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Anti-ISIS Humor: Cultural Resistance of Radical Ideology

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ABSTRACT
After the release of ISIS's 'Salil Al-Sawarem' promotional and motivational video with its famous religious chant, hundreds of Arab YouTubers started mocking it by editing its chant and including it in funny dancing clips which they called 'the popular edition'. Also, some Arabic and Kurdish TV channels produced shows that aimed at mocking the radical group. Since ISIS regards dancing as a religious taboo, these popular and official media productions represent a cultural resistance force and a rejection of ISIS and its extremist ideology. I argue in this article that these active involvements in ridiculing, countering, and discrediting the terrorists' ideology are cultural resistance efforts that aim at countering terrorism and raising awareness about its dangers in the Middle East region.

Introduction

ISIS is regarded now as one of the wealthiest and deadliest terrorist organizations on earth.[1] In its 'Salil Al-Sawarem' (The Clinging of the Swords) promotional videos, the group employs highly graphic scenes and images which can be easily found on YouTube; they mainly highlight ISIS's savage vision of control, featuring military victories, beheading scenes, mass killings, assassination attempts, and suicide attacks. This article investigates the kind of cultural resistance ISIS encounters in many Middle Eastern countries by examining a number of famous TV shows and popular YouTube videos.

In this context, it is important to refer to one of the foundations of ISIS's extremist ideology which is built on spreading fear. The idea is borrowed from an earlier Al-Qaeda publication entitled 'The Administration of Savagery'. The work was written by a jihadist called Abu Bakr Naji and was posted online around 2004.[2] The document offers detailed predictions of the Islamic State establishment, but that in order to achieve it, savagery and chaos must overwhelm. In this regard, acting savagely and portraying savagery must be continuously done and in a way justified by Islamic jurisdiction in order to make Muslims feel vulnerable and seek the help of mujahideen to gain peace.

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[1]R. Windrem, 'ISIS Is the World's Richest Terror Group, But Spending Money Fast', *NBC News*, 20 March 2015, www.nbcnews.com/storyline/isis-terror/isis-richest-terror-group-world-n326781

[2]Lawrence Wright, 'The Master Plan: For the New Theorists of jihad, Al Qaeda is Just The Beginning', *The New Yorker*, 11 September 2006, www.newyorker.com/magazine/2006/09/11/the-master-plan

Naji mentions that 'even though the jihadis will have caused the chaos, that fact will be forgotten as the fighters impose security, provide food and medical treatment, and establish Islamic courts of justice'.[3] He also asserts a media committee or division must be established that should persuade the masses 'to join the jihad, offer positive support, and adopt a negative attitude toward those who do not join the ranks.[4] In other words, the target audience is the general public who must be informed about the alleged credibility of ISIS's action and its savagery, both of which must be justified based on Islamic sharia. One example of the above view is documented back in 2012. The spokesperson of the group, Abu Mohammed al-Adnani, once participated in a meeting near Aleppo with representatives from different Islamist factions fighting in Syria in order to find a solution to the ongoing military confrontations amongst them. An agreement was reached to form an Islamic religious council in order to end the feuds based on Islamic law. However, Adnani

> merely looked at them disdainfully. He then said: 'The only law I believe in is the law of the jungle.'[5]

This kind of thinking is similar to that of Al-Qaeda, which routinely emphasized the following messages in their public communication: an Islamist Utopia, they are attacking us, jihad is the only just response, terrorism is a legitimate tactic in jihad, and the glory of martyrdom.[6] Indeed, 'Salil Al-Sawarem' is one of these media productions that embodies ISIS's vision of savagery whose goal is to create fear and promote ISIS's brand as a frightful group.

It is important here to closely examine the link between terrorism and propaganda because they are connected to the overreaching concepts covered in this study. According to Jowett and O'Donnell, propaganda refers to the 'deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and divert behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist'.[7] Religious authorities and political institutions in different times relied on media to consolidate their powers though media was also used by opposing parties and groups to undermine the hegemony of the powerful groups. Media can also be complicit if it promotes 'terrorism by stressing fear and an uncertain future'.[8] In this regard, G. Weimann emphasizes the link between terrorism and propaganda as follows:

> Terrorists see the media as a powerful tool in their psychological warfare. They believe that fear and panic can be spread by the coverage of terrorist attacks. They also look at the media as instruments of propaganda, targeting various audiences as they can create awareness (on a global scale) of the problems and issues motivating them. They can use terrorist attacks to promote their cause on the media agenda and thus on the public agenda, they can turn to their own people seeking legitimacy, support, and funding and even recruit new members.

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[3]Abu Bakr Naji, 'The Management of Savagery: The Most Critical Stage Through Which the Umma Will Pass', trans. William McCants, John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies at Harvard University, 2006, https://azelin.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/abu-bakr-naji-the-management-of-savagery-the-most-critical-stage-through-which-the-umma-will-pass.pdf, p. 11.

[4]Ibid., p. 51.

[5]C. Reuter, R. Salloum, and S. Shafy, 'Digital Jihad: Inside Islamic State's Savvy PR War', *Spiegel Online*, 8 October 2014, http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/the-professional-pr-strategies-of-isis-in-syria-and-iraq-a-995611.html

[6]K. Payne, 'Winning the Battle of Ideas: Propaganda, Ideology, and Terror', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 32:2 (2009), pp. 109–128.

[7] , p. 7.

[8] D.L. Altheide, 'The Mass Media and Terrorism', *Discourse & Communication*, 1:3 (2007), pp. 287–308, p. 287)

> The mass media are a valuable instrument in terrorist strategy, and consequently in terrorist tactics too.[9]

Jowett and O'Donnell believe that religion and propaganda are often related since the role of propaganda in the spread of different religions cannot be ignored. For example, they have both 'relied on the use of charismatic figures, heavy symbolism, a simple and incessant moral philosophy, and an understanding of their audience's needs.[10] From the early stages of ISIS's emergence as an extremist terrorists group, it has been actively using propaganda to promote its vision and goals.[11] In this regard, communication, technology, and new media are the best tools that ISIS is using to reach its public and possibly create an impact on some audience segments.

For many decades, propaganda has been used as a resource for mobilization for many terrorists groups and in different world regions.[12] According to a number of nineteenth-century Italian anarchists such as Errico Malatesta, Carlo Cafiero and Emilio Covelli, terrorism was understood to be 'propaganda by the deed'.[13] Another anarchist theorist called Peter Kropotkin said that 'By actions which compel general attention, the new idea seeps into people's minds and wins converts. One such act may, in a few days, make more propaganda than thousand pamphlets. Above all, it awakens the spirit of revolt'.[14] In other words, 'propaganda by the deed' refers to the idea that only powerful or important deeds can draw peoples' attention to a group's cause.[15] Hence, there is always a need for mediated violence in order for a terrorist group to thrive. Garrison asserts that the

> terrorist act, in and of itself, communicates that change can occur and the violence of the act commands the attention of the society. The propaganda effect is in the act of securing the attention of the populous and then providing the message through the violence.[16]

According to Schmid,[17] terrorism serves three main purposes: intimidation, blackmail and propaganda. In fact, many scholars equate terrorism and propaganda, for they 'are identical insofar as they both seek to influence a mass audience in a way that is intended to benefit the sponsor'.[18] Another scholar believes that violence and propaganda constitute what is known as terrorism since 'Violence aims at behaviour modification by coercion. Propaganda aims at the same by persuasion.'[19]

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[9] G. Weimann, 'The Theater of Terror: The Psychology of Terrorism and the Mass Media', *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, 9:3–4 (2005), pp. 379–390, p. 383.

[10] G.S. Jowett and V. O'Donnell, Propaganda & Persuasion. Sage Publications; 2014.

[11] J.P. Farwell, 'The Media Strategy of ISIS', *Survival*, 56:6 (2014), pp. 49–55.; T. Neer and M.E. O'Toole, 'The Violence of the Islamic State of Syria (ISIS): A Behavioral Perspective', *Violence and Gender*, 1:4 (2014), pp. 145–156; Charlie Winter, 'The Virtual "Caliphate": Understanding Islamic State's Propaganda Strategy' (Quilliam Report), July 2015, www.quilliamfoundation.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/publications/free/the-virtual-caliphate-understanding-islamic-states-propaganda-strategy.pdf

[12] J. Wright, *Terrorist Propaganda: The Red Army Faction and the Provisional IRA, 1968–86* (London: Macmillan, 1991); D.L. Paletz and A.P. Schmid (eds) *Terrorism and the Media* (Thousand Oaks CA: Sage, 1992).

[13] As cited in A.H. Garrison, 'Defining Terrorism: Philosophy of the Bomb, Propaganda By Deed and Change Through Fear and Violence', *Criminal Justice Studies*, 17:3 (2004), pp. 259–279, p. 265.

[14] As cited in P.S. Alex, 'Frameworks for Conceptualising Terrorism', *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 16:2 (2004), pp. 197–221, p. 205.

[15] W. Laqueur, *Terrorism* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1977), p. 49.

[16] Garrison, op. cit., p. 265.

[17] A.P. Schmid, 'Terrorism and the Media: The Ethics of Publicity', *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 1:4 (1989), pp. 539–565.

[18] M. Tugwell, 'Terrorism and Propaganda: Problem and Response', *Journal of Conflict Studies*, 6:2 (1986), pp. 5–15, p. 5)

[19] Alex, op. cit., p. 206.

It is important to note here that the use of symbols is one of the defining features of terrorist acts, as Thornton stresses: 'If the terrorist comprehends that he is seeking a demonstration effect, he will attack targets with a maximum symbolic value.'[20] Karber also emphasizes that 'terrorism can be analyzed much like other media of communication'[21] due to its symbolic nature. As stated above, the terrorist act is not necessarily intended at the victims, but rather media consumers in order to instill fear in their hearts.[22] In other words, 'the skin on a drum [is] beaten to achieve a calculated impact on a wider audience'.[23] In this regard, Weimann and Winn[24] introduced the concept of the theater of terror in which they emphasized that terrorism is meant to disseminate a message by orchestrating violence. This is originally an idea borrowed from Jenkins,[25] who said that terrorism is similar to a choreographed act that aims at attracting attention.

On the other hand, Miller and Sabir distinguish between propaganda and mere communication of messages as they claim that more coercive forms of power like torture and killing 'can be examples of propaganda'.[26] Further, Rhonda Zaharna[27] mentions that it is important to distinguish between propaganda and public diplomacy as the former term is regarded as negative, while public diplomacy is usually run by governments and is meant to serve some good causes. Yet, many other scholars disagree with the above claims as both terrorism and propaganda are types of persuasive communication, and there remains a symbiotic relationship between terrorism and mass media. 'Each exploits the other and terrorism has no meaning without media coverage in this age of mass communication.'[28] In the following section, a detailed theoretical discussion is provided on the link between media and power and cultural resistance.

Mediated Power, Cultural Resistance and Humor

In relation to this study, a few theoretical concepts will be discussed especially the relation between media and power as well as cultural resistance and the use of humor. Many media and communication scholars believe that media and power are closely associated. Anthony Giddens, for example, states that power has a transformative capacity because it can change society. It is 'the capability to intervene in a given set of events so as in some way to alter them'.[29] In other words, power is linked to change and media can be instrumental here in enlightening and leading people on how to enact this change. In this regard, John B. Thompson classifies power into four main forms: economic, political, coercive, and symbolic.[30] The latter involves media and communication means that is

[20]T.P. Thornton, 'Terror as a Weapon of Political Agitation' in H. Eckstein (ed.) *Internal War: Problems and Approaches* (New York: The Free Press. 1964), pp. 71–99, pp. 73–4.

[21]P. Karber, 'Urban terrorism: Baseline data and a conceptual framework', *Social Science Quarterly*, 52 (1971), pp. 527–533, p. 529.

[22]Ibid.

[23]A. Schmid and J. de Graaf, Violence as communication (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1982), p. 14.

[24]G. Weimann and C. Winn, *The Theater of Terror: Mass Media and International Terrorism* (New York: Longman, 1994).

[25]B. Jenkins, *International Terrorism* (Los Angeles: Crescent, 1975).

[26]D. Miller and R. Sabir, 'Propaganda and Terrorism' in D. Freedman and D. Thussu (eds) *Media & Terrorism: Global Perspectives* (Thousand Oaks CA: Sage, 2012), pp. 77–94, p. 79.

[27]R.S. Zaharna, 'From Propaganda To Public Diplomacy in the Information Age' in N. Snow and Y. Kamalipour (eds) *War, Media and Propaganda: A Global Perspective* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), pp. 219–225.

[28]L.J. Martin, 'The Media's Role In International Terrorism', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 8:2 (1986), pp. 127–146, p. 127.

[29]A. Giddens, *The Nation-state and Violence*, Vol. 2 (Oakland: University of California Press, 1985), p. 7.

[30]John Thompson, *The Media and Modernity: A Social Theory of the Media* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), pp. 12–18.

used to exert influence and possibly control over others. As far as ISIS is concerned, the group seems to employ all these forms in varying manners and levels. Further and in relation to the symbolic power mentioned above, Fiske distinguishes between two types of power: semiotic and social. The first one is the power to 'construct meanings, pleasures, and social identities, and the power to construct a socioeconomic system'.[31] Media can be regarded as a symbolic and semiotic form of power because of its role in shaping reality in the minds of people. Nick Couldry further elaborates here by stressing that media is a complicated social process because of its 'symbolic power of 'constructing reality' (both factual representations and credible fictions)'.[32] Indeed, media is regarded as an emergent social power because the infrastructure of our modern society 'depends increasingly on the fast circulation of information and images.[33] In this regard, Van Dijk elaborates by emphasizing that:

> Media power is generally symbolic and persuasive, in the sense that the media primarily have the potential to control to some extent the minds of readers or viewers, but not directly their actions. Except in cases of physical, coercive force, the control of action, which is usually the ultimate aim of the exercise of power, is generally indirect, whereas the control of intentions, plans, knowledge, beliefs, or opinions that is, mental representations that monitor overt activities is presupposed.[34]

In relation to the types of media power, James Curran[35] points out three main kinds of influence: economic, political, and cultural powers. The latter refers to counter-discourses that resist the powerful institution which could be linked to this study as different centralized and non-centralized media productions in the Middle East attempt to culturally resist ISIS's radical ideology. In his theory of mass-self communication, Manuel Castells argues that media 'are not the holders of power, but they constitute by and large the space where power is decided'.[36] In other words, media outlets are used as possible vehicles for power and counter-power. In the two cases, media can influence and have an impact on people, and ISIS uses media to counter the messages of the mainstream media as well as the general public, so this is regarded as counter-power. On the other hand, ISIS succeeds in many ways in disseminating its messages and sometimes persuading some individuals to join its ranks. As a result, the terrorist group will hold power over those it controls and its new recruits. Castells explains the binary nature of power by saying that all 'institutional systems reflect power relations, as well as the limits to these power relations as negotiated by a historical process of domination and counter-domination'.[37] In this context, the line that separate Castells' dichotomy in terms of power and counter-power is blurred here because power itself is continuously negotiated.

As for the concept of cultural resistance, media is used a vehicles to articulate a variety of resistances against hegemonic institutions and groups. The term itself was first

[31]J. Fiske, *Television Culture* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 315.

[32]N. Couldry, *The Place Of Media Power: Pilgrims And Witnesses Of The Media Age* (New York: Psychology Press, 2000), p. 4.

[33]N. Couldry and J. Curran (eds) Contesting Media Power: Alternative Media in a Networked World (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), p. 4.

[34]T.A. Van Dijk, 'Power and the News Media' in T.A. Van Dijk and D. Paletz (eds) *Political Communication and Action* (New York: Hampton Press, 1995), pp. 9–36, p. 10.

[35]James Curran, *Media and Power* (London: Routledge, 2002).

[36]M. Castells, 'Communication, Power and Counter-power in the Network Society', *International Journal of Communication*, 1:1 (2007), pp. 238–266, p. 242.

[37]Ibid., p. 239.

introduced in the early twentieth century, and one of the earliest works that referred to this concept was written in 1922 by Henry Baerlein (1875–1960) on Slavic people. The author describes the Slavs' resistance of the German attempts to introduce Christianity into their lands in the ninth century, emphasizing 'the political and cultural resistance … against the State of the Franks.[38] The term itself is usually associated with foreign invasions' attempts to change the social fabric of certain nations and the struggle of the occupied, enslaved, or affected people to maintain their culture and traditional beliefs.[39] Cultural resistance is also used in other contexts. As Scott[40] claims, cultural resistance can be manifested as 'everyday forms of resistance' such as contesting the issues of personal identity,[41] religious values and discrimination,[42] gender,[43] race,[44] generational differences,[45] and sexual orientations.[46] Among the means used to express this kind of cultural resistance is, for example, rap music in the Cape Town area during the apartheid period[47] or subaltern press in South Africa.[48] Further, sports can also be used like playing baseball in the Caribbean which is regarded as a form of cultural resistance against Americanization and the influence of the dominant culture.[49] Due to the colonial heritage of many countries around the world, nationalism itself can be considered a form of cultural resistance.[50]

In this article, the focus is on traditional and social media, especially YouTube, employed as a cultural resistance tool. In general, the term is used in connection to the rejection of imported cultural beliefs that are regarded as a threat to the society and its people. As explained below, ISIS exerts power over many people and areas, so the group can be regarded as hegemonic, while the efforts of the anti-ISIS groups exhibit a form of cultural empowerment. Cultural resistance is employed to express resentment,

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[38]Henry Baerlein, *The Birth of Yugoslavia*, Vol. I (London: Leonard Parsons, 1922), p. 29.

[39]B. Bush, '"The Family Tree Is Not Cut": Women and Cultural Resistance in Slave Family Life in the British Caribbean' in G. Okihiro (ed.) *In Resistance: Studies in African, Caribbean, and Afro-American History* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1986), pp. 117–132; Roger Neil Rasnake, *Domination and Cultural Resistance: Authority and Power Among An Andean People* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 1988); D.E. Walker, *No More, No More: Slavery and Cultural Resistance in Havana and New Orleans* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2004).

[40]J.C. Scott. Everyday Forms of Resistance. *The Copenhagen Journal of Asian Studies.* 4:1 (2008 May 15), pp. 33–62.

[41]S. Gregory, *Santeria in New York City: A Study in Cultural Resistance* (London: Taylor & Francis, 1999).

[42]F. Colonna, 'Cultural Resistance and Religious Legitimacy In Colonial Algeria', *Economy and Society*, 3:3 (1974), pp. 233–252; O. Arrieta, 'Religion and Ritual among the Tarahumara Indians of Northern Mexico: Maintenance of Cultural Autonomy through Resistance and Transformation of Colonizing Symbols', *Wicazo Sa Review* (1992), pp. 11–23; H. Moghissi, 'Away from Home: Iranian Women, Displacement, Cultural Resistance and Change ', *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 2:30 (1999), pp. 207–217.

[43]G. Gerbner, 'The Dynamics of Cultural Resistance' in G. Tuchman, A. Daniels and W. Benét (eds) *Hearth and Home: Images of Women in the Mass Media* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), pp. 46–50; K. Weingarten, *Cultural Resistance: Challenging Beliefs About Men, Women, and Therapy* (London: Routledge, 2013).

[44]T. Rose, 'Orality and Technology: Rap Music and Afro-American Cultural Resistance', *Popular Music & Society*, 13:4 (1989), pp. 35–44; B. Carrington, 'Sport, Masculinity, and Black Cultural Resistance', *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 22:3 (1998), pp. 275–298.

[45]G. Yang, 'China's Zhiqing Generation Nostalgia, Identity, and Cultural Resistance in the 1990s', *Modern China*, 29:3 (2003), pp. 267–296.

[46]A. Elling, P. De Knop and A. Knoppers, 'Gay/Lesbian Sport Clubs and Events Places of Homo–Social Bonding and Cultural Resistance?', *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 38:4 (2003), pp. 441–456.

[47]D. Künzler, 'South African Rap Music, Counter Discourses, Identity, and Commodification Beyond the Prophets of Da City', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 37 (2011), pp. 27–43.

[48]L. Switzer, 'South Africa's Subaltern Press: A Case Study in Reading A Cultural Text', *Ecquid novi*, 19:1 (1998), pp. 66–87.

[49]A. Klein, A. Yiannakis and M.J. Melnick, 'Sport and Culture as Contested Terrain: Americanization in the Caribbean', *Contemporary Issues in Sociology of Sport*, (2001), pp. 461–465.

[50]Klein.

mistrust, and animosity against the domineering culture that is represented by ISIS, and it becomes a venue against religious discrimination.

As Colleen Roach[51] mentions in her discussion of cultural imperialism and resistance, there is also resistance of the resistance in cultural studies which can also be applied in this study since there is always some kind of power shift; as usual, resistance is linked to the vulnerable or disenfranchised group. In this regard, Fiske asserts that counter-powers are 'not just oppositions to power, but [they are] the sources of power in their own right: they are the social points at which the powers of the subordinate are mostly clearly expressed'.[52] In this way, cultural resistance is the obvious 'refusal to accept the social identity proposed by the dominant ideology and the social control that goes with it'.[53] Finally, these counter-power movements can be manifested as a local, national, regional, and even international movement. In this context, Mittleman refers to the transnational or regional scope of some anti-hegemonic movements in terms of having 'collective resistance transcending national borders.[54] Based on the examples provided below, the anti-ISIS mocking videos and shows clearly have regional and international scope and audiences.

In addition, cultural resistance is manifested in the use of mediated humor. In particular, dark humor and satire seem relevant here. In relation to the former, it treats a morbid topic such as ISIS and its mediated savagery in an entertaining and funny manner. During and after times of crisis, human beings tend to express their fears in sometimes humorous ways such as the case of popular culture in post 9/11 America.[55] For this article, I borrowed Sorensen's definition of humor which 'means everything that causes amusement, from a joke, story, play, skit, movie or book, to a way of acting or a slogan in a demonstration. It can be based on irony, satire, parody, or ridicule.[56] In fact, humor, especially dark comedy, has been employed from the beginning of time in political resistance though its cost might be painful or deadly in some countries and historical periods, especially when dealing with totalitarian regimes.[57]

As for satire, numerous scholars have highlighted the way satire can be used as a form of non-violent resistance against hegemony and power control in different contexts.[58] Kìshtain, for example, argues that political satire has been used in the Arab world in

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[51]C. Roach, 'Cultural Imperialism and Resistance in Media Theory and Literary Theory', *Media, Culture & Society*, 19:1 (1997), pp. 47–66.

[52]Fiske, op. cit., p. 241.

[53]Ibid.

[54]J.H. Mittleman, *The Globalization Syndrome: Transformation and Resistance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. 169.

[55]T. Gournelos and V. Greene (eds) *A Decade of Dark Humor: How Comedy, Irony, and Satire Shaped Post-9/11 America* (Mississippi: University Press of Mississippi, 2011).

[56]M.J. Sorensen, 'Humor as a Serious Strategy Of Nonviolent Resistance To Oppression', *Peace & Change*, 33:2 (2008), pp. 167–190, p. 170.

[57]E. Draitser, 'Soviet Underground Jokes as a Means of Popular Entertainment', *The Journal of Popular Culture*, 23:1 (1989), pp. 117–125; E. Oring, 'Risky Business: Political Jokes Under Repressive Regimes', *Western Folklore*, (2004), pp. 209–236.

[58]S.B. Rodrigues and D.L. Collinson, '"Having Fun"?: Humour As Resistance in Brazil', *Organization Studies*, 16:5 (1995), pp. 739–768; Khalid Kishtain, 'Humor and Resistance in the Arab World and Greater Middle East' in M. Stephan (ed.) *Civilian Jihad: Nonviolent Struggle, Democratization, and Governance in the Middle East* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 53–63; L. Tang and S. Bhattacharya, 'Power and Resistance: A Case Study Of Satire on the Internet', *Sociological Research Online*, 16:2 (2011), pp. ; E. Mascha, 'Mocking Fascism Popular Culture and Political Satire' in V. Tsakona and D. Popa (eds) *Studies in Political Humour: In Between Political Critique and Public Entertainment* (New York: John Benjamins, 2011); M. Sienkiewicz, 'Out of Control: Palestinian News Satire and Government Power in the Age of Social Media', *Popular Communication*, 10:1-2 (2012), pp. 106–118; G. Yang and M. Jiang, 'The Networked Practice of Online Political Satire in China: Between Ritual and Resistance', *International Communication Gazette*, 77:3 (2015), pp. 215–231

critiquing politics, and many well-known political leaders like the former Egyptian leader Jamal Abdul Nasser was not exempted from jokes and humorous attacks.

In addition to its entertainment quality, humor, in general, vents negative emotions and provides liberating feelings because it empowers people in expressing their frustrations towards the shortcomings of the political, religious, or social system. In this regard, Freud emphasized the aggressive nature of jokes and how they can have an impact on individuals, while other scholars discussed the importance of the incongruence elements in making jokes popular in different platforms including social media.[59] Further, Lindvall chronicles the history of humor and finds that each age has its own distinct type of religious satire. Here, a satirist is defined as a person who 'plays the role of a trickster, but with a purpose'.[60] Further, Kuipers[61] focuses on the importance of social background and globalization in perceiving good and bad humor. In other words, humor remains relative because it is bound by cultural values. For example, Lewis stresses that humor in the USA is viewed from partisan perspectives as it seems to be divisive, but he asserts that 'much of our joking has serious objectives that can elicit acquiescence or resistance'.[62] Also, the Danish cartoons that mocked Muhammed, the Prophet of Islam, were regarded as humorous by some in the West, yet the majority of Muslims' reactions towards these cartoons were 'totally devoid of any humor'.[63]

As stated above, humor is a form of cultural resistance against hegemonic powers. For instance, the Serbian Otpor movement relied on humor to topple the rule Slobodan Miloševic'.[64] In his study of sarsart.org which contains digital artworks that were made as a reaction to the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) outbreak, Gillett stresses the importance of the Internet as a means for cultural resistance, stating: 'Like forms of cultural resistance generally, the Internet gives a forum for those who are silenced or marginalized to express their views publicly in ways that would not otherwise be available'.[65] Indeed, humor is regarded as an effective means of non-violent resistance,[66] and it is a universal trait as the use of humor to express political and cultural struggle or resistance is documented in Mexico,[67] Syria,[68] and Egypt during the Arab Spring.[69] It is also often used by African Americans as a way to assert their Black identity in a hegemonic white

[59]E. Oring, *Jokes and their Relations* (: University Press of Kentucky, 1992); *Engaging Humor* (: University of Illinois Press, 2003); L. Shifman and M. Blondheim, 'The medium is the joke: Online humor about and by networked computers', *New Media & Society*, (2010), pp. ; A.E. Holton and S.C. Lewis, 'Journalists, Social Media, and the use of Humor on Twitter', *Electronic Journal of Communication*, 21:1/2 (2011), ; P.D. da Silva and J.L. Garcia, 'YouTubers as Satirists', *eJournal of eDemocracy & Open Government*, 4:1 (2012), .

[60]T. Lindvall, *God Mocks: A History of Religious Satire from the Hebrew Prophets to Stephen Colbert* (New York: NYU Press, 2015), p. 2.

[61]G. Kuipers, *Good Humor, Bad Taste: A Sociology of the Joke* (: Walter de Gruyter, 2015).

[62]P. Lews, *Cracking Up: American Humor in a Time of Conflict* (: University of Chicago Press, 2006), p. 2.

[63]C. Davies, G. Kuipers, P. Lewis, R.A. Martin, E. Oring and V. Raskin, 'The Muhammad Cartoons and Humor Research: A Collection Of Essays', *Humor: International Journal of Humor Research*, 21:1 (2008), pp. 1–46, p. 41.

[64]Sorensen, op. cit.

[65]J. Gillett, 'Internet Web Logs As Cultural Resistance: A Study of the SARS Arts Project', *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 31:1 (2007), pp. 28–43, p. 30.

[66]Sorensen, op. cit.; C. Zelizer, 'Laughing our Way to Peace or War: Humour and Peacebuilding', *Journal of Conflictology*, 1:2 (2010), .

[67]S. Schmidt, *Seriously Funny: Mexican Political Jokes as Social Resistance* (: University of Arizona Press, 2014).

[68]L. Wedeen, 'Ideology and Humor in Dark Times: Notes from Syria', *Critical Inquiry*, 39:4 (2013), pp. 841–873.

[69]M.M. Helmy and S. Frerichs, 'Stripping the Boss: The Powerful Role Of Humor in the Egyptian Revolution 2011', *Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science*, 47:4 (2013), pp. 450–481.

culture.[70] I argue here that the numerous TV shows and YouTube videos that are called 'Salil Al Sawarem: The popular edition' that mock ISIS and its media productions function as cultural, religious, and political resistance against ISIS's ideology and its attempt to expand in other countries. The section below is focused on presenting these media productions that are related to anti-ISIS humor.

Non-violent Resistance Against ISIS

When ISIS advanced into parts of Iraq and Syria, it caused a huge humanitarian crisis because millions of people were forced to flee.[71] For example, thousands of Yazidi women from Iraq were enslaved and raped by the group.[72] As it is well publicized, ISIS's expansion was met with armed confrontation from a US-led Coalition as well as Shiite militias and the Iraqi army. However, there are numerous other non-military and non-violent types of resistance against ISIS,[73] which are regarded as forms of cultural resistance that will be the focus of this study. For example, GhostSec, which is a hacking group involving many Arabs from various countries, has been formed whose goal is to attack ISIS's websites and social media accounts in what is described as a 'counter-terrorism operation'.[74] According to its website, the group's 'mission is to eliminate the online presence of Islamic extremist groups … in an effort to stymie their recruitment and limit their ability to organize international terrorist efforts.[75] Also, the hacktivist group, Anonymous, announced its ongoing online attacks against ISIS's websites and its followers on Twitter. The group was allegedly successful in taking down over 750 Twitter accounts, some of which had more than 10,000 followers.[76]

Other forms of cultural resistance include the case of Aeham Ahmed, a Palestinian refugee whose piano was destroyed by ISIS when they advanced into Yarmouk city, a refugee enclave in Syria. ISIS burnt Aeham's piano because music is regarded as a sin, and they threatened to kill him, saying: 'Shut up or I will throw you on top and burn you along with it!'. Instead of complying, Aeham continued playing music on his keyboard despite the risks because 'music brings peace', according to him.[77] Similar to Aeham Ahmed, an Iraqi artist called Akeel Khreef used old and torn shoes to mock ISIS. The artist admits that his non-violent means of countering the terrorist group 'will not get

[70]C. Bailey, 'Fight the Power: African American Humor as a Discourse of Resistance', *The Western Journal of Black Studies*, 36:4 (2012), pp. , p. 253.

[71]Fazel Hawramy, 'Winter brings fresh threat to Iraq's refugees who fled the Isis advance', *The Guardian*, 6 December 2014, www.theguardian.com/world/2014/dec/06/winter-threat-iraq-refugees-kurdish-region-camps-isis; UNHCR, 'Sharp increase in Iraqi refugees fleeing ISIS into Jordan and Turkey', 23 September 2014, www.unhcr.org/54214cfe9.html

[72]Raya Jalabi, 'Who are the Yazidis and Why is Isis Hunting Them?', *The Guardian*, 11 August 2014, www.theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/07/who-yazidi-isis-iraq-religion-ethnicity-mountains; Richard Spencer, 'Iraq crisis: UN condemns "war crimes" as another town falls to Isis', *The Guardian*, 16 June 2014, www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iraq/10904414/Iraq-crisis-UN-condemns-war-crimes-as-another-town-falls-to-Isis.html

[73]Sophia Jones, '"SNL" Has Nothing On The Way The Middle East Mocks ISIS', *The Huffington Post*, 3 March 2015, www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/03/03/mocking-islamic-state_n_6790254.html

[74]L. Tzach, 'Miss Jordan 2010 is Fighting Islamic Extremists Online', *Vocativ*, 9 July 2015, www.vocativ.com/news/209255/isis-beauty-queen-hacktivist-fighting-islamic-state/

[75]L. Tzach and G. Shiloach, 'Anonymous Faction Launches Attacks Against ISIS', *Vocativ*, 1 July 2015, www.vocativ.com/news/207207/anonymous-faction-launches-attack-against-isis/

[76]'Anonymous Targets IS Sympathisers on Twitter', *BBC News* online, 21 July 2015, www.bbc.com/news/technology-33608369; G. Shiloach, 'ISIS Is Being Attacked By Anonymous', *Vocativ*, 2 July 2015, www.vocativ.com/world/isis-2/isis-anonymous/

[77]S. Abdelaziz, 'ISIS Tried To Silence Him, But Pianist Won't Stay Quiet', *CNN*, 2 September 2015, www.cnn.com/2015/09/02/middleeast/isis-syria-yarmouk-piano-player/

Table 1. Top ten anti-ISIS YouTube videos.

Rank	Link	No. of views	No. of likes	No. of dislikes	No. of comments	Date posted
1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=exMS5HkfCFA	888,852	1588	1899	1022	1 March 2015
2	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZCT6013Skg	633,914	2538	808	664	22 Feb 2015
3	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gdmwemv7ixc	256,569	541	137	81	17 March 2015
4	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-fd5v_dVZp8	240,173	364	584	181	3 March 2015
5	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BFQiEz1yyOw	201,423	813	150	No comments	27 Feb 2015
6	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=357cbgFdp1c	173,531	412	99	36	27 Feb 2015
7	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fQEV-FrY568	159,986	253	209	11	23 Feb 2015
8	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hqgElVrQSd0	132,127	1071	285	89	4 March 2015
9	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XBJ-WbbV-Es	135,090	155	131	52	2 March 2015
10	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=050ybAbpMOU	119,622	22	146	92	25 Feb 2015

them out of my country with this work, but … I am certain they would be embarrassed by it'.[78] Finlay, an Iraqi cartoonist called Diyaa Al-Hajjar, routinely publishes works in mainstream Iraqi media that mock ISIS and its ideology. For example, he once produced a cartoon featuring

> a towering cleric in traditional Arabic dress [who] removes the brains from subservient donkey-eared jihadists and replaces them with bombs. The newly programmed, black-clad fighters rush off to battle, wielding a scimitar in each hand.[79]

The cartoon mocks the stupidity of ISIS members and is regarded as an attack against the alleged support ISIS gets from some Gulf Arab countries.

In relation to social media use, there are many other efforts to counter ISIS's ideology such as the famous Twitter account that is called 'ISIS Karaoke' (twitter.com/isis_karaoke) which comically shows ISIS fighters signing love songs instead of delivering their threatening speeches. Another campaign that became viral is a Twitter hashtag called #SorryISIS in which people from around the world started mocking ISIS for its call to join the group. However, it also led to suspending the Twitter account of an Arab Spring activist whose name was Iyad El Baghdadi.[80]

In fact, the viral campaigns against ISIS were not only global but also national. For example, the comedy show, *Saturday Night Live*, once featured Dakota Johnston as a young girl who says goodbye to her father in order to join ISIS.[81] Another viral video posted from Mexico

[78]A. Karim, 'Iraqi Artist Gets Creative With Old Shoes To Mock ISIS', *Al Arabiya*, 1 February, 2015, http://english.alarabiya.net/en/life-style/art-and-culture/2015/02/01/Iraqi-artist-gets-creative-with-old-shoes-to-mock-ISIS-.html

[79]Dominique Soguel, 'Fighting Horror with Humor, Iraqis Retaliate against Islamic State', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 1 October 2014, www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2014/1001/Fighting-horror-with-humor-Iraqis-retaliate-against-Islamic-State

[80]'Twitter "Confuses" Iyad El Baghdadi With Islamic State Leader', *BBC News* online, 1 January 2016, www.bbc.com/news/world-35210527

[81] Elizabeth Nicholas, 'Can We Just Laugh Off ISIS?', *Vice*, 25 July 2015, www.vice.com/en_ca/read/can-we-just-laugh-off-isis-235

Figure 1. The most viewed video on anti-ISIS humor.

showed a group of Mexican men parodying an ISIS execution scene.[82] Also, the hacktivist group Anonymous announced on 11 December 2015 its #trollingday campaign in which the group urged its followers to use the hashtag #Daeshbags in order to mock ISIS on social media. The original idea began when the bulletin board 4chan showed how they super-imposed duck heads on the pictures of Isis fighters.[83] Anonymous later explained that the idea behind organizing the campaign was related to showing ISIS that 'we are not afraid, we will not just hide in our fear, we are the majority and with our strength in numbers we can make a real difference'.[84] In this campaign, three recurrent themes were highlighted such as claiming that ISIS members were 'secretly gay, that they like to have sex with goats, or something to do with rubber ducks.[85] Indeed, there are numerous other examples that ridiculed ISIS which can be found in different parts of the world; many of them can be categorized as forms of cultural resistance against ISIS's ideology. This article examines another type of cultural resistance ISIS faces in different Arab countries by focusing on TV shows and YouTube videos, as will be explained below.

[82]'Mexicans Mock ISIS with Video Parody of Execution and Song about a Sea Snake', *Irish Daily Star*, 2015, http://thestar.ie/watch-mexicans-mock-isis-with-video-parody-of-execution-and-song-about-a-sea-snake/

[83]Joel Gunter, 'Isis Mocked with Rubber Ducks As Internet Fights Terror with Humour', *The Guardian*, 28 November 2015, www.theguardian.com/world/2015/nov/28/isis-fighters-rubber-ducks-reddit-4chan

[84]Brian Mastroianni, 'Anonymous Hackers Declare Friday "Troll ISIS Day", *CBS News*, 9 December 2015, www.cbsnews.com/news/anonymous-declares-friday-troll-isis-day/

[85] Kevin Collier, 'Anonymous Announces "Trolling ISIS Day" to Mock the Islamic State', *DailyDot.com*, 8 December 2015, www.dailydot.com/politics/anonymous-trolling-day-isis-islamic-state/
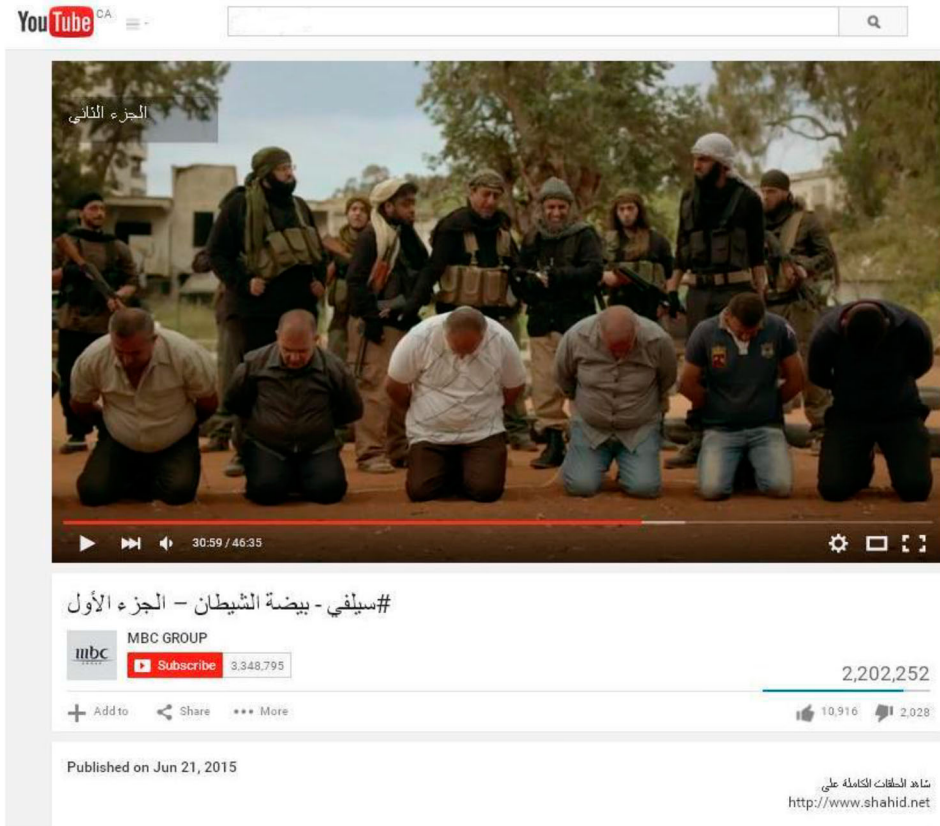
Figure 2. A scene from the satirical Saudi TV show, *Selfie*.

The Anti-ISIS Videos

By using the search term 'Salil Al Sawarem' in Arabic on 9 September 2015, the top ten videos dealing with anti-ISIS humor were selected based on their number of views (see Table 1). The results were recorded on the same day because social media data changes with time, and since this is a qualitative study that relies on interpretive assessment, the quantitative part is only used to provide an overview of the top videos that deal with anti-ISIS humor. Only the top videos are included because there are hundreds of similar clips that have not garnered the same public attention. YouTube is selected because of its popularity and the fact that it is a global video platform.[86] There are numerous qualitative and quantitative studies that used popular YouTube videos and comments in order to assess the online public's views and sentiments towards social movements, trends, and important world events.[87]

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[86]Burgess & Green, 2013

[87]C. Tryon, 'Pop Politics: Online Parody Videos, Intertextuality, and Political Participation', *Popular Communication*, 6:4 (2008), pp. 209–213; K. Andén-Papadopoulos, 'US Soldiers Imaging the Iraq War on YouTube ', *Popular Communication*, 7:1 (2009), pp. 17–27; L. Van Zoonen, F. Vis and S. Mihelj, 'Performing Citizenship on YouTube: Activism, Satire and Online Debate Around the Anti-Islam Video Fitna', *Critical Discourse Studies*, 7:4 (2010), pp. 249–262; L. Mosemghvdlishvili and J. Jansz, 'Framing and Praising Allah on YouTube: Exploring User-Created Videos about Islam and the Motivations for Producing them', *New Media & Society*, 15:4 (2013), pp. 482–500; M. Thelwall, P. Sud and F. Vis, 'Commenting on

Figure 3. Al Iraqiya TV series featuring Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi.

Most of the anti-ISIS videos examined in this study seem to be edited and dubbed as they are taken from various older movies and songs performed by a variety of Arab actors and singers. Video clip (1) got the highest number of views (888,852), dislikes (1899), as well as comments and replies (1022). This video uses the term DAESH which is the Arabic acronym of ISIS, a term detested by the terrorist group. It features a famous belly dancer called Saffynaz, dancing on the tunes of the edited version of ISIS's 'Salil Al-Sawarem' (see Figure 1). One of the reasons behind this high number of dislikes is the belief that the clip is profane since ISIS uses Islamic terms in its chant. In total, the top ten videos generated 2,941,287 views, 7,757 likes (63.5 per cent), 4,448 dislikes (36.4 per cent), and 2,228 comments and replies which indicate the high amount of public engagement.

YouTube Videos: From Guatemalan Rock to el big bang', *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 63:3 (2012), pp. 616–629; A.K. Al-Rawi, 'The Anti-Terrorist Advertising Campaigns in the Middle East', *Journal of International Communication*, 19 (2013), pp. 182–195; 'Online Reactions to the Muhammad Cartoons: YouTube and the Virtual Ummah', *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 54 (2015), pp. 261–276; A.J. Terry, 'The Church Made Me Do It: Identity and Apology in Marin Foundation Video Confessionals', *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 39:4 (2015), pp. 298–318; M.K. Park, 'Psy-Zing up the Mainstreaming of "Gangnam Style": Embracing Asian Masculinity as Neo-Minstrelsy?', *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 39:3 (2015), pp. 195–212; M.A. Shapiro and H.W. Park, 'More than Entertainment: YouTube and Public Responses to the Science Of Global Warming and Climate Change', *Social Science Information*, 54 (2015), pp. 115–145.

Figure 4. LBC TV show on mocking ISIS.

Based on the figures provided above, these decentralized anti-ISIS and humorous videos are engaging and effective public diplomacy efforts against this terrorist group. In this regard, Philip Seib discusses how public diplomacy or soft power can be used to counter terrorism. He says, for example, that the production of the Palestinian *Shara'a Simsim* that started airing in 2006 as an adaptation of *Sesame Street* became a crucial tool in countering violent ideology. The same children's show was also used in other places like Northern Ireland and Kosovo that witnessed previous violence.[88] In this regard, the Saudi government has been running the Assakina Campaign for Dialogue that is supervised by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The media campaign aims at discrediting extremist ideology by engaging radical youth in religious debates.[89] Further, the Jordanian government ran a public campaign against Al-Qaeda after the 2005 hotel bombing in Amman,[90] and Bashar Assad's regime in Syria frequently aired public awareness ads to counter religious extremism.[91]

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[88]P. Seib, 'Public Diplomacy Versus Terrorism in D. Freedman and D. Thussu (eds) *Media & Terrorism: Global Perspectives* (Thousand Oaks CA: Sage, 2012), pp. 63–76, pp. 69–70).

[89] 'A Special Study by Assakina: Terrorists' Websites Lose their Scientific Glamour', *Assakina*, 30 July 2012, www.assakina.com/news/news3/17085.html

[90]Mark Lynch, 'Public Opinion Survey Research and Public Diplomacy in Joshua S. Fouts (ed.) *Public Diplomacy: Practitioners, Policy Makers, and Public Opinion*, Public Diplomacy and World Public Opinion Forum, April 9–11, Washington, Pew Research Center, p. 39.

[91]Al-Dunya, 'Terrorism: I'm Syrian, I'm against it', *YouTube*, 22 April 2012, www.youtube.com/watch?v=uhxatFakQOU

Figure 5. LBC TV featuring Abu Bakr Baghdadi.

In relation to ISIS, several Arab governments have been involved in such counter-terrorism and anti-radicalization activities. For example, the Saudi-run television, MBC, produced and aired the anti-ISIS show 'Selfie'.[92] As a result, the Saudi actor, Nasr Al-Qasabi, received numerous death threats by ISIS followers and sympathizers on Twitter because he was the show's lead actor (see Figure 2).[93] The word itself is a pun playing on the Arabic word *salafi* (ultra-orthodox Islamist) and the word Selfie. Al-Qasabi emphasized in an interview that his role as an actor in this show is to expose ISIS's reality: 'it's a price we have to pay. If we were not serious about showing [reality], we would have remained [idle] at our homes.'[94] In this regard, the regional director of the Saudi-MBC once revealed to a US diplomat that one of the main goals of the MBC channels is to enhance '"moderate" perspectives among the country's youth'.[95]

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[92]Alma Al Turkmani, 'Saudi TV Deploys New Weapon against ISIS: Satire', *CNN*, 22 June 105, www.cnn.com/2015/06/22/middleeast/anti-isis-satire/

[93]Aisha Gani, 'Saudi Comedian Laughs Off Threats Over Isis Satire', *The Guardian*, 24 June 2015, www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/24/saudi-comedian-laughs-off-threats-isis-satire

[94]'The Saudi Actor Nasr Al-Qasabi: Death Threats Because Of Selfie Show Do Not Fear Me', *BBC Arabic*, 23 June 2015, www.bbc.com/arabic/artandculture/2015/06/150623_saudi_nasser_alqasaby_mocks_isis

[95] Wikileaks, 'Ideological and Ownership Trends in the Saudi Media', 09RIYADH651 May 11. E.O. 12958. Embassy Riyadh, 2009, http://wikileaks.org/cable/2009/05/09RIYADH651.html

Figure 6. The Kurdish 'The program program' show that mocks the stupidity of ISIS fighters.

Another popular anti-ISIS TV series was produced by the Iraqi national television, Al Iraqiya. It is called 'The Mythical State' (Doulatt al-Khuraffa) which is an intended distortion of 'The Caliphate State' (Doulatt Al-Khilaffa). The series' trailer highlights Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi as can be seen in Image (3), and its main goal is to ridicule ISIS and its ideology.[96] In relation to the concept of cultural resistance, the series' director, Ali Al-Qasim, stated: 'We are not good at carrying arms, but we know how to undermine ISIS's ideology with our work'.[97] The Iraqi TV show also 'took a jab at the CIA, Israel, and the Gulf monarchies, a trio that many Iraqis hold responsible for the rise of the demonic group'.[98] Finally, the Lebanese TV station, LBC, aired a TV series show called 'Kttir Selbi' (Very Negative) in which ISIS fighters are presented in awkward situations and are made fun of especially in relation to the contrast between their extremist ideology that enforces female niqab and encounters with women that often allude to sex. For example, in one show some ISIS fighters plan to assassinate the famous Lebanese singer, Haifa Wahbi, but they completely change their minds after seeing her sexy body and moves (see Figure 4). In another show, Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi is presented getting a shoulder message by an attractive young woman wearing a short "dress" (see Figure 5). In this regard, the Lebanese producer, Nabil Assaf, stated that ISIS fighters 'are not a true

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[96]J. Al-Hattab, 'Doulatt al-Khuraffa Show … This is How Iraqis Mock ISIS', *Al Arabiya*, 29 September 2015, www.alarabiya.net/ar/last-page/2014/09/29/-الدواعش-من-يسخر-عراقي-كليب-فيديو-الخرافة-دولة.html
[97]'Doulatt al-Khuraffa: An Iraqi Comedy that Mocks DAESH', RT, 30 September 2014 http://arabic.rt.com/news/760062--دولة/داعش-كوميديا-عراقي-مسلسل-الخرافة
[98]Soguel, op. cit.

representation of Islam and so by mocking them, it is a way to show that we are against them'.[99]

Finally, another anti-ISIS weekly TV show was aired by the Iraqi Kurdsat TV channel in Kurdish in 2014. The show is called 'The program program', featuring a famous song that mocks ISIS by emphasizing the group's savagery, stupidity, and backwardness.[100] For example, the song mentions that ISIS members milk a goat even if it is a male and that ISIS fighters have no brains (See Figure 6).[101] The name of the Kurdish show is apparently borrowed from the satirical Egyptian TV program that was presented by Bassem Youssif in which he imitated Jon Stewart.[102] This show is another representative example of the way people from the Middle East are fighting ISIS 'not with guns, bombs, or munitions … [but] with humor'.[103]

In brief, the centralized and non-centralized anti-ISIS cultural media productions presented above can be regarded as public diplomacy and cultural resistance activities which aim at countering radical ideology by ridiculing and discrediting ISIS's claims. The videos posted on YouTube in relation to 'Salil Al Sawarem: The popular edition' mock ISIS and its media productions, and they manifest cultural, religious, and political forms of resistance. Whether a centralized media production or not, anti-ISIS humor is an important non-violent means to express the rejection of the terrorist group's violence and extremism.

Notes on Contributor

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[99]J. McLaughlin, 'The Case For Making Fun of ISIS: Middle East Satirists Say Making Fun of the Extremists is an Act of Counterterrorism', *Mother Jones*, 6 March 2015, www.motherjones.com/politics/2015/03/snl-dakota-johnson-isis-middle-east-satirical-cartoons

[100]Dean Obeidallah, 'Middle East Goes Monty Python on ISIS', *The Daily Beast*, 29 October 2014, http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2014/10/29/middle-east-goes-monty-python-on-isis.html

[101]Kurdsat, 'Beh Rinamah Beh Rinamah', YouTube, 9 January 2016, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6DvyX4dlEk02014 (accessed).

[102]Max Fisher, 'Jon Stewart's brilliant appearance on Egypt's version of *The Daily Show*', *The Washington Post*, 25 June 2013, www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2013/06/25/jon-stewarts-brilliant-appearance-on-egypts-version-of-the-daily-show/

[103]Husna Haq, 'Got Goat Milk? Kurds Mock ISIS with SNL-like Musical Parody (+video)', *Christian Science Monitor*, 21 October 2014, www.csmonitor.com/World/Global-News/2014/1021/Got-goat-milk-Kurds-mock-ISIS-with-SNL-like-musical-parody-video