

**MEDIA NARRATIVES OF WOMEN IMPACTED BY ISIS' TERROR:
PASSIVE VICTIMS "AND/OR" ACTIVE AGENTS OF TERROR**

By

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to all Yazidi/Yezidi women who have faced the brutality of ISIS terror including Meryem, Nergiz, Sirin, Suari and Zehra, in particular.

Abstract

The environments of war and terror has a direct effect on gender roles and their representation. ISIS, as a global Salafi jihadist movement, is just one of the groups who force their morality upon women's bodies with specific rules. I am one of the journalists who listened to women's experiences of ISIS terror, and through my work I have told the stories of Avesta and Murad, two women who have fought ISIS terror physically, mentally and emotionally. This thesis examines media narratives of women impacted by ISIS terror from three different media angles. It utilizes a feminist-informed Arts-Based Research Method including narrative and visual analyses. The first media perspective is from my own published news articles to explain my narrative about the terrorist organization and women. The second view comes from ISIS' narratives about women from their own magazine, *Dabiq*. The last narrative examines comes from published international media content about women as 'heroines'. The main research question in this thesis is 'what narratives does the media tell about women impacted by ISIS' terror? and all narratives are analyzed through visual and textual materials from these selected news articles with this question. These three media approaches (my own perspective, ISIS' perspective and selected international news perspective) construct narratives of 'heroes/heroines', 'villains', 'victims' and 'helpers' under ISIS terror. This thesis highlights multiple narratives that exist about women impacted by ISIS' terror, including my personal narrative as a female reporter.

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And finally, thank you to all the women who intersected my life and will intersect my future life: you belong here too.

¹ I have chosen to represent myself using all small caps in my name because my name with five letters is just a symbol and tool to describe me – and nothing more, nothing less. I believe that no letter is more important than another, nor do I believe in any kind of capital[ism].

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Chapter One: Introduction

“I do not know how my daughters are.

Were they killed? Were they being sold?

Life is hard here, but life with these questions on my mind is harder”

(Yur, 2015f, para. 3).

Sirin Hasa, who is a Yezidi/Yazidi² mother of five daughters and three sons held captive by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in Sinjar/Shingal, Iraq, uttered these words when I interviewed her in Diyarbakir Fidanlik Refugee Camp on June 2015. At that time, my aim for being at the camp was to report on its conditions. However, a lot of women like her wanted to talk about their lives before and after the ISIS terror because they had faced the brutality of terror. They were exposed to violence and abuse; their bodies were sold and raped; their faith was interrogated because they are Yezidi/Yazidi women. After that, I visited many other refugee camps along the Turkey-Syria borders and followed women's ‘journey of hope with boats’. This journey follows an unsafe Eastern Mediterranean Sea route between Turkey and Greece to access European Union (EU) countries. Many women shared their personal stories. Many women showed me pictures taken in their homes before ISIS terror. Many women cried on my shoulder when they talked about their stories. I waved goodbye to many refugee women who were on their journey in small boats at midnight seeking safety. Tragically, as a Turkish journalist, I witnessed the bodies of small children being washed up on the shores of the resort town of Bodrum, Turkey. In every single one of my news pieces, I wanted to give this significant message: although terror affects all people, women and children are impacted tremendously. Alternatively, ISIS does not avoid using female bodies as tools in their propaganda. The international media also uses images of women wearing

² Yezidi/Yazidi is ethnically Kurdish religious group.

burqas and carrying weapons. For that reason, although I had never written a news article about female fighters in and/or against ISIS, as a reader, and also journalist working in an environment of terror and reporting on it, I had often read western media coverage about female fighters and heard public conversation about female participation in the terror. Since my first visit to a refugee camp in 2015, I have started to think more deeply about ISIS terror and female experiences and asked myself, where are these women in this terror? This thesis was born as a result of my self-reflection in these refugee camps. I attempt to deeply consider the issues that surround terror, gender and media because in my understanding, ISIS, as a nationalist-jihadist movement, is deliberately capitalizing on these women and employing the media to spread their propaganda.

Women's bodies are able to be weaponized, which means "[adopted] for use as a weapon of war" ("Weaponize | Definition of Weaponize by Merriam-Webster," n.d.), by terrorist groups, whether it is indirectly as sex slaves or directly as fighters and suicide bombers. This weaponization is supported by the media through the representation of women as passive victims "and/or" active agents of terror. ISIS also regenerates their own strength through female bodies. It is possible to say that the instrumentalization of the female body is a key method in their aim, which is to create an Islamic State. Women's bodies are used as tools, and these bodies are at the core of the political order as markers of status and power. Because the relationship between masculinity and militarism repeatedly recreates gender roles in armed conflict, advancement requires assimilation to the norms associated with powerful bodies. Assimilation of people belonging to other religions, particularly Yezidis/Yazidis, is one of the main war tactics for ISIS to ensure religious integrity. Consequently, first, physical space is occupied and then a massive attack on the physical bodies of women follows. This means like the land, the female body is also looted and plundered.

In this framework, the main research question for this thesis is 'what narratives does the media tell about women impacted by ISIS' terror?' This question is considered through an examination of the organization's own media, (specifically see Chapter Six: ISIS' Frame/Narrative) and international news media coverage (see Chapter Seven: Western Media's Frames/Narratives of Women as 'Heroines'). In addition, this examination includes my personal experience as a journalist through my own published news articles. The justification for the inclusion of my own perspective as a media worker is explored in Chapter Five: damla yur's Frame/Narrative. Moreover, the original question invites reflection on further questions, such as 'how are female bodies framed in media coverage of ISIS terror?' and 'are they cast as victims, witnesses, perpetrators and/or all of the above in media coverage of ISIS?' These secondary questions are essential to support the main question's objective of identifying the media narratives at play. In this thesis, the answers to these questions are uncovered through narrative and visual analysis of selected news coverage in both texts and photographs.

Institutional violence perpetrated against women by terrorist organizations such as ISIS, and also spreading this propaganda, means publishing content which frames women as objects/victims in the media is not a new phenomenon. However, the methodological criteria for selecting the time period for the examined news articles in this thesis is based on a 'mutual time period' which means the time period of my articles parallels ISIS own magazine's articles. The international media content is selected based on this mutual time period as well. During this time, I wrote and published my own news articles about the issue in *Cumhuriyet Newspaper* (between May 2015 and March 2016), ISIS prepared and published their own magazine, *Dabiq*, (between July 2014 and July 2016). The international media news articles are also based on these dates, July 2014 and July 2016. The first selected international media articles from the *Daily Mail* and *Marie*

Claire were about a group of women who escaped ISIS terror in June 2015. At that time, I was around the Turkey-Syria border and the eastern Mediterranean coast reporting on the situations of refugee women. Simultaneously, ISIS was preparing their magazine's 10th issue. The second story I selected from the international media coverage was from *Foreign Policy*'s September 12, 2014 interview with Avesta. At this time, I was in Diyarbakir³ and had a chance to contact the Kurdish community like that of Avesta's. Two days prior, *Dabiq*'s 3rd issue had been published, and ISIS was already preparing for their 4th. My last selected international media news article, Murad's story, was published on October 5, 2018; however, this article was based on Murad's experience being held a captive by ISIS back in September 2014. The same time period that Avesta was a female fighter against ISIS terror; I was around Kurdish controlled areas as a female journalist; and ISIS, as a jihadist movement, was distributing their propaganda with their own media. It is possible to say that at that time, ISIS terror and the situation of women impacted by this terror, are central for all women in this thesis; however, all of them see the terror from different perspectives and disseminate their own narratives.

ISIS- Islamic State of Iraq and Syria

The Middle East – it has several definitions. It is a geographic region. It is a culture and it is also the birth place of most jihadist movements. It is difficult to explain the Middle East's conflict in a couple of sentences, but it is very clear to see how the conflict and ethnic tensions affect civilians' lives. For that reason, it is not easy to be optimistic about peace in the Middle East because the conflict is military and also has moral dimensions (Chomsky, 2004). What is the moral judgement of terrorists? ISIS is just one of many terrorist groups that are not afraid to force their morality upon women's bodies with specific rules. This terrorist group entered the Middle East

³ Diyarbakir is a city in Southeastern Turkey and is often considered the unofficial capital of Northern Kurdistan.

when the civil strife ignited in the Middle East in 2011 (Gerges, 2016). Four years ago, ISIS released a manifesto clearly outlining the role of women in the jihadist group. According to the manifesto, girls at the age of nine should marry fighters. In addition, education for girls should start at the age of seven but finish before the age of 15; during that time, girls should focus on Islamic religious studies, Koranic Arabic, basic cooking and knitting only (Saul, 2015). In addition, ISIS believes in Sharia law (Islamic law) and its rules include the control of personal appearance with clothing choices as well as non-gender mixing (Lister, 2015). This may lead one to ask, 'who are ISIS and why did they decide to publish a manifesto about women?'

Lister (2015), examines ISIS as "more than a terrorist organization" (p. 5) because of their power. When we search the list of terrorist groups, it is possible to find at least 80 different organizations. However, over the past decade, ISIS and the organization's terror have been at the center of world politics. Weiss and Hassan (2015) claim the group has gained power because they are "a mafia adept at exploiting decades-old transnational gray markets for oil and arms trafficking" (p.xv).

ISIS was established under the terrorist group 'Jamaat-al Tawid wal- Jihad (JTWJ) in 1999 and joined Al-Qaeda in 2004 before separating in 2014, after which point the group became official (Stern & Berger, 2016). When ISIS started to act in the middle of 2013, many researchers thought the group was working with Al-Qaeda. However, on February 2, 2014, Al-Qaeda declared that ISIS was not affiliated with them (Stern & Berger, 2016).

The terrorist group ISIS is known as a global Salafi jihadist movement. Gerges (2016) defines the group's ideology:

ISIS was born of a marriage between an Iraq-based AQI (Salafi-jihadism) and an identity frame of politics. The group's ideological lineage of Salafi-jihadism forms part of the

ideological impetus; the other part of its ideological nature is a hyper-Sunni identity driven by an intrinsic and even genocidal anti-Shia ideology (p. 24).

The group believes in an Islamic State and the anti-western militant group's major financial resources are oil and land (Greene & Thompson, 2016). Moreover, the group also uses the technique of 'kidnap-for-ransom' very effectively. As an example, in 2014, two Italian women and a Japanese national were successfully kidnapped for money (C. R. Lister, 2015). These activities have made the terrorist organization very powerful. According to Greene and Thompson (2016), ISIS has quickly captured large areas in Iraq and Syria. Although citizens in these Middle Eastern countries suffer from the actions of this terrorist organization, many other cities from east to west all over the world are exposed to the organization's terrorist attacks. Paris, France; London, United Kingdom; Istanbul, Turkey; Orlando, United States of America; Ottawa, Canada are among cities that have experienced ISIS' terror.

CNN reported in 2018 that the terrorist group had killed 2,043 people in 29 different countries (T. Lister et al., 2018). In 2017, extremist Islamic groups killed 866 civilians, including 181 children and 94 women – 857 of those, including 180 children and 94 women, were killed by ISIS – whereas 9 civilians, including 1 child, were killed by Fateh al Sham Front which is another terrorist organization and known Al-Nusra Front (“5381 Civilians Killed in the First Half of 2017 - Syrian Network for Human Rights,” 2017).

Chapter Two: Theoretical Approach

Hunt and Rygiel (2006) advocate that gender should be center to understand war and 'the shape of global politics' in the twenty-first century:

When we talk about '(en)gendering the war on terror', we use this concept to signify the ways that this war is produced, constructed, and waged on highly gendered terrain. Feminist analyses of this (en)gendered war disrupt and make visible the masculinized, militarized, racialized, sexualized, and classed dynamics through which the war operates and which often go unnoticed, ignored or hidden by official representations of war (p. 3).

ISIS terror affects all genders; however, like many other terrorist groups, women are their main target. This is because in a terror environment, rape most often happens to women. As individual women suffer through physical trauma, the terrorist groups communicate their power over communities: the primary purpose for punishing one woman is the punishment for all. Al-Ali and Pratt (2009) also explain the situation as "[r]ape is not only used to attack and humiliate the 'enemy woman', but through her to attack her supposedly male protectors" (p. 11). In systematic rape practice, the feminine body becomes a commodity through its transformation into a weapon of war. Zainab Hawa Bangura, United Nations' (UN) Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict said, "This is a war that is being fought on the bodies of women" after a recent trip to Iraq and Syria in April 2015 (Cantilero, 2015, para. 3). She claims that girls are sold for as little as a pack of cigarettes or as much as several hundred or thousand dollars in slave markets ("Isis Slave Markets Sell Girls for 'As Little As A Pack of Cigarettes', UN envoy says," 2015). At that time the UN reported that 3,500 women and children of the Yezidi/Yazidi community remain captive under ISIS, suffering physical and sexual violence every day (Cantilero, 2015).

According to Enloe (2000), in order for rape to qualify as a systematic event, these events must be planned, rather than coincidental. Enloe's (2014) foundational question is, "Where are the women?" (p. 6). This question emphasizes gendered constructions of violence in war and international relations. The experience of war can be read through the lens of gender, and women's experiences in war have begun to be discussed in scholarly literature. Part of this discussion involves a process of analyzing the concept of security as compared to the value of women. In addition, Enloe (2014) also focuses on political power, men as 'natural' protectors and ethnic cleansing. She asks, "Where does power operate?", "What forms does power take?", "Who wields it?" and "How are some gendered wieldings of power camouflaged so they do not even look like power?" (Enloe, 2014, p. 8-9). She claims that conducting a feminist gender analysis requires investigating power. Enloe's (2014) analysis explains media construction of living in a dangerous world serves to reinforce the primacy of particular forms of masculinity. This framework advances the idea that women who live in a dangerous world are those that need protection (Enloe, 2014).

On the other hand, terrorist groups also commonly use female bodies for suicide bombing attacks. This is not a new method of spreading terror, as it has a low financial and technological cost and a significant impact on large groups of people. Three percent of all terrorist attacks between 1980 and 2001 were suicide bombings. However, these attacks caused half of the total deaths due to terrorism during that time (Zedalis, 2004). This makes suicide bomber attacks a very effective tactic of inflicting terror on the general population. While female participation in terrorist organizations is not a new phenomenon, many scholars claim that the media has characterized female suicide bombers as a new development in terror. According to Sjoberg and Gentry (2011), the involvement of women in terrorist organizations is not exclusive to the 21st century, nor is the situation limited to Islamist terrorist groups. A Russian nihilist organization had female members

in the late 19th century, as did the Socialist Revolutionary Party in the late 20th century (Sjoberg & Gentry, 2011a). Moreover, according to Brunner (2016), a 17-year-old Lebanese girl who was a member of the Syrian Socialist National Party (SSNP) is the first female suicide bomber in modern history. She blew herself up in Lebanon in 1985. Between 1985 and 1990, 9 attacks were carried out by women. Brunner asks the question, “women suicide bombers or female suicide terrorism?” in the literature and explains the aims of female suicide bombing in history:

Four more women followed her [the 17-year-old Lebanese girl] in the first campaign, two of them Christians. The targets were clearly military – religion was not the primary motive. Thereafter, as the increasing generalization of the phenomenon took a different shape – that of the stereotyped fanaticized Islamist suicide terrorist targeting innocent civilians – these women were gradually relegated to a mere footnote in history (para. 3)

Why are women in particular used for suicide bombings? One explanation is gender stereotypes, such as men in positions of authority avoiding touching women's bodies during a physical search and in addition, a great deal of journalists and researchers claim that terrorist groups use female suicide bombers because women can hide bombs and explosives better under traditional clothing such as the burqa or abaya (Brunner, 2016 ; Zedalis, 2004). Moreover, Zedalis claims that the psychological impact of women's participation in terror is powerful as men, not women, are typically viewed as active agents of terror. Furthermore, Brunner also explains the reason why terrorist groups take advantage of female suicide bombers:

[...] women often enter the stage of violent agency later in campaigns, when the tactic is more developed than at the beginning of the campaign and at a time when larger parts of society support extreme forms of violence. For all these reasons, women's operations are

far more lethal than men's, and their impact on society is much more intense, because sexed-gendered reporting on the attacks mobilizes more attention (para. 5).

Generally, female bodies are at the core of terrorist activities, although hegemonic masculinity⁴ is emphasized because hegemonic masculinity also supports heterosexual hegemony, and these structures directly affect women. Butler (2004) claims that the power of heterosexual hegemony forms the 'matter' of bodies, sex, and gender. According to her idea, bodily autonomy is a lively paradox, which means it is nonstable and time-dependent. This is a part of the normative aspiration of any movement. As an example, the situation seeks to maximize women's sexual protection and gender minorities' freedoms defined with the broadest possible compass, of racial and ethnic minorities, especially as they cut across all the other categories. She asks, "Is there a way in which the place of the body in all of these struggles opens up a different conception of politics?" (Butler, 2004, p. 21). Butler's theory about the body is constituted as a social phenomenon in the public sphere and she defends the idea with "My body is and is not mine" (Butler, 2004, p. 21) and "One's body is never fully one's own" (Butler, 2010, p. 54). If we consider her quote with the connection between women and subject positions, specifically victims "and/or" agents of terror in media coverage of ISIS terror, it is clear one must examine media narratives as the result of the operations of power upon the body.

Media, Terror and Gender

The relationship between the media, terrorism and gender is always complex and fraught. Media has a pervasive influence on the way the public views men and women. Scholars claim that all forms of media communicate images of the sexes, many of which perpetuate unrealistic,

⁴ Masculinity is associated with social life structures which applies to institutions, practices and activities (Eichler, 2012). With the approach, hegemonic masculinity can be defined as a form of being a man who legitimizes masculine relationships between men and women, produces ideal form of men and affects other masculinities more or less in structures of social life.

stereotypical, and limiting perceptions (S. Harding, 1992). According to Wood (1994), there are three ways that the media represents gender. First, women are underrepresented, which falsely implies that men are the cultural standard and women are unimportant or invisible. Second, women and men are portrayed in stereotypical ways that reflect and sustain socially endorsed views of gender. Third, depictions of relationships between men and women emphasize traditional roles and normalize violence against women (Wood, 1994).

In addition, some feminist scholars believe that media, with their visual representation of war, have a limited perspective of conflict. For example, Butler (2010) explains the frame of the photograph with these phrases, “the framing of the immigration issues as a ‘war at home’ and the framing of sexual and feminist politics in the service of the war effort” (p. 26). Moreover, she argues that the frame of the war photograph tends not to view ‘multiculturalism’ and ‘sexual freedom’ as a part of ‘foreign affairs’. She insists “Sexually progressive conceptions of feminist rights or sexual freedoms have been mobilized not only to rationalize wars against predominantly Muslim populations, but also to argue for limits to immigration to Europe from predominantly Muslim countries” (Butler, 2010, p. 26).

Furthermore, Bhattacharyya (2008) claims that attacks on the west are usually shown as a significant event to explain “iconography of the war on terror” and added this case as an example,

The theatrical destruction of the Twin Towers, the videotapes of Bin Laden flickering across the world’s TV and computer monitors, and the horrors of hostage broadcasts including the horrific development of killings transmitted over the internet all reveal an impulse to extend the range and extent of terror through the dissemination of such images. (p. 65).

This problematic relationship between the media and the representation of women in Middle East affects many types of news reporting, including celebrity news, sports news, and political news. Moreover, terrorist groups use media very effectively. According to Cockburn, a jihadist website has a slogan, "Half of jihad is media" (2015, p. 127). Like many other terrorist organizations, specifically ISIS is very active in all kinds of media, such as social media, to exploit international media attention. According to Lister, ISIS in particular has used social media better than any other terrorist organizations before the U.S. government banned them from Twitter. Particularly since 2014, the group had started to focus on English language productions such as *The Dabiq Magazine* (Lister, 2015). According to Weiss and Hassan (2015), the group spread their attitudes with the idea of "Don't hear about us, hear from us" (p. 170).

Chapter Three: Methodological Framework

This thesis uses the Arts-Based Research (ABR) Method. Arts-based researchers George Lakoff and Patricia Leavy's ideas are used to conduct a narrative analysis for selected news articles and to conduct a visual analysis for selected news photographs. Visual analysis is methodologically reliant on ABR, and narrative analysis is conducted using a cognitive linguistic approach. Both of them are used for this thesis in selected news about ISIS' terror. Moreover, bell hooks' arts-based practice, which is grounded in photography and black experience, is also used as an example of a methodology to examine visual imagery in this thesis. The overall purpose of this thesis is to analyse the multiple media narratives of women impacted by ISIS' terror. The method with two analytic styles and three theorists allows this topic to be analyzed from feminist, post-structuralist, visual imagery (ABR) and a cognitive linguistic approach.

Arts-Based Research (ABR) Method

As a methodological tool, ABR is used by qualitative researchers for social research including data collection, analysis, interpretation and representation, according to Leavy's (2009) definition. Literary writing, music, performance, dance, visual arts and film are some of its arts-based practices, and this method has a strong frame through which to understand subjugated perspectives, challenge stereotypes and dominant ideology, and raise critical consciousness. In addition, dominant social movements – such as the women's movement, particularly second wave feminism, and the gay rights movement – have the power to affect these kinds of research both theoretically and methodologically. For example, feminist researchers create, produce and make visible standpoint epistemology against hierarchical social order (S. G. Harding & Hintikka, 1983; Smith, 1987). Critical discourse, representation, and reflexivity are used by these feminist researchers (Haraway, 1988). According to Harding (1992) and Haraway (1988), both the context

of discovery and justification are claimed simultaneously by feminist researchers to produce partial and situated truths. These epistemological conditions encourage the use of qualitative methods such as the oral history interview. For that reason, as an alternative methodology, arts-based practice permits one to understand 'power relations'. Narrative analysis and visual analysis are just two methods to use ABR and this thesis uses both of these analytic methods.

Narrative Analysis

Narrative and frame can be defined as a method of report which includes a written, verbal or artistic sequence of events or experiences. Narrative is created in a brain perspective and the mind's role for the narrative is the awareness of consciousness. According to Lakoff, fighting "a culture war" is the main point for radical conservatives; however, the brain is the main fighting area, more specifically the level of consciousness in the brain functions (2008, p. 1). This means we need to focus on our brain and our consciousness.

Social changes are influenced by many different dynamics: some of them are institutional, while others are material or political. According to Lakoff (2008), controlling wealth, running powerful institutions, and winning elections directly affect social change. Yet, when the subject is politics, he questions "how the brain and the mind actually work" (Lakoff, 2008, p. 4). He focuses on cognitive science to understand the workings of the brain and the mind for political topics.

Although economics, power, and social organization are central issues in politics, the brains of our citizens are vital for understanding the political mind. According to Lakoff's beliefs (2008), the significant role of the human brain and the mind are ignored. However, the human brain and mind contain many different kinds of opinions both consciously and unconsciously. Conscious and unconscious thoughts are produced differently. While unconscious thought is described as reflexive, automatic and uncontrolled, unconscious thought is explained as reflexive.

The cognitive unconscious is the main site for politics and morality. For that reason, embodiment of mind is matter for politics, but why? According to Lakoff's (2008) idea, there are three key reasons that are not well understood. First, our morality and politics are affected by our embodied brains with the level of consciousness. Second, these unconscious senses are willful. Third, we are connected to each other and to the physical world by the embodied aspects of the mind. Therefore, the 18th century view of the mind is ineffective in understanding 21st century politics (Lakoff, 2008).

We have many different kinds of words, which are used to describe our opinions about the world – as examples, the noun of 'victim' or the noun of 'jihad'. The letters that make up the words 'victim' or 'jihad' are just tools. We contextualize the concepts of these words in our brains and minds. What is the meaning of 'victim' or 'jihad' in our understanding? In this thesis, Lakoff's (2008) idea that "language is a tool, an instrument but it is the surface, not the soul of the brain" is used to scrutinize and discuss the selected media coverage of women under ISIS' terror (p. 15). Our narratives are shaped by our experiences. 'Hero', 'victim' and 'helper' are some of the typical roles which are played out by our narratives. Lakoff (2008) uses the meaning of 'doctor', 'housewife' and 'nurse' as examples. The adjective of 'victim' for 'housewife' is created by society's sexism in his argument. In his understanding, we are not born with them, but these meanings are created and embedded by the cultural narratives and frames (Lakoff, 2008, p. 33). In the framework, Lakoff's (2008) purpose is analyzing the cognitive unconscious in order to make the conscious in political reality. In addition, he believes that new narratives have been created by feminism, but if these narratives just show people like Hillary Clinton or Gloria Steinem instead of people like Vickie Lynn Hogan, the narrative becomes an 'upper-middle class fantasy' (Lakoff, 2008, p. 35).

In addition, he also focuses on ignoring other narratives when the person accepts a particular narrative. His example of the narratives of the first Gulf War shows how Saddam Hussain was the 'villain' which equates to evil, while Kuwait was the 'victim' despite also employing dictatorship— which included major violations of human rights. The United States was the 'hero' and the coalition members were the 'helpers' in his analysis (Lakoff, 2008, p. 37). These narratives do not allow us to see other roles for these actors. When he analyzes people's positions as readers or watchers of media, they become active observers. For that reason, he believes that "we are in a melodrama" (Lakoff, 2008, p. 38). In this part, he focuses on two properties of the brain: seeing and imagining, which both happen in the same part of the brain. Thus, the technical definition of mental 'simulation' is for moving or perceiving, using brain areas, imagining, remembering, dreaming, or understanding language and connecting imaginative stories to our lived narratives (Lakoff, 2008, p. 39). The connection between these lived narratives and the neural structure in the brain is used whether we see it in real life or on TV. This is what makes literature and art meaningful in his approach (Lakoff, 2008). Although politics is about who has power, patronage and control of money and resources, politics is also about morality, which involves our unconscious thought. Public political discourse can be explained with the cognitive and unconscious thought. Cognitive science and neuroscience allow us to understand the big picture with Lakoff's (2008) main question, "what to do about it?" (p. 114)

This thesis uses Lakoff's (2008) narrative theory to analyze selected articles with a narrative approach from the arts-based method to also think about the questions of "what do narratives tell" and "what are the dynamics that give them the dominance to come into power?" Labov (2006) describes narrative inquiry as "about something" (p. 37) and Connelly and Clandinin (1990) define narrative inquiry as a "basic phenomenon of life" (p. 2). Analyzing media coverage of ISIS with

this perspective allows us to critically comprehend the identity representation of terror. On the other side, narrative analysis is not enough to read the big picture, so this thesis also applies visual analysis to understand the meaning of these selected articles' photographs.

Visual Analysis

There is no doubt that visual material has a strong power and role in our societies. Photographs give a language to express feelings for which we can find no words. Moreover, photographs may also affect our opinions about social movements. Leavy (2009) describes the power of the image as “worth a thousand words” (p. 215). According to her opinion, for social researchers who employ arts-based research, understanding visual imagery enhances knowledge of social, political and economic activity. Visual imagery represents a created perspective, not just a window into the world. For that reason, it is possible to liken visual art production and journalism, because photographs record some aspect of the social world as seen by photographer and/or journalists (Leavy, 2009). Particularly, when the image comes from war and terror, this visual representation is always powerful but at the same time arguable. Butler (2010) claims that although images from war document the situation of war, the meaning as “emotional responses” may support the war effort and/or resistance against the war. She poses the question, “so can we say that the image itself is really part of the waging of war?” (p. xi).

Moreover, Leavy (2009) claims that visual images occupy an elevated place in memory, and she uses 9/11 as her main example. She said that many Americans remember the image of New York's World Trade Center under some state of attack or destruction. When we think about other important events that happened on September 11th, we may recall some strong pictures. As an example, the Chilean Coup happened on September 11, 1973; and the Sabra and Shatila Massacre of Lebanon caused the killing of thousands of civilians on September 11, 1982.

However, nowadays some of society do not know and some do not remember when they heard the day of September 11. Yes, we have visual memories about the history of some social tragedies, but it is possible to say that our memories are based on new events. According to Leavy (2009), visual images have long-term power to be consumed differently than text and sound. However, almost all days on the calendar are full of many tragedies. While some of them have visual images, which of them is in our area of concern? What is the long-term capacity of our visual memories?

Visual art is also available to use in feminist, postcolonial and other critical perspectives of social research. bell hooks is one of the many feminist scholars who use ABR practice. Her research about group identity struggles is a remarkable example to understand the visual arts power in the study of race, class, gender and sexuality. In her book, *Art on my mind: Visual politics* (hooks, 1995), she claims that representation is the main point to defend subjectivity and decolonization. Therefore, underrepresentation and invisibilities of black individuals in art are problematic for black identity. Connections between the place of art in black life, the social construction of black identity, the impact of race and class, and the presence in “black life of an inarticulate” are main points in her work (hooks, 1995, p. 57). Photography is used to consider snapshots as a starting point for her approach. Her questions, “how we see ourselves” and “how others see us”, are a site of ongoing struggle in her understanding (hooks, 1995, p. 57). One of her examples is the history of the Black Liberation movements in the United States. She describes this as a combat over images because representation remains a crucial realm of struggle, as important as the question of equal access. In addition, the vast majority of images representing black females in mainstream art photography depict black females from full frontal views of face or body which may be interpreted as an insistence of transparency. These images cause us to rethink “what you see is what you get” (hooks, 1995, p. 97). This thesis can be analyzed by using this perspective to

critically examine subjects of women who were pictured before, during and after ISIS terror. Moreover, hooks examines that being 'safe' is to stay within fixed boundaries. What are these boundaries? These are family, community or nation in her work. But if our nation is occupied, how can we keep safe? hooks also emphasizes the importance of body as a first site of limitation before these boundaries. This thesis questions how we can keep our bodies in these boundaries which are occupied. Therefore, hooks' idea "to move across boundaries against the norm" (1995, p. 135) is relevant for this thesis and also encourages rethinking about border crossing more than once.

Chapter Four: Methodology

In this chapter, I would like to describe where the specific news media outlets originated and explain how and why I chose these articles. I will then explain the challenges analyzing selected articles and how I apply narrative and visual analysis. In this thesis, I examined the narratives represented in a selection of news articles published online. This thesis has three main analysis chapters which show different narratives. The first analysis chapter, Chapter Five: *damla yur's* Frame/Narrative, is of my own published news articles, to explain and reanalyze my personal narrative regarding ISIS' terror and women's experiences. The second analysis chapter, Chapter Six: ISIS' Frame/Narrative, examines ISIS' magazine *Dabiq* to present, understand and analyze the terrorist organization's narratives about women in the 'Islamic State'. The final analysis chapter, Chapter Seven: Western Media's Frames/Narratives' of Women as 'Heroines', is of international media content, to explore and examine the women's narratives as well as media's understanding of discourses that connect ISIS' terror and women.

Selection of Sources

The time period of my articles parallels *Dabiq* magazine's. For that reason, the international media contents are selected based on this mutual time period starting, 2014, to 2018. The international media sources are chosen based on news topics which show women's narratives as 'heroines' under ISIS' terror. In addition, my articles are about the experiences of women who lived under ISIS' terror, escaped the terror and were seeking refuge in Turkey at that time. The *Dabiq* articles alternatively are about the rules for women who live in the 'Islamic State'. Both my articles as well as *Dabiq*'s do not have any discourses about female fighters; however, it is known that groups of women have visibly fought against ISIS. For that reason, these women's narratives

from international media are also shown in the final analysis chapter of this thesis because this thesis tries to examine multiple positions of women under the terror of ISIS.

For the first analysis chapter, damla yur's Frame/Narrative, I selected 7 articles which are published in *Cumhuriyet Newspaper* both online and print copies. I used these articles' online versions. Moreover, all articles were originally published in Turkish and were translated. Articles are selected based on the subject of women's shared experiences about ISIS' terror. The first selected article, entitled "Syrians think abortion is illegal in Turkey", was published on May 11, 2015. The last selected article which is called "My hope is just to stay alive", was published on March 8, 2016. All 7 articles are dated between May 2015 and March 2016. The photographs are selected based on these texts' narratives from the photographic archives of Can Erok, who worked as a photojournalist with me in these areas for *Cumhuriyet Newspaper*, and Ümit Bektaş, who works as a photojournalist for *Reuters* and worked with me at the same time, in the same area, for the same issue.

For the second analysis chapter, ISIS' Frame/Narrative, I chose 8 articles that were all published between July 2014 and July 2016. The magazine has 15 issues in total and 8 issues have articles about the subject of women. The first article about the topic was published on October 11, 2014 and the last one was published on July 31, 2016. The selected articles' time periods are between those dates. Photographs in the same pages with these selected articles, are analyzed.

For the final analysis chapter, Western Media's Frames/Narratives of Women as 'Heroines', I chose 3 news topics as symbols of 'heroines'. First one is showing group of women who removed their burka/burqa⁵ after escaping ISIS' terror. For this topic, I selected 2 articles

⁵ Burka/burqa is a one-piece veil that covers the face and body (see *Table 1: Head Coverings Worn by Muslim Women*, p. 72)

from different media, one of them is from *Daily Mail* because this topic was first published in this online tabloid newspaper, June 5, 2015. Second article about same topic is selected from *Maria Claire*, fashion magazine to show a different approach. Another topic shows a woman who fight against ISIS. Although there are many news articles about female fighters in ISIS, there are not any direct quotes from these fighters in these articles. Most quotes come from male fighters or ISIS' manifesto and in their visual materials, it is not clear whether these are ISIS' militants or from other terrorist organizations. For that reason, I selected a symbolic story of a female fighter 'against' ISIS terror because the woman like many other PKK⁶ members also experienced ISIS' terror therefore, she preferred to fight physically and reported her narrative to a journalist. For this topic, I selected article from *Foreign Policy* because this news article draws deeply portrait about female fighters against ISIS with the example of a woman, Avesta, and this media source has the high level of professional about the terror. This article is also published on September 2014 when I worked about this issue and ISIS was preparing their own media sources. Nadia Murad, who is 2018 Nobel Peace Prize winner, is selected as a last symbolic woman in this chapter. Her story, based on her experience as a captive by ISIS in September 2014, from her book was published in *The Guardian* on October 6, 2018 and I selected this to analyze in this chapter because of understanding her own narrative to comprehend women's narratives. These articles photographs are also analysed in this chapter with ABR method.

Challenges

Some articles from ISIS' own magazine, *Dabiq*, have narratives about the LGBTQI+ communities (the acronym includes Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex and other sexual orientations). I am uncertain which pronoun these people preferred.

⁶ PKK: Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (Kurdistan Worker Party)

Furthermore, I know many people from the community do not feel comfortable being addressed with masculine or feminine pronouns. For that reason, this thesis applied a gender-neutral pronoun guide⁷ for this chapter analysis, Chapter Six: ISIS' Frame/Narrative.

damla yur's Frame/Narrative Chapter does not need to use any gender-neutral pronouns because the selected articles do not have any knowledge of LGBTQI+ and also those articles are written in Turkish language⁸ which does not have any gender-specific pronouns. For that reason, it was possible to translate these articles and write this chapter with sensitivity of gender-neutral language.

Western Media Frames/Narratives of Women as 'Heroines' Chapter also does not have any knowledge of people who self-identified as LGBTQI+. For that reason, this last analysis chapter also does not need to use any pronouns from the Gender-Neutral Pronoun Table.

	Nominative (subject)	Objective (object)	Possessive determiner	Possessive Pronoun	Reflexive
Traditional pronouns					
He	He laughed	I called <i>him</i>	<i>His</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>his</i>	He likes <i>himself</i>
She	She laughed	I called <i>her</i>	<i>Her</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>hers</i>	She likes <i>herself</i>
It	It laughed	I called <i>it</i>	<i>Its</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>its</i>	It likes <i>itself</i>
They	They laughed	I called <i>them</i>	<i>Their</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>theirs</i>	They like <i>themselves</i>
Invented pronouns					
Ne	Ne laughed	I called <i>nem</i>	<i>Nir</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>nirs</i>	Ne likes <i>nemself</i>
Ve	Ve laughed	I called <i>ver</i>	<i>Vis</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>vis</i>	Ve likes <i>verself</i>
Spivak	Ey laughed	I called <i>em</i>	<i>Eir</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>eirs</i>	Ey likes <i>emself</i>
Ze (or zie) and hir	Ze laughed	I called <i>hir</i>	<i>Hir</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>hirs</i>	Ze likes <i>hirself</i>
Ze (or zie) and zir	Ze laughed	I called <i>zir</i>	<i>Zir</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>zirs</i>	Ze likes <i>zirself</i>
Xe	Xe laughed	I called <i>xem</i>	<i>Xyr</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>xyrs</i>	Xe likes <i>xemself</i>

⁷ Gender Neutral Pronoun Table ("xemself | Search Results | Gender Neutral Pronoun Blog," n.d.)

According to the table, the nominative subject of xe refers xem as an objective object; xyr as a possessive determiner; xyrs possessive pronoun, and xemself as reflexive. Those are used in the ISIS' Frame/Narrative Chapter. Therefore, before reading the Chapter Six, please note this gender neutral pronoun table ("xemself | Search Results | Gender Neutral Pronoun Blog," n.d.).

⁸ This means the singular third person pronoun is 'o' in Turkish and refers to 'he/she/it'. The plural third person pronoun is 'onlar' in Turkish language and refers to 'they', meaning both of them are completely gender neutral.

Doing Narrative and Visual Analysis

In 3 analysis chapters – damla yur's Frame/Narrative, ISIS' Frame/Narrative and Western Media's Frames/Narratives of Women as 'Heroines' – the selected articles are described, the narrative analysed, and a visual analysis is performed. Based on this thesis' theoretical approach, Lakoff's cognitive linguistic perspective, some words such as 'victim' and 'jihad' are explained in these chapters' narratives. As an example, in damla yur's Frame/Narrative Chapter, those words were explained from my own perspective. The same methods are applied in the ISIS' Frame/Narrative and also Western Media's Frames/Narratives of Women as 'Heroines'. In addition, Lakoff's example of the Gulf War's actors – hero, victim, villain and helper – are practiced in ISIS' terror from the perspectives of multiple narratives. In the framework, this thesis has created its own table about actors in/under and against ISIS' terror from three different approaches: my own, ISIS' and the international media.

Visual material from three different time periods, before, during and after ISIS' terror, is presented in this thesis. For these pictures' visual analysis, Leavy's perspective about our visual memories was used to deeply analyze the visual representation of ISIS' terror. Some iconic images from other wars and terror events are recalled in the first analysis chapter, damla yur's Frame/Narrative, to encourage visual ISIS terror memories. In addition, bell hooks' practices are used as an example to perform visual analysis. Her questions such as "how we see ourselves" and "how others see us" (1995, p. 57) were specifically answered in the first narrative chapter, damla yur's Frame/Narrative. Moreover, her approach encouraged this thesis to ask how one can stay safe if our nation is occupied, and how we can protect our bodies in these boundaries which are occupied.

These methodological practices, with these theoretical approaches, have allowed this thesis to deeply examine the media narratives of women impacted by ISIS' terror. Analyzing the gendering of ISIS terror imagery, as socially visible from media coverage, is one of the main aims of this thesis. The arts-based method can be applied to the research interests of sexuality, gender and any number of contested social identities. Leavy (2009) claims that this approach allows researchers to make a connection between visual culture and the changing relations of dominance and oppression. In addition, hooks' (1995) approach, with the question of "what narratives the images tell", is a critical question because her approach enables using images for a recuperative, redemptive memory to construct radical identities, and the limits of the colonizing eye. In addition, Lakoff's (2008) cognitive linguistic perspective is also a strong approach to understand implicit meaning of selected news articles and its effects on the minds of society. Moreover, I believe that by analyzing these texts and images with my own personal approach frame, this thesis has a powerful feminist lens. For all these reasons, the theoretical and methodological approaches in this work aimed to prove how the terrorist group's imagery impacts gender dynamics through the media.

Chapter Five: damla yur's Frame/Narrative

In this chapter, I share my own perspective through the use of my published news articles on ISIS terror and women impacted by this terror. My family, education, work experiences have all influenced my personal perspective which connects to my news articles and therefore, this thesis. First of all, I would like to share some details about myself. I was born on August 24, 1991 in İzmir which is the most secular and modern metropolitan city in Turkey. My mother's side of the family immigrated to Turkey from Bulgaria, so they are Bulgarian Turks and my father's side immigrated from Greece. I was born as a daughter whose parents had lived through the 1980 Turkish coup d'état where they witnessed 50 people executed, 500,000 people arrested and hundreds of people who died in prison (*"Erdogan and his generals - Turkey and its army,"* 2013). Most of my family members are Muslim, but Islam is not a central concern for my family. Moreover, I do not believe in any religion, but I believe in god and/or Allah, I still do not know the name. Therefore, I describe myself as a theist. When I meet new people, I do not typically share my religious beliefs. I usually say that I am a feminist and vegetarian. I am more sensitive about gender neutral language and also animal rights, than religion. For my personal character, I am a very inquisitive person. My mother always says, "questions never finish in damla's mind". I always expect answers from someone. So, it is possible to say that I usually ask others, not myself. On the other hand, I love writing stories, particularly biographies, but not my own autobiography. My subjects are usually women, children, people who self-identify as LGBTQI+ and sometimes men, but not myself. In the process of writing this thesis, I have recognized that for a long time, I have not asked the question, "who am I?" until writing this project.

When I was 19 years old, my first news article was published in a Turkish newspaper and for 5 years, I wrote many articles about women-oriented news stories. Most of them were published

as lead articles. I started to work for *Milliyet Newspaper*, one of the mainstream newspapers in Turkey, and my last newspaper was *Cumhuriyet* which is the oldest social, democratic, Turkish daily newspaper. When my ex-newspaper, *Milliyet*, became more pro-government media, I left and went to *Cumhuriyet Newspaper*, which was becoming more fearless in their reporting, including stories about Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's 'dictatorship' in 2015 and 2016. Working at *Cumhuriyet Newspaper* strongly affected my worldview. When Turkey became more conservative day by day, writing news about feminism, trans gender issues, sex workers' situations and many other things which were not accepted easily in 'Turkish conservative moralities' made me more determined in my journalistic career.

As a person who grew up in Western Turkey, specifically İzmir, the concept of terror was foreign to my family. Although my parents tried to keep me away from television news broadcasts announcements about terror, I have some memorable images about terror from my childhood. For example, Al-Qaeda and the image of the organization's founder Osama bin Laden are remembered clearly. When ISIS was established under the terrorist group 'Jamaat-al Tawid wal- Jihad (JTWJ), I was 8 years old and I do not remember anything about it. However, when the group joined Al-Qaeda and became more active after 2004, I was in high school and university and my memory is full of newspaper pages with the image of Osama bin Laden. When the group declared themselves as not a brand of Al-Qaeda, just ISIS, I was politically aware and became a journalist who wrote news articles about the issue. In my narrative, ISIS is a jihadist and terrorist organization and they are villains against the modern world. Specifically, ISIS' terror and generally, the word 'terror' have been more meaningful since I listened to the Yezidi/Yazidi women's experiences, and I believe that nothing has hurt me more than the things I have heard from these women.



Figure 1: Can Erok/ November, 2016/ Çeşme-Turkey.

Since my childhood as a windsurfer, I had only positive stories about this coast, shown in Figure 1, until November 2015 when I went there as a journalist to report about the refugee crisis and saw this coast of Çeşme had become a place of hope for refugees. My city İzmir, specifically Çeşme, has always been a Turkish vacation destination and beaches in Çeşme have usually been visited by surfers from all over the world. These areas had now become a refugee hub due to its close proximity to the Greek Island of Chios, their entrance into EU countries. Gone was the beauty of this coastline, and now graffiti covered unfinished homes, Figure 2, family photographs were forgotten, Figure 3, and holding life jackets were a common sight, Figure 4, were new meanings of this coastline. Although, I was never bold enough to go windsurfing on this coast because of the dangerously high level of winds, I have many good surfing experiences in another Çeşme's coastlines. But after I listened to the refugees' expectations, I was waiting with them for less windy days to cross over to the Greek Island in their small boats. For that reason, my thoughts and feelings about these coastlines have changed in my memory, mind and heart. Now when I windsurf my thoughts about the wind are not only questioning if it can power my sail, but inevitably I wonder if it would be too strong for a small boat to cross. I can say that the meaning of winds has more than one meaning after this experience.



Figure 2: Can Erok/ November, 2016/ Çeşme-Turkey.



Figure 3: Ümit Bektaş/ March, 2016/ Çeşme- Turkey.



Figure 4: Can Erok/ November, 2016/ Çeşme-Turkey.

2013 was the beginning of my coverage of the refugee crisis but it was not until fall 2015 that I interviewed the refugees in my hometown, İzmir-Çeşme. This was very memorable for me. Around that time, working at *Cumhuriyet Newspaper*, my photojournalist, Can Erok and I had learned that many refugees preferred to take boats from this coast to Greece to enter the EU. Almost three months earlier, we had been in Bodrum, which is another resort town of Turkey and the grave site of many refugee children's bodies like Alan Kurdi⁹. From this place, I had written an article entitled "Journey of hope in the basement of humanity in Bodrum". Bodrum has two meanings in the Turkish language. One is 'basement' and the other is the name of the town. I tried to use dramatic irony with the phrase of 'the basement of humanity'. The first paragraph under this title shows the details about the population's situation in Turkey and the harrowing steps they took to seek refuge:

They are millions of refugees from Syria, which has been destroyed by the civil war, Pakistan, which has ongoing bomb attacks, and Afghanistan and Iran, which are two countries that have experienced serious disruptions from normal life because of suicide attacks. They are refugees who have been placed in refugee camps and are trying to create lives in cities of Turkey because of the hard-living conditions in camps. We usually see them when they sell handkerchiefs at traffic lights or beg for money around mosques. However, some of them sell bags and some of them work in factories or in construction. When a Turkish worker makes 5 TL [Turkish liras] for a job, a refugee worker makes 3 for the same and sometimes

⁹ Alan Kurdi was a 3 year old Syrian boy of Kurdish ethnic background whose image made global headlines after he drowned on September 2, 2015 in the Mediterranean Sea (Fallon, 2018). See Figure 14: Nilüfer Demir, DHA (News & Canada, 2015).

their salaries are postponed with comments like “tomorrow, this week, next week...” And now their new hope is Greece which represents a door to Europe for them, but only by taking a possible ‘death journey’. Here is a step-by-step escape from Bodrum, Turkey to Greece... (Yur, 2015b, para. 1)

I tried to accurately describe these refugees, who by many Turkish readers were viewed with contempt. I tried to explain the meaning of escaping war, keeping safe and creating new lives. But at the same time, I tried to understand where they were and where I was. Sometimes, I was behind shrubbery and sometimes I was on a coast at midnight to follow their journey yet also interview them about what they were leaving behind and where they going. However, it was very challenging emotionally to use a voice recorder while they were trying to inflate their dinghies or put on their life jackets. Particularly, talking to the female refugees was always more emotional for me. After many interviews, I would talk to myself, starting with “If I were them...” Often one moment we were together on the same land at the same time, shown in Figure 5, which was taken by Erok, a *Cumhuriyet Newspaper* photojournalist on November 2016 in Çeşme, Turkey. However, a few short moments later they were out at sea, taking the very unsafe journey in a small boat across the Mediterranean. One of these groups is shown in Figure 6 on August 2015 in Bodrum, Turkey and I was on the shore and waving goodbye. I do not know how many refugees who waved back at me are still alive.



Figure 5: Can Erok, November, 2016/ Çeşme-Turkey.



Figure 6: Can Erok, August 2015/ Bodrum- Turkey

After this first article was published, it became a news article series and on the second day I shared the refugees' preparation of the journey, step by step. My photojournalist Erok and I shared a couple of the pictures with our editors. Figure 7 was one of the strongest pictures which shows the difficulties of life for refugees, particularly women and children in Bodrum. In this photograph, buses, plastic bags as suitcases and a tired mother and her children are sleeping on benches. They are just three of the refugees who were waiting for their boats to pass the Mediterranean Sea and gain access to the EU. As noted under the picture "waiting to immigrate is

like this in Bodrum” (Yur, 2015c). The article showed what was transpiring on the coast of Bodrum between 12:00 am and 5:30 am. The family in this picture, and refugee families like them, are in striking contrast to the local Turkish and tourist children who were there just hours before happily eating their ice-cream cones or wealthy Turkish national women walking from club to club in their evening attire, while the refugee women were inflating their boats after sunset.



Figure 7: Can Erok, August 2015, Bodrum- Turkey

Some details about these illegal trips across the sea are written in my articles. As an example, a Syrian group of 6 people could not start the motor of their small boat. They had tried to get help from a man who spoke Turkish very well, another man who had given the boat to them as well as a taxi driver – in my understanding, they were smugglers. The refugees begged for help. A young woman from the group of 6 said, “Prithee, please come” and cried a lot (Yur, 2015c, para. 7). And finally, the boat worked, and the group sailed away. According to the constabulary report, that night 250 people wanted to pass the Greek Island from that area. However, 25 people were derailed by the constabulary and coastguard. A local person was detained because of organizing human smuggling. The Syrian refugees who were derailed were sent to the closest refugee camps

with an administrative fine and African refugees in the area were deported. Also, a human smuggler was charged and faced between 3 to 8 years imprisonment (Yur, 2015c, para. 8).

I did not have extensive interviews with the refugees in these conditions because they were really worried about smugglers, Turkish people, constabularies, coastguards and police officers. The worry in their eyes was very clear and also it was not hard to assume how hard their lives as refugees in Turkey were, particularly from women's eyes. Almost 3 months before, I wrote another article which was entitled "Syrians think abortion is illegal in Turkey" (Yur, 2015e) about the statistics on violence and rape of refugee women from ISIS militants on their journey to Turkey and then in Turkish refugee camps. I was inspired to write this article after learning from Women on Waves, which is a non-profit organization for prevention of unsafe abortions and empowerment of women to exercise their human rights, physical and mental autonomy and works for safe abortion all over the world. The group visited Gaziantep, Urfa and Kilis which are cities in the Eastern Anatolia Region in Turkey, and the visit is shown in Figure 8.



Figure 8: Women on Waves in Turkey May, 2015

The article, which had shared the group's analysis of the refugee women's situation, had started with these sentences:

Turkey plays host to more than 2 million Syrian refugees. Most of them are women and children. Since 2011, 30 thousand Syrian refugee women have given birth. It is very difficult to gain knowledge about this childbearing [because access is limited for journalists in the government refugee camps by the government itself as a means of controlling information to the public]. Women on Waves took this situation into consideration and came to Turkey. After their recent trip, they had shared their findings with *Cumhuriyet* [newspaper] (Yur, 2015e, para. 1).

According to the Women on Waves' report, in Turkish refugee camps 6 thousand rapes were documented over 4 years (Yur, 2015e, para. 5). There are some Syrian women who gave birth 3 times in 3 years (Yur, 2015e, para. 3). And those are just the reported incidences. According to the organization, the reality is likely more than these numbers (Yur, 2015e). In addition, many women were obligated to give birth which was a result of rape. The main problem was the right of abortion in Turkey. Many refugee women reported that this was the first time to hear of their right to abort in this new country when activists of Women on Waves shared this information with them. Moreover, many women had falsely believed that abortion is totally forbidden in Turkey. Syrian doctors had also been misinformed about this by Turkish doctors and incorrectly reported this to their Syrian patients, according to Women on Waves' report (Yur, 2015e). Since 1983, abortion in Turkey has been legal until the end of the first 10 weeks of pregnancy (IPPF European Network, 2009). These women had incorrect knowledge, because abortion in practice is often considered socially unacceptable in Turkey. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan does not support abortion and he did not avoid saying this in press conferences. He said “[e]very abortion is an Uludere” when he was prime minister (Arsu, 2012, para. 9). Uludere is a place where in 2011, 34 Kurdish people were massacred (“Massacre at Uludere - The Kurds and Turkey,” 2012, para. 1).

Moreover, he added “There is no difference in killing the fetus in a mother’s womb or killing a person after birth” (Arsu, 2012, para. 3). After his declaration, many doctors in Turkey began to avoid performing abortions (Letsch, 2015). In fact, abortions are de facto forbidden in Turkey. Legal rights have been attempted to be changed by the government party members of parliament many different times, however, feminist activist women in Turkey have dominantly protested this situation. Their slogan is “my body, my decision because of my life” (Gharib, 2012, para. 4). These mass movements have prevented changes in the law but in practice, many doctors are still being influenced by this government’s views.

In addition, Women and Waves’ report about refugee women’s lives in Turkey also shows that these women who did not want to be pregnant would like to access birth control. However, they do not know which person or place is right to seek this and they feel disempowered or uncomfortable when talking about freedom of their bodies. They do not have any idea about women’s rights in Turkey, they do not know about 6284 Law to Protect Family and Prevent Violence Against Women and they had never heard about shelters for women in Turkey (Yur, 2015e). With this report, it was clear to perceive how the refugee women’s lives in my country are and I knew this before I went to the coastlines to watch them prepare and depart across the unsafe Mediterranean Sea routes. When I looked into their eyes, I thought about the reported 6 thousand rapes and the women who had to give birth to their babies after being raped. In my understanding, after escaping ISIS terror, life in refugee camps in Turkey is the second face of the brutality of terror. In my many news articles, I tried to encourage my readers to think about whether just opening the door is enough or not, with these examples in mind.

Another important detail about these refugee women’s new lives in Turkey is their roles as ‘mothers’. Dozens of women had lost many people from their families and many aunts became

new mothers for many refugee children. Suari is one of these women. I met her in Diyarbakir Fidanlik Refugee Camp while she was playing ball with her nephew, Malik and niece, Melek. She was 19 years old at that time and had been living in the camp with 11 members of her family for 9 months. She said that she had become a mother for these kids because her brother's wife stepped on a land mine and died while they were migrating from Sinjar Mountain to Turkey. First, I talked to her with the help of my translator. After that she invited me to her tent without my male translator. She prepared tea for us and showed me pictures which were taken before ISIS terror in her home country in northwestern Iraq. There were many photographs from a house which I assumed was her house and some pictures from school events, birthday parties, etcetera. We could not talk but I tried to understand her from the look on her face and also her body language. She showed me some pictures very excitedly and after that she cried many tears on my shoulder. Our speechless interview was interrupted when her other family members came into the tent. I took a picture, which is Figure 9, and left the tent. For me, this moment was much more powerful than most of my other interviews to understand these women.



Figure 9: Diyarbakir Fidanlik Refugee Camp, June 2015

Another news article series of mine was “Refugee children should live” from Çeşme, another resort town in Turkey and also my hometown. I described the coast there now as a ‘refugee ghetto’ because a large number of refugees waiting to cross were now living in unfinished buildings, just 2 minutes’ walk to the Mediterranean Sea. In contrast, around the ‘ghetto’, many houses sell for millions of dollars and have the latest fashion bamboo dining tables in their garden as well as fireplaces inside. For that reason, I described the refugee area in the first paragraph of the news article with these sentences:

Sheets or blankets were stretched over the windows and doors. Inside, there were no fireplaces and trash was burned on the floor. The guests of these summer residences were sitting on a blanket on the floor, not a bamboo sofa. This area is opposite of Cos Island, Greece. Their dreams were just 250 meters down from the site to reach the beach by boat and access to Greece (Yur, 2015a, para. 6).

This time, unlike in Bodrum, I had a chance to chat with the refugee women in the area because they first had to settle into the unfinished houses and wait for the wind to calm down before they took the trip. Issa, who spoke English, French, Kurdish and Arabic, and Ziya, who spoke Arabic and Turkish, both helped me to interview other refugees who could not speak Turkish, English or French like I could. While we walked with Issa and talked about Turkish people’s attitudes against refugees after the Paris bombing attacks in November 2015, we heard a woman scream. When I walked in the direction the voice had come from, I met Zehra Mirzey and her 2 daughters. Her daughters described their situation for me. The family had come from Syria a month before. They had worked at restaurants as cleaners and saved money to go to Europe. They needed \$1000 for each adult and \$500 per child. The day before my interview, Ahmedi Mirzey, their father, had given \$5000 to their mother, Zehra Mirzey, for safe keeping. Zehra

Mirzey had put it somewhere, however, she forgot where she put the money that day. When I met them she just cried and said, “I burnt our life, my children’s future” (Yur, 2015d, para. 5). In my article, I described the family, “her one daughter has a blue headscarf which is like a representation of their hope because it is the same colour as the sea and her other daughter has a black headscarf which represents their difficult situation”(Yur, 2015d, para. 3). Figure 10 shows Mirzey’s daughters and their youngest brother.



Figure 10: Can Erok/ November, 2016/ Çeşme-Turkey.

Nergiz was another woman who I met in the refugee ghetto. The look on her face attracted my photojournalist Erok. She did not cry but emotions of hate, anger and fear from her eyes were remarkable. She is in Figure 11. She is a mother of 4 children. At that time, she was 41 years old and her children were 11, 13, 16 and 18. Her husband had been killed by Taliban militants in Afghanistan the month before. She came to Turkey with her 4 children the same night that she had buried her husband. She said, “I could not sleep one more night there after my husband’s death. I do not want to lose my children in the terror” (Yur, 2015d, para. 7). The tearful woman Zehra and angry Nergiz were sitting in the same boat and sailing for hope. I was on the shore and as I waved

goodbye, I asked myself, is geography fate? If yes, these women should be reborn without nationality.



Figure 11: Can Erok/ November, 2016/ Çeşme-Turkey.

After a year, I was in my hometown and waiting for some documents to come to Canada for my master degree. It was just a few days before March 8, International Women's Day. For the first time in a long time, I was not busy that week because I was not officially working any longer as a journalist, more precisely as a feminist journalist. However, I felt compelled to visit the 'refugee ghetto' again with my photojournalist friend Ümit Bektaş who works for *Reuters News Agency*. When we arrived, it was not crowded like my first visit in November 2015. There were many ownerless clothes, blankets, life jackets and photographs around the area. Those were traces of the hard summer. After checking around, we went to the unfinished buildings and met Meryem. She and her daughter, Mubine, 4 years old, were sitting inside the unfinished house with no door, windows, water and electricity. It was really cold and silent. She started to share her story. She and her husband had fled Afghanistan for Iran. And then her husband moved to Germany 4 years before and she spent 3 years in war in Iran. The year before my interview, she had come to Turkey and her aim was to access Germany from Greece to find her husband. When I asked something about

March 8, International Women's Day, I recorded her reply, "I have tried to keep alive for 30 years. Afghan women have suffered from the war for 45 years. I do not have women's day, my hope is just that the Mediterranean Sea will not be a grave for us" (Yur, 2016, para. 2). I wrote an article with the title of "My hope is just to stay alive" (Yur, 2016). And I describe her, "Meryem, sitting on a rock and her daughter Mumine, shown in Figure 12. Meryem, who was dressed completely in black clothing, hopes that the Mediterranean Sea will not be a grave for them on International Women's Day" (Yur, 2016, para. 2). Like her, many refugee women who I met were unaware of the meaning of March 8. Many women set aside their gender identity in their fight for survival although their gender is at the core of the terror they are facing.



Figure 12: Ümit Bektaş/ March, 2016/ Çeşme- Turkey

If I can analyze these narratives through Lakoff's theory of linguistic analysis, the word 'victim' in my narrative can be used to describe these refugee women. More generally, millions of refugees from Syria, which has been destroyed by the civil war; Pakistan, which has faced continued bombing attacks; and Afghanistan and Iran, have experienced serious disruptions to normal life because of suicide attacks, are also 'victims' in the narratives. The meaning of 'victim' is a person who faces the brutality of the terror. Moreover, if I create my own table like Lakoff's

Gulf War practice, I would like to define many 'villains'. First of all, ISIS is the main 'villain' in my narrative which is based on refugee women's shared experiences. These women usually use the words 'terrorists', 'ISIS men', 'beasts' and 'monsters' to describe the members of ISIS. I had never heard any female subject described by them. In addition, Turkish business owners who paid 5 TL to their Turkish workers but only paid 3 TL or sometimes nothing to refugee workers, are other 'villains'. Taxi drivers and some Turkish males who are described in the news article of "The basement of humanity" are also 'villains' because they took advantage of the refugee population as smugglers. In addition, the Turkish government who wants to change the abortion rights in Turkey, Turkish President Erdoğan, who creates misunderstanding about abortion rights in his country because of his conservative religious beliefs, and also Turkey as a country who cannot ensure security for refugee women which has led to rape in refugee camps, are other 'villains' in the narrative. In addition, rapists, which means ISIS members, local Turkish male and also male from their own communities, are the other 'villains'.

Inarguably, supporting abortion by allowing it to be legal, safe and accessible is one of the most significant women's rights as human rights. The legal status of abortion is the most important indicator of reproductive rights usage. However, if legal right cannot be practiced, the situation usually causes illegal, unsafe abortions and maternal deaths. There is a proven connection between unsafe abortion and maternal death. Women in countries with restrictive abortion laws are at risk of putting their lives or health in danger to end their pregnancies. Who is guilty of abortion being misperceived as 'illegal' in Turkey? Who is guilty of making women give birth after rape? Who is guilty of rape in these refugee camps? I feel that the Turkish Government, specifically President Erdoğan, is largely responsible.

If 'victims' and 'villains' in these narratives have been identified, who is the 'hero'? In my narrative, the main 'hero [heroines]' are all these women. For these women, the 'hero' is EU countries, particularly Greece and Germany in these news articles, because these countries were reported by migrants as 'dream countries' in their quotes shared in these news articles. According to these stories, these countries were 'safe havens' for them, however, I learned, and some refugees did too, they faced difficulties such as discrimination and violence in their 'beacons of hope'. Before their journey, these countries were the 'hero'; however, during their journey, these 'hero' countries became the 'villain'. The roles of 'villain' and 'hero' are not static; they are constantly evolving in these narratives as refugees look for hope but face new challenges.

In addition to words, photographs have strong power, particularly those on the topic of war and terror. Leavy's description "[a picture is] worth a thousand words" is critical for many war photographs (Leavy, 2009, p. 215). As an example, "Afghan girl" ("Afghan Girl Sharbat Gula Denied Bail, Reported Ill With Hepatitis C in Pakistan," n.d.), which was taken by *National Geographic* photographer Steve McCurry in December 1984 about the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, is one of the most iconic pictures of all time (Khan, 2015).

The story behind this iconic photograph became visible with the visual material. Through this powerful photograph, many people around the world were suddenly aware of the Afghan people and their plight. Although there were thousands of pictures about the issue, why was the image of the "Afghan girl" most remarkable and remains unforgettable? We can perceive that this young woman's image with her green eyes matches western beauty standards or say that children as civilians in environments of war and terror environments are more innocent than adults, both of which may evoke empathy among western readers. This picture was/is disturbing and sad, much like visual representation of the Syrian crisis. What are iconic pictures for the Syrian crisis and

ISIS terror? It is not possible to give one answer to this question because there are many iconic pictures of the terror, but most of them show children. The image of Alan Kurdi, Figure 14, is one example and that of Omran Daqneesh¹⁰, Figure 15, is another.



Figure 13: Nilufer Demir, DHA (“Alan Kurdi, Nilüfer Demir, 2015 - Album on Imgur,” n.d.)

¹⁰ Omran Dagnesh was a 5 year old Syrian boy whose image gained media attention after footage of him injured in an alleged air strike appeared on the Internet (E. Hunt, 2016). See Figure 15 Mahmoud Rslan, Anadolu Agency/ Getty Image (Katz, 2016).



Figure 14: Mahmoud Rslan, Getty Image

But where are the iconic photograph representing ISIS terror on women although the war clearly has happened to them and had impact on their bodies. Our memories may be full of Yezidi/Yazidi refugee women who faced ISIS' terror, escaped them, were sex slaves of ISIS or were fighters for/against the terrorist organization; however, in this particular case of war and terror, we do not seem to have any one significant photographic power about the narratives of women. In my frames, I wanted to show these women's positions in refugee camps and along the coasts of Turkish towns. Most of them are dramatic and represent the 'victim' positions. Figure 9 reminds me of hooks' definition of 'safe', which is to stay within fixed boundaries. What are these boundaries? In her example, these are family, community and/or nation. Refugee camps should be 'safe' fixed boundaries for these refugees in these articles because of new hope after escaping ISIS terror. However, the narrative from Women on Waves' report, 6 thousand women who were raped in refugee camps, destroy the concept of safety. Therefore, 'how can we keep our bodies in these boundaries which are occupied?' become a new question in the narrative of these women's hometowns and also 'how can we keep our bodies in the area of our new hope?' become a new question in the narrative of refugee camps.

Moreover, when I consider hooks' questions, "how we see ourselves?" and "how others see us?" (hooks, 1995, p. 57), when I look at Figure 5, I am at the forefront of the photo, but I cannot see myself. I can see a family, 3 women, 3 children, 7 personal stories and many details about their experiences. My mind is full of their stories. I remember every single detail. Tragically, I remember many women's faces, but it is not easy to recall my own, private life around that time.

My seeing the world through rose-colored lenses was tainted from when I was 19 to 24 years old. I became a witness to many human rights violations. When I was at the end of the first year of my journalism degree, I started working at newspapers and faced some brutal realities of life. I also suffered from capitalist hegemony¹¹ and hegemonic masculinity. When my editor in chief emphasized my gender as a reason not to go to some dangerous places, I said to myself "Welcome to the patriarchal world". Although I faced many difficulties in my private life, I thought, if I mentioned these, it would be shallow compared to the terror and difficulties these women were facing. Therefore, this reality caused me to forget my own private life. As an example, when I followed refugee children in August 2015, I missed the day my sister gave birth. When I said goodbye to these refugee children, I postponed to say hello to my niece on her first day in the world. After I listened to these refugee women's experiences, I could not stand spending time listening to my friends' stories about their partners. I became more aware of global issues but at the same time, I became more asocial in my private life. I do not remember how many times I dreamt about refugee women, Sirin, Suari, Zehra, Nergiz, Meryem and children like Alan, Omran, Mubine, etcetera. Therefore, I cannot give an answer to the question of "how we see ourselves". But I know my narratives were created by not just an 'objective' journalistic view, because I was

¹¹ Repressing of discussion and awareness of Marx's concept of class is one way to keep capitalist hegemony. According to Marx and Engels (1998), powerful classes who control the economy also control political and ideological institutions.

influenced by what I experienced. I saw, followed and listened to these refugees as a 'subjective' feminist journalist. Although this topic has psychologically damaged me, I cannot ignore the issue as a Turkish journalist, which means as a witness of refugee trips in Turkey. For that reason, although my editors and chiefs helped me to improve my reporting, planning, researching, interviewing and writing these news articles about the issue are my own choices just like this thesis. On the other hand, maybe I knew these topics are always important and attractive for my chiefs and also many readers. Cockburn describes this situation for journalists:

In one respect, war reporting is easier than other types of journalism: the melodrama of events drives the story and attracts an audience. It may be risky at times, but the correspondent talking to a camera with exploding shells and blazing military vehicles behind him knows his report will feature prominently in any newscast (2015, p. 115).

I do not prefer to use the word of 'easy' about reporting war and terror environments; however, I agree with the highlighted portion about "featuring prominently" when I wrote these types of news' articles, I knew my articles would become headline news.

All in all, if I do not define my narrative as a witness of ISIS terror, my thesis aim would be incomplete. As a witness and also as a woman, my understanding is that their bodies are inside the small boats in the Mediterranean Sea at midnight, located in unhealthy tents in refugee camps and at the core of the inhumaneness of terror. All of my articles were influenced by my personal attitudes. For that reason, it would not be possible to write this thesis without these perspectives.

Chapter Six: ISIS' Frame/Narrative

This chapter in the thesis aims to show and analyze ISIS' narrative about women from their own perspective with storytelling. For that reason, ISIS' published articles about women have been selected for analysis in this chapter. In all articles, the terrorist group described their organization as an "Islamic State" and themselves as "Islamic State soldiers". Although, I do not personally prefer to refer to the terrorist organization as just a 'state', this chapter describes the group without using the term 'a terrorist organization' to reflect how they see themselves from their own perspective. In addition, quotation marks play a very significant role in this chapter, so all sentences do not show my personal view about the story, event and/or person.

This chapter employs Lakoff's cognitive linguistic approach and uses his example of actors in the Gulf War, to understand who the 'heroes', 'victims', 'helpers' and 'villains' are in the ISIS' narrative (Lakoff, 2008). In addition, pictures published by ISIS are analyzed based on Leavy's visual analysis theory (Leavy, 2009). Some pictures include violence, but it is not possible to understand ISIS' perspective without these visuals.

All articles and pictures are selected from *Dabiq* magazine, the group's first but not last online propaganda magazine. ISIS uses many different kinds of media for propaganda, distributing videos, magazines and flyers through their social media channels. Specifically, the group is widely known for its posting of disturbing content such as beheading videos. According to Winter (2015), the group has six instruments, which are brutality, mercy, belonging, victimhood, war and Islamic utopia. Islamic utopia, which is a perfect example of ISIS' fantastical propaganda, is based on stories about how Muslims should live full of joy and happiness under the caliphate. The caliphate represents a jihadist movement which includes a state ruled by an Islamic leader known as a caliph. The name *Dabiq* is also the name of a northern Syrian town which is around 10 kilometers away

from Syria's border with Turkey. According to certain Muslim myths, the town of Dabiq will be the location for one of the final battles of the apocalypse and for that reason, the group's first online magazine was named *Dabiq* to highlight the caliphate's goals. Therefore, it is possible to say that the magazine's style matches Winter's (2015) definition of "Islamic Utopia". *Dabiq*'s first issue was published on July 5, 2014 in a number of different languages including English, French, German and Arabic ("*Islamic State's (ISIS, ISIL) Horrific Magazine*", 2014). The last issue of *Dabiq* was published on July 31, 2016, when the town of Dabiq was lost by ISIS (Delemarre, 2017). In total, fifteen issues were published.

The first selected article was published on October 11, 2014. This is the fourth issue of *Dabiq* had the front-page headline "The Failed Crusade" and the magazine's first story and picture of women and children, Figure 16 (A Message From Sotloff To His Mother Days Before His Execution, 2014). Above this picture, they printed a quote from American-Israeli journalist Steven Sotloff, who was kidnapped in Syria and held captive by militants from the group.

As for me being a journalist, they know this. I've repeatedly told them this, but like they always say, do U.S. airstrikes differentiate between those who are armed and those who are unarmed. Likewise, they don't (A Message From Sotloff To His Mother Days Before His Execution, 2014, para. 10).

After this quote, the article shared a story which is described as a 'US massacre of the Muslim families' (*A Message From Sotloff To His Mother Days Before His Execution*, 2014, para. 12). According to this narrative, at midnight on Sunday, September 14/15, 2014, the Islamic State's soldiers' families, which included women and children, were being transported from one province to another. These women and children noticed that the caravan was being followed by U.S. warplanes and drones. They left the caravan and took shelter in nearby houses just outside of the

town of Sinjar, Iraq. Nine women and five children claimed to have been killed by U.S. warplanes at that time. The article claimed, "By Allah, their blood will not be forgotten" (*A Message From Sotloff To His Mother Days Before His Execution*, 2014, para. 11).



Figure 15: "A Message from Sotloff To His Mother Days Before His Execution"- October 11, 2014.

Under this quote, pictures of women's and children's dead bodies, shown in Figure 16, were published. Although this picture is not very clear, it is very graphic and disturbing as it shows the bloodied bodies of young children. In the article, the group describes themselves as 'Islamic State soldiers' and those women and children are described as 'Muslim families'. The visual material shows these women and children are innocent victims in the story.

Issue seven was published on February 12, 2015 with the cover story "From Hypocrisy to Apostasy: The Extinction of the Grayzone". The issue also featured an article titled "Clamping Down on Sexual Deviance" which claims that the West has had sexual deviance and immorality since the 1960's (*Clamping Down On Sexual Deviance*, 2015). According to the article, a lot of sexually transmitted diseases like AIDS accompanied the sexual revolution in the West. The article claims that the new system causes the disease to be rampant, with many children born outside of marriage, and the 'nuclear family' to become a relic of the past. The article describes the situation

as one of “eradicating morals” (*Clamping Down On Sexual Deviance*, 2015, para. 4). Moreover, the article also accuses the entertainment industry of normalizing and promoting LGBTQI+ communities while mocking and belittling any groups, such as ISIS, against these people. ISIS also believe that Parliaments which have legalized LGBTQI+ marriage and education systems which promote equal rights have also created ‘sexual deviance’ and ‘immorality’. The ISIS article does not refer to these people as being part of the LGBTQI+ community, they prefer to use the term “sexually deviant fringe” (*Clamping Down On Sexual Deviance*, 2015). The group clearly declares themselves as continuing efforts against these people because they believe that being LGBTQI+ does not fit the ‘fitrah’, means the natural human disposition. The article shares two stories about two people, one of them a woman and the other person identified as LGBTQI+. These discourses and pictures show these people being punished by the group.

According to the narrative, the person who is identified as LGBTQI+ was thrown off the top of a building. The person is described as “guilty of engaging in sodomy” in the narrative (*Clamping Down On Sexual Deviance*, 2015, para. 6). Two pictures were showing the situation. One of them, shown in Figure 17, is a person sitting at the top of a building and xyr eyes were blindfolded (“xyr | Search Results | Gender Neutral Pronoun Blog,” n.d.). Two men who disguised their heads and faces with black fabric were located behind xem (“xemself | Search Results | Gender Neutral Pronoun Blog,” n.d.). The caption below the photo reads “A sodomite is thrown off a building in ar-Raqqah” (*Clamping Down On Sexual Deviance*, 2015). Another picture, shown in Figure 18, is the key photo for the article. In the picture, xyr dead body lays on the ground and many people stand around xem. Undoubtedly, these visual materials are violent. There are many stones around the person. It can be assumed that the person’s body was stoned by the public at that time.



Figure 16: “Clamping Down on Sexual Deviance”- February 12, 2015



Figure 17: “Clamping Down on Sexual Deviance”- February 12, 2015

Another story in the same article is about a woman. According to the narrative, the group found the woman guilty of ‘zina’, which is an Islamic legal term meaning to illicit sexual relations. Stoning is the method of punishment for this crime. The woman was punished by the group and the article illustrates the situation with two pictures. One of them shows a woman who is wearing a black chador is crouching down while the group of men throw stones at her. The picture, shown in Figure 19, was taken of the woman’s face, making it likely that she knew her photo was being taken. It is clear to see the group of men’s anger and hatred. In the narrative, these men are ‘heroes’.

“The hadd is an expiation for the sin” is captioned in the picture (*Clamping Down On Sexual Deviance*, 2015).



Figure 18: “Clamping Down on Sexual Deviance”- February 12, 2015.

Another picture, shown in Figure 20, shows the incident from behind the group of men. It is clear to see the woman’s position at that time and it can be described with just a single word ‘villains’ in the ISIS’ frame. “Stoning a Zaniyah in ar-Raqqah” is captioned under the picture (*Clamping Down On Sexual Deviance*, 2015).



Figure 19: “Clamping Down on Sexual Deviance”- February 12, 2015.

The ninth issue with the headline “They Plot and Allah Plots”, was published on May 21, 2015. The issue has a five-page article titled “Slave-Girls or Prostitutes?” by Umm Sumayyah Al-Muhajirah. The article starts with the Surah a Nisa passage from the Quran:

Allah (ta’ālā) said, {And if you fear that you will not deal justly with the orphan girls, then marry those that please you of [other] women, two or three or four. But if you fear that you will not be just, then [marry only] one or those your right hand possesses. That is more suitable that you may not incline [to injustice]}. (Al-Muhajirah, 2015b, para. 2)

This was followed by the article sharing justification for ISIS taking female captives such as:

The right hand’s possession are the female captives who were separated from their husbands by enslavement. They became lawful for the one who ends up possessing them even without pronouncement of divorce by their harbī [real] husbands (Al-Muhajirah, 2015b, para. 6).

On the other hand, the same article says that it is forbidden for a man to have sex with any married woman who is also an enslaved woman. The article uses an example from an incident in the Khaybar War where 93 Jewish men were killed, and women and children were enslaved. One of these women, Safiyyah Bint Huyayy Ibn Akhtab who fell into captivity, is referred to as “the Mother of the Believers” and was used by ISIS as a role model for other Muslim women to follow (Al-Muhajirah, 2015b, para. 11). ISIS believes that “Allah’s Messenger [Prophet]” set her free and married her. The writer continues to give examples such as the Prophet, Ali Ibn Abi- Talib who took four more slave girls, for a total of nineteen slaves. However, the writer says that once “kafir media” which means western media and also other countries’ news stories about the group as a

terrorist organization, mentioned the group capture of Yazidi women, Islamic State supporters started denying the matter (Al-Muhajirah, 2015b, para. 16). The writer believes Allah may forgive them because they were rushing to defend the Islamic State. In addition, the article admits that some of people were killed, women were captured, and children were enslaved. However, ISIS feels that this is justified based on the belief that Allah has opened the land for them and some of these people were “kuffar [unbelievers]”. This situation is considered an “honor and pride for the Muslim[s]” (Al-Muhajirah, 2015b, para. 20). The writer also writes that some of the enslaved girls were pregnant and some of them were freed for Allah’s sake because they had a right to get married in “the courts of the Islamic State” as they became Muslims and practiced Islam ‘well’ (Al-Muhajirah, 2015b, para. 27). However, the same article advocates that Islam orders even ISIS fighters should show kindness even towards slaves. Despite this, the writer uses contradictory terms like “savage” Islam to refer to the religious practices of Yazidi women. In addition, the writer swore “by Allah” that no one coerced these slave girls to accept Islam. According to the writer’s assertion, these slave girls – all of those in their understanding – accepted to believe in Islam voluntarily. The article finishes with some questions like “Are slave girls whom we took by Allah’s command better, or prostitutes – an evil you do not denounce – who are grabbed by quasi men in the land of kufr where you live?” and “What is wrong with you?”(Al-Muhajirah, 2015b, para. 39). In the last sentence of the article, the former first lady of the United States, Michelle Obama, is directly targeted by ISIS, “and who knows maybe Michelle Obama’s price won’t even exceed a third of a dinar, and a third of a dinar is too much for her!”(Al-Muhajirah, 2015b, para. 40)

On July 13, 2015 the tenth issue was published with the title of “The law of Allah or the laws of men”. This issue has a chapter called “From our sisters” which includes an article with the

title “They Are Not Lawful Spouses for One Another”, also by Umm Sumayyah al-Muhājirah. The writer explains the article’s aim as “offering advice and guidance to the wives of the Sahwah [awakening movement] soldiers” (Al-Muhajirah, 2015c, para. 4). She defines the group as “secular-oriented Sahwāt who have stated explicitly or implicitly their intent to rule with democracy, or according to what the people desire, or with division of powers” (Al-Muhajirah, 2015c, para. 5). The writer advocates that staying under the same roof with someone “who has removed the noose of Islam from his neck” is impermissible and the marriage contract becomes nullified (Al-Muhajirah, 2015c, para. 14). Until the man repents and returns to Islam anew, he becomes unlawful for a woman to remain married. Al-Muhajirah describes the situation as “zina [fornication]” and warns women to be careful (Al-Muhajirah, 2015c, para. 14). She claims that some emotions like sense of motherhood, fear of breaking up your family and/or financial maintenance are understandable, however there is no excuse for you before Allah. Moreover, the writer encourages these women to separate from their husbands, who are unbelievers in ISIS’ sect of Islam and asserts all problems, even financial ones, will be solved by Allah. But if these women keep their relationships with their ‘kafir’ husbands, these women will continue to suffer Allah’s punishment. In addition, the writer shares a quote from a woman who was one of the Sahwah’s group and imprisoned by the Islamic State:

I and my husband were stopped at a checkpoint belonging to the Jawlānī front. They then handed us over to the minions of the so-called ‘Liwā’ at-Tawhid,’ and tawhid has nothing to do with them. They took my husband somewhere I didn’t know and threw me into one of the houses they were using as a prison for their enemies. Every day, one of the women would come to us with lunch. At first, she wouldn’t speak to me at all, and I noticed that she appeared frightened and confused, so much so

that she would place the food down for me and quickly leave. The days went by one after another, and I began to feel her change towards me, such that she began exchanging some words with me and asking me about some issues. So she found out that I was a muhājirah and I found out that she was the wife of the donkey that was coming to me almost every day to rebuke me and to 'teach' me my religion, or so he claimed! One day, she asked me, 'Why are they fighting you people specifically?' So I took advantage of the opportunity and clarified to her the reason for their deep animosity and hatred towards us, and that we desire Allah and the rule of His Sharī'ah in this land and for that reason we were taken as enemies and were fought. I found that she was listening, and she then said, 'I know that my husband is wrong, and I feel that Allah is not pleased with his actions. I even want to help you escape, but I'm afraid that he'll kill me. He's a criminal! (Al-Muhajirah, 2015c, para. 18)

After the quote, the writer claims that the woman was afraid because she knew the man was a criminal. She also claimed to know how these people were killed and who went to heaven or who did not. After that the writer warned this woman one more time and portrayed her as a "female slave of Allah" (Al-Muhajirah, 2015c, para. 24). The writer also describes this man like "a husband who is pleased having the warplanes of the cross flying in his skies in order to pour the lava of death upon the Muslims" and "pleasing the Arabs or the West, or the people, not with pleasing his Lord" describing the woman and children as "helpless" (Al-Muhajirah, 2015c, para. 27). In addition, the article also gives some advice for these women. First, they should advise their husbands to fear Allah. Second, they should remind their husbands that they can repent. After this

advice, the writer invited these women and their husbands to make 'hijrah' which means to make a religious pilgrimage (Al-Muhajirah, 2015c).

Issue eleven was published with the headline "From the Battles of Al-Ahzab to the War of Coalitions" on September 9, 2015. The chapter titled "To Our Sister" features an article "A jihad without fighting", again by Umm Sumayyah al-Muhajirah. According to the article, women do not have to fight physically for jihad which means a struggle or fight against the enemies of Islam, but men have to do it. However, women should show support with different roles such as building the Ummah [community], and by producing men and sending them to 'jihad and war'. For that reason, the writer asserts the article was written for "the wife of mujahid [one engaged in jihad]" and "the mother of lion cubs [men soldiers]" (Al-Muhajirah, 2015a, para. 3). The article's general message for women is to be patient and wait for their husbands while they are away for jihad, leave their 'kafir' husbands and raise their children, particularly sons for jihad. Al-Muhajirah calls out to women with the sentence, "o my sister, equip yourself with obedience and worship so that it may be your help and assistance at the time of calamities and hardships!" (Al-Muhajirah, 2015a, para. 17). In addition, the writer proposes that mothers have a responsibility to spread the jihad. She writes these words by a prophet who is a messenger of Allah, "Every one of you is a shepherd and everyone is responsible for his herd ... And the woman is a shepherd in her house and is responsible for her herd" (Al-Muhajirah, 2015a, para. 20).

The writer claims that men use rifles and explosive belts as weapons, while 'good behavior and knowledge', which means knowing their sect of Islam, is a weapon for women, particularly mothers. Over and above the writer asserts that 'kafir' children are raised by the stories of Cinderella and Robin Hood, but 'real' Muslim children should grow up with Allah's words which

are described as “the methodology of prophethood and to Allah belongs all praise”, as their stories (Al-Muhajirah, 2015a, para. 24). Mothers should teach only these lessons.

Umm Sumayyah al-Muhajirah wrote another article on November 18, 2015 in the twelfth issue with the headline of “Just Terror”. The issue has a chapter titled “To our sisters” with the article “Two, three or four”. In the article, Al-Muhajirah claims that ‘kafir’ groups prohibited what Allah permitted, and permitted what Allah prohibited, including polygyny. Polygyny is not polygamy, it means having more than one wife or female mate at a same time. The writer says that Allah allows marriage to two, three or four women, however if the man cannot take care of all of those women, the man should marry just one woman. The writer describes marriage as “giving birth to a knight who will wage jihad for the cause of Allah” (Al-Muhajirah, 2015d, para. 4). In addition, the writer asserts that not just Islamic religion, but also Judaism and Christianity support polygyny. The writer defends polygyny as a means of protecting women who divorce because men prefer virgins but may take a divorced woman as one of his wives. Additionally, the writer believes that when women are menstruating, giving childbirth or have postpartum bleeding, they are interrupting men. For that reason, second, third or fourth women should be good for men. The writer believes that Muslim women have been honoured by Allah and they should be protected by men with marriage. Being jealous about another woman is defined as “shaytan [devil]” in the article and women are warned by the writer to not yield to temptation. The writer asks for readers to restrain their jealousy and remain patient and anticipate Allah’s rewards. The writer also defines women, who accept polygyny, as “the women of the prophetic household”, and women who do not accept polygyny, as “unprincipled women whose sources of reference are vile plays and soap operas” (Al-Muhajirah, 2015d, para. 22). Moreover, the writer also has advice for men who have multiple wives: They should be gentle, speak softly, and be extremely patient but that they should

inform these women using quotes from Allah and Prophet's and even threaten with Allah when necessary.

The thirteenth issue was published with the headline of "The Rafidah from Ibn Saba' to the Dajjal" on January 19, 2016. In the issue, the chapter of 'To our sisters' discusses the subject of being a widow with the article of 'Advice on Ihdad'. The unknown author's article gives some advice for women whose husbands have passed away. The rules which are based on Shariah law (Islamic law) according to the article, are that women should not wear jewelry, perfume, decorative clothing, or use anything else meant to beautify oneself. Moreover, the article claims the following idea from the messenger of Allah:

The woman is not to mourn more than three days, except for her husband, for whom she shall mourn for four months and ten days. She should not wear any colorful clothing except for cloth used to block menstrual blood. Nor should she wear kohl [eyeliner] or use any perfume, except at the end of her menses when she bathes therefrom, with only a dab of qust or adhfār [perfume] (Advice on Ihdad, 2016, para. 2).

The article has different rules for pregnant women in mourning. When their pregnancy ends, the time for grieving should also end and a woman can get married and beautify, perfume and adorn herself as she likes 'for her husband'. In addition, the article also claims that women should not dye their hair during a period of mourning. Black clothing should be worn because the colour black represents grief and it is not an adornment. Additionally, women should mourn in the house where they lived with their husband. After the period of mourning is over, they should return to their family if the house is not their own. Furthermore, these women should attend outside events during the day only because night time causes suspicions to arise and additionally, they should not

sleep anywhere except their homes. Rules for sleeping are really strict in the narrative and the article shares some quotes to explain the roles of mourning for women:

It is not right that she should spend a single night, during the 'iddah of either death or divorce, except in her home (Advice on Ihdad, 2016, para. 15).

It is upon the woman in 'iddah whether due to the death of her husband or divorce to sleep at her home ... It is okay if she leaves her home during the day for her errands ... She should try to return home before the sun sets. It is not permissible for her to sleep except at her home. If she leaves during a night of her 'iddah and sleeps elsewhere, she is sinful by her deed (Advice on Ihdad, 2016, para. 19).

It is okay for the mourning widow to go out to run errands during the day ... But she must return to her home and sleep there (Advice on Ihdad, 2016, para. 20).

In addition, the article also gives some advice about marriage proposals during mourning. According to the belief, men should not propose directly during that time. The belief claims that women should not attend any wedding ceremony although they do not wear any adornment.

On July 31, 2016, *Dabiq* magazine's last issue – the fifth issue – was published with the headline of “Break the Cross”. This issue's 'For Women' chapter has an article “The Fitrah of Mankind and the Near-Extinction of the Western Woman” again without an author. According to the article, 'fitrah' means inborn human nature and the teachings of Darwin, Marx, Nietzsche, Durkheim, Weber, and Freud destroy the basis of religiosity, morality and society. The article claims that 'the pagan' Christians believe morality and society were purely relative concepts having no foundation or basis except in what is dictated by financial interest and sexual instinct. Gender roles among Christians have been mixed up according to the article. Christians working women are criticized with the following quote, “Woman need not be a mother, a wife, or a maiden,

but rather, she should work like man, rule like man, and have intercourse like an animal, without being conscious of her Lord watching both her and her heinous partner in crime”(*The Fitrah Of Mankind And the Near-Extinction of the Western Woman*, 2016, para. 2).

The article states that marijuana, bestiality, transgenderism, sodomy, pornography and feminism are some evils and legitimized by America and Western Europe. In addition, the article states that man was created and instilled with ‘fitrah’ by ‘Allah’. The article also promotes the idea that the Allah’s gender is male. According to the belief, all “sexual perversion” is the opposite of the ‘fitrah’, and the Quran mentions the worst is sodomites. Homosexuality is considered to be one of the ‘sexual perversions’ and is defined in the article as “men with desire, instead of women” and “immorality” (*The Fitrah Of Mankind And the Near-Extinction of the Western Woman*, 2016, para. 13). The article published the picture, shown in Figure 21, of the White House which was lit in rainbow colors as a nod to LGBTQI+ rights during Obama’s Presidency (*The Fitrah Of Mankind And the Near-Extinction of the Western Woman*, 2016). The rainbow colors represent pride parades, also known as pride marches and pride events for LGBTQI+ communities. Many pride events take place around the month of June to commemorate the 1969 Stonewall riots in New York City, a pivotal moment in modern LGBTQI+ movements. For that reason, the White House had been covered by the rainbow lights a month before the fifth issue of *Dabiq* was published. The article describes the picture with the sentence of “Sodomite pride on display at the White House.” (*The Fitrah Of Mankind And the Near-Extinction of the Western Woman*, 2016).



Figure 20: "Break the Cross"- July 31, 2016.

The article also claims motherhood and mercy of mother for children as part of 'fitrah'. Women's main role is as nursing their children in their homes, while men's main role as fathers means working outside homes as 'breadwinners'. In addition, the article emphasises 'chastity' for women by saying, "And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and guard their private parts and not expose their adornment except that which [necessarily] appears thereof and to wrap their veils over their chests and not expose their adornment..." (*The Fitrah Of Mankind And the Near-Extinction of the Western Woman*, 2016, para. 16).

In this framework, homosexuality is perceived as a 'imitating' and the followers of ISIS believe that if women imitate men or men imitate women, they are cursed by the prophet. In addition, being a female fighter is not a responsibility for women. Rather, the article claims that women's jihad is the pilgrimage to Mecca, which is a city in Saudi Arabia that Muslims consider to be a holy city in Islam. At the end of the article, Western women are put at the core of the main target. According to the discourse, Western women are encouraged to compete with men in the workplace and show their bodies. The article advocates that 'the fitrah' continues to be desecrated

day by day in the West and added “the true woman in the West has become an endangered creature” (*The Fitrah Of Mankind And the Near-Extinction of the Western Woman*, 2016, para. 27). Moreover, if women employ the Western way of life, many dangers and ‘deviances’ come together in this belief and the article describes these women as “the willing victim who sacrifices herself for the immoral freedoms”.

All in all, according to these selected articles from ISIS’ own magazine *Dabiq*, everybody who is against ISIS, is a ‘villain’. The group usually uses the words of “kafir/kafur” and “shaytan” to describe their enemies. It is possible to explain what kafir/kafur means in their understanding, referring to person, the group of people, religion, region and/or media who are non-supporters of the Islamic State, non-Muslims, and disbelievers of Islam and/or ISIS’ sect of Islam. However, if I would like to emphasize specifically the following actors in their understanding, are ‘villains’: media who publish news against the group; men who are not members of the ‘Islamic State’, fight against the ‘Islamic State’ and/or please Arabs and the West; women whose husbands have passed away and do not follow the ‘Islamic State’s’ rules during mourning; Western women; feminists; transgenders; lesbians; gays; Christians; former U.S. president Barack Obama and first lady Michelle Obama; and some scientists like Darwin, Marx, Nietzsche, Durkheim, Weber, Freud.

On the other hand, nine women and five children who were described as ‘Muslim families’ by the article “A Message From Sotloff To His Mother Days Before His Execution” and the author claims were killed by U.S. warplanes near the town of Sinjar on September 14/15, 2014 are some victims in these narratives like women who believe Islam, but their husbands are not members of the ‘Islamic State’. The narrative also uses the word ‘helpless’ for these women. The narrative creates ideal women with roles of being ‘mother’ and ‘wife’. Generally, ‘hero’ is always male fighters, Allah (God) and the messenger of Allah (Prophet). Women are not identified as ‘hero’ in

their narratives. For example, 'Islamic State soldiers' who fight for Allah are 'hero' but their wives, who are believers in and supporters of ISIS' sect of Islam, are just 'good wives'. Women who wait for their husbands patiently for jihad, divorce from their unbeliever husbands, raise their children with the stories of Allah and not Cinderella or Robin Hood are acceptable but still not 'heroes', they are obligated to do these things. If they do not, they become 'villains'. In addition, women who accept polygyny are good because they also help the Islamic State to have more men who fight for jihad and women who do not accept polygyny, are 'villains'. Generally, women should serve as 'helpers' in the Islamic State.

According to this narrative, spreading fear among their target audiences of 'Allah' is a main tactic. It is possible to say that the pathway of the norepinephrine circuit in *Dabiq* readers can be full of Allah fair. In their perspective, women's roles are not shown to be fighters, their roles are just to be a 'good wife' and 'mother' which means that they must follow ISIS' sect of Islam as a mother and wife. In this narrative, the main punishment for women will be administered by 'Allah'.

ISIS' propaganda, sharing narratives like the 'Islamic Utopia', helps them successfully spread their approach because these kinds of discourses correspond with cultural narratives in Islamic societies. Consequently, it is possible to say that in the narrative, women's roles and positions are a 'passive victim' and also an 'passive agent'. The role of 'victim' is clear to recognize as the definition of a 'helpless' person. However, in my understanding of ISIS' narrative, they are also 'agent', although these articles never mention female fighters because purpose of agents is not just fighting. The group places a much responsibility on to women who are giving birth to sons, raising their children with jihadist rules and serving their husbands with their bodies and fertility. Future jihadists for ISIS are raised by these women. For that reason, women's roles

in the organization is not just 'passive victims' but also 'passive (invisible) agents' who must be 'good wives' for jihadists and 'good mothers' of future jihadists.

Analyzing ISIS' visual narratives, it is clear to recognize that the group avoids showing women's pictures. There are not any photographs of women in all 15 issues of *Dabiq*, except dead bodies and girls who wear black burqas. I believe this is not an unintentional situation. This is a powerful decision which is showing their attitudes about ISIS' sect of Islam. It is possible to say that these women are located just as 'victims' and 'criminals' in these visual materials. For example, women and LGBTQI+ pictures show about their punishments, like stoning and throwing from the top of a building, are other significant visual materials to show their behaviour against these groups. In my understanding, those pictures are selected consciously to spread horror. Moreover, using some girls' pictures, which are shown with burqas, shown in Figures 22, 23 and 24, also tell us that girls should use burkas/burqas in their state, no matter their ages.



*Figure 21: "The Fitrah of Mankind and the Near-Extinction of the Western Woman"-
July 31, 2016.*



Muslim children being raised in the lands of Islam

Figure 22: “How I Came to Islam”- July 31, 2016.



Abū Hafs and Junaydah

Figure 23: “Amongst the Believers Are Men” - November 18, 2015 (Al-Almani, 2015)

In addition, the group’s opinion about homosexuality is also shown with a picture of girl carrying a poster with the slogan of “My 2 Moms are married”, shown in Figure 25 (*Why We Hate You & Why We Fight You*, 2016). As with many conservative societies, in ISIS, lesbians are faced with the intense antipathy and hate because they are women and at the same time they are homosexual. I can say that they come up against compounded hate speech. The girl’s picture was

published in the article of “Why We Hate You & Why We Fight You”. This means ISIS hates and fights also some children who do not belong to heterosexual families.



An example of the perversion the West seeks to spread

Figure 24: “Why We Hate You & Why We Fight You”- July 31, 2016.

In conclusion, the analysis shows women’s roles and positions in the ISIS’ own media coverages are at the core of the passive victims. This means their bodies in visual materials represents as victims and their roles in ‘Islamic State’ are helpers.

Chapter Seven: Western Media's Frames/Narratives of Women as 'Heroines'

This chapter aims to analyse and clarify women's frames/narratives about ISIS' terror as well as women's lived experiences under ISIS' terror from their own perspective. This includes women who wrote their own stories as "heroes" during and after ISIS' terror. As I mentioned before in the theory chapter, according to Lakoff, our narratives/frames are inclined to play significant roles in our thoughts. His hypothesis was explained with the sentence: "Each frame has roles (like a cast of characters), relations between the roles, and scenarios carried out by those playing the roles" (Lakoff, 2008, p. 22). The key word as a role/character of this chapter is "hero/heroes" and becomes "heroine/heroines". According to the Online Etymology Dictionary, the word 'hero' is defined as a "man who exhibits great bravery" in any course of action" ("hero | Origin and meaning of hero by Online Etymology Dictionary," n.d.). 'Heroine' is the feminine version of the word which is defined as a "woman distinguished by exalted courage or noble achievements" ("heroine | Origin and meaning of heroine by Online Etymology Dictionary," n.d.). Although the term of 'hero' is predominantly used, women's roles as heroines are often neglected. It can be possible to say that from mythology to history, many heroines have existed; however, they are not clearly visible like heroes. Iphigenia, one of the heroines from Greek mythology, was a daughter of King Agamemnon and Queen Clytemnestra. She became a heroine because she was sacrificed by her father in order to enter the city of Troy (Garnett, 1891). If we consider historical heroines, Joan of Arc is accepted as a heroine of France for her role during the Lancastrian phase of the Hundred Years' War (De Julleville, 1901). Furthermore, one of the most popular fictional heroines and female comic-book superheroes of all time, is 'Wonder Woman', although she has not been as successful as Superman, Batman or Spider-Man. While Joan of Arc is a well-known

heroine in history, perhaps real heroines are not 'really' as popular as fictional figures such as 'Wonder Woman'. Who are the real 'heroines' in the 21st century?

Avesta, Murad and a group of "brave women" are selected as 'heroines' and their narratives are analyzed from 4 international news articles in this chapter. Like damla yur's Frame/Narrative Chapter and ISIS' Frame/Narrative Chapter, this chapter also employs Lakoff's cognitive linguistic approach and uses his example of actors in the Gulf War, to understand who the 'victims', 'helpers' and 'villains' are from the western media representation of these women's (heroines') perspectives. Furthermore, these women's pictures which were published in these selected articles are analyzed based on Leavy's visual analysis theory.

Can we think, research, talk and share just 'heroines' without 'heroes' even if just for one moment? Without the presence of 'villains', we cannot see 'victims' as well as 'heroes/heroines' in narratives. In the ISIS' terror, 'victims', 'heroines', and/or sometimes all these roles simultaneously and/or sequentially, adopt women and get mired in it. The image of 'heroines' has many different meanings in ISIS' terror. Some of them become 'heroines' after they escape ISIS' terror and achieve freedom. Moreover, some of them who have shared their own experiences about ISIS' terror to encourage other women and become spokespersons about the issue, are also 'heroines'. Furthermore, some of them who prefer to fight against ISIS are 'heroines' as well. It can be possible to say that there is not just one character of 'heroines'.

On June 2, 2015, many people from all over the world became aware of the Syrian crisis and women under terror with pictures which were taken from the border between Syria and Turkey and were published on Twitter. Hundreds of Twitter users had started to retweet and like the pictures with the comments such as "amazing moment", "freedom of women" and/or the hashtag of "#freekurdishwomen" (Shahine, 2015). The pictures were taken by Shervan Derwish and Jack

Shahine, freelance journalists from Kobani, a city in northern Syria and south of the border with Turkey. This social media moment affected media and a lot of local and international media have taken these pictures and published them.

On June 5, 2015 the tabloid newspaper, *Daily Mail*, first published these pictures in a news article with the title of “Incredible Moment Elated Syrian Women Rip off Strict Islamic Robes and Headscarves After Escaping Religious Persecution under ISIS”, written by Jenny Stanton (Stanton, 2015). This news article starts with these sentences:

This is the incredible moment elated Syrian women tear off their black shapeless robes as they enter Kurdish-controlled territory after fleeing for their lives from the clutches of [the] Islamic State. In two video clips released exclusively to MailOnline, men, women and children are seen celebrating their arrival in Rojava in the north of the country (Stanton, 2015, para. 1-2).

Although the journalist preferred to describe the clothing removed by women as “black shapeless robes”, it is assumed that they were burkas or chadors which are common names in Muslim societies – names of different kinds of head coverings worn by Muslim women shown in Table 2 (*Why some Muslim women wear the veil*, 2018). In addition, the news also shares direct sentences from photojournalist Jack Shahine who had taken these pictures at the border and he also used the term “black Burkas” to describe the clothing. He said to *Mail Online*, “These women, children and men are fleeing ISIS controlled area[s] and as soon as reaching Kurdish YPG (People’s Protection Units) controlled areas they remove the black Burkas obliged by ISIS, breathing freedom again” (Stanton, 2015, para. 5).



Table 1: Head Coverings Worn by Muslim Women (“Why some Muslim women wear the veil,” 2018).

After these sentences, the news shares a video which is only 37 seconds. In the first 20 seconds of the video, a small truck carrying 6 women and more than 3 girls appeared. A man had been sitting in the driver’s seat and many men had been around the immobile truck. The sound of the wind was recognizable. A woman who appeared taller than others pulled off her black burka or chador. The woman who had removed and thrown her burka/chador appeared with her green dress. The woman started to make a peace symbol with her hand and ululated a sound which is heavily associated with celebration and/or mourning in Arabic culture. After that, a second small truck was shown in the video. Another woman who pulled off her burka/chador, wearing red and orange dress, made a peace sign and ululated like other woman. The woman had thrown her black burka/chador from the small truck. A man who was in the small truck with her had helped her to throw her burka/chador. The video was focused on the burka/chador which was left on the ground after she had thrown it. The news article describes the situation with the sentence, “Two women pull off their robes to reveal colourful dresses while another removes her headscarf and lets it fly away in the wind after escaping religious persecution under ISIS” (Stanton, 2015, para. 3).

After the video and these sentences, the news article shares two pictures from that moment. The first picture, shown in Figure 26, shows the second woman who had the red and orange dress from the video. In the picture, the truck is driven by a man wearing a kaffiyed, which is a head scarf commonly worn by Arab men and is described as “climate, history, and religion conspired to turn a small square piece of cloth into a powerful symbol” (Gilad, 2014, para. 1). Its cargo bed carries 3 people which is assumed to be a family. A man whose arm is raised, and a male child is sitting, and the woman with the red and orange dress is pulling off her burka/chador. Anger but also passion in her face is obvious. When we consider the truck came from the town of Syria which has been occupied by ISIS, it can be possible to say that the picture represents how she was confined to a role by ISIS' sect of Islam in her town, how her body was controlled by ISIS' militants and how she missed making decisions for herself. “Freedom: A Syrian woman tears off her shapeless black robe as she enters Kurdish-controlled territory” is the caption in the picture. The news article preferred to describe the situation with the verb of “tears off” rather than ‘takes off’, ‘removes’, or ‘pulls off’.



Figure 25: “Incredible moment elated Syrian women rip off strict Islamic robes and headscarves after escaping religious persecution under ISIS” June 5, 2016 (Stanton, 2015).

In the second picture, shown in Figure 27, a group of women are standing up, some of them waving their burkas/chadors, some of them raising their arms. Although the picture is not clear,

smiling faces from women and children are visible. “Elation: Men, women and children celebrate their arrival in Rojava after fleeing from the clutches of ISIS” is written under the picture. In the sentence, use of the word “clutches” is provocative.



Figure 26: “Incredible moment elated Syrian women rip off strict Islamic robes and headscarves after escaping religious persecution under ISIS” June 5, 2016 (Stanton, 2015).

After the picture, the news article shares some details about the area. This area is close to Tel Abyad, a town in Syria and about 40 miles east of Kobane, which is a city in northern Syria. In addition, the photojournalist Shahine describes the women’s emotions by saying, “These women started to remove blackness, feeling cheerful and joyful for being finally free” (Stanton, 2015, para. 6). Like his definition, cheerful and joyful emotions in these women’s faces are recognizable in these pictures.

Moreover, up to date information about ISIS’ actions in Syria is published in the news article. According to Stanton (2015), this information was realised by activists and Syrian state media that week that ISIS had attacked Hassakeh [known Al-Hasakah], which is the Kurdish city in northeastern Syria. And after this information, more pictures, shown in Figures 28, 29 and 30, the group of women, including the one with the green dress, in small trucks published in the news article.



Figure 27: “Incredible moment elated Syrian women rip off strict Islamic robes and headscarves after escaping religious persecution under ISIS” June 5, 2016 (Stanton, 2015).



Figure 28: “Incredible moment elated Syrian women rip off strict Islamic robes and headscarves after escaping religious persecution under ISIS” June 5, 2016 (Stanton, 2015)



Figure 29: “Incredible moment elated Syrian women rip off strict Islamic robes and headscarves after escaping religious persecution under ISIS” June 5, 2016 (Stanton, 2015).

Some of the pictures were taken during and after removing the burkas/chadors, while other pictures show just women in the truck and some also include men. If we look at just one of these photographs, we may have different assumptions about the moment, but with more than a single picture we can understand what kind of environment they were in (see Figures 28-33). In addition, captions to these photographs portray singular perspectives and make ethnocentric assumptions. As an example, a picture, shown in Figure 26, is described with the caption, “Freedom: A Syrian woman tears off her shapeless black robe as she enters Kurdish-controlled territory” (Stanton, 2015). Another picture, shown in Figure 30, is clarified as “A Syrian woman raises her arms in the air as she celebrates escaping from ISIS and arriving in Rojava, Syria” (Stanton, 2015). Both of them make ethnocentric assumptions. The moment is defined as celebratory; however, this is the interpretation of the journalist.



Figure 30: “Incredible moment elated Syrian women rip off strict Islamic robes and headscarves after escaping religious persecution under ISIS” June 5, 2016 (Stanton, 2015).

Another picture showing a woman in a red and orange dress from a different perspective was published, shown in Figure 31. From this perspective, one more small truck which carried a group of people and their staff, is seen. In addition, the picture also shows women’s hair flapping around under the black burka/chador, men facing back, and a male child invisible. “Syria-based

freelance journalist Jack Shahine watched as the refugees arrived in the area and said they were ‘joyful for being finally free’” is a caption in the picture (Stanton, 2015). And the final picture, Figure 32, is from the group of women with one woman standing out in a green colour dress. These women make peace signs together and look and smile at the cameras. The situation was described with the caption, “Women raise their hands in the air with smiles on the faces as they arrive in Kurdish-controlled territory” (Stanton, 2015).



Figure 31: “Incredible moment elated Syrian women rip off strict Islamic robes and headscarves after escaping religious persecution under ISIS” June 5, 2016 (Stanton, 2015).

As these moments are romanticized and celebrated, the article simultaneously neglects and minimizes the complex realities of these women’s lives. This news article finishes with more information from the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. According to Stanton (2015), dozens of fighters from ISIS and also other groups fighting against ISIS were killed, perhaps including people women know. The writer claims that other extremist groups like the Nusra Front, which is a branch of Al-Qaeda, have fought and ISIS has lost many towns and villages which they occupied before where some of these women may have lived or may be returning to (Stanton, 2015).

This moment was published in many print and online media outlets, including the fashion magazine *Marie Claire*. On June 8, 2015 *Marie Claire* published an article with the title “These Photos of Syrian Women Escaping ISIS Are Incredible” without a writer’s name. The magazine used two photographs from the photojournalist Shahine’s Twitter account. The magazine article emphasizes the fashion of these women in the situation. The first sentence from the article said, “Crossing the border out of Syria and leaving the oppression of ISIS behind, Jack Shahine’s images sum up everything amazing about freedom, fashion and identity...” (“These Photos of Syrian Women Escaping ISIS Are Incredible,” 2015, para. 1). And after that Shahine’s tweet with the woman who had the red and orange dress, shown in Figure 33, is shared on Marie Claire’s website.



Figure 32: June 8, 2015 (“These Photos Of Syrian Women Escaping ISIS Are Incredible,” 2015).

The magazine tries to encourage their readers to empathize with the words: Imagine if, after a lifetime of wandering around in skinny jeans and mini skirts, crop tops, vest tops, tank tops and those slightly-questionable-totally-see-through-fishnet-tops, the government suddenly decided that – no matter what your religion – you had to start wearing two layers of veils at all times. That you couldn’t leave the house without a male

companion. And that to disobey – even once – could lead to sexual abuse, violence, or death (“These Photos Of Syrian Women Escaping ISIS Are Incredible,” 2015, para. 2).

This magazine also minimizes the complexities of this situation and makes ethnocentric assumptions about these women in this case relating to fashion. After the description of skinny jeans and miniskirts, the article includes information about the Syrian crisis and women in Syria. According to the article, ISIS had taken a control of the capital city of Raqqa which has a 10 per cent Christian population (2015). The oppressive and extremist group started to force all women to cover their bodies from head to toe in early 2014. The magazine claims that this is just one reason these images are powerful. After the comment, the magazine article shares another picture of the woman with the green dress, Figure 34.



Figure 33: June 8, 2015 (“These Photos of Syrian Women Escaping ISIS Are Incredible,” 2015).

The magazine article prefers the use of the word “veils” to describe these women’s black clothing which is described as “black shapeless robes” by *Daily Mail*; “black burkas” by photojournalist Shahine; and “burkas/chadors” in this thesis. Moreover, the magazine article also emphasizes some details of these women’s dresses such as “reveal[ing] bright, primary-coloured

dresses underneath” (“These Photos Of Syrian Women Escaping ISIS Are Incredible,” 2015, para. 5). Although the last part of the article highlights that most important thing for women is that they have freedom to express themselves, the focus on these women’s clothing such as “brightest”, “nicest” and “most attention grabbing” is problematic:

And while it’s not sure if the women deliberately wore their brightest, nicest, most attention-grabbing dresses to make a political statement, or if they even knew a photographer was on hand to capture it, it doesn’t really matter, does it? After all, they’re finally free, and can finally express themselves however they want to (“These Photos Of Syrian Women Escaping ISIS Are Incredible,” 2015, para. 6-7).

What can be concluded from analyzing these media extracts is, although news and magazine articles illustrate these women’s narratives with visual materials, when viewed as texts, the ethnocentric, political, and social biases of the journalists and their news outlets is clearly evident.

On September 12, 2014, the American news publication, *Foreign Policy*, published an article titled “Meet the Badass Women Fighting the Islamic State” and written by Mohammad A. Salih. The article is about female guerillas from PKK, more specifically it is about Avesta who was one of the leaders in the PKK and fight against ISIS. The article starts with the emphasis on the women who are the organization’s leaders on the front lines of the PKK. After this information, a photograph was shown. The picture, shown in Figure 35, was taken by the author, Salih. In the picture, a woman and a man appear in a home. The central focus of the photograph is the woman whose brown hair and remarkable green eyes are the same camouflage as her clothing. This woman carries a sniper rifle and sits on the sofa. A man is sitting next to the woman and also has

camouflage clothing. Although the area can be described as a 'safe place', the people's clothing speaks to an environment of war and terror.



Figure 34: "Meet the Badass Women Fighting the Islamic State" September 12, 2014 (Salih, 2014).

After the picture, the article explains the environment in the room. According to the article, this area is in Makhmour, a town in Iraq with ISIS fighters just 10 miles away at the time. The woman in the picture is Avesta, a 24-year-old guerilla. According to the article's description, she enters the room and greets her fellow fighters. When she shook these fighters' hands, she said "Hello, heval [comrade]" (Salih, 2014, para.1). Tea and coffee services are started, and she lays down her rifle. After explaining the environment of the room, the writer portrays Avesta's appearance. According to the writer, she looks older with a wrinkled and roughened face and calloused hands. After the physical definitions, the writer explains the woman's role in the organization. She commands a group of 13 PKK fighters, eight of which are female. The PKK is a rebel group which has fought for three decades against the Turkish State for Kurdish rights. Avesta's group came to Makhmour from the Qandil Mountains, which is near the Iraq-Iran border. In that area, there are hundreds of Kurdish 'volunteers', including Avesta's group, to fight jihadists

of the ISIS. These Kurdish guerillas who are believed to be PKK supporters retook control of a main target area which is a camp populated by more than 10,000 Kurdish refugees from Turkey. Moreover, the groups, the PKK, and Peoples Protection/Defines Unites (YPG) which is a Syrian affiliate, played a significant role in security and created an escape route for the Yezidi/Yazidi religious minority living in Sinjar Mountain. However, the group is also known as a terrorist organization which is a fact that the article emphasizes by that the United States and many European countries, including Turkey, hold the claim that PKK and YPG are terrorist groups. Avesta's description of the situation is directly shared in the article. She said, "We have been called terrorists for years. But we say to those countries: Come and see this war and then judge for yourselves.... The [Islamic State] beheads civilians.... We have rescued civilians" (Salih, 2014, para. 18).

In addition, the article gives details about Avesta's radicalization process. According to the article, her brother, who was a PKK fighter, died during a clash with Turkish security forces in 2005. When she saw her brother's mutilated body, she became radicalized. She left her hometown, Van, the eastern city in Turkey, and went into the mountains to work with weapons. At that time, she was 15 years old. When she entered the mountains, she took an intense theoretical and practical boot camp. The theory included the party's revolutionary leftist ideology and women's roles in the society. The practical part included training about using weapons. Throughout 9 years, as a member of PKK, she had to follow specific rules. As an example, romantic relationships were prohibited and her communication with her family was limited, which was the same for all PKK members. Despite, this environment, she said that she had discovered herself in the mountains of southeast Turkey and northern Iraq and said "It was in the mountains that I found out women can be also powerful" (Salih, 2014, para. 12). The PKK is well-known for having roles for women that

are more than raising children, cooking, cleaning and pleasing their husbands. The organization is defined as a Marxist organization, and half of the organization's leaders are women. The article describes the situation as totally in contrast to the radical fundamentalism of ISIS, the woman also says that she voluntarily came to Makhmour from Qandil Mountain to fight ISIS.

Moreover, in the article, Avesta is defined as an 'expert fighter' because she had fought many times against Turkey, which is NATO's second-largest military. The woman goes on to say that "The Islamic State fought rigorously. But it was not as severe as our previous fights with the Turkish army. The Turks have warplanes and air power" (Salih, 2014, para. 8).

In addition, these explanations are supported by the 19-year-old male fighter, shown in Figure 35. He said, "It gives us strength and motivation when a woman like Avesta is our commander. She gave us orders during the fighting and instructed us on tactics" (Salih, 2014, para. 13). However, according to Avesta, this was not a big deal. She said "They were not as capable fighters as their propaganda claimed. They mostly fought from afar with heavy weaponry like mortars and artillery" (Salih, 2014, para. 7). The article finishes by describing Avesta's exit:

After her meeting with her comrades ends, she picks up her sniper rifle and bids them farewell. She and a male comrade get into a dusty car and head off to stand guard at the checkpoint at the camp's entrance. From there, she can see the hazy horizon south of Makhmour, where the Islamic State still maintains a foothold (Salih, 2014, para. 21).

However, this is not the last paragraph in the article. The most important part is published after the article's last paragraph as a note. The note was updated on September 13, 2014 at 2.20pm, 23 hour and 57 minutes after the article was published. According to the note, Avesta was killed

by an ISIS militant when she had fought to retake a village. She had taken a strike to her neck and during the drive to the Erbil hospital, she died.

Nadia Murad, who is a joint winner of the 2018 Nobel Peace Prize, wrote her story which is selected as another demonstration of women's frames/narratives as 'heroines' in this thesis ("The Nobel Peace Prize 2018," 2018). As a Yazidi/Yazidi woman, she had faced ISIS terror when Kocho, which is her hometown in northern Iraq, was occupied by ISIS. She had been captured with her sisters, and her six brothers and mother were killed (Murad, 2018). She escaped ISIS militants and shared her traumatic experience in an autobiographic book, *The Last Girl: My Story of Captivity and My Fight Against the Islamic State*. A British daily newspaper, *The Guardian*, has published an extract from her book with the title "I Was an Isis Sex Slave. I Tell My Story Because It Is the Best Weapon I Have" on October 6, 2018. Her story was published with the announcement, "Nobel peace prize winner Nadia Murad describes her extraordinary journey from suffering at the hands of Islamic State to human rights campaigner" (Murad, 2018, para. 1).

The article starts with explaining the environment of the ISIS female slave market. According to Murad (2018), while militants had registered and organised downstairs from the slave market which was opened at night time, the women upstairs were able to hear these dialogues. When the first man came up to the room, the women and girls screamed. The situation downstairs was depicted as "the commotion" and the moment of the women's screams upstairs was defined as "the scene of an explosion" by Murad (Murad, 2018, para. 2). Those screams did not cause the militant to stop and others also came up. The most beautiful women are militants' first targets, and the militants asked some questions to these slave women such as "how old are you?" and "they are virgins, right?" (Murad, 2018, para. 2). The women's bodies, including their breasts and legs, were touched by the militants. Murad described the way these women were

treated, including herself, “as if we were animals” (Murad, 2018, para. 2). When militants tried to take a woman, the women in the room, including Murad, curled their bodies on the floor and through themselves across other women to protect themselves from the militants. Salwan, who was a high-ranking militant, had commanded Murad, “Stand up” and kicked her (Murad, 2018, para. 5). Murad describes him with the sentence, “He didn’t look like a man – he looked like a monster” (Murad, 2018, para. 5) and claims that his smell was like “rotten eggs and cologne” (Murad, 2018, para. 8). The process to take women in the slave market was that militants went to the lower floor and registered the transactions. The women’s names were written with the names of the militants who took them. When Murad was waiting with Salwan in the registration line, she saw a skinny man, Hajji Salman, who was a judge in Mosul. She said, “Please, take me with you. I just can’t go with this giant” (Murad, 2018, para. 8). Because of his powerful position as a judge, everybody obeyed Hajji Salman. When he said, “she’s mine”, Salwan also did not argue with him and Murad’s name was written with Hajji Salman’s.

In addition, Murad gives more information later in the article about using women as sex slaves in ISIS’ terror. She mentions ISIS’ online magazine, *Dabiq*, whose articles are analyzed in this thesis, Chapter Six. She claims that rape, which is used as a weapon of war, is consciously planned by ISIS, like other terrorist organizations. Rwandan women’s situation is used as an example in the article. Murad said that she had never known the country of Rwanda and was unaware about Rwandan women as victims of war crimes until ISIS came to her hometown. The article also shares her emotions about her first speech in front of a large audience in the Switzerland UN forum on minority issues, in November 2015. She wrote:

I wanted to talk about everything – the children who died of dehydration fleeing
Isis, the families still stranded on the mountain, the thousands of women and

children who remained in captivity, and what my brothers saw at the site of the massacre. I was only one of hundreds of thousands of Yazidi victims. My community was scattered, living as refugees inside and outside of Iraq, and Kocho was still occupied by Isis. There was so much the world needed to hear about what was happening to Yazidis (Murad, 2018, para. 11).

In addition, she says that world leaders, particularly Muslim religious leaders, should speak out about the situation. She claims that talking about the story is never easy and each time she speaks, she relives it. However, like the first part of her autobiographic book's title, *The Last Girl*, she wants to be the last girl in the world with a story like hers, and like the second part of the article's title, *I Tell My Story Because It Is the Best Weapon I Have*, her story is the best weapon she has against terrorism, and she plans on using this until those terrorists are put on trial. The article published a picture. In the picture, Murad's age is estimated at 25; however, she looks much older. She puts her hand on her chest and looks down. The emotions on her face can be read as 'quiet' but at the same time 'thoughtful' and 'tired'.



Figure 35: "I was an ISIS Sex Slave. I Tell My Story Because It is the Best Weapon I Have" October 6, 2018.

If I analyze these women's narratives/frames through Lakoff's theory of linguistic analysis, the words 'victim' and 'hero', 'heroines' in this thesis, can be used to describe these three women in these women's narratives/frames. The peace signs made by the group of "brave women" show us their roles as 'heroines' who escaped from the position of 'victims'. Moreover, Avesta, who was a member of PKK and fought ISIS, is another type of 'heroine' in her narrative/frame. As a real woman, Avesta fought against ISIS similar to how 'Wonder Woman' as a fictional superhero fights against imaginary military forces. Her words, "The [Islamic State] beheads civilians... We have rescued civilians" (Salih, 2014, para. 18) supports how she sees her role against ISIS' terror. In the narrative, she is a 'heroine' for civilians with the role as a 'protector' against ISIS. However, Murad, who is a Yezidi/Yazidi survivor and winner of the 2018 Nobel Peace Prize, is a different type of 'heroine' than Avesta. It can be possible to say that Murad's fighting is a mental construct whereas Avesta's fighting is physical. Murad came from a 'victim' position and has become 'heroine' with her active survivor role and position. Her sentence, "I was only one of hundreds of thousands of Yazidi victims" clearly shows her position as a 'victim' (Murad, 2018, para. 10). In contrast, her speech "I want to be the last girl in the world with a story like mine" emphasizes that although it is not easy to talk about her experiences because each time she speaks, she relives it, she bravely shares her truth, and shows her position as a 'heroine' (Murad, 2018, para. 14).

If I create other actors from these women's narratives/frames like Lakoff's Gulf War practice, ISIS militants are the main 'villains'. Although there are not any direct sentences from the group of "brave women" who removed and threw down their burkas/chadors, if we consider the trucks which had carried them from a town in Syria which had been occupied by ISIS, it can be understood that wearing burkas/chadors had not been these women's decisions. In addition, it is possible to comprehend, how they had been confined to roles by ISIS' sect of Islam in their

hometown. Moreover, Murad also describe an ISIS' militant with the word of "monster": "He didn't look like a man – he looked like a monster" (Murad, 2018, para. 5). In Avesta's narrative/frame, ISIS is also emphasized as a villain; however, Turkish security forces who killed her brother are a different kind of 'villain' in her narrative. However, the country of Turkey, more specifically Turkish leaders, as Muslim countries leaders, are helpers for Murad's narrative/frame. For that reason, although the main 'villain' ISIS exists in these three stories, a 'villain' for one woman is a 'helper' for another woman.

If I can analyse these women's visual narratives/frames, these photographs show that there are a lot of pictures of ISIS' terror and women. However, we cannot say that one of these is an iconic picture of ISIS' terror. Chapter 7, damla yur's Frame/Narrative, argues that there is not any iconic picture of ISIS' terror and women, although the war clearly has happened to women and has had an impact on women's bodies. Murad's picture is one of the symbols of Yezidi/Yazidi women survivors in ISIS' terror. However, she does not have one of single picture which encompasses the power and brutality of ISIS terror like Alan Kurdi, shown in Figure 14, and/or Omran Dagnesh, shown in Figure 15.

hooks definition of 'safe', which is to stay within fixed boundaries, is remarkable in these women's narratives/frames. In hooks' example, fixed boundaries are family, community and/or nation. It can be possible to say for these women; fixed boundaries are just uncontrolled ISIS' areas. The safe places are sometimes the home, which is shown in Figure 35, sometimes crossing borders but sometimes safe areas are just 'trucks' which came from ISIS' controlled area and reach YPG controlled areas, shown in Figure 26-34.

All in all, in these women's frames/narratives from selected news articles, they were 'victims' but not 'passive'. They can be regarded as 'active survivors' who escaped ISIS' terror.

In addition, some of them are 'active agents' but not for the terror, they are 'active agents against the terror' who fight against ISIS as PKK members.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

This thesis started by proposing the idea that women's bodies can be weaponized by terrorist groups, whether it is indirectly as sex slaves or directly as fighters. The main strategy of terrorist organizations is using women's bodies as tools and these bodies are at the core of the political order as markers of status and power; and this is not only practiced by ISIS. Recreating gender roles in armed conflict occurs often. The relationship between masculinity and militarism, assimilation of people belonging to other religions and instrumentalization of the female body are main tactics for terrorist groups, including ISIS. This thesis advocates that this weaponization is supported by many different kinds of media through the representation of women as passive victims "and/or" active agents of terror, using the example of ISIS' terror against women. The main research question, 'what narratives does the media tell about women impacted by ISIS' terror?' and sub questions, 'how are female bodies framed in media coverage of ISIS terror?' and 'are they cast as victims, witnesses, perpetrators and/or all of the above in the media coverage of ISIS?' have been analysed through three perspectives. damla yur's frame/narrative shows my personal approach using my published news articles from *Cumhuriyet* Newspaper; ISIS' frame/narrative is analysed from ISIS' own perspective with articles from the group's online magazine, *Dabiq*; and Western media's frames/narratives of women as 'heroines' are examined with selected western media articles. The main aim of my analysis has been to understand how female bodies are framed in media coverage of ISIS and how they are cast as 'victims', 'witnesses', 'perpetrators' and/or all of these. In addition, this thesis also engages with the political jihadist ideology from ISIS' narrative as a gendered ideology, with specific roles for women. This final chapter highlights the findings of these three narratives and visual analyses and makes recommendations for future areas of exploration and research.

This thesis was prepared when new developments were being learnt of ISIS terror every day. When this thesis began, the terrorist organization was very powerful; however, as this thesis was completed, recent western media coverage seems to indicate that ISIS has weakened. U.S. President Donald John Trump claims that ISIS has been defeated. On February 3, President Trump said, "When I took over Syria it was infested with ISIS. It was all over the place. And now you have very little ISIS and you have the caliphate almost knocked out" (Kelly, 2019, para. 3). In addition, on February 11, at a rally in El Paso, Texas, he said: "We've made tremendous strides in the Middle East. Our brave warriors have liberated virtually 100 percent of ISIS in Iraq and Syria" (Kelly, 2019, para. 4). However, on April 29, 2019, ISIS published a new propaganda video. After 5 years, ISIS' leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi appears in the video and delivering messages that he is alive and is making an effort to maintain the organization's global presence and perpetuate attacks. In the video, he compliments the bombers responsible for the Easter Bombings in Sri Lanka in which 250 people were killed and at least 500 were injured. He also comments on recent world politics¹² to highlight political unrest around the world and assert his influence as a 'political leader' (Britton & Alkhshali, 2019). In general, the video proves it is impossible to accept that ISIS is defeated. Many journalists and researchers believe that it is possible to say "defeat" in reference to the caliphate but not ISIS: "The caliphate is gone; ISIS remains" (Kelly, 2019, para. 23) and "[t]he caliphate is gone, but Islamic State has a new plan" (Hénin, 2019). That being said, the trajectory and future of ISIS is currently unclear.

As mentioned in the beginning of this thesis, ISIS was not formed recently. The terrorist organization's origins trace back to the 1990's and evolved from Al-Qaeda. It is clear to say that

¹² Such comments include the Israeli election, which resulted in Benjamin Netanyahu's win, and the political chaos in Algeria and Sudan with the resignations of Algerian president, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, and Sudan's president, Omar al-Bashir (Britton & Alkhshali, 2019).

this radical organization knew the political instability and power gap of the Middle East was an opportunity to take for their advantage. The strategy of jihadists is to typically wait and watch for any signs of civil or political unrest and once they recognize a precarious area, they use this as their opportunity to attack. This is their strategy to grow and this is how ISIS entered Syria in 2011. Although today ISIS seems weaker, history shows that if the jihadist ideology has not been weakened, it will continue to exist either in the same place or maybe even the new area. Like the land these jihadist militants capture, the bodies of the women impacted have been, and will likely continue to be, looted and plundered. Its instrumental use of women is not particular to ISIS and will not be a new phenomenon for another jihadist movement.

Understanding Women Impacted by ISIS' Terror

This thesis makes an effort to theoretically table different narratives and understand women impacted by ISIS' terror referring Lakoff's cognitive linguistic approach and Leavy's visual analysis method. According to Lakoff (2008), when we live out a narrative, we can use our prior experiences. Real life and media narratives are affected by this situation and they have a relationship to each other. Lakoff explains, "we are in melodrama" (Lakoff, 2008, p. 38). Melodrama treats everything within just one framework, the either good or evil. Good is always good and admirable; evil is always evil and terrible. The melodramatic approach is the kind of caricaturist drama as well as caricaturist reality. This concept of 'cognitive linguistic approach' explains how we allow a general narrative to form, such as 'victim' or 'hero/heroine'. This thesis tries to understand what narratives tell through dominant narratives, or where each narrative comes from and the means by which it creates power.

ISIS' Frame/Narrative Chapter shows the terrorist organization's ideology about women and their beliefs of women's roles and positions in their ideal world. Their actors, who are seen as

'villain(s)', 'victim(s)', 'hero(s)/heroine(s)' and 'helper(s)', show their opinion of how women 'should be' in the 'Islamic State'. For example, the 'Islamic State's rules for 'mothers' is to raise future jihadist militants and for wives to obey their husband's every wish. In ISIS' narrative, women's roles and positions are those of 'passive victims' and also 'active agents'; however, *Dabiq*'s articles never mention female fighters because they believe that men should be militarized protectors. These narratives promote ideological agents in the 'Islamic State'.

Sharia law (Islamic law) is at the heart of ISIS, with strict control and restriction of women's liberties. ISIS follows a policy which is based on violence against anyone who does not believe in their utopian 'Islamic State'. Examples of this include throwing people who self-identify as LGBTQI+ off the top of a building, brainwashing women to divorce their 'kafir/kafir' (unbeliever) husbands, and accusing the west of all non-jihadist ideas. These are their clear methods to enforce ISIS diktats (or rules/customs) and understand their mentality.

Writing Chapter Six, ISIS' Narrative/Frame, particularly some sentences from *Dabiq* Magazine about 'fitrah', reminds me of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's attitudes and his rhetoric which includes this word 'fitrah'. As an example, on November 25, 2014 President Erdoğan declared at the 'Women and Justice Summit' that he does not believe in gender equality by stating: "You cannot give equal status to women and men. It is against their fitrah" (Altiok & Somersan, 2015, para. 6). Moreover, he added:

Our religion [Islam] has defined a position for women: motherhood. Some people can understand this, while others can't. You cannot explain this to feminists because they don't accept the concept of motherhood. (...) You cannot make women work in the same jobs as men do, as in communist regimes. You cannot give them a shovel and tell them to do their

work. This is against their delicate nature (“Recep Tayyip Erdoğan: ‘Women Not Equal To Men,’” 2014, para. 4-5-10)

Article 10 of the Turkish Constitution states “men and women have equal rights. It is the responsibility of the Turkish State to realize this equality” (“It Is Not Fitrah – Creation, But Constitution!,” 2014, para. 4). Although President Erdoğan’s sentences breach the Turkish Constitution, the most important thing is his narrative which he wants to be spread. ISIS’ narrative about ‘fitrah’ is also shaped by motherhood roles. It is clear that President Erdoğan’s perspectives and ISIS’ attitudes about women are in line with one another. Here, feminists are at the core of hate speech and motherhood is a significant role for women in both understandings. Tragically, if we consider that President Erdoğan has never lost an election since 1994 in Turkey, a majority Muslim nation, and he is very well-known as a Muslim leader all over the world, it should not be surprising to see how people are encouraged to join the jihadist movements, believe in the jihadist’s sect of Islam, and support the ‘Islamic State’ with these kinds of propaganda.

In addition, ISIS is able to take advantage of their target societies such as Yezidi/Yazidi women, with ‘gender prejudices’ and violence. Raping women does not only harm women physically and psychologically. It also damages the men in these women’s communities because in patriarchal world, men are ‘natural protector’ for women. The clearest finding for ISIS’ policy on women is that this organization sees women as wares and spoils of war. They view women’s bodies as commodities which can be bought and sold. Murad’s discourses, in Chapter 8, clearly show this as an example.

Furthermore, before escaping the group of “brave women” (see Figure 26-34) who were forced to wear burkas/chadors while in ISIS captivity exemplifies the oppressive face of ISIS. Both women’s ‘purdah’, which means dressing in all-enveloping clothing, and ‘nakedness’ can be

oppressing and liberating; the critical factor is who decides this. In this situation, liberation is based on choice and decision, and oppression is based on creating limitations and debarring individuals from making independent decisions. The practice of women's bodily autonomy and ownership being taken from them and given to an organization, state, or any other third party, is oppression. These women's political act of removing their burkas/chadors illustrates that practicing purdah was not their own choice. In this case, wearing a burqa is a visual symbol identifying these women as 'prisoners' and 'victims' as according to Martini (2018), who claims that this meaning is not just for ISIS but also 'Islamic patriarchy' (p. 467). However, an alternative perspective is offered by Freedman (2006) in her article, "*The Headscarf Debate: Muslim Women in Europe and the War on Terror*"; she discusses the gender inequality involved in banning women from wearing a headscarf:

The discourse surrounding these debates, policies, and legislation is often framed in terms of a defence of the rights of Muslim women against a patriarchal order that requires them to cover their heads. Thus, in terms of the upholding of gender equality, it might be argued that the policy of banning Muslim women from wearing headscarves has in fact been detrimental to the exercise of their rights, acting to further exclude them from European societies in the name of supposedly universal, although Eurocentric, conceptions of women's rights. The decision to ban the headscarf can thus be seen as part of a 'politics of control', extending the reach of Western norms over Muslim women within European populations (p. 169).

I would say Martini's and Freedman's ideas show that 'purdah' and 'nakedness' are not mutually exclusive. This decision should be made by the women themselves.

To conclude, in this thesis' main findings, according to my narrative (from *Cumhuriyet Newspaper*), I would like to describe these women as 'active survivors'. All my articles are based on women who escaped ISIS and tried to create new lives for themselves and their families. Women's narratives from western media coverage selected for this thesis (*Daily Mail, Marie Claire, Foreign Policy* and *The Guardian*) portray them as 'heroines' against ISIS terror. However, the most prominent western narratives about these women show us they are *either* 'passive victims' *or* 'active survivors', which fails to illustrate the complex roles of women in this situation. In contrast, ISIS' narratives (from *Dabiq*) are one-sided, showing that women are 'helpers' as 'good wives' for jihadists and 'good mothers' for future jihadists in the 'Islamic State'. ISIS sees these women as merely 'passive victims'; they create the victimhood narrative by playing upon the 'war on Islam'. However, I read these women's positions in ISIS' own media as 'passive agents'; they are used deliberately for propagating the ISIS' jihadist message. The analysis shows that women in ISIS' own media coverage are at the core of the narratives of 'passive victims and supporters of ISIS' cause'. Their bodies in visual materials are at the core of manipulating human sentiment; their faith and choices are at the core of ISIS' judgment; and their fertility is at the core of their gender's value for ISIS. Tragically, all of these are conscious tactics of war.

Due to the complexity of this situation, this thesis uses the two phrases, 'passive victims' and 'active agents' with the conjunctions of 'and' and 'or' with quotation marks in the title. My findings from three main narratives, 'victims becoming active survivors', 'passive victims and supporters of ISIS' cause' and 'heroines and active agents resisting ISIS' rules' show that we cannot pigeonhole these women into single-sided frames. These women are more than victims or agents. We should avoid seeing these women superficially and critically acknowledge that their multiple positions include 'active survivors'.

Understanding Media Narratives About Women Impacted by ISIS' Terror

When terrorism targets civilian populations, media narratives play a part on the front lines. People expect that the media should inform without resorting to sensationalism. However, every single news article is influenced by its writer and/or editor. 'Terrorists' and 'freedom fighters' are always difficult words for media. Using these words is based on different dynamics such as journalists', editors', newspapers' and magazines' ethnocentric, political and social alignments and also ownership. This means using these terms is never neutral. Different narratives from selected articles in this thesis advocate that 'victims' are more than just labels, 'heroines' are more than just escapers, and 'helpers' have more than just one meaning and are different from narrative to narrative. For that reason, it can be possible to say that actors have different meanings based on different perspectives. However, showing one perspective usually comes with the opposite argument. For example, Chapter 8 argues *Daily Mail* and *Marie Claire*'s approaches about the group of "brave women" who removed their burkas/chadors after escaping ISIS have an ethnocentric assumption. When the *Daily Mail* reported on the story they described a scene of joy and happiness where the women begin to ululate. However, their narrative failed to consider that ululating, in the Middle East, is also an act of mourning. In addition, *Marie Claire*'s Western perspective that women who suddenly cannot wear their "skinny jeans, miniskirts, crop tops, vest tops and tank tops" are now oppressed and controlled, did not consider that perhaps these women never wanted to wear these in the first place.

On the other hand, the story of female fighters against ISIS, Avesta's story in Chapter 8, may be argued from a different point of view. Because the gendered analysis of a woman's radicalization against terror, such as Avesta's story, destroys the idea that women are usually peaceful, domestic and caring mothers whereas men are considered strong, autonomous and

political individuals. Martini (2018) explains, “[t]he figure of a woman militant contradicts the main gender constructions and thus produces a certain shock and disconcertment in societies” (p. 458). Furthermore, Eisenstein (2008) explains that “[p]eace is often identified with females; and war with males. Because war unsettles previously gendered life, space itself is reconstructed. The language of war – home front, battle zone, combatant, civilian – challenges established notions of home, safety, and privacy. Death creates new necessity” (p. 33). In addition, Sjoberg and Gentry also examine the roles of women as ‘terrorists’ with:

Women remain underrepresented in the political and economic power structures of the world, which have not magically become gender neutral just because women have joined workforces or voting lists. Women in professions associated with masculinity are often identified by their sex- women soldiers, women political leaders, women CEOs, or even women terrorists. Conversely, women in professions associated with femininity are often identified only by the name of the profession – we do not hear women housekeepers, women teachers, or women nurses. Women in those professions are identified simply as housekeepers, teachers, and nurses, because women are assumed to belong in them rather than ones that remain at odds with ideal- typical notions of what it means to be “a woman” despite women’s participation (Sjoberg & Gentry, 2011, p. 3&4).

Although I personally do not support any armed defence, I disagree with portraying women just as peaceful, domestic and caring mothers and this thesis tries to understand different views.

In addition, women’s discourses from selected articles, my published articles and also international media articles, show that ‘rape’ is the main tactic of war and these news articles published these women’s experiences in their own words. On the other hand, I have several news articles about rape in Turkey. These were reported not during wartime, these happened in

peacetime. The same as western and international media, there are thousands of rapes reported locally and internationally during peacetime. For that reason, I believe that we should interrogate sexual violence in peacetime and not be shocked to see it in times of war. (Ward, 2013) clearly explains the situation with the following quote:

Women still have less access to the areas of politics, economics and education, though this situation has improved. It is a fact that gender specific crimes during peacetime are marginalized in domestic courts, and gender specific crimes during wartime are marginalized in international criminal law. There was, and still is, a perception that rape and other forms of sexual violence are somehow a lesser, inevitable or invisible crime not worth investigating. If women are left unprotected in domestic law, they would be unprotected on the international plain, having neither the legal instruments nor the political power to protect them.

In addition, like Leavy's explanation about her own example of 9/11, this thesis also tries to explain and analyse the issue using my own experience. She wrote:

The piece illustrates how narrative autoethnography can be used to explore serious issues, as experienced and perceived by individuals, while placing those issues in a larger sociohistorical context (Leavy, 2009, p. 51).

Similar to her work, this thesis highlights my autoethnography (in Chapter Five: damla yur's Frame/Narrative) before analyzing two other perspectives, because as a writer of this thesis which analyzes media narratives, I see the news through my own lens.

In summary, this thesis clearly shows that media makes sense of these women through specific narratives, in one way or another. Lakoff claims that "the brain is not neutral" (Lakoff,

2008, p. 14). This thesis asserts that these news articles and the narratives/frames from these articles, are not neutral and cannot be neutral.

Future Implications

The existing literature about terror, particularly the terrorist organization of ISIS, is vast; however, there is little that acknowledges the power of media in relation to women, or analyzes the situation of intentionally and/or unintentionally sexist propaganda. This thesis, with its feminist lens, contributes to the scholarly literature by further expanding the knowledge of ISIS' narrative/frame about women in the organization's strategic communication. In addition, the narratives/frames of women impacted by this terror, also provides additional insight into the arguments underpinning *Dabiq's* overarching message and selected international media's approaches. A great success of the feminist movement is making visible the issue of gender inequality as a political issue. This situation is valid for both times of war and peace. Feminist literature contains a large number of studies that involve women affected by 'and/or' involved in the war on terror. Particularly, recent studies show that rape is not the only experience faced by women in war and terror. Although rape is the main tactic for terrorist organizations including ISIS, this thesis also analyzes how women were/are living and experiencing more than rape in conflict zones. Although women experience different kinds of violence, including physical and psychological, they are also part of defence groups and/or terrorist groups. Women's fertility, faiths, abilities are assets in the war on terror. This study presents and contributes a critical approach to the problematic framing of women as just 'passive victims' and/or 'active agents' demonstrated by the media, and also challenges and questions the feminist literature on the war on terror. Bhattacharyya (2008) supports this "pigeonhole" idea:

In common with many other conflicts, this war is animated by allusions to the welfare of women. Women are being repressed, the (male) enemy desires and hates our women, freedom is embodied in the persons of our emancipated women and this is what is under attack; it is the women who have been denied schooling and a role in public life and they will rebuild their nations. Underlying such stories is the assumption that women are victims, survivors and reconstructors but not combatants (p. 43/44).

This study aims to highlight that women should not be stigmatized as a single actor in the war on terror, using the specific example of ISIS' terror. Moreover, using an autobiographical approach to this thesis helps to support a more powerful claim that any narrative cannot be neutral, including my own. This research project contributes to an understanding of media narratives, including my own narratives, in the context of the war on terror. Like many of the authors researching gender and terrorism and media coverage of terrorism, this research acknowledges and encourages the inclusion of those analyses and particularly my previous interviews as a journalist. This thesis' main future implication is more research about women who are either within jihadist terror movements' and/or suffered from terror to create more equal and peaceful living standards for women in the future.

In addition, some parts of this thesis, particularly damla yur's Frames/Narratives Chapter, highlights safe and legal abortion services for women who escaped ISIS' terror. Such services are essential to support women in terror and should be emphasized as one recommendation in dealing with this issue. Countries who open doors for refugee women should support the option of safe and legal abortion to prevent unwanted pregnancies and consider that rape is the main tactic of terrorists, and ISIS' militants as well. In addition, although physically, geographically and financially support services are critical for survivors of ISIS, the privacy and confidentiality of

those who have escaped ISIS captivity is also very important and should be respected at all times. Notably, journalists and researchers should not attempt to interview escapees without ensuring they have given their informed consent, and no one should put any pressure on escapees to speak to journalists or researchers if they do not feel comfortable doing so.

In addition, when I explain my own narrative, I also emphasized working as a female journalist in media with the phrases of 'capitalist hegemony' and 'hegemonic masculinity' (in Chapter Five: *damla yur's* Frame/Narrative). Eisenstein (2008) explains women as workers in a capitalist system with "Global capitalism requires a rearticulation and regendering of patriarchy. This involves a use of class differentiation among women to affirm masculinist privilege across class lines. And working-class women, especially women of color, are most often the new masculinist warriors. As class differences exacerbate inequality and injustice globally these class realities are written into the militarization of gendering everyday life" (p. 37). At the end of this thesis, I would like to highlight again female journalists and researchers are absolutely vital in reporting and critiquing on the war on terror in media as well as academia and in politics. I hope there will be more women in these areas in the future.

In conclusion, these selected narratives show how specific narratives affect discourse. For that reason, my final recommendation for readers, and also future researchers, is to think about Lakoff's sentences:

Our political institutions and practices reflect our collective self-understanding. When that changes dramatically, so should our politics. But we'd better hurry up. The ice caps are melting (Lakoff, 2008, p. 271).

And we need to ask ourselves, what do narratives say about terror and women; where are we; and where do we go now?

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Appendix

Information for the selected news articles in this thesis data.

damla yur's Frame/Narrative Chapter's Articles

Suriyeliler Türkiye'de kürtajı yasak biliyor (Syrians think abortion is illegal in Turkey)

Damla Yur

May 11, 2015

Cumhuriyet Gazetesi (Newspaper)

http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/sokak/274019/Suriyeliler__Turkiye_de_kurtaji_yasak_biliyor.html

Türkiye onları unuttu (Turkey forgot them)

Damla Yur

June 7, 2015

Cumhuriyet Gazetesi (Newspaper)

http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/turkiye/293241/Turkiye_onlari_unuttu.html

İnsanlığın bodrumundan umuda yolculuk (Journey of hope in the basement of humanity)

Damla Yur

August 17, 2015

Cumhuriyet Gazetesi (Newspaper)

http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/yazi_dizileri/347030/insanligin_bodrumundan_umuda_yolculuk.html

Ne olur in bottan yarın gelirsin hepimizi yakma (Please get out of the boat, come tomorrow, do not burn all of us)

Damla Yur

August 18, 2015

Cumhuriyet Gazetesi (Newspaper)

http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/yazi_dizileri/347501/Ne_olur_in_bottan_yarin_gelirsin_hepimizi_yakma.html

Mülteci çocuklar yaşasın (Refugee children should live- Writing series' title)

Emir hayata böyle açıldı (Emir had sailed for a life like this)

Damla Yur

November 22, 2015

Cumhuriyet Gazetesi (Newspaper)

http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/sokak/427583/Emir_hayata_boyle_acildi.html

Mülteci çocuklar yaşasın (Refugee children should live- Writing series' title)

Para gitti hayaller bitti (Money gone, dreams over)

Damla Yur

November 23, 2015

Cumhuriyet Gazetesi (Newspaper)

http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/yazi_dizileri/428533/Para_gitti_hayaller_bitti.html

Tek beklentim hayatta kalmak (My hope is just to stay alive)

Damla Yur

March 8, 2016

Cumhuriyet Gazetesi (Newspaper)

http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/turkiye/493763/Tek_beklentim_hayatta_kalmak.ht

[ml](#)

ISIS' Frame/Narrative Chapter's Articles

A Message from Sotloff to his mother days before his execution

n.a.

October 11, 2014

Dabiq Magazine (Al-Hayat Media Centre)

<https://clarionproject.org/docs/islamic-state-isis-magazine-Issue-4-the-failed-crusade.pdf>

Clamping down on sexual deviance

n.a.

February 12, 2015

Dabiq Magazine (Al-Hayat Media Centre)

<https://clarionproject.org/docs/islamic-state-dabiq-magazine-issue-7-from-hypocrisy-to-apostasy.pdf>

Slave- Girls or Prostitutes?

Umm Sumayyah al-Muhajirah

May 21, 2015

Dabiq Magazine (Al-Hayat Media Centre)

<https://clarionproject.org/docs/isis-isil-islamic-state-magazine-issue+9-they-plot-and-allah-plots-sex-slavery.pdf>

They Are Not Lawful Spouses for One Another (Chapter title: from our sister)

Umm Sumayyah al- Muhajirah

July 13, 2015

Dabiq Magazine (Al-Hayat Media Centre)

<http://clarionproject.org/wp-content/uploads/Issue%2010%20-%20The%20Laws%20of%20Allah%20or%20the%20Laws%20of%20Men.pdf>

A Jihad without fighting (Chapter title: to our sister)

Umm Sumayyah al-Muhajirah

September 9, 2015

Dabiq Magazine (Al-Hayat Media Centre)

<http://clarionproject.org/wp-content/uploads/Issue%2011%20-%20From%20the%20battle%20of%20Al-Ahzab%20to%20the%20war%20of%20coalitions.pdf>

Two, Three or Four (Chapter title: to our sisters)

Umm Sumayyah al-Muhajirah

November 18, 2015

Dabiq Magazine (Al-Hayat Media Centre)

<http://clarionproject.org/wp-content/uploads/islamic-state-isis-isil-dabiq-magazine-issue-12-just-terror.pdf>

Advice on Ihdad

n.a.

January 19, 2016

Dabiq Magazine (Al-Hayat Media Centre)

<http://clarionproject.org/wp-content/uploads/Issue-13-the-rafidah.pdf>

The Fitrah of Mankind and the Near-Extinction of the Western Woman (Chapter title: For Women)

n.a.

July 31, 2016

Dabiq Magazine (Al-Hayat Media Centre)

<http://clarionproject.org/wp-content/uploads/islamic-state-magazine-dabiq-fifteen-breaking-the-cross.pdf>

Western Media's Frames/Narratives of Women as 'Heroines' Chapter's Articles

Incredible moment elated Syrian women rip off strict Islamic robes and headscarves after escaping religious persecution under ISIS

Jenny Stanton

June 5, 2015

Mail Online/ Daily Mail

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3112942/Incredible-moment-elated-Syrian-women-rip-strict-Islamic-robos-headscarves-escaping-religious-persecution-ISIS.html>

These Photos of Syrian Women Escaping ISIS Are Incredible

n.a.

June 8, 2015

Marie Claire

<https://www.marieclaire.co.uk/reports/jack-shahine-s-photos-of-women-escaping-isis-are-incredible-73719>

Meet the Badass Women Fighting the Islamic State

Mohammed A. Salih

September 12, 2014

Foreign Policy

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2014/09/12/meet-the-badass-women-fighting-the-islamic-state/>

I was an Isis sex slave. I tell my story because it is the best weapon I have

Nadia Murad

October 6, 2018

The Guardian

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/oct/06/nadia-murad-isis-sex-slave-nobel-peace-prize>