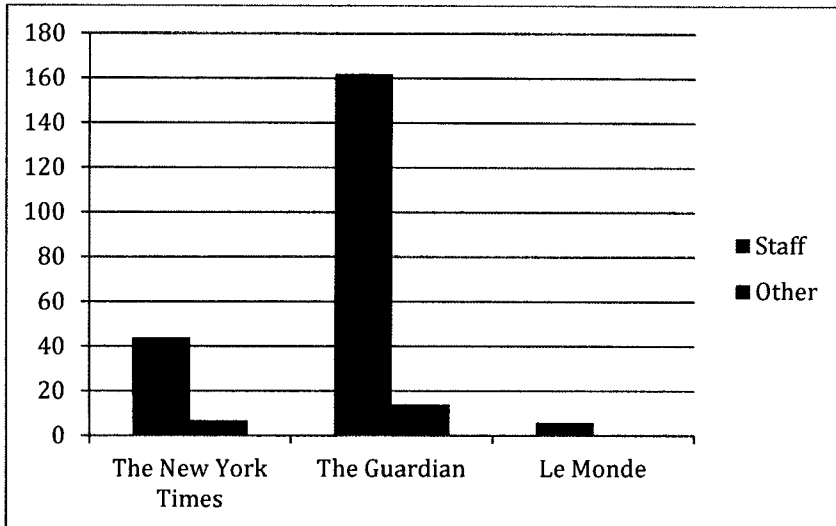
Note: 64.7% of The New York Times articles, 51.1% of The Guardian articles and 0% of the Le Monde articles have a negative tone of voice whereas 35.5% of The New York Times articles, 48.9% of The Guardian articles and 100% of the Le Monde articles have a neutral tone of voice.

Hypothesis 2: Sources of Information

Hypothesis 2 was partially supported. The newspapers were similar in that they depended on staff members as opposed to independent writers ($\chi^2(2) = 2.216, p > .05$). 91% (212 articles) of the total analyzed articles were written by a staff member of the different media outlets in question and only 9% (21 articles) of the total analyzed articles were written by independent writers. See Chart 6 for breakdown among newspapers. For example, Article 13 in Appendix C is a reference of a staff writer and Article 14 was coded as a non-staff writer.

Chart 6

Newspaper Staff



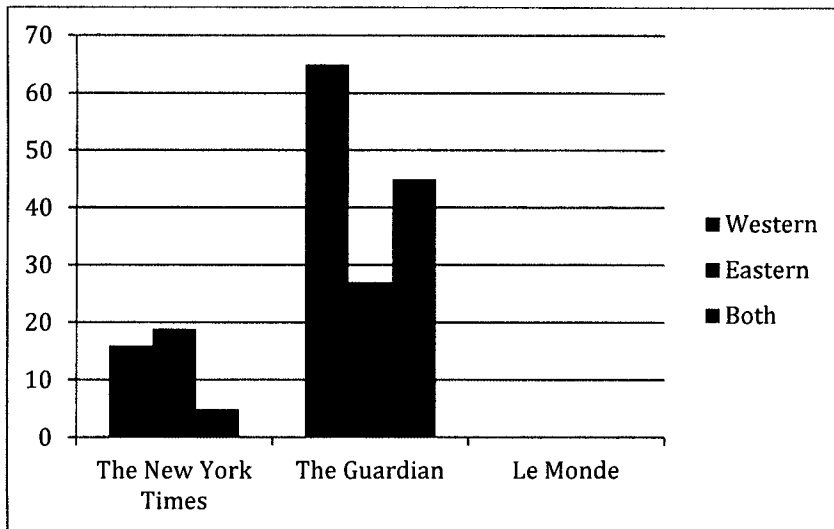
Note: The New York Times relied in 86.3% of its articles on its newspaper staff and in 7% of its articles on Non-staff writers. The Guardian relied in 92% of its articles on its newspaper staff and in 8% of its articles on non-staff writers. Le Monde relied in 100% of its articles on its newspaper staff.

However, results indicated a significant difference for the source they use whether western or eastern and if an official or unofficial source was included in the news report (Western/Eastern: ($\chi^2 (6) = 34.02, p < .05$); Expert: ($\chi^2 (6) = 23.091, p < .05$)). In regards to western versus eastern sources: 34.8% (81 articles) of the total analyzed articles relied on western sources, 19.7% (46 articles) of the total analyzed articles relied on eastern sources, 21.5% (50 articles) of the total analyzed articles relied on both western and eastern sources and 24% (56 articles) of the total analyzed articles relied on no sources. In relation to official versus unofficial sources: 47.6% (111 articles) of the total analyzed articles relied on official sources, 9.4% (22 articles) of the total analyzed articles relied on unofficial sources, 18.9% (44 articles) of the total analyzed articles relied on both official and unofficial sources and 24% (56 articles)

of the total analyzed articles relied on no sources. See Chart 7 and 8 for the differences among newspapers. For an example of coding for sources of information, refer to Article 15 (Western), Article 16 (Eastern), Article 17 (Both: Western and Eastern), Article 19 (official), Article 20 (Non-official), and Article 21 (Both: Official and Non-official) in Appendix C.

Chart 7

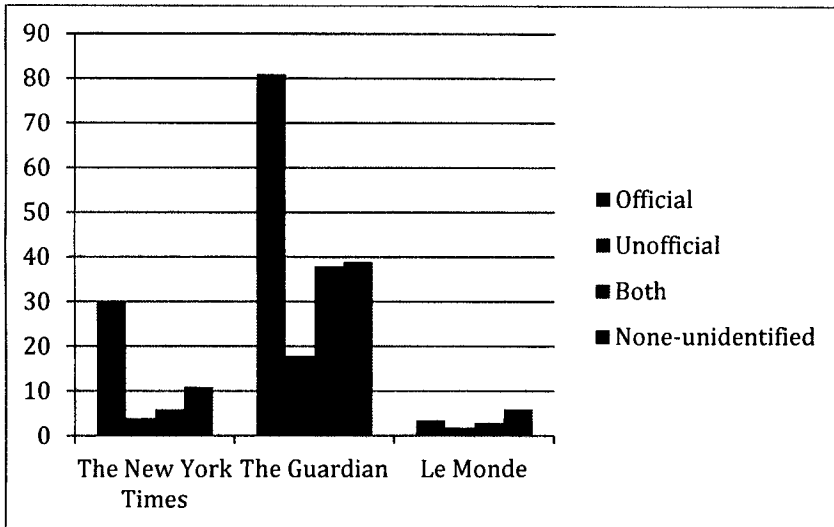
Western vs. Eastern



Note: The New York Times relied on 31.4% of its articles on Western sources, on 37.3% of its articles on Eastern sources, on 9.8% articles on both sources and in 21.6% on no sources at all. The Guardian relied in 36.9% of its articles on Western sources, in 15.3% of its articles on Eastern sources, in 25.6% articles on both sources and in 22.2% on no sources at all. Le Monde relied on no sources at all in all its articles (6 articles).

Chart 8

Official Sources vs. Unofficial



Note: The New York Times relied in 58.8% of its articles on official sources, in 7.8% of its articles on non-official sources, in 11.8% articles on both sources and in 21.6% on no sources at all. The Guardian relied in 46% of its articles on official sources, in 10.2% of its articles on non-official sources, in 21.6% articles on both sources and in 22.2% on no sources at all. Le Monde relied on no sources at all in all its articles (6 articles).

Discussion

This thesis investigated through a cross-national content analysis whether and how *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, and *Le Monde* are similar and rely on the same sources in the coverage of IS (Islamic State issue) during well defined periods of time. Fundamentally, it was assumed that all three western media channels will have a similar approach and sources in their treatment of the subject. Both hypothesis were partially supported; the sources as well as the approach for treating the issue from the different outlets were different especially between *The New York Times* and *The Guardian*.

All three newspapers depended equally on their own staff in the reporting of the facts. *The New York Times* depended heavily on eastern source of information whereas *The Guardian* relied more on western sources. Both newspapers relied on official sources as primary sources of information. As discussed earlier, Bennett's indexing hypothesis (1990) argued that mass media news is indexed to the dynamics of governmental debate. This hypothesis and the symbiotic relationship between the press and the state, often found in war coverage, brought about the expectation that all three newspapers would depend largely on their official sources. This expectation, however, was not satisfied in this case. Thus, this study shows that the media do not always follow their governmental voices and agendas in totality, especially when the involvement of the country and its direct benefits from a conflict are limited. *The New York Times* heavily relied on eastern sources, especially opponent of the "Islamic State" movement, in order to portray the atrocity and inhuman activity of the group, through the perspective of the victims, making the message more authentic and reliable for its target audience. *The Guardian* relied more on the Western official sources given its objective and neutral role in communicating facts about the targeted issue.

It was obvious that all the concerned newspaper had an unfavorable approach toward the “Islamic State” phenomena, since not even one of the analyzed articles had a favorable approach to the issue.

The “Islamic State” subject was heavily covered in *The New York Times* and especially in *The Guardian* making it an important subject in their respective countries based on the agenda setting theory, whereas the issue was not of an importance for the French newspaper with merely six articles during the stated period. Saliency is an important component in the agenda setting literature and has been defined predominately through the attention given, prominence or placement and valence (Kiousis, 2004). Scholars have emphasized space along with a large quantity of stories devoted to an issue in the media highly impacts the salience of that topic on the media agenda (McCombs, 2004; Dearing & Rogers, 1996). On the visual and structural level, *The New York Times* emphasized and devoted a significant amount of space to the issue, through the use of well-elaborated articles of 1000+ words; on the other hand *The Guardian* and *Le Monde* used more concise articles. The use of the long articles by *The New York Times* gave additional importance to the topic and enabled the authors to easily frame the articles according to the newspaper's point of view.

Prominence, such as the mention of the issue (e.g., IS) in the title, indicates placement and positioning, which are linked to visibility (Kiousis, 2004). *The Guardian* mentioned the “Islamic State” term in more than half the total articles' title in order to grab the attention of its readers and highlight the content of the articles. On the other hand, *The New York Times* used the term in only 15.7% of its articles' title, but in order to draw attention and emphasize its position concerning the issue, as well as to communicate its negative stand against the IS phenomena hence the use of several connotative terms used (e.g., terrorist, insurgents) and described

civilians' deaths as "murder," "massacre," and "war crimes" and accused the Islamic State of mounting a "genocide," calling it inhuman and irresponsible. Where the lead elements are found in a story contribute to how the story is framed (Evans, 2010). According to Entman (1993), "to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition" (p. 52).

To back up its negative stand against the Islamic State, *The New York Times* and *The Guardian* relied on visual supports and graphical elements, however *The New York Times* took advantage of these elements to a greater extent, coupling more than 58.8% of its articles to visuals portraying either the barbaric acts of the Islamic State, the consequences of the chaos or the struggle of the oppressed entities.

The third component of salience as per agenda setting literature is valence or in other words attributes of news. Emotional elements in a news report can increase the level of saliency for the audience (Kiousis, 2004).

All the newspaper conducted an objective and descriptive coverage of the issue away from analysis and subjective output focusing on political and military issues for the majority of the articles. However, *The New York Times* used a negative tone of voice in 64,7% of its articles whereas both *The Guardian* and *Le Monde* relied on a more neutral approach.

Higher valence can be attributed to the positive or negative tone towards the main issue (e.g., IS) in the story, thus increasing its salience (Kiousis, 2004). *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, and *Le Monde* were expected to report stories portraying the Islamic State negatively. As the results showed, this expectation was supported strongly and there was not a big difference in the negative description of the Islamic State among the three newspapers. Although news articles are by convention supposed to carry a neutral tone, reporters in Great Britain and the

United States are guaranteed a level of freedom of press boasting a more liberal environment for reporting as part of the North Atlantic Liberal model (Hallin & Mancini, 2004), this level of freedom was obvious in this study through the subtle negative connotation used by the different authors in describing the Islamic State even when objectively describing an event.

The coverage of all three newspapers was heavily episodic, they did not explore the origins of the group and the causes of its rise into power, failing to take into account the larger social, economical, and political contexts in which this group development occurred.

The portrayal of the “Islamic State” in *The New York Times* has largely been negative and linked to several atrocities throughout the Middle East. The coverage started with the organization itself and evolved to cover America’s potential strategies in the region, fully embodying the “Propaganda model” developed by Herman and Chomsky, whereas the articles are indirectly an extension of the U.S. propaganda and a preparation for any potential military intervention in the Syrian conflict.

The New York Times followed the interests of an involved country, whereas *The Guardian* and *Le Monde* reflected the interests of a supporting country with no direct benefit in the conflict: The former emphasized the process of violence, political support of the victims, military operation, and war victims of the “Islamic State”, whereas the later just worked on objectively describing the events.

The New York Times indirectly transmitted the stand and position of the American administration, highlighting the atrocity of the group in a political and military context with minimal attention to the roots of the problem and the implication of the U.S. allies (e.g., some GCC countries) in the development of the “Islamic State”, making the newspaper lack critical perspective. This absence of critical reporting in the U.S. mainstream medium supports previous

studies (e.g., Dickson 1994; Kellner, 1993), which showed that the U.S. media lacked critical perspectives when they reported international conflicts, in which the United States was directly or indirectly engaged.

As for *The Guardian* and *Le Monde*, their sources, article structures and components reflect the neutrality of these media toward the conflict, this neutrality is not clearly linked to, and is not an obvious projection of, their respective country of origin that have no direct influence/interest in the conflict.

In summary, this study emphasized the fact that news agencies and journalists still have the ability to dictate what stories are considered newsworthy and how much prominence and space they are allocated, setting the agenda for their audience given the difference in the number of articles between the different publications.

The New York Times, *The Guardian* and *Le Monde* showed the similar negative view on the conflict because they reflected similar national interests and public opinions despite the differences in the structural and technical approach to the issue.

Given the direct involvement of the United States in the conflict and in order to emphasize the legitimacy of war, *The New York Times*, was more negative in the portrayal of the Islamic State, trying to emotionally appeal to its audience through the use of well elaborated articles meticulously describing the events, relying on locals testimonies to create emotional relation with the victims of the group, employing connotative terms, and extensively relying on the usage of visual supports and graphical elements. In contrast *The Guardian* and *Le Monde*, despite their negative stand toward the Islamic State, relied more on a neutral approach, objectively describing the events.

Limitations and Further Suggestions

This comparative analysis of the three prominent newspapers carries value in understanding what and how the IS phenomenon was emphasized through the various aspects of its coverage. However, there were few limitations. One limitation is the lack of studies previously conducted about the Islamic State phenomenon given that this group rise to power dates back to 2011, the lack of new studies regarding the mentioned topic and the availability of studies that offer only general information concerning media and war/terrorist relation; however, this is itself more reason to be conducting a study on this topic in order to understand the underlining mechanisms and test how agenda-setting and framing hold up in present day.

Another limitation is the fact of choosing only three newspapers (e.g., one from the United Kingdom, one from France, one from the U.S.) for the comparison poses a difficulty in generalizing the results; , thus the content analysis can perhaps be broaden to include a wider sample with news media such as *BBC* and the *Washington post*.

The *LexisNexis* database limits the study because not all newspapers are accessible through the database. Even though *LexisNexis* has its limitations, it is important to note that nearly 2.5 billion documents are available through the database, and approximately 15 million documents are added each week (Neuendorf, 2002, p. 219). “All databases are ‘full text searchable,’ meaning that the user may specify any word or string of characters, and due to the unique organizing patterns of the system, all documents containing that string will be located almost instantly” (Neuendorf, 2002, p. 219). The *LexisNexis* database has proved to be a respectable tool to assist researchers.

Recommendations for future research will be to choose different media outlets for the study, to add sources and new elements, collecting data from different sources through

interviewing professionals in the fields of media and communication. Also, a cross-national survey administered in the regions specified can produce greater insight as far as the opinions and attitudes of the readers in relation to the topic analyzed. In addition, assessing the effect of other types of media, especially the ever-growing social media is also recommended in order to evaluate and compare the issue from different perspectives, especially between old and new source of media, as well as a one way versus a two-way source of information.

Conclusion

This thesis exposed a cross disciplinary study as it explored intersections of mass communication, journalism and military/political issues. Due to its unique context and combination of research streams as well as resulting findings, this study was theoretically and descriptively rich, adding to the understanding of framing, building news content and terrorism studies.

Foremost, this study was one the first to explore the attitude of prominent western newspapers covering the Islamic State subject. The topic of the Islamic State and the media relation is a huge and diverse subject, which can be studied from different angles using multiple approaches.

News media serve as an effective source of information and powerful mode of communication. In order to communicate efficiently, writers and journalists use media frames to streamline information flow to their readers. Framing is, on the most fundamental level, the combination of words that form a sentence, phrase or story that consequently provides a message to its recipient. This message, whether it is provided by mass or alternative media, is being set and framed in order to tell the audience what and how to think about an issue. Hence this study, through the analysis of the media coverage of the Islamic State, enhances the agenda-setting and framing literature. In addition, newspaper coverage seems to reflect notions, values and ideas that resonate within particular societies. All three newspapers beside from politics and military actions gave prominence to accounts of civilian deaths and humanitarian issues, which fit the image of a harsh and cruel war. The identification with the Islamic world, which is the outer circle beyond national boundaries, comes into play in the case of *The New York Times* and *The Guardian* that appear like uninvolved observers relying heavily on objective and descriptive

articles whose approach to the war is not touched by national or religious sentiment. In a practical sense, being a well informed citizen is vital in order to be able “to approach the political and economic marketplace armed with knowledge” (Day, 2006, p. 83). “The media are the primary conduits of information flow, and to the extent that they do not provide truthful, accurate, and meaningful information, they deprive their audiences of the intellectual nourishment necessary for rational decision making” (p. 83). This is more of a reason to understand what and how the media portrays different issues in their coverage, which end up impacting citizens’ attitudes and ways in which citizens approach political, economical and societal matters.

Each study conducted on this matter will increase understanding regarding this issue, which will, in turn, become a base for other researchers to draw from. This study shed light on a phenomenon and how it is being treated, analyzed and highlighted, given that the Islamic State is shaping and affecting an important region in the international security balance.

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Appendix A: Codebook

Newspaper	NYT	1
	The Guardian	2
	Le Monde	3
IS mentioned in title	Yes	1
	No	2
Type of article	Analytical	1
	Descriptive	2
Lengths of article	Short	1
	Medium	2
	Long	3
Source 1	Western	1
	Eastern	2
	Both	3
	None	4
Source 2	Official	1
	Non Official	2
	Both	3
	None	4
Source 3	Newspaper staff	1
	Other	2
Article	Favorable	1
	Unfavorable	2
	Neutral	3
Tone of article	Positive	1
	Negative	2
	Neutral	3
Issues discussed	Political	1
	Military	2
	Humanitarian	3
	Theological	4
	Other	5
Article	Objective	1
	Subjective	2
	Neutral	3
Visual Support	Yes	1
	No	2

Appendix B: Charts

Chart 1

Length of Articles

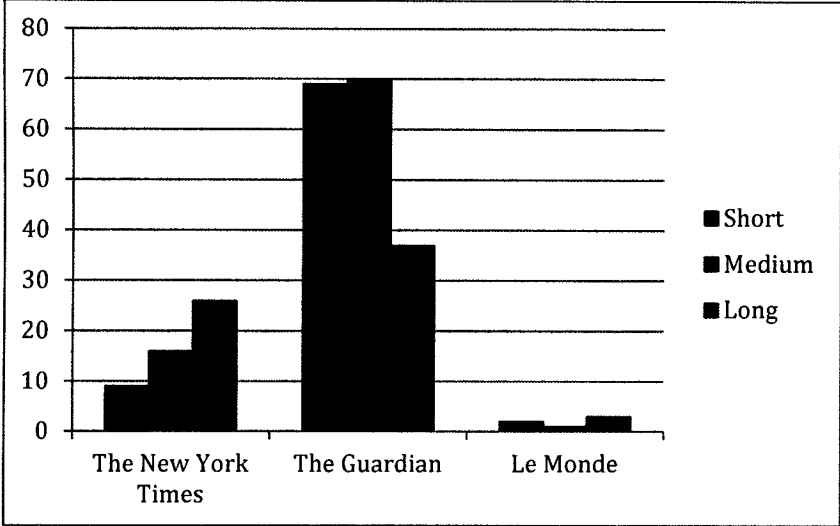


Chart 2

Visuals or Info Graphics

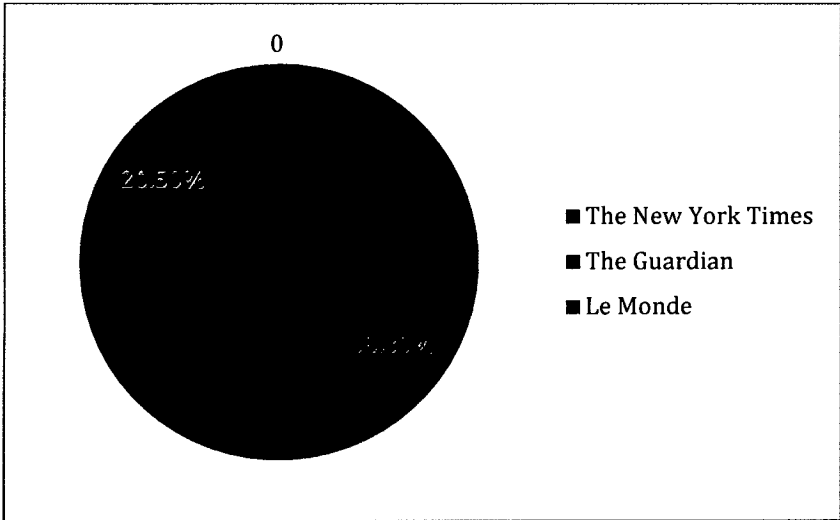
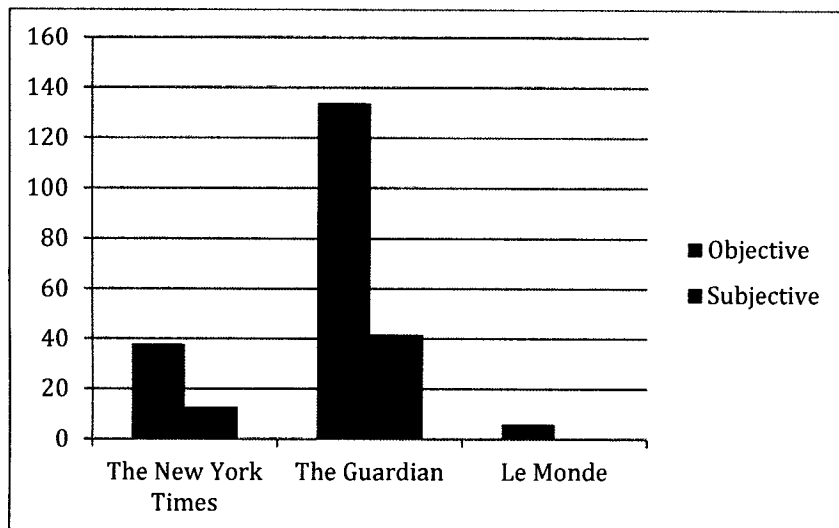


Chart 3

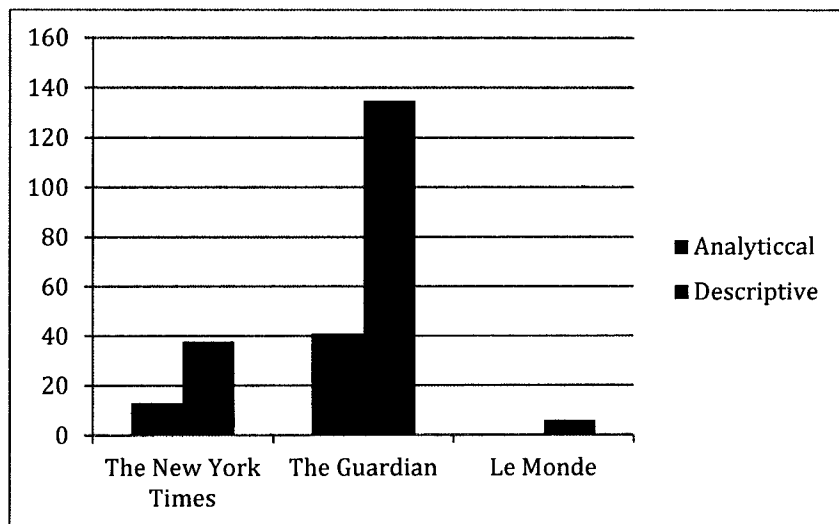
Objective vs. Subjective



Note: 74.5% of The New York Times articles, 76.1% of The Guardian articles and 100% of the Le Monde articles are objective.

Chart 4

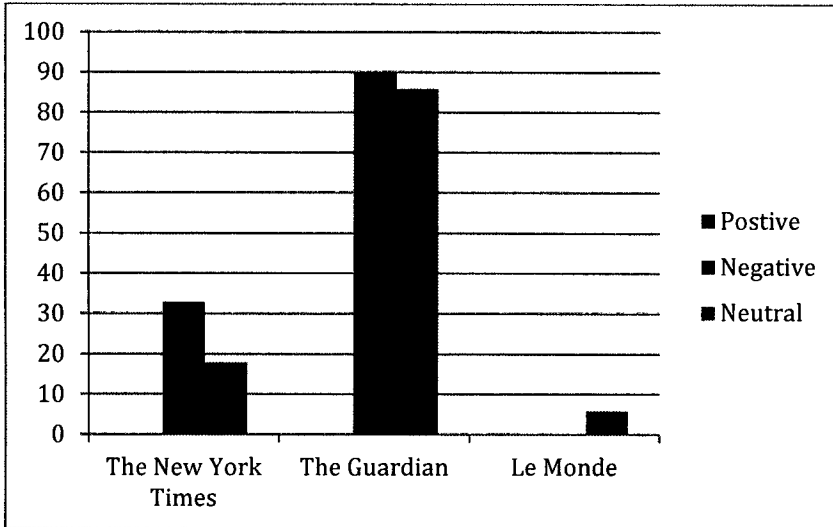
Descriptive vs. Analytical



Note: 74.5% of The New York Times articles, 76.6% of The Guardian articles and 100% of the Le Monde articles are descriptive.

Chart 5

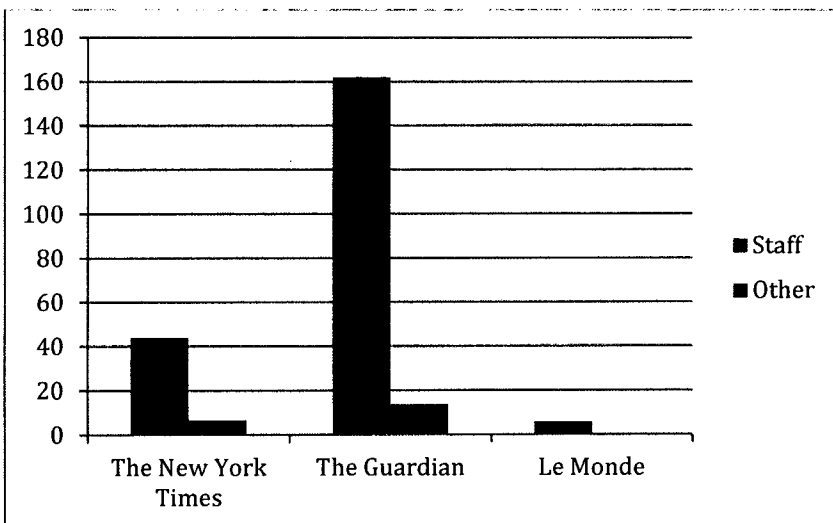
Tone



Note: 64.7% of The New York Times articles, 51.1% of The Guardian articles and 0% of the Le Monde articles have a negative tone of voice whereas 35.5% of The New York Times articles, 48.9% of The Guardian articles and 100% of the Le Monde articles have a neutral tone of voice.

Chart 6

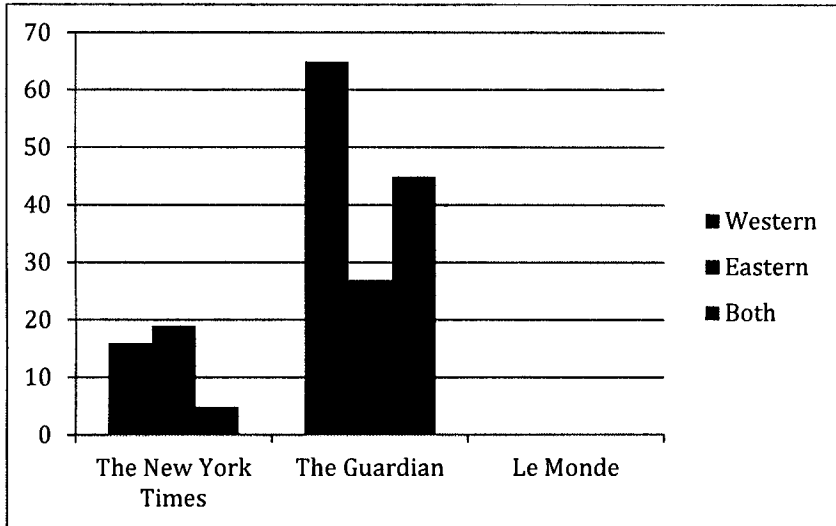
Newspaper Staff



Note: The New York Times relied in 86.3% of its articles on its newspaper staff and in 7% of its articles on Non-staff writers. The Guardian relied in 92% of its articles on its newspaper staff and in 8% of its articles on non-staff writers. Le Monde relied in 100% of its articles on its newspaper staff.

Chart 7

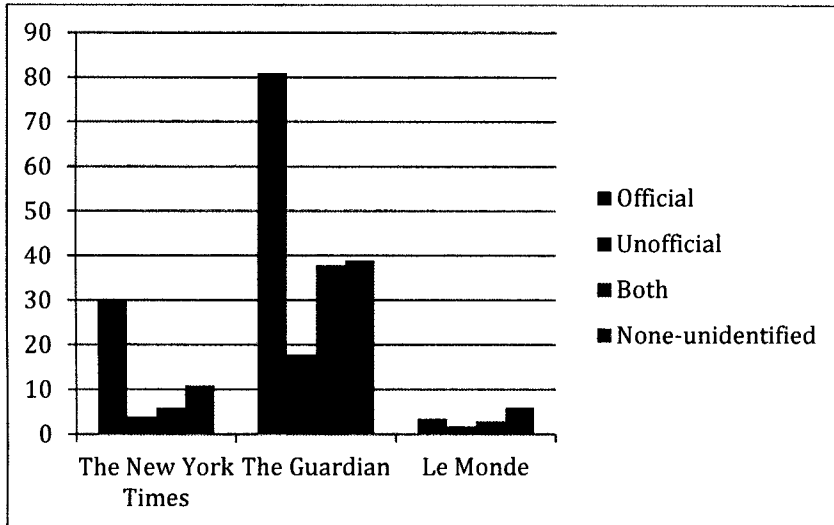
Western vs. Eastern



Note: The New York Times relied on 31.4% of its articles on Western sources, on 37.3% of its articles on Eastern sources, on 9.8% articles on both sources and in 21.6% on no sources at all. The Guardian relied in 36.9% of its articles on Western sources, in 15.3% of its articles on Eastern sources, in 25.6% articles on both sources and in 22.2% on no sources at all. Le Monde relied on no sources at all in all its articles (6 articles).

Chart 8

Official Sources vs. Unofficial



Note: The New York Times relied in 58.8% of its articles on official sources, in 7.8% of its articles on Non-Official sources, in 11.8% articles on both sources and in 21.6% on no sources at all. The Guardian relied in 46% of its articles on official sources, in 10.2% of its articles on Non-Official sources, in 21.6% articles on both sources and in 22.2% on no sources at all. Le Monde relied on no sources at all in all its articles (6 articles).

Appendix C: Sample Articles

Article 1

Guardian.com.

June 10, 2014 Tuesday

Isis insurgents seize control of Iraqi city of Mosul

BYLINE: Martin Chulovtheguardian.com

LENGTH: 716 words

ABSTRACT

Maliki seeks to declare state of emergency after Sunni militants with Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant overrun northern city

FULL TEXT

Islamic extremists have seized control of much of Mosul in northern Iraq after troops abandoned their posts and government buildings, in a serious blow to Baghdad's efforts to slow a raging insurgency.

After four days of fighting in which country's third most populous city all but slip from its grasp, Baghdad announced it would arm citizens in a bid to curb the threat from extremists in three cities and much of the northern countryside. Details about the plan were initially sparse, but Iraqi officials suggested a collaboration between tribal leaders and the US military that quelled an insurgency in 2007 might be used as a template.

The incumbent prime minister, Nouri al-Maliki, said during a televised news conference that he had asked the Iraqi parliament to declared a state of emergency.

Officials in Mosul say the city is now effectively in the hands of Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (**Isis**), a group inspired by al-Qaida that has remained in control of parts of Fallujah and Ramadi for the past six months. **Isis** has carved out a cross-border swath of influence in Syria; from al-Bab, east of Aleppo, through the lawless eastern deserts and into Anbar province, Iraq.

The Iraqi military has been unable to stop the **Isis's** advances, or the multiple-bombing campaigns the Sunni extremist group frequently launches in an effort to disrupt the country's Shia power base and to re-establish a caliphate governed by fundamentalist Islamic law.

With its authority steadily crumbling, Iraq has asked the Obama administration to provide it with missiles and artillery. Iraq has not sought a return of US forces and Barack Obama has been deeply reluctant to commit to deploying troops in the region.

Strategic posts in Mosul were seized after four days of running battles with security forces, many of which withdrew on Tuesday after hundreds of extremists armed with assault weapons and rocket-propelled grenade launches edged closer to the city centre.

Militants released prisoners from the city's prisons and are reported to have raised the **Isis** flag above civic buildings. Developments appear to have caught senior Iraqi officials off-guard in Baghdad, where Maliki

has been trying for the past six weeks to assemble a coalition that would secure him a third term as leader after parliamentary elections in May.

In a statement released on Tuesday, he said he would create a leadership group responsible for sourcing and arming residents. He offered no details of when arming might take place, or who might receive weapons.

Maliki had positioned himself as the only Iraqi politician who could stand up to **Isis**. But his forces have been unable to win back Fallujah, or Ramadi and seem increasingly impotent as the insurgency gathers steam.

Iraqi officials believe about 6,000 **Isis** militants are in Iraq, although the number could be several thousand greater with members regularly crossing the porous border with Syria.

The group's leadership is almost exclusively comprised of Iraqis, battle-hardened by close to a decade-long insurgency against US forces and a gruelling civil war against the country's Shias. But its rank and file hails from all corners of the Arab world, as well as Europe, south Asia and south-east Asia.

Isis played a prominent role in Syria's civil war throughout last year, subverting both moderate and Islamist groups lined up in against the regime of Bashar al-Assad in the north of the country. Its influence, though, was sharply curtailed earlier this year when opposition groups ousted it from Idlib and Aleppo, two Syrian cities where it had been most active.

Ever since, **Isis** leaders have consolidated their power base in the eastern city of Raqqa while intensifying their operations in Iraq.

Mosul had remained restive even after the Awakening project, which quelled an earlier jihadist insurgency in 2007. Then, as now, jihadists aspiring to restore a caliphate, had imposed a ruthless hardline regime upon communities that had initially agreed to host them. The Anbar Awakening helped to bring relative normalcy to Fallujah and Ramadi return until late last year, but Mosul and its surrounds were still largely ungovernable.

LOAD-DATE: June 10, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Article 2

The Guardian - Final Edition

June 11, 2014 Wednesday

Islamists seize Iraq's second-biggest city: Isis militants take Mosul and threaten Kirkuk: Baghdad government says it will arm civilians

BYLINE: Martin Chulov and Dan Roberts in Washington

SECTION: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 18

LENGTH: 917 words

Islamist extremists have seized control of much of Iraq's second biggest city, Mosul, and the surrounding province, freeing more than 1,000 prisoners, sending troops and residents fleeing and crippling Baghdad's efforts to quell a fast spreading insurgency.

Mosul fell yesterday after advances by the Islamic State of Iraq in Syria (**Isis**) and rapid capitulation by the Iraqi military, whose members reportedly abandoned their posts as the jihadists advanced.

By nightfall, there were reports of **Isis** forces moving towards the ethnically sensitive city of Kirkuk and consolidating positions throughout Nineveh province, which borders the Kurdish north and Arab centre of the country.

The US said it was deeply concerned with the situation and the White House called on the Iraqi government in Baghdad to do more to address Sunni concerns.

The fall of Mosul left officials in Washington warning of an "extremely serious" threat that could impact the entire region.

The US pledged to continue to supply weapons and other advanced military equipment. But, in comments that may strain relations with Baghdad, the White House made clear it believed the actions of prime minister Nouri al-Maliki's Shia-led government were partly to blame for his force's lack of support in Sunni areas.

Obama spokesman Josh Earnest said the US was encouraging "all Iraqi leaders including prime minister Maliki to do more to address unresolved issues to better meet the needs of all the Iraqi people".

He added: "We are going to continue our important relationship in terms of providing some security assistance to the government of Iraq but ultimately there is a responsibility on behalf of the Iraqi leaders to step up to the plate here."

The day's developments mean **Isis** now has effective control over three cities, including Falluja and Ramadi in neighbouring Anbar. All three were centres of the insurgency against coalition forces and more than 30% of US lives were lost there during the Iraq war.

The US claim at the time that it had "strategically defeated" al-Qaida has repeatedly been proved to be false over recent months as jihadists have re-entrenched themselves in former battlegrounds. Iraqi officials have

told the Guardian that casualty rates among military ranks are now higher than 2,500, despite no serious attempts being made to retake lost ground.

Iraq's embattled government said it would arm civilians and ask the parliament to declare a state of emergency. It said it would reorganise military forces, many of which were armed and trained by the US until 2011. Officials suggested a collaboration between tribal leaders and the US military that quelled an insurgency in 2007 might be used as a template. No tribal figure was prepared to intervene yesterday, with residents reporting that hundreds of extremists carrying weapons were roaming Mosul with impunity.

"All of Nineveh province fell into the hands of militants," parliament speaker Osama al-Nujaifi told a press conference in Baghdad.

"The city fell like a plane without an engine," said a Mosul businessman who fled to Erbil in the Kurdish north. "They were firing their weapons into the air, but no one was shooting at them."

The rapid organisation and mobility of **Isis** has shocked leaders across the region. The group gathered momentum in late 2012 on the battlefields of northern Syria, where its fortunes have waned in recent months during a fight with Islamist and moderate forces in Syria's opposition which have succeeded in ousting them from Aleppo and Idlib.

Despite losing land, the group has carved out a cross-border swath of influence in Syria from al-Bab, east of Aleppo, through the lawless eastern deserts and into Iraq's Anbar province.

Isis has stepped up the bombing campaigns it frequently launches in an attempt to disrupt Iraq's Shia power base and to re-establish a caliphate governed by fundamentalist Islamic law.

With its authority steadily crumbling, Baghdad has turned to Washington, asking the Obama administration to provide it with missiles and artillery. The events in Mosul - where militants released prisoners from the city's jails and are reported to have raised the group's flags above civic buildings - appear to have caught off guard. Maliki has been trying for the past six weeks since national elections to assemble a coalition that would secure him a third term as prime minister.

In a statement released yesterday, Maliki said he would create a leadership group responsible for sourcing and arming residents. He offered no details of when the arming might take place or who might receive weapons.

Maliki had positioned himself as the only Iraqi politician who could stand up to a resurgent **Isis**. However, his forces have been unable to win back Falluja or Ramadi and seem increasingly impotent as the insurgency gathers steam.

Iraqi officials believe there are about 6,000 **Isis** militants in the country, although the number could be several thousand higher, with members regularly crossing the porous border with Syria.

The group's leadership is almost exclusively made up of Iraqis, battle-hardened by a nearly decade-long insurgency against US forces and a gruelling civil war against the country's Shias. However, its rank and file hail from all corners of the Arab world, as well as Europe, south Asia and south-east Asia.

Captions:

Iraqi families fleeing the violence in Nineveh province gather at a Kurdish checkpoint west of Erbil in the autonomous Kurdish region yesterday Photograph: Safin Hamed/AFP/Getty Images

LOAD-DATE: June 11, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

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Article 3

Guardian.com.

June 11, 2014 Wednesday

Kurdish forces on high alert after collapse of Iraqi army in Mosul

BYLINE: Fazel Hawramytheguardian.com

LENGTH: 652 words

ABSTRACT

Queues form at checkpoints into Iraqi Kurdistan as people flee city taken by **ISIS** militants

FULL TEXT

On Wednesday morning, the Kurdish security forces were taking no chances at a new checkpoint on the road to Mosul just outside Irbil, the capital of the Kurdistan Region. Several dozen uniformed and plain-clothes Asayish (security) officers were watching every move of anyone who arrived at the checkpoint. Less than an hour's drive to the west, militants of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (**Isis**) were in control of Mosul after security forces abandoned their positions on Tuesday.

Over the past two days, thousands of Mosul residents have fled the city in fear and headed to the relative safety of the Kurdistan region. "Suddenly the army withdrew and there was no army nor police, just the militants, we don't know where they are from, they are masked," said Abu Abdullah, a 55-year-old man who pointed to the clothes he was wearing, saying that they were all he took from his belongings in Mosul.

More than 100 cars, mostly with Ninawa (the province of which Mosul is the capital) number plates, were parked outside the Kalak checkpoint waiting to go through the few layers of security that Kurdish security forces have set up. Just inside the parking areas, where several dozen people, including pregnant women and children, were queuing in the scorching heat, an old Kurdish man in his turban and baggy suit hugged a man in Arabic robes. "He is a friend from the old days, we did military service together in the 1970s and we have been friends ever since," said the Kurdish man, who had come to greet his friend and his family and offer support. The Arab man laughed and said sarcastically "we have come to Irbil for a picnic".

People were crouched in the scant shade cast by several cabins where the paperwork was processed. The Kurdish officers were on edge, some saying they had not slept for two days and questioning anyone who looked suspicious, including photographers. One plain-clothes officer who asked not to be named said the Kurdish officers at the checkpoint had seized a large number of guns from civilians heading to Kurdistan Regional Government-controlled areas (KRG). Shirzad, a taxi driver who has a relative in Mosul and who has been ferrying Iraqi army deserters from the checkpoint towards Kirkuk, says the price of guns has dropped dramatically because the fleeing soldiers were selling theirs.

The sudden collapse of the Iraqi army in Mosul has put the Kurdish forces, known as peshmerga, on high alert. The spokesman for the Peshmerga Ministry, Brigadier General Halgord Hekmat, told the Guardian on the phone that "the sudden collapse of the Iraqi army has left us with no option but to fill some areas with our forces because we can't have a security vacuum on our border". The spokesman said the Kurdish forces

ISIS NEWSPAPER MEDIA COVERAGE COMPARISON 63

did not want to engage the militants of Isis because no political decision has been made between the political leaders in the KRG and Baghdad.

The KRG is planning to set up a camp for the refugees who are leaving Mosul, with the help of the UN.

As Abu Abdullah waited in his car with three other relatives to be let through the checkpoint, he said: "We don't know what is going to happen, our future is uncertain, we won't go back unless the security services return to their posts."

With the Isis militants firmly in control of Iraq's second largest city, which stands less than 100km from Irbil, the capital of Kurdistan Region, Kurdish people feel worried about the threats the militants pose. Last September, a series of explosions rocked the main headquarters of the Kurdish security forces in Irbil, killing at least six officers.

A 36-year-old trader from Mosul, who was waiting to be let through with a group of other men, said: "I think it will become like Syria because now the militants have entered the city, the army will come and there will be war."

LOAD-DATE: June 11, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

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Article 4

Guardian.com.

June 11, 2014 Wednesday

Isis militants seize central Iraqi city of Tikrit

BYLINE: Fazel Hawramytheguardian.com

LENGTH: 1008 words

ABSTRACT

Fighters push forward after taking control of Mosul and abducting Turkish diplomats

FULL TEXT

Sunni jihadists pushed forward in a lightning offensive from northern Iraq on Wednesday, seizing the central city of Tikrit.

"All of Tikrit is in the hands of the militants," a police colonel said of the Salaheddin province capital, which lies roughly halfway between Baghdad and Mosul.

In a spectacular blow to Iraq's Shia-led government on Tuesday, **Isis**-led jihadists seized Mosul, its surrounding region of Nineveh and areas of Kirkuk and Salaheddin province. The assault by the group formerly known as al-Qaida in Iraq saw black banner-waving insurgents raid government buildings, push out security forces and capture military vehicles as residents fled from Iraq's second-largest city.

Iraq's parliamentary speaker, Osama al-Nujaifi, told journalists in Baghdad that the entire province of Nineveh had fallen under militant control.

Insurgents extended their control from Mosul to a region further south that includes Iraq's largest oil refinery. Sunni militants drove into the town of Baija, about 200km south of Mosul, late on Tuesday and torched the court house and local police station, after freeing prisoners. Militants seized the Turkish consulate in the Iraqi city of Mosul and kidnapped the head of the diplomatic mission, along with 24 staff members, as residents fled the city in their thousands.

"Isil members managed to kidnap the Turkish consul and 24 of his guards and assistants," a police colonel told AFP, referring to the jihadist group the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, also known as **Isis**. The colonel said he had spoken to the kidnappers, who said those held "are safe with us" and will be moved to a "safer place".

The kidnappings of the diplomats came a day after Turkey's consulate in Mosul said **Isis** fighters had seized 28 Turkish truck drivers. Turkish forces have targeted **Isis** in Syria, and warned it against attacking a shrine in the northern province of Aleppo that is under Turkish jurisdiction. **Isis** is the most powerful militant group in Iraq, and an important force in the rebellion against President Bashar al-Assad in Syria.

On Wednesday morning, several dozen Kurdish security force officers, both uniformed and plainclothed, manned a new checkpoint at Aski Kalak on the road between Mosul and Irbil, the capital of Iraqi Kurdistan. More than 100 cars - mostly with Nineveh number plates - had parked outside the checkpoint.

ISIS NEWSPAPER MEDIA COVERAGE COMPARISON 65

Several dozen people, including pregnant women and children, queued in the heat to pass through the layers of security personnel.

A 36-year-old trader from Mosul who was waiting to be let through with a group of other men told the Guardian: "I think it will become like Syria because now the militants have entered the city, the army will come and there will be war."

Atheel al-Nujaifi, the Ninevah provincial governor who has fled Mosul, said on Wednesday that Iraqi authorities are determined to recapture the northern city.

"Mosul is capable of getting back on its feet and getting rid of all the outsiders ... and we have a plan to restore security," he said. "We have taken practical steps in order to restore order ... by mobilising people into public committees that would retake the city."

Mosul, which before the exodus had a population of 1.5 million, is the capital of Nineveh, which along with the neighbouring Sunni-dominated Anbar province shares a long and porous border with Syria.

The takeover of Mosul prompted the US to voice deep concern about the situation, warning that Isis poses "a threat to the entire region".

There were no immediate estimates on how many people were killed in the assault, but an estimated 500,000 people have already fled the city, according to the International Organisation for Migration.

Iraq's foreign minister, Hoshyar Zebari, said the seizure of Mosul must push the country's leaders towards working together to tackle the "serious, mortal threat" facing Iraq.

Zebari made his remarks on the sidelines of a meeting of EU and Arab League foreign ministers in Athens. He said Iraqi troops and Kurdish forces in the country must join together to push the insurgents out of Mosul, though it was not clear what plans on cooperation - if any - were in the works.

"We can push back on the terrorists ... and there would be a closer cooperation between Baghdad and the Kurdistan regional government to work together and try to flush out these foreign fighters or elements who have disturbed the safety, the wellbeing of the population," he said.

Residents in Mosul told reporters on Wednesday that gunmen had gone door to door, reassuring locals they would not be harmed and urging civil servants to return to work. The situation appeared calm but tense, said the residents, who spoke on condition of anonymity out of concerns for their safety.

In an eastern area of the city, 34-year-old Ali Sameer said mosques there were calling on people to return to work, especially those in public services.

Mosul's fall was a heavy defeat for the Iraqi prime minister, Nouri al-Maliki, amid a widening insurgency by Isis.

The group has been advancing in both Iraq and neighbouring Syria, capturing territory in a campaign to set up a militant enclave straddling the border.

Maliki has pressed the Iraqi parliament to declare a state of emergency following the fall of Mosul.

Nujaifi accused senior security force commanders of providing Baghdad with false information about the situation in the city and said they should stand trial.

Speaking from Irbil, he said smaller armed groups had joined Isis during the fight for control of Mosul.

Elsewhere in Iraq on Wednesday, at least four people were killed and 10 others injured by a car bombing targeting Shia pilgrims on their way to the holy city of Karbala. Police said another car bomb killed three

ISIS NEWSPAPER MEDIA COVERAGE COMPARISON 66

people and wounded 12 in a town just south of Baghdad.

Medical officials confirmed the casualties for all attacks. All officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to speak to the media.

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Article 5

The Guardian - Final Edition

June 12, 2014 Thursday

Front: Troops flee as Islamist insurgents rampage through Iraq

BYLINE: Martin Chulov and Fazel Hawramy, Irbil

SECTION: GUARDIAN HOME PAGES; Pg. 1

LENGTH: 1069 words

Iraq is facing its gravest test since the US-led invasion more than a decade ago, after its army capitulated to Islamist insurgents who have seized four cities and pillaged military bases and banks, in a lightning campaign that seems poised to fuel a cross-border insurgency endangering the entire region.

The extent of the Iraqi army's defeat at the hands of militants from the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (**Isis**) became clear yesterday when officials in Baghdad conceded that insurgents had stripped the main army base in the northern city of Mosul of weapons, released hundreds of prisoners from the city's jails and may have seized up to \$480m in banknotes from the city's banks.

Iraqi officials told the Guardian that two divisions of Iraqi soldiers - roughly 30,000 men - simply turned and ran in the face of the assault by an insurgent force of just 800 fighters. **Isis** extremists roamed freely last night through the streets of Mosul, openly surprised at the ease with which they took Iraq's second largest city after three days of sporadic fighting.

Senior government officials in Baghdad were equally shocked, accusing the army of betrayal and claiming the sacking of the city was a strategic disaster that would imperil Iraq's borders.

The developments seriously undermine US claims to have established a uni-fied and competent military after more than a decade of training. The US invasion and occupation cost Washington close to a trillion dollars and the lives of more than 4,500 of its soldiers. It is also thought to have killed at least 100,000 Iraqis.

In a day of extraordinary developments, **Isis** gunmen also encircled the city of Deir el-Zour across the border in Syria, kidnapped 80 Turkish citizens in two mass abductions, made advances in two other provinces and claimed to have successfully smuggled a huge weapons haul to eastern Syria's Hassaka province.

Isis fighters rode unopposed into Saddam Hussein's birthplace of Tikrit. There, as in Mosul the day before, they quickly set up checkpoints, sacked government buildings and filled trucks with weapons and cash, some of which were quickly dispatched to Syria.

22-23= Militants also destroyed a police station in Baiji, site of Iraq's largest refinery. Local officials said the insurgents withdrew after local tribal leaders persuaded them not to seize the refinery and power stations. At least half a million residents of northern Iraq are reported to be on the move, with most attempting to flee to the Kurdish far north where border officials were overwhelmed and expecting refugee

numbers to increase sharply in coming days.

The UN said it was scrambling to deal with the crisis. Save the Children said: "We are witnessing one of the largest and swiftest mass movements of people in the world in recent memory. The majority of Iraqis fleeing Mosul had to escape in a matter of minutes."

As security unravelled in the country's north and centre, the radical Shia Islamic leader Moqtada al-Sadr threatened to reform the Mahdi army - a key protagonist in the sectarian war that nearly ripped Iraq apart in the wake of the US invasion. Militias had primacy nationwide during the worst of the war years and are once again ascendant as the Iraqi military's authority crumbles.

Foreign minister Hoshyar Zebari urged Kurdish and central government leaders to set aside their differences to deal with the "mortal threat" facing the country. Kurdish authorities were letting nearly all new arrivals enter in an early sign of closer than normal cooperation.

For a second day, the road between Mosul and Kirkuk was choked with cars full of families who described chaos in the city as troops beat an undignified retreat.

Abu Abdulla, a 55-year-old who had just arrived in Irbil, said: "Suddenly the army withdrew and there was no army nor police, just the militants; we don't know where they are from; they are masked."

So many soldiers had fled Mosul that the price of firearms plummeted as troops flooded the market with their service weapons, said Shirzad, a taxi driver at the border of Iraqi Kurdistan, who had been ferrying Iraqi army deserters from the checkpoint towards Kirkuk.

Isis released footage of large numbers of weapons and armoured military vehicles being received by members in eastern Syria, confirming fears that the looted weapons would fuel the insurgency on both sides of an increasingly irrelevant border. Sources in the Syrian city of Hassaka confirmed to the Guardian that large convoys of trucks carrying weapons arrived late on Tuesday and were met by a senior **Isis** figure, Omar al-Chechani.

Statements released by the group claimed that the assault on Mosul was the beginning of the end of the Sykes Picot agreement - the post-colonial settlement which in 1916 enshrined the nation states of Syria and Lebanon and influenced the drawing of the Jordan and Iraq borders. **Isis** commanders say they are fighting to destroy the post-Ottoman nation state borders and restore a caliphate that submits to fundamentalist Islamic law.

The group has been steadily building towards such an outcome, rampaging first through northern Syria and then back into Anbar province, the heartland of its earliest incarnation almost 10 years ago. Along the way, it has steadily accrued weapons and gained confidence, storming unopposed into towns and cities that were notionally protected by the best trained and armed military in the Arab world.

However, Mosul is by far its biggest prize so far: a gain that will seriously undermine Nour al-Maliki's efforts to be renominated as prime minister for a third term - and cripple the standing of the military, regarded for the past three years as the most important institution in the land. Any counter-offensive against **Isis** is expected to be led instead by Kurdish Peshmurga forces, which remain fiercely loyal to Kurdish leaders, but not to Baghdad. A spokesperson for the Peshmurga, Brigadier General Halgord Hekmat, told the Guardian that "the sudden collapse of the Iraqi army has left us with no option but to fill some areas with our forces because we can't have a security vacuum on our border". Maliki accused some senior military figures of "negligence" attempting to deflect blame for the rout. Additional reporting by Mona Mahmood, Naziha Baasiri, Saalim Rizk and Yousif al-Timimi

Caption:

ISIS NEWSPAPER MEDIA COVERAGE COMPARISON 69

800

The number of insurgents who defeated a force of 30,000 Iraqi soldiers in the country's second city of Mosul

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Article 6

The Guardian - Final Edition

June 12, 2014 Thursday

Iraq: Analysis: Accidental occupiers must now weigh Mosul as boon or burden

BYLINE: Jason Burke

SECTION: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 22

LENGTH: 791 words

The leaders of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (**Isis**) did not expect to seize the northern Iraqi city of Mosul when they attacked on Monday. The preferred tactic of the group in recent years has been to strike swiftly, cause significant casualties and damage, then withdraw. This time, the government forces were quicker on their feet. Though they outnumbered the militants by around 50 to one they fled, leaving **Isis** in control.

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of **Isis** since 2010, must now confront some of the most acute strategic questions facing Islamic militants over the last decades: whether or not to seize and hold territory, and how to deal with the people living there.

A rapid withdrawal from Mosul would indicate a belief that holding the city is either impossible or undesirable. This is still the most probable outcome. But the fact that, since January, **Isis** have captured and held three other cities in Iraq - Falluja, Ramadi, and last night Tikrit - as well as Raqqa in neighbouring Syria, indicates that 43-year-old Baghdadi may think twice before taking the vast booty from the Mosul operation and leaving.

His group's name, after all, makes an unequivocal statement of its aims. He leads "the Islamic state" in Iraq and Syria. This is very different from the goals suggested by the name al-Qaida, the group founded by Osama bin Laden and now run by his former deputy Ayman al-Zawahiri from Pakistan. The word al-Qaida can mean a physical base - such as the army camps in Mosul looted of their heavy weapons by **Isis** in recent days - but also a methodology or a maxim.

For a decade or more, Islamist strategists have bitterly debated whether they should seek to establish defensible safe havens, which can act as launchpads for further expansion, or focus on spectacular terrorist operations, such as 9/11, which mobilise entire populations and spark a global "leaderless jihad".

Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, a Jordanian who set up al-Qaida in Iraq in 2004 and controlled a significant part of the country's western Anbar province before being ousted and killed in 2006, chose the former strategy. Abu Musab al-Suri, a leading Syrian militant, who had seen the crushing of an Islamist uprising in Hama by Hafez al-Assad in 1982, was the main proponent of the latter strategy.

Zarqawi's group so alienated locals with their brutality and intolerance that they rebelled and drove the Islamists out. By the end of the last decade, this experience - and that of other groups elsewhere in the

Islamic world - appeared to have overcome the "war of position" strategy in favour of the less territorial "war of manoeuvre". Yet the lure of territory appears eternal.

Egyptian Islamists in the 1990s bemoaned their country's topography as unsuited to the establishment of a secure base from which to operate. In April 2004 senior militants from al-Qaida in Iraq met in Falluja "to review the situation" of their campaign. Abu Anas al-Shami, a Jordanian Palestinian cleric present at the meeting, wrote afterwards: "We realised that after a year of jihad we still had achieved nothing on the ground (and had) failed resoundingly."

Instead of relying on propaganda, he said, they needed a base that would be a springboard for further expansion once the immediate defensive phase of fighting, which they compared to the early trials faced by the prophet Mohammed with his band of followers, was over.

There was a personal motive too: "None of us had even a palm-sized lot of earth on which to reside, no refuge amongst his own," complained Abu Anas, who was killed in November 2004 when US troops retook Falluja.

When Islamist groups have seized urban areas, and tried to control local populations, the results have, by and large, been a disaster. In Yemen, al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula briefly held the regional capital of Jaar before being forced out by government troops. The Islamic Courts Union briefly took Mogadishu, the Somali capital. Chunks of Libyan and Syrian cities have fallen under Islamist control. The Taliban in Afghanistan had nominal control of five cities and lasted for five years.

But it is clear that most people realise very rapidly that Islamists make very poor municipal administrators - even if **Isis** have now stopped killing garbage collectors as collaborators. "The people of Mosul have voted with their feet," said analyst and regional expert James Denselow. Almost the entire population of the city appears to have fled.

A survey of the location of extremist-controlled zones across the Islamic world reveals that almost all are remote, often on frontiers beyond the reach of weak central governments, and of limited strategic value, with one glaring exception: the growing, cross-border Islamic State of Iraq and Syria.

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Article 7

The Guardian - Final Edition

June 13, 2014 Friday

Iraq turmoil pushes oil to 3-month high

BYLINE: Sean Farrell

SECTION: GUARDIAN FINANCIAL PAGES; Pg. 33

LENGTH: 377 words

Escalating violence in Iraq sent the price of oil to a three-month high as traders bet that advances made by insurgents could disrupt supplies from one of the world's largest oil exporters.

Brent crude futures rose 2% to \$112.12 a barrel, the highest price since early March. The initially calm response to Sunni militants' overrunning of Mosul, Iraq's second largest city, on Tuesday turned to alarm as **Isis**, the al-Qaida splinter group, announced its intention to take Baghdad.

The prospect of rising oil prices because of the turmoil in Iraq prompted concerns about wider price rises that could force central banks to raise interest rates to curb inflation. That could in turn put the brakes on economic recovery in the US and UK.

Chris Beauchamp, analyst at financial spread better IG, said: "The longer-term worry is the impact of higher oil prices on inflation readings for major economies.

"With inflation edging up in the US, there will be concerns that CPI (consumer prices index) growth might get out of hand and force the Federal Reserve to take action. This is the worst-case scenario, but markets are more than capable of focusing on that to the exclusion of all others."

Concerns that the Iraqi army, controlled by the Shia-led government, was collapsing grew after soldiers left the northern oil city of Kirkuk in the control of Kurdish forces. But most oil production and export activities are in the largely Shia south, where al-Qaida influence is minimal.

Iraq's oil minister, Abdul Kareem Luaibi, said the facilities, which produce 2.6m barrels a day, were "very, very safe".

The AA said the short-term effect on prices at pumps was likely to be small. It pointed out that when the US considered military action against Syria in September the price of petrol rose by just 1p a litre.

The AA said: "A short-term surge in the oil price no longer guarantees that pump prices will shoot up 8p or 10p a litre."

Opec predicted oil markets would be balanced in the second half of the year as extra production met growing demand.

Energy shares led the FTSE 100 on speculation that rising prices would feed through to profits. BG Group, which has no presence in Iraq, rose 2.5%. BP and Royal Dutch Shell, which do have operations in the country, gained 0.7% and 0.5%.

ISIS NEWSPAPER MEDIA COVERAGE COMPARISON 73

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Article 8

The Guardian - Final Edition

June 13, 2014 Friday

Comment: Toppling Saddam was right, but we pulled out too soon: Instead of blaming Blair and Bush for the chaos in Iraq, we should be sending forces back there to rescue democracy

BYLINE: John McTernan

SECTION: GUARDIAN COMMENT AND DEBATE PAGES; Pg. 38

LENGTH: 867 words

The Kurds like to tell a story about the discussions at the end of the Iraq war. As details of the new republic were being finalised, there was a row between the United States representatives and the Kurds of northern Iraq. Under no circumstances, the Americans insisted, would the Kurds be allowed to have an army now that the whole of Iraq was free and the no-fly zone was no longer needed. There was deadlock. At the 11th hour, the Kurds made a concession. All right, they said, we will have no army but we want to keep our "peshmerga". Fine, fine, the Americans agreed, and flew back to Baghdad from Erbil. It was only when they landed that they thought to ask what the meaning of the Kurdish word peshmerga actually was - "the guards of the Kurdish region" or, more simply, army.

These troops have protected Kurds from the type of lethal terrorism that has killed so many in the rest of Iraq. And it is to their protection that thousands of inhabitants of Mosul are fleeing now that their city has fallen to Islamist terrorists Isis. It is worth remembering that the one unequivocally and universally acknowledged good and lasting result of the fall of Saddam Hussein was the continuation of over 20 years of democracy in the Kurdish region. This is a beacon of hope not just to those fleeing Mosul but to the whole of Iraq, showing that unity of purpose, together with a confident and capable security force, can beat the terrorists. So what has gone wrong?

There has been an immediate bout of recriminations within Iraq. Government sources accuse the allies, primarily the US and the UK, of leaving them in a mess. British and American sources observe that the prime minister, Nouri al-Maliki, told them to leave back in 2011. Indeed, one would have been forgiven for believing that al-Maliki thought Iraq well shot of British forces after Moqtada al-Sadr's Mahdi army was cleared from Basra. Arguing past each other, the danger is that a fatal paralysis sets in.

The truth is that the US and UK left Iraq before it was ready, and they left for their own selfish, domestic political reasons. The ordinary Iraqis left behind have never abandoned hope - the turnout at the recent election was greater than the gridlocked Iraqi political class perhaps deserves, and showed a thirst for freedom. Supporting the Middle East's second full democracy after Israel is still the noble cause it was when I was in No 10 working for Tony Blair, and when I worked in the prime minister's office in Baghdad. Complex conflicts need strategic patience - the kind that won the cold war. It will take as long to rebuild Iraq as it took Saddam Hussein to destroy it.

The true scandal is the studious, indeed shameful, silence in Westminster. It is an appalling reflection on

ISIS NEWSPAPER MEDIA COVERAGE COMPARISON 75

the House of Commons that MPs - a majority of whom voted for the Iraq war - chose not to ask a single question about the fall of Mosul at prime minister's questions.

For all the studied outrage about the non-publication of the Chilcot report, the Iraq war is the Mrs Rochester of modern British politics. It is a faint blessing that Ed Miliband's leadership prevented the UK joining a military intervention in Syria - otherwise you'd be seeing Cameron and Hague in contortions as they faced two ways on **Isis**, depending on which regime they were attacking.

Our government is transfixed and immobilised by Tony Blair. First we get out of Iraq because it is the opposite of what he would do. Then we want to go into Syria because it is precisely what he would have done. Finally our leaders go silent because they have no idea what they think should actually be done.

Blair was denounced for his recent speech on Islamism but it stands out in retrospect for two things: the clarity of its analysis and the prescience of its title, "Why the Middle East matters". As he put it: "What is presently happening there still represents the biggest threat to global security of the early 21st century. The region . . . is in turmoil with no end in sight to the upheaval and any number of potential outcomes from the mildly optimistic to catastrophe."

There is no way that the UK can stand aside at Iraq's moment of greatest need. We have a responsibility to those whose democracy we created. Those who are not utterly silent are sullen, muttering that Blair and Bush caused all this, that there was no al-Qaida in Iraq before 2003. Let's be clear what that statement really is - bloodless, amoral pragmatism of the type Henry Kissinger excelled in. You might as well say: "Saddam may have been a fascist who inflicted genocide on the Kurds, but at least that kept Iran and the jihadists at bay." That remark would have the merit of being honest.

The truth is that if we do not act now, we will surely act later. Having protected the freedom and autonomy of the Kurds since the Kuwait war, we cannot abandon them now, or leave them dependent on protection from Iran. We have to go back to Iraq to rescue democracy. After all, as Margaret Thatcher said at the time of the Falklands, why else do we have armed forces?

John McTernan was Tony Blair's political secretary from 2004 to 2007 and advised the then Iraqi prime minister Iyad Allawi from 2004 to 2005

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LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

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Article 9:

Guardian.com.

June 12, 2014 Thursday

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi: Isis chief may be next leader at Al-Qaida Central

BYLINE: Peter Beaumonttheguardian.com

LENGTH: 882 words

ABSTRACT

Brutal and mysterious head of the Islamic State of Iraq in Syria is said to wear mask even when addressing his commanders

FULL TEXT

In the scheme of prominent jihadi leaders, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, leader of the Islamic State of Iraq in Syria (**Isis**), is among the most mysterious. And his mystique - for now at least - has only been burnished by his group's capture of the city of Mosul.

Described by some as "the new Osama bin Laden", he has a \$10m US bounty on his head, only two pictures of him are known to exist and, despite his nom de guerre, he was born not in Baghdad but 78 miles north, in Samarra.

Ambitious and violent, his reputation as a militant leader and tactician is as much a reflection of the disarray of other rebel groups in Syria and the poor showing of the Iraqi army this week.

Baghdadi is said to keep a low profile even among his own armed supporters, who amount, it is estimated, to some 7,000 fighters. He is not one for video-taped pronouncements; some reports claim - perhaps fancifully - that he wears a mask when addressing his commanders, earning him the nickname "the invisible sheikh".

What is known about Baghdadi - whose other aliases, according to US intelligence, include Abu Duaa and Dr Ibrahim Awwad Ibrahim Ali al-Badri al-Samarrai - come largely from jihadi websites that have described his career and accomplishments and his own statements.

Born in 1971 into a religious family in the city of Samarra, Baghdadi earned a doctorate in education from the University of Baghdad. There are competing versions of how he came to jihad.

One version suggests that he was already a militant jihadist during the time of Saddam Hussein. Others have pointed to the four years he was held at Camp Bucca as the root of his further radicalisation.

Another variation describes how, after the US invasion in 2003, he was quickly drawn into the emerging al-Qaida in Iraq under Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, getting involved first in smuggling foreign fighters into Iraq, then later as the "emir" of Rawa, a town near the Syrian border.

There, presiding over his own sharia court, he gained a reputation for brutality, publicly executing those suspected of aiding the US-led coalition forces - the same brutality that has become familiar to those living

in Syria under his group's control.

Baghdadi preached and taught at various mosques and apparently led several smaller militant groups before being promoted to a seat on the Majlis al-Shura (consultation council) of the mujahideen and judicial councils of the Islamic State in Iraq, who promoted Baghdadi to succeed the previous two leaders, Abu Omar al-Baghdadi and Abu Hamza al-Muhajir.

Perhaps learning from the lesson of one of his notorious predecessors in Iraq the Jordanian leader of al-Qaida in Iraq, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi - who was reprimanded in a letter by Al-Qaida Central for the excesses of his violence - Baghdadi's prominent supporters have tried to emphasise a leader open to discussions with tribal leaders.

None of this is entirely consistent with his rise to power in the leadership of al-Qaida in Iraq in 2010 - and later of **Isis** - during which he murdered prominent Sunnis as well as Shia civilians in bombings.

Indeed, part of the problem is that Baghdadi's character - as presented through the writings of jihadi scholars who support him - has been deliberately designed to make him more palatable and deliberately cast him, as some analysts have suggested, in the role of a "philosopher jihadi" perhaps to boost his credentials for leadership within the wider jihadi world.

One measure of the success of that tactic is how **Isis**, under Baghdadi, has become the go-to group for thousands of would-be foreign jihadi fighters who have flocked to his banner. Late last year a unilateral announcement was made that he was creating a new group that would be merged with a rival al-Qaida affiliate active in Syria, Jabhat al-Nusra. It was a pronouncement disputed both by Jabhat, and Al-Qaida Central's leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri, who ruled against Baghdadi.

Six months ago that was regarded as a moment of serious hubris. Today analysts are wondering whether, after the success of **Isis** in winning swathes of Iraq, Baghdadi has eclipsed Zawahiri at Al-Qaida Central. Whether that trajectory can continue will depend on the coming weeks and months.

The recent careers of jihadi field commanders have tended to be short after their rise to prominence and notoriety.

And, despite being from Iraq, Baghdadi and his followers will have to negotiate the same complex minefield of competing Sunni interests - including his current allies in Ba'athist insurgent groups, who are ideologically very different. These frictions have led to the downfall of a previous al-Qaida incarnation in Iraq.

That has already been prefigured in Syria where, this year, during his last big play to merge with Jabhat al-Nusra, other rebel groups complained that **Isis** and Baghdadi were more interested in consolidating its rule over captured towns as part of Baghdadi's plan to establish his own rule than fighting Assad.

There is at least no mystery about what Baghdadi wants. He believes that the world's Muslims should live under one Islamic state ruled by sharia law, the first step of which is establishing a caliphate spanning Syria and Iraq.

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Article 10

Guardian.com.

June 12, 2014 Thursday

Britain deploys humanitarian team in Iraq to assess civilians' needs

BYLINE: Patrick Wintourtheguardian.com

LENGTH: 553 words

ABSTRACT

UK ready to provide 'whatever help is needed' to assist those fleeing violent takeover of parts of country by Islamist extremists

FULL TEXT

Britain has deployed a humanitarian team in Iraq to assess the needs of civilians fleeing the violent takeover of parts of the country by Islamist extremists. The international development secretary, Justine Greening, said the UK stands ready to provide "whatever help is needed" to assist the hundreds of thousands of people believed to have fled their homes in northern Iraq.

But the foreign secretary, William Hague, restated the government's position that Britain will not get involved militarily in the struggle between the administration of prime minister Nouri al-Maliki and jihadists from the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (**Isis**) group.

The al-Qaida splinter group took control this week of Iraq's second city Mosul and Saddam Hussein's home city of Tikrit as part of an effort to set up a Sunni militant enclave across the Iraq/Syria border.

Hague told the BBC: "Britain won't be getting involved militarily in this situation. We are considering if we need to send humanitarian aid. We are very concerned about the hundreds of thousands of people who have been displaced. With our very large humanitarian budget, we may be in a position to assist with that and we are looking at that now.

"But we will not be getting involved militarily. We will support the United States in anything they decide to do. We are in consultation with them. But I stress that it is for the Iraqi leadership primarily to respond to this. This is a democratic country with an elected government with considerable resources and the prime responsibility rests with them in their own country to deal with this issue."

Greening revealed that UK experts were on the ground assessing the needs of those caught up in the fighting. She said: "Hundreds of thousands of people, including vulnerable women and children, are being forced to flee their homes as fighting spreads across northern Iraq.

"Last night I deployed a team of humanitarian experts to assess the situation on the ground and coordinate with our partners. We are monitoring the situation very closely and stand ready to provide whatever help is needed."

The deputy prime minister, Nick Clegg, made clear he would resist any call to send troops to the country, where the UK took part in a US-led invasion.

ISIS NEWSPAPER MEDIA COVERAGE COMPARISON 80

On LBC's Call Clegg phone-in, he also said Britain should not go back into Iraq and stressed his personal view is that the legality of the original invasion in 2003 was "always on shaky ground or ever proved".

He said "the porous border between Syria and Iraq is really becoming the absolute fulcrum for ever-more violent forces usurping the government of Iraq".

Clegg said: "It is a very dangerous situation", adding it underlined "the knock-on effects of this very bloody civil war in Syria". He said the best way to restore peace is through the politics and a settlement in Syria, but added he had no perfectly packaged solution.

Clegg said the UK government would look at any appeal for help from the Iraqi government, but added: "If the invasion of Iraq has in the first place contributed to the instability should we now be going back in to sort it? I don't think if we have made one mistake we repeat it by making a second one."

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Article 11

Guardian.com.

June 12, 2014 Thursday

Iraqi Kurdish forces take Kirkuk as Isis sets its sights on Baghdad

BYLINE: Peter Beaumonttheguardian.com

LENGTH: 833 words

ABSTRACT

Major oil city is controlled by peshmerga fighters after central government's army abandons posts in a rapid collapse

FULL TEXT

The crisis in Iraq escalated rapidly on Thursday as Iraqi Kurdish forces took control of key military installations in the major oil city of Kirkuk and the Sunni jihadi group **Isis** revealed its intention to move on Baghdad and cities in the southern Shia heartland.

Kurdish peshmerga fighters entered Kirkuk after the central government's army abandoned its posts in a rapid collapse during which it lost control of much of the country's north.

Iraq has been fragile since the 2003 US-led invasion and the latest developments have raised fears that it is in danger of splintering along ethnic and sectarian lines.

Iraq has a Shia majority, with a substantial Sunni minority concentrated in Baghdad and the provinces north and west, who have long complained of being disenfranchised. Iraqi Kurds enjoy a large degree of autonomy and self-government in the north-east but have long coveted Kirkuk, a city with huge oil reserves which they regard as their historical capital.

In Kirkuk, truckloads of peshmerga fighters patrolled the streets, but sporadic clashes continued between Kurdish forces and **Isis** gunmen on the outskirts of the city. A Kurdish minister responsible for regional security forces survived a bomb blast as he drove to the city after visiting peshmerga units in the surrounding region, AFP reported. Since Tuesday, black-clad **Isis** fighters have seized Iraq's second biggest city, Mosul, and Tikrit, hometown of the former dictator Saddam Hussein, as well as other towns and cities north of Baghdad. They continued their lightning advance on Thursday, moving into towns just an hour's drive from the capital.

About 500,000 people have fled Mosul, home to 2 million, and the surrounding province, many seeking safety in autonomous Kurdistan.

Isis's spokesman, Abu Mohammed al-Adnani, said on Thursday that the group's fighters intended to take the southern cities of Kerbala and Najaf, which hold two of the holiest shrines for Shia Muslims.

US officials have said they are considering ways to help the Iraqi government even as it emerged that the Obama administration had rebuffed a secret request from the Iraqi prime minister, Nouri al-Maliki, to bomb

Isis positions.

Reports from Iraq have painted a confused picture of a rapidly developing situation with fighting reported in a number of key locations on Wednesday night and on Thursday, including on the outskirts of the city of Samarra, where government officials said Isis fighters had been driven back.

According to Army Staff Lieutenant General Sabah al-Fatlawi, quoted by Agence France-Presse, "elite forces" backed by air strikes pushed back a "fierce attack by Isis fighters who then bypassed the city heading towards Baghdad".

Complicating the picture of the past few days were emerging suggestions that other Sunni insurgent groups, including Ba'ath nationalists, supporters of the executed Saddam, had played a role in the series of stunning setbacks for the Iraqi military.

The sudden collapse of the Iraqi army has raised international concerns about a rapidly widening regional crisis that has implications for Iraq's powerful neighbours, Iran and Turkey.

Iran's president, Hassan Rouhani, warned in a televised address on Thursday that Iran would combat the "violence and terrorism" of Sunni extremists in Iraq. The foreign minister, Mohammad Javad Zarif, offered Iran's support for Iraq's "fight against terrorism" during a phone call with his Iraqi counterpart, Iranian state TV reported.

In Baghdad residents described panic buying and rising fear.

A meeting of MPs called by Maliki to vote on introducing an emergency law was cancelled after insufficient MPs attended.

The Iraqi leader - a Shia whose authoritarian and sectarian policies have been blamed by many as the root cause of the country's crisis - is trying to hold on to power after indecisive elections in April. The mounting sense of anxiety in the capital followed a statement by a spokesman for Isis who said the group had scores to settle with Maliki's government.

Hundreds of young men crowded in front of the main army recruiting centre in Baghdad on Thursday after authorities urged Iraqis to help battle the insurgents.

The army of the Shia-led government in Baghdad has essentially fled in the face of the onslaught, abandoning buildings and weapons to the fighters who aim to create a strict Sunni caliphate on both sides of the Iraq-Syria border.

In Tikrit, militants have set up military councils to run the towns they captured, residents said. "They came in hundreds to my town and said they are not here for blood or revenge but they seek reforms and to impose justice," said a tribal figure from the town of Alam, north of Tikrit. "They picked a retired general to run the town. 'Our final destination will be Baghdad, the decisive battle will be there,' that's what their leader of the militants group kept repeating."

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Article 12

The Guardian - Final Edition

June 13, 2014 Friday

Iraq turmoil pushes oil to 3-month high

BYLINE: Sean Farrell

SECTION: GUARDIAN FINANCIAL PAGES; Pg. 33

LENGTH: 377 words

Escalating violence in Iraq sent the price of oil to a three-month high as traders bet that advances made by insurgents could disrupt supplies from one of the world's largest oil exporters.

Brent crude futures rose 2% to \$112.12 a barrel, the highest price since early March. The initially calm response to Sunni militants' overrunning of Mosul, Iraq's second largest city, on Tuesday turned to alarm as **Isis**, the al-Qaida splinter group, announced its intention to take Baghdad.

The prospect of rising oil prices because of the turmoil in Iraq prompted concerns about wider price rises that could force central banks to raise interest rates to curb inflation. That could in turn put the brakes on economic recovery in the US and UK.

Chris Beauchamp, analyst at financial spread better IG, said: "The longer-term worry is the impact of higher oil prices on inflation readings for major economies.

"With inflation edging up in the US, there will be concerns that CPI (consumer prices index) growth might get out of hand and force the Federal Reserve to take action. This is the worst-case scenario, but markets are more than capable of focusing on that to the exclusion of all others."

Concerns that the Iraqi army, controlled by the Shia-led government, was collapsing grew after soldiers left the northern oil city of Kirkuk in the control of Kurdish forces. But most oil production and export activities are in the largely Shia south, where al-Qaida influence is minimal.

Iraq's oil minister, Abdul Kareem Luaibi, said the facilities, which produce 2.6m barrels a day, were "very, very safe".

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ISIS NEWSPAPER MEDIA COVERAGE COMPARISON 85

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Article 13

The Guardian

June 13, 2014 Friday

Advances by Iraq militants send oil price soaring to three-month high

BYLINE: Sean Farrell

SECTION: GUARDIAN FINANCIAL PAGES; Pg. 33

LENGTH: 450 words

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Chris Beauchamp, analyst at financial spread better IG, said: "The longer-term worry is the impact of higher oil prices on inflation readings for major economies.

"With inflation edging up in the US there will be concerns that CPI (consumer price index) growth might get out of hand and force the Federal Reserve to take action. This is the worst-case scenario, but markets are more than capable of focusing on that to the exclusion of all others."

Concerns that the Iraqi army, controlled by the Shi'ite-led government in Baghdad, was collapsing grew after soldiers left the northern oil city of Kirkuk in the control of Kurdish forces. However, most of Iraq's oil production and export activities are in the largely Shi'ite south of the country, where al-Qaida influence is minimal.

Iraq's oil minister, Abdul Kareem Luaibi, said the facilities, which produce about 2.6m barrels a day, were "very, very safe".

The AA advised motorists not to panic and said the short-term effect on prices at pumps was likely to be small. It pointed out that when the US considered military action against Syria in September the price of petrol rose by just 1p a litre. Unleaded petrol costs about 130p per litre in the UK, with diesel costing 137p per litre.

The AA said: "A short-term surge in the oil price no longer guarantees that pump prices will shoot up 8p or 10p a litre as they did during 2011 to 2013."

Despite the volatility in the market, Opec predicted oil markets would be balanced in the second half of the year as extra production met growing demand.

Energy shares led the FTSE 100 index on speculation that rising prices would feed through to profits. BG

ISIS NEWSPAPER MEDIA COVERAGE COMPARISON 87

Group, which does not have a presence in Iraq, rose 2.5%. BP and Royal Dutch Shell, which have operations in the country, gained 0.7% and 0.5% respectively.

The turmoil in Iraq also prompted buying of gold and silver, whose prices had collapsed as fears of a financial meltdown receded and hopes of recovery grew.

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LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

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Article 14

The Guardian

June 13, 2014 Friday

Comment: Toppling Saddam was right, but we pulled out too soon: Instead of blaming Blair and Bush for the chaos in Iraq, we should be sending forces back there to rescue democracy

BYLINE: John McTernan

SECTION: GUARDIAN COMMENT AND DEBATE PAGES; Pg. 38

LENGTH: 867 words

The Kurds like to tell a story about the discussions at the end of the Iraq war. As details of the new republic were being finalised, there was a row between the United States representatives and the Kurds of northern Iraq. Under no circumstances, the Americans insisted, would the Kurds be allowed to have an army now that the whole of Iraq was free and the no-fly zone was no longer needed. There was deadlock. At the 11th hour, the Kurds made a concession. All right, they said, we will have no army but we want to keep our "peshmerga". Fine, fine, the Americans agreed, and flew back to Baghdad from Erbil. It was only when they landed that they thought to ask what the meaning of the Kurdish word peshmerga actually was - "the guards of the Kurdish region" or, more simply, army.

These troops have protected Kurds from the type of lethal terrorism that has killed so many in the rest of Iraq. And it is to their protection that thousands of inhabitants of Mosul are fleeing now that their city has fallen to Islamist terrorists **Isis**. It is worth remembering that the one unequivocally and universally acknowledged good and lasting result of the fall of Saddam Hussein was the continuation of over 20 years of democracy in the Kurdish region. This is a beacon of hope not just to those fleeing Mosul but to the whole of Iraq, showing that unity of purpose, together with a confident and capable security force, can beat the terrorists. So what has gone wrong?

There has been an immediate bout of recriminations within Iraq. Government sources accuse the allies, primarily the US and the UK, of leaving them in a mess. British and American sources observe that the prime minister, Nouri al-Maliki, told them to leave back in 2011. Indeed, one would have been forgiven for believing that al-Maliki thought Iraq well shot of British forces after Moqtada al-Sadr's Mahdi army was cleared from Basra. Arguing past each other, the danger is that a fatal paralysis sets in.

The truth is that the US and UK left Iraq before it was ready, and they left for their own selfish, domestic political reasons. The ordinary Iraqis left behind have never abandoned hope - the turnout at the recent election was greater than the gridlocked Iraqi political class perhaps deserves, and showed a thirst for freedom. Supporting the Middle East's second full democracy after Israel is still the noble cause it was when I was in No 10 working for Tony Blair, and when I worked in the prime minister's office in Baghdad. Complex conflicts need strategic patience - the kind that won the cold war. It will take as least as long to rebuild Iraq as it took Saddam Hussein to destroy it.

The true scandal is the studious, indeed shameful, silence in Westminster. It is an appalling reflection on the House of Commons that MPs - a majority of whom voted for the Iraq war - chose not to ask a single question about the fall of Mosul at prime minister's questions.

For all the studied outrage about the non-publication of the Chilcot report, the Iraq war is the Mrs Rochester of modern British politics. It is a faint blessing that Ed Miliband's leadership prevented the UK joining a military intervention in Syria - otherwise you'd be seeing Cameron and Hague in contortions as they faced two ways on Isis, depending on which regime they were attacking.

Our government is transfixed and immobilised by Tony Blair. First we get out of Iraq because it is the opposite of what he would do. Then we want to go into Syria because it is precisely what he would have done. Finally our leaders go silent because they have no idea what they think should actually be done.

Blair was denounced for his recent speech on Islamism but it stands out in retrospect for two things: the clarity of its analysis and the prescience of its title, "Why the Middle East matters". As he put it: "What is presently happening there still represents the biggest threat to global security of the early 21st century. The region . . . is in turmoil with no end in sight to the upheaval and any number of potential outcomes from the mildly optimistic to catastrophe."

There is no way that the UK can stand aside at Iraq's moment of greatest need. We have a responsibility to those whose democracy we created. Those who are not utterly silent are sullen, muttering that Blair and Bush caused all this, that there was no al-Qaida in Iraq before 2003. Let's be clear what that statement really is - bloodless, amoral pragmatism of the type Henry Kissinger excelled in. You might as well say: "Saddam may have been a fascist who inflicted genocide on the Kurds, but at least that kept Iran and the jihadists at bay." That remark would have the merit of being honest.

The truth is that if we do not act now, we will surely act later. Having protected the freedom and autonomy of the Kurds since the Kuwait war, we cannot abandon them now, or leave them dependent on protection from Iran. We have to go back to Iraq to rescue democracy. After all, as Margaret Thatcher said at the time of the Falklands, why else do we have armed forces?

John McTernan was Tony Blair's political secretary from 2004 to 2007 and advised the then Iraqi prime minister Iyad Allawi from 2004 to 2005

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Article 15

Guardian.com.

June 11, 2014 Wednesday

Hillary Clinton's apology for Iraq vote is just a sop to the masses

BYLINE: Anne Perkinstheguardian.com

LENGTH: 681 words

ABSTRACT

Anne Perkins: First thoughts: Clinton's memoir-cum-manifesto issues the on-trend grovelling that politicians believe a braying public now demand

FULL TEXT

Perhaps as many as 150,000 men, women and children have fled Mosul in the past few days as **Isis** fighters take control of Iraq's second city. All the grit and stoicism invested in rebuilding their lives over the past 10 years has gone for nothing. Elsewhere, the death toll in suicide bombings in the country has been running at around 1,000 a month. Violence has returned to levels not seen since 2007. The whole region is plunged into instability.

For her small contribution to triggering this decade of human catastrophe, of terrible loss and suffering, Hillary Clinton has now said sorry.

To be precise, in the memoir-cum-manifesto that has just been published, called, appropriately enough, *Hard Choices*, what she says of the Iraq vote in 2002 is: "I got it wrong. Plain and simple."

On one level, this is simply a piece of housekeeping, a cushion-plumping moment on the way to a pitch for the presidency in 2016. Her senatorial vote - which might conceivably also have been influenced by presidential ambition - was a mark against her in the contest with Obama in 2008. It was important, but it hardly changed the balance. Move on.

But on another, it is one more stride down the long and dusty road of obfuscated political communication, one more example of how the appearance of reaching out is only a sleight of hand.

Apologising for predecessors' failures has become an easy hit. David Cameron is particularly good at it. He has apologised for the Amritsar massacre, the Mid-Stafford hospital scandal, the Hillsborough cover-up and most memorably and effectively for Bloody Sunday. He does it so gracefully that it is easy to forget that for the state to admit mistakes at all is a very 21st century development.

It's not saying sorry that marks out Clinton's apology different. It's the fact that she is saying sorry for something for which she bears a degree, small as it is, of culpability. And that her calculation is that by saying sorry, she will not be consigned to the footnotes of Washington history but instead be released, shriven, to continue her career in politics, possibly ascending to its summit.

But what exactly is she saying sorry for? She acted in good faith, as she says. Well, obviously. Contrary to widespread sentiment, no politician sets out to precipitate disaster (although avoiding it may not always

ISIS NEWSPAPER MEDIA COVERAGE COMPARISON 91

play a large enough part in their calculations). So she is apologising for a misjudgment. Although she is not liable, she is acknowledging her own fallibility.

The consequences of Iraq are far less terrible for us than for Iraqis, but they are bad enough. It remains an active force in politics. Even on BBC Radio 4's Today programme this morning, David Miliband, whose ambitions partly foundered on his support for the war, reiterated that he wouldn't vote for it now. It underlies the real purpose of the interminable Chilcot process, which is to force Tony Blair to admit he was wrong. There is an appetite for revenge, a longing to escape at least from the moral consequences of a disastrous error by finding someone to blame. It's a basic human instinct, a more elevated version of shouting at the driver of the car you've just smashed into.

It's the Iraq experience that began the process of transforming the ordinary human appetite for disrespecting politicians into an almost unrestrained desire to give them a good kicking, which shot into overdrive after the expenses scandal. We are no longer prepared to wait until an election to kick MPs out of the Commons. We want to make them grovel.

And then what? Once, politicians only apologised for a misjudgment of national consequence - like the invasion of the Falklands - and the apology led directly, unhesitatingly, to resignation. Now, an apology risks becoming a sop, a bit of red meat flung out to assuage the appetite of the mob. And it will be about as meaningful as the anodyne formula of the operator at the customer services centre.

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Article 16

Guardian.com.

June 11, 2014 Wednesday

Security collapse in Iraqi city of Mosul is not solely Maliki's responsibility

BYLINE: Simon Tisdalltheguardian.com

LENGTH: 1002 words

ABSTRACT

The fact Islamist extremists have seized control of much of Iraq's second biggest city reflects badly on Obama's administration

FULL TEXT

Nouri al-Maliki, Iraq's tough-guy prime minister, bears much responsibility for the security collapse in Mosul and surrounding areas in the face of this week's hard-driving Islamist military offensive. But others must take their share of the blame, including the Obama administration, which appears once again to be asleep at the wheel.

The antagonistic attitude of Maliki's Shia Muslim-led government towards the Sunni minority in central and eastern Iraq lies at the heart of the current crisis. Sunnis in Anbar province, which includes the flashpoint cities of Fallujah and Ramadi, have long complained the government in Baghdad ignores their interests and concerns.

Following an upsurge in sectarian, inter-communal violence that gathered pace through 2013, when the UN says more than 8,800 people died, Maliki ordered an army offensive in Anbar on 23 December (using units from the Shia south). He claimed all those backing the Sunni protest movement were, in effect, part of al-Qaida.

The prime minister apparently hoped to assert his authority before the general elections in April. But his heavy-handed tactics only served to unite more moderate tribal leaders, who famously backed the US military "surge" in Anbar in 2007, with the Islamist hardliners.

"Most tribes issued calls to arms and demanded the withdrawal of all federal armed forces from the province. Heavy fighting soon followed, the army withdrew personnel from all cities, and convoys of heavily-armed **Isis** (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) militants streamed into Ramadi and Fallujah," said Brookings analyst Charles Lister.

Despite losing de facto control of Anbar and a subsequent loss of votes in the elections, Maliki has spent recent weeks trying to stitch together a coalition government to keep him in power for a third consecutive term. **Isis** spent the time expanding and strengthening its position in neighbouring Nineveh province, of which Mosul is the capital.

Thus the **Isis** takeover of the city and surrounding towns and villages was sudden but hardly a surprise, according to regional analysts. It had been in the making for months.

Despite Maliki's claims, **Isis** is separate from and to some extent a rival to al-Qaida, whose affiliates it has clashed with in Syria. Veteran commentator Patrick Cockburn said: "**Isis** has taken over from al-Qaida as the most powerful and effective extreme jihadi group in the world. It now controls or can operate with impunity in a great stretch of territory in western Iraq and eastern Syria, making it militarily the most successful jihadi movement ever."

Maliki's divisive politics have made a big contribution to this outcome. Following the 2011 Sunni uprising in Syria, "peaceful demonstrations [by Iraqi Sunnis] from the end of 2012 won few concessions, with Iraq's Shia-dominated government convinced that the protesters wanted not reform but a revolution returning their community to power. The 5 or 6 million Iraqi Sunni became more alienated and sympathetic towards armed action by **Isis**," Cockburn said.

The chaotic flight of Iraqi security forces as the militants closed in on the centre of Mosul has raised understandable concerns about the government's grip on other parts of the country. Predictions by opponents of the American-led Iraq invasion in 2003 that Iraq could end up being split three ways between its Shia, Sunni and Kurdish areas now look closer than ever to being realised.

This is not the first time security in Mosul has imploded. During the occupation that followed Saddam Hussein's overthrow, the US military described the city as the last stronghold of al-Qaida and a focal point for foreign fighters coming to wage jihad against western forces. In 2004, thousands of police officers fled their posts rather than combat Sunni insurgents, leaving US and Kurdish forces to fight to keep control of the city.

But this latest collapse reflects badly on the Obama administration, which signed a series of security pacts, including a strategic framework agreement, with the Maliki government when US troops finally left in 2011. The idea (in a worrying echo of Afghanistan) was that Washington would help Baghdad to build an effective, well-trained national army.

Since then, however, the US has been busy turning oil-rich Iraq into a lucrative market for American arms sales while doing nothing much, in practical terms, about the looming Islamist threat. These advanced weapons were intended to bolster government forces. Now some of them could soon fall into the hands of the Islamists.

"Our shipments have included delivery of 300 Hellfire missiles, millions of rounds of small arms fire, thousands of rounds of tank ammunition, helicopter-fired rockets, machine guns, grenades, sniper rifles, M16 and M4 rifles to the Iraqi security agencies," the White House said this week. In January, Congress gave a green light to the sale of 24 Apache attack helicopters in a deal valued at \$6.2bn.

This US policy of arming the locals is now looking dangerously inept, to say the least. A recent offer by Iran, an ally of Iraq's government in the region-wide Shia-Sunni stand-off, to help Maliki combat extremism highlighted the extent to which outside forces have taken advantage of the growing security vacuum in Iraq and Syria. Tehran's involvement is galling for Washington, which fought (in theory at least) for eight years to create a unified, pro-western democracy in Iraq despite subversive Iranian meddling.

But Obama has made it clear, most recently in his West Point speech, that he is deeply disinterested in sending troops back to combat theatres in the Middle East, or anywhere else for that matter - a position enthusiastically applauded in Tehran. The bottom-line message from Washington to the hapless Maliki, as to Syria's pro-western opposition groups, is that when push comes to shove, as it did this week, you are on your own.

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Article 17

Guardian.com.

June 11, 2014 Wednesday

Isis: too extreme even for al-Qaida

BYLINE: Mark Trantheguardian.com

LENGTH: 712 words

ABSTRACT

The Islamic State of Iraq in Syria has a reputation for being even more brutal than the main terror group of inspiration for jihadis

FULL TEXT

The Islamic State of Iraq in Syria (**Isis**) is so hardline that it was disavowed by al-Qaida's leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri.

Led by an Iraqi called Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, **Isis** was originally an al-Qaida group in Iraq, the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI). As the Syrian civil war intensified, its involvement in the conflict was indirect at first. Abu Muhammad al-Joulani, an ISI member, established Jabhat al-Jabhat al-Nusra in mid-2011, which became the main jihadi group in the Syrian war. Joulani received support and funding from ISI and Baghdadi.

But Baghdadi sought to gain influence over the increasingly powerful Jabhat al-Nusra by directly expanding ISI's operations into Syria, forming **Isis** in April last year. Differences over ideology and strategy soon led to bitter infighting. **Isis** turned out to be too extreme and brutal not just for Jabhat al-Nusra, but for al-Qaida itself, leading to a public repudiation by Zawahiri himself, who last month called on **Isis** to leave Syria and return to Iraq.

By then **Isis**, also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, had lost ground in Syria to Jabhat al-Nusra and its allies. But any notion that **Isis** is a spent force has been shattered by its capture of Mosul, Iraq's second largest city. **Isis** now controls territory that stretches from the eastern edge of Aleppo, Syria to Falluja in western Iraq and now the northern city of Mosul.

Isis has shown its ruthlessness and brutality in the areas of Syria under its control, eastern Aleppo and the city of Raqqa. It was blamed for the February killing of a founding member of the Salafi group Ahrar al-Sham and the group's leader in Aleppo, Muhammad Bahaiah, who had close connections with senior al-Qaida leaders. It was also blamed for the assassination of Jabhat al-Nusra's leader in the Idlib governorate, Abu Muahmmad al-Ansari, along with his wife, children and relatives. It ordered the crucifixion of a man accused of murder; other forms of punishment include beheadings and amputations.

Despite its brutal reputation, **Isis** has shown flexibility as well in Iraq to win over disaffected Sunnis in the north against the Shia-led government of Nouri al-Maliki. Mushreq Abbas, who writes on Iraq for the Al-Monitor website, describes how Baghdadi has presented himself as an alternative to the Sunni political class tribal leaders and moderate clerics who oppose central government.

"Until now, Baghdadi's fighters have not harmed religious men ... When the tribes refused to raise **Isis** banners in Falluja, he ordered his fighters not to raise the banner and try to co-opt the fighters of armed groups, clans or religious men," says Abbas.

Unlike the Iraqi troops facing them **Isis** fighters are highly motivated, battle hardened and well-equipped, analysts say.

"It also runs the equivalent of a state. It has all the trappings of a state, just not an internationally recognised one," Douglas Ollivant of the New America Foundation, told the Washington Post.

It runs courts, schools and services, flying its black-and-white flag over every facility it controls. In Raqqa, it even started a consumer protection authority for food standards.

Isis has bolstered its strength by recruiting thousands of foreign volunteers in Syria, some from Europe and the US and is estimated to have more than 10,000 men under its control. As for resources it counts of large extortion networks in Mosul that predates the US withdrawal and in February it seized control of the financially valuable Conoco gas field, said to be worth hundreds of thousands of dollars a week, from Jabhat al-Nusra in Deir Ezzor, in Syria.

Now that it has captured Mosul, **Isis** is in an even stronger position to bolster its claim that it is the leading jihadi group.

"**Isis** now presents itself as an ideologically superior alternative to al-Qaida within the jihadi community and it has publicly challenged the legitimacy of al-Qaida leader Ayman al-Zawahiri," said Charles Lister, a visiting fellow at the Brookings Institution, Doha, in a paper last month. "As such it has increasingly become a transnational movement with immediate objectives far beyond Iraq and Syria."

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Article 18

The Guardian - Final Edition

June 13, 2014 Friday

Comment: A nightmare foretold: To those who champion more intervention we say: the calamity of Iraq must never be repeated

BYLINE: Owen Jones

SECTION: GUARDIAN COMMENT AND DEBATE PAGES; Pg. 38

LENGTH: 713 words

I have encountered no sense of vindication, no "I told you so", among veterans of the anti-war protest of 15 February 2003 in response to the events in Iraq. Despair, yes, but above all else bitterness - that we were unable to stop one of the greatest calamities of modern times, that warnings which were dismissed as hyperbole now look like understatements, that countless lives (literally - no one counts them) have been lost, and will continue to be so for many years to come.

In July 2002 the Guardian warned that Britain was "sleepwalking to war". Blair's commitment to invade come what may - which the Chilcot inquiry (when it is finally published) will either confirm or whitewash - is now established. By September 2002, the inevitability had sunk in. In the first demonstration, hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets in London on 27 September - me and my grandfather among them - full of determination and foreboding. Three weeks earlier Amr Moussa, then secretary general of the Arab League, warned that the Iraq war would "open the gates of hell".

I remember the premature triumphalism and hubris of the cheerleaders in the run-up. In my first year at university, one of Britain's most senior army officers came to talk to students as the guest of Lord Butler, who would later lead one of the inquiries into the war. When Iraq was invaded by western forces, he told us solemnly, 99% of the Iraqi population would be on the streets, throwing flowers at advancing troops. The other 1% would still be cowering at home, too scared to celebrate, but would be quickly reassured. Men such as this helped direct the entire war effort. And then there were those who were not listened to, such as former UN chief weapons inspector Scott Ritter, who warned in 2002 that "since 1998 Iraq has been fundamentally disarmed".

The catastrophic results of the Iraq invasion are often portrayed as having been impossible to predict, and only inevitable with the benefit of hindsight. If only to prevent future calamities from happening, this is a myth that needs to be dispelled. The very fact the demonstration on that chilly February day in 2003 was the biggest Britain had ever seen is testament to the fact that disaster seemed inevitable to many people.

In a way, opponents of the war were wrong. We were wrong because however disastrous we thought the consequences were likely to be, the reality has been worse. The US massacres in Fallujah in the immediate aftermath of the war, which helped radicalise the Sunni population, culminating in an assault on the city with white phosphorus. The beheadings, the kidnappings and hostage videos, the car bombs, the IEDs, the Sunni and Shia insurgencies, the torture declared by the UN in 2006 to be worse than that under Saddam Hussein, the bodies with their hands and feet bound and dumped in rivers, the escalating sectarian

slaughter, the millions of displaced civilians, and the hundreds of thousands who died: it has been one never-ending blur of horror since 2003.

The invasion was justified as an indispensable part of the struggle against al-Qaida. Well, to be fair, large swaths of Iraq have not been handed over to al-Qaida: they are now run by **Isis**, a group purged from al-Qaida for being too extreme. Iraq and Syria are trapped in a bloody feedback loop: the growth of **Isis** in Iraq helped corrupt the Syrian rebellion, and now the Syrian insurgency has fuelled the breakdown of Iraq. Those who believe the west should have armed Syria's rebels should consider the fact that **Isis** reportedly raided an arms depot in Syria which was stocked with CIA help. Support from western-backed dictatorships in Saudi Arabia and Qatar has fuelled the Syrian extremists now spilling over into Iraq.

Such is the brutal sectarianism of Iraq's Shia prime minister Nouri al-Maliki that some Mosul residents are reported to be fleeing in fear of an army counterattack; other Mosul residents are even welcoming **Isis** as a liberation.

What hope, then, for the future? It is difficult to see how the continuing collapse of Iraq can be avoided - the more informed the expert, the more despairing they seem to be. There will be those who champion more western intervention. But whatever happens, this calamity must never be allowed to happen again.

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Article 19

Guardian.com.

June 11, 2014 Wednesday

A Thirty Years War In Iraq and Syria?

BYLINE: Richard Norton-Taylortheguardian.com

LENGTH: 680 words

ABSTRACT

∑ Mosul attacks reveal growing strength of al-Qaeda militancy∑ No effective military force to counter it∑
A UN summit could help

FULL TEXT

The capture by Sunni militants with the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (**Isis**) of key areas of Mosul should be a loud wake-up call for those leaders - in the west, the east, and in between - desperately hoping all they need to do is provide governments with weapons and money, and sit back.

The US has pumped billions of dollars of aid into Iraq's military. Yet US-trained Iraqi forces quickly abandoned their posts as **Isis** militia took over military bases, police stations, and the airport, capturing US military equipment, including Humvees, taking much of it across the border into Syria.

A civil war in Iraq will intensify unless the Iraqi prime minister, the beneficiary of so much US aid (and more is on its way) does more to embrace Iraq's Sunni population. Mosul is Iraq's second largest city, in effect the Sunni capital of Iraq. **Isis** rebels are operating freely across the Iraqi and Syrian borders, fighting the Maliki government in Baghdad and the Assad government in Damascus.

Isis wants to impose some kind of Islamic emirate across both countries.**Isis**, which grew out of al-Qaeda in Iraq, already controls parts of Ramadi, the capital of Iraq's Anbar province, and the city of Falluja.

"This is for the Iraqi security forces and for the Iraqi government to deal with," said Rear Admiral John Kirby, the Pentagon's press secretary, on Tuesday.

There is no appetite, military, political, or public, for sending US troops back to Iraq. Yet opposition in the US Congress, concerned that Maliki might use them against his political opponents, has delayed the supply of heavy weapons, including Apache helicopters, to Iraq.

This is all the fallout from the 2003 invasion of Iraq, and the accompanying decision to purge Iraq's entire military and government structure. Two months ago we witnessed the extraordinary spectacle of Tony Blair saying on the one hand that the failure to intervene in Syria - a direct result of the public and political response in the west to the invasion of Iraq - was a historic mistake, yet adding that Britain and other western countries should now join forces with Vladimir Putin and others in a common cause in a "titanic" struggle against radical Islam.

"We have to elevate the issue of religious extremism to the top of the agenda," he said. "All over the world the challenge of defeating this ideology requires active and sustained engagement."

ISIS NEWSPAPER MEDIA COVERAGE COMPARISON 100

The next test is Afghanistan. Despite the huge amounts of money poured into that country, by Britain as well as the US, there is little evidence that Afghan forces will be up to the job of protecting the government once all foreign forces give up their combat role at the end of this year (though Barack Obama has said some 10,000 US troops would remain in Afghanistan in a "support" role).

Heavily-armed Islamist groups are within striking distance of the oil-rich town of Kirkuk in northern Iraq, and in large areas of Syria. The Taliban appears to be alive and well in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

If Islamist extremism is the common enemy, and if there is no effective military deployment (even if there was the will) what do we face but a generation of war and conflict - thirty years, as some commentators have suggested - with the colonial settlements imposed after the first world war, arbitrary lines in the sand crisscrossing Sunni and Shia regions, blown away?

There must be an alternative to an escalation of violent attritional conflicts.

There is a role for the UN - for all five permanent members of the security council have an interest. It could summon an international intergovernmental conference where all potential players - Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, Afghanistan, Jordan, Lebanon, Nigeria and other African governments, as well as the US, Russia, and China - would have appropriate status, and cooperate against what all must see as a common enemy.

And then, very soon after, another summit, with Palestine, and Israel.

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Article 20

The Guardian - Final Edition

June 12, 2014 Thursday

Iraq: Refugee's story: 'We worried we would be killed'

SECTION: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 22

LENGTH: 199 words

Reema Fawaz, 32, a mother of two, works at Mosul University

I was at my office last Thursday. The students were doing their final exams when news came that Samara city had fallen and there would be a curfew in Mosul from 6pm to 7am. After a few hours, we heard gunfire, mortars and rockets on the right bank of the river.

We did our best to stay in Mosul . . . but my brother is a police officer and we were worried we would be killed. Any policeman who tried to resist the **Isis** fighters was killed immediately.

We left this morning, with seven other families. We left our houses, only taking our kids and clothes with us.

The **Isis** fighters have set up checkpoints all the way to Irbil. You need a permit to get to Kurdistan and luckily we knew people at the residency office so we only had to wait two hours to get into the city. Many couldn't get permits and went home.

We have just arrived at a hotel in Irbil. It's \$120 for a single room but the owner of the hotel gave us a discount, so we're paying \$70 a day. The hotel is full of people from Mosul. I do not know how long our money will last.

As told to Mona Mahmood

Captions:

An image posted by **Isis**, which has checkpoints across north-east Iraq

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Article 21

Guardian.com.

June 12, 2014 Thursday

We anti-war protesters were right: the Iraq invasion has led to bloody chaos

BYLINE: Owen Jones theguardian.com

LENGTH: 961 words

ABSTRACT

Owen Jones: First thoughts: The horrific fallout from the war was inevitable, and continues today. This calamity must never be allowed to happen again

FULL TEXT

I have encountered no sense of vindication, no "I told you so", among veterans of the anti-war protest of 15 February 2003 in response to the events in Iraq. Despair, yes, but above all else, bitterness - that we were unable to stop one of the greatest calamities of modern times, that warnings which were dismissed as hyperbole now look like understatements, that countless lives (literally - no one counts them) have been lost, and will continue to be so for many years to come.

In July 2002, the Guardian warned that Britain was "sleepwalking to war". Blair's commitment to invade come what may - which the Chilcot inquiry (when it is finally published) will either confirm or whitewash - is now established. By September 2002, the inevitability had sunk in. In the first demonstration, hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets in London on 27 September - me and my grandfather among them - full of determination and foreboding. Three weeks earlier, Amr Moussa, then-secretary general of the Arab League, warned that the Iraq war would "open the gates of hell".

I remember the premature triumphalism and hubris of the cheerleaders in the run-up. In my first year at university, one of Britain's most senior army officers came to talk to students as the guest of Lord Butler, who would later head one of the inquiries into the war. When Iraq was invaded by western forces, he told us solemnly, 99% of the Iraqi population would be on the streets, throwing flowers at advancing troops. The other 1% would still be cowering at home, too scared to celebrate, but would be quickly reassured. Men like this helped direct the entire war effort. And then there those who were not listened to, such as former UN chief weapons inspector Scott Ritter, who warned in 2002 that "since 1998 Iraq has been fundamentally disarmed"; or Robin Cook, who told a hushed House of Commons as he resigned that "Iraq probably has no weapons of mass destruction in the commonly understood sense of the term."

The catastrophic results of the Iraq invasion are often portrayed as having been impossible to predict, and only inevitable with the benefit of hindsight. If only to prevent future calamities from happening, this is a myth that needs to be dispelled. The very fact that the demonstration on that chilly February day in 2003 was the biggest Britain had ever seen, is testament to the fact that disaster seemed inevitable to so many people.

The commentators who cheered on the conflict, far from being driven from public life are still feted: still

writing columns, still dispensing advice in TV studios, still hosting thinktank breakfasts. "If nothing is eventually found, I - as a supporter of the war - will never believe another thing that I am told by our government, or that of the US ever again," declared David Aaronovitch in this newspaper.

A few months after the invasion, he wrote: "There have been very few suicide attacks." In the seven years that followed, 12,284 civilians would perish in 1,003 suicide bombings. He went on: "If Iraq becomes anything like a democratic and pluralistic state, then just about everything that the opponents of intervention predicted will have turned out to be wrong. If it descends into long-term chaos and civil war, then just about everything they said will turn out to have been right."

If Aaronovitch was to stay true to his word, he would now be expressing the greatest mea culpa of the century; instead, he has written a column in the Times today [paywall] which makes it clear he has no intention of expressing any regret.

In a way, opponents of the war were wrong. We were wrong because however disastrous we thought the consequences of the Iraq war, the reality has been worse. The US massacres in Fallujah in the immediate aftermath of the war, which helped radicalise the Sunni population, culminating in an assault on the city with white phosphorus. The beheadings, the kidnappings and hostage videos, the car bombs, the IEDs, the Sunni and Shia insurgencies, the torture declared by the UN in 2006 to be worse than that under Saddam Hussein, the bodies with their hands and feet bound and dumped in rivers, the escalating sectarian slaughter, the millions of displaced civilians, and the hundreds of thousands who died: it has been one never-ending blur of horror since 2003.

The invasion was justified as an indispensable part of the struggle against al-Qaida. Well, to be fair, large swaths of Iraq have not been handed over to al-Qaida: they are now run by **Isis**, a group purged from al-Qaida for being too extreme. Iraq and Syria are trapped in a bloody feedback loop: the growth of **Isis** in Iraq helped corrupt the Syrian rebellion, and now the Syrian insurgency has fuelled the breakdown of Iraq, too. Those who believe that the west should have armed Syria's rebels should consider the fact that **Isis** reportedly raided an arms depot in Syria which was stocked with CIA help. Support from western-backed dictatorships in Saudi Arabia and Qatar has fuelled the Syrian extremists now spilling over into Iraq.

Such is the brutal sectarianism of Iraq's Shia prime minister Nouri al-Maliki, that some Mosul residents are reported to be fleeing because they fear an army counterattack; other Mosul residents are even welcoming **Isis** as a liberation.

What hope, then, for the future? It is difficult to see how the continuing collapse of Iraq can be avoided: the more informed the expert, the more despairing they seem to be. There will be those who champion more western intervention. But whatever happens, this calamity must never be allowed to happen again.

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