Sanctioned rhetoric: Nefarious professional communications produced by the state

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Abstract: The state and its institutions have traditionally produced professional documents in the form of flyers, magazines and brochures. Typically free, or low cost, these documents cover informational, legal and political functions of the state. In the West, citizen health, safety, education, taxes, tourism, nutrition, the law, employment and technology are some of the needs fulfilled by these seemingly innocuous documents. Such public communication can however be subverted for ulterior motives, especially during periods of domestic conflict and war. Using case studies, this paper shows how professional communication can fulfil questionable purposes. This paper analyses the use of professional documents for mainly disreputable purposes, including a major WWII publication, an Australian magazine, and more recently, a jihadist online periodical. It concludes by inviting scholars and the media to analyse such propaganda as a method of understanding the intent of nefarious agencies and ultimately counteract their myths and public relations spin.

INTRODUCTION

The tacit practice of rhetoric is a commonplace tool of most governments, whether the political system is democratic, communist, a dictatorship or a monarchy. Indeed the democratic society in which rhetoric was first coined, ancient Greece, fostered proponents of draconian laws, and their rhetorical responses (Whedbee, 2003). Charlemagne in 811AD used the first known survey to both query high-ranking officials, and also to persuade them not to meddle in worldly affairs. Usually, when new governments come to power, they maintain their power by a mandate, which incorporates political, intellectual, and sectarian rhetoric, or sometimes, brute force. Once established, such new governments usually roll out new policies and laws to control the behaviour of its citizens. Professional documents such as flyers, brochures and magazines are less confrontational and have been exploited to manipulate a country's attitudes about a range of issues, with such campaigns lasting periods of months, years, or even, decades. The study of contemporary professional communication for unethical purposes usually invokes the concept of propaganda, which is seen as negative and deleterious to an organisation, a government or a society. The concept has been extended to advertising copy and marketing/public relations campaigns originating from private organisations (Pollay, 1986). One need only think of Nestle, Nike, Volkswagen or McDonalds to remember the fiascos surrounding these companies, and their rhetorical excuses for their alleged actions. Such famous cases are now almost folklore in contemporary Western society. The accusations of unethical behaviour arise, the organisations respond with rhetoric and spin, small changes are made, and the company survives and keeps trading, albeit with its reputation slightly tarnished.

While the word, 'propaganda' was originally neutral, coined by the Catholic church in 1622 to mean 'propagation', the study of propaganda with its modern connotation starts properly in the twentieth century with both world wars. The USA, Britain, Germany, Russia, Italy and Japan produced campaigns of intense propaganda for both their own populace but especially for foreign audiences. All of the countries at war set up special departments of propaganda usually staffed by journalists or researchers, whose job it was to produce posters, leaflets, and magazines that both induced hatred of the enemy, and aimed at recruitment of the public. The same processes were re-visited during the Vietnam war, with both real and alleged events broadcast via print, and electronic media. A simple categorisation comprises white, grey or black propaganda (Zeman, 1978). White propaganda is from an openly declared source, grey propaganda is ambiguous or has its source anonymized, and black propaganda falsifies the source.

However, not all that passes as propaganda is necessarily deceptive or has manipulative intent. The judgment of something being propaganda is a challenging one, and not as simple as many commentators would have us believe (Edwards, 1940; Cone, 2003). Using a case study approach, this paper will rhetorically analyse the text and images of three famous examples of propaganda in order to interpret the effects upon its target audiences. The analysis will focus on historical, contextual, and audience features of the magazine contents, with attention paid to rhetorical devices. The targeted audiences are varied and wide-ranging, thus no attempt is made to survey actual members of the readership given the age of the documents, and the high risk to personal safety involved with the contemporary jihadist magazine.

Case Study 1: *Signal* Magazine (1940-45), Germany

Signal magazine was the major publication of the *Wehrmacht* of Nazi Germany. Modelled upon American LIFE magazine, *Signal* was a modern, illustrated photo journal targeted specifically at the neutral, allied, and occupied countries. While a German edition was distributed in Switzerland and to various other countries, *Signal* was never distributed in Germany itself. Published twice a month, (with extra special editions), given away for free or costing less than competing magazines, *Signal* had as many as 25 separate versions in 30 languages, and at its height in 1943 had a circulation of 2,500,000 copies making it the largest periodical in Europe at this time. This figure would place it around the 3rd top selling magazine in most EU countries today. The magazine was distributed to 20,000 cities and by 36,000 separate vendors (http://www.signalmagazine.com/files/editions.gif). It was also available in the United States in English until December, 1941, when the USA entered the war.

Using reportage, illustration and photojournalistic techniques*, Signal* narrated the wartime effort of the German troops and their allies on all fronts with its high quality photos, heroic stories and full colour centrefolds. The magazine also contained articles about economics, science, arts, and fashion, and housed advertisements for many well-known German companies such as BMW, Audi, and Siemens creating a "lifestyle" magazine. The contents of the different editions were customised, often to circumvent topics that could cause anxiety to the population of a certain country. It is tempting to consider the magazine purely as being a mouthpiece for the Third Reich, but *Signal* was allowed to be independent from the Ministry for Propaganda, remaining under control of the military forces. *Signal's* one political aim was to champion a unified Europe ruled by the Third Reich and its allies. This ideal was represented by the depiction of the different foreign units and allies fighting on the German side (Rutz, 2007). The audience of *Signal* was heterogeneous: the occupied, allied and neutral countries surrounding Germany. Citizens of these countries would have been diverse given the varying cultures, perspectives on the war and their predisposition towards or against German aggression. Many countries had experienced economic depressions of the 1930's and the arrival of war, occupation, and the threat of Nazi occupation most probably lead to feelings of anxiety and fear for the majority of Europe. The magazine directly addressed this fear by assuaging the brutality of the Third Reich, and downplaying exact details.
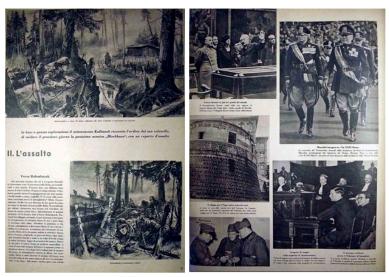

Fig 1. Illustrations for an assault tale and recent photos of Nazi events from Apr 1940 - Issue #1, *Signal*

Emotional feelings about war run deep, and nearly every commentary about *Signal* uses the word, 'propaganda', dismissing any possibility of its utility by its readers. However, it is too simplistic to use the propaganda label for the entire *Signal* magazine corpus, even though such a motive may have been its authors' overriding intention (Saur, 2003). Many of today's most iconic photos of WWII are taken from *Signal*. The continuous photographs of frontline soldiers provide a chronology of the effects of war, albeit a selective view. The magazine in all its editions has become very collectable with rare facsimiles now being sold on ebay for around $100 an issue. While the general public has realised the value of this magazine, few European museums or institutions have collected this publication to produce a definitive archive. These exist only in private collections. While books of *Signal* photographs and analysis certainly exist, very few scholars have continued to analyse the magazine in any kind of detail, possibly to avoid ridicule or being branded a sympathiser. There are however, several good websites, which have begun collecting information, articles and links to collections of *Signal* editions and scholarship (see Anton Zoller's site, http://www.signalmagazine.com).

LIFE magazine was a popular American magazine in 1940 with a circulation of 2.86 million (Knappe, 2008), but nowhere near its later 13.5 million height of popularity. The *Wehrmacht* mimicking of the LIFE format reveals a sophisticated understanding of magazine appeals, and betrays a hidden admiration for the original source. *Signal* can be seen as personifying the (German) allied military war effort showing how they wished to be depicted during the war years. It is worth noting that there is no mention of the persecution of the Jews in the magazine, which carefully sidesteps the horrors of the Holocaust.

Fig 2. Spring in the snowfields and a full frontal photo of model for an art sculpture – Issue #1, *Signal*

It is challenging to analyse the magazine in its entirety – different languages, different versions, and no central repository is available. Thus, this paper will look at the premiere issue, in French and Italian from April, 1940 (from ww2aircraft.net forums). There is no Contents page, so the casual reader would have to flick through the whole issue to find articles of interest. The contents are extremely varied, in order: stories of battles, a travel piece of Spring in the snowfields, a report of the German war, an economic article, a full-page artists' impression of "fallen women", the "Alpine battles", a cheesecake article on female nude sculptures, an article on airplane manufacture, a fashion piece on female leather garments, and the Navy's domination of the North. The 44-page issue does not have a single audience; it is seemingly aimed at people of many ages and nationalities. This issue juxtaposes the German war effort with human-interest stories, scientific pieces and sexually titillating copy all lavishly photographed to create a melange of perspectives, ideologies and genres – a smorgasbord of emotional appeals, or *pathos*. If one could identify a modern-day equivalent it might be contemporary lifestyle magazines - this successful recipe has health and fitness, tourism, leisure, fashion, humour, cartoons, technology and fiction. *Signal* adds wartime stories/graphics, and includes some hefty titillation for good measure.

The photographs of the war effort do not include death or injury in most issues: that would be too disturbing. Instead we see fearless actions of soldiers, mighty weapons being tested, landscapes full of fighters - a colourful, bloodless, fictional war replete with hardship shown on the soldiers faces, and proud human endeavour as shown by their determination to succeed. The *pathos* of pain and suffering is rarely shown in early editions of *Signal*. Similarly, scenes of human indignity are not part of the menu for the recipients of the magazine.

Functionally, the contents of *Signal* create a 'normal' world for the audience, thus war, occupation, deadly weapons, and soldiers become commonplace occurrences alongside the articles of fashion, art, science, and cartoons. This calculated media montage would have been paralleled by eventual real life events as the Third Reich spread all over Europe. By depicting this fictional German world in *Signal*, the audience would come to more readily accept real world occurrences, when they did eventuate. The various war articles that included detailed information and maps about German battlefield successes construct a special relationship with some readers who may have felt grateful to be an informed and privileged recipient. These positive emotions could be seen as a calculated antidote to the mass anxiety experienced by ordinary people when the Nazis occupied Europe. One of *Signal's* major achievements was to attract many volunteers to fight against Bolshevism (Zoller, 2010). The real LIFE magazine reported in March, 1943 that the US was losing the war of words and that "the Nazis have invariably employed 'the strategy of terror' to invade the enemy's mind". The article referred to the competing US propaganda magazine, *Victory*, which was a 'pallid imitation' of *Signal* with less than half the circulation. It seems that Germany's best war correspondents, photographers and

magazine designers could produce a publication that epitomised the highest quality of professional communication, albeit propaganda-based.

Case Study 2: *Dawn* and *New Dawn* magazine, 1952-1975, NSW Australia
Dawn and its sequel, *New Dawn* magazines were contiguous publications originating from the NSW Aboriginal Protection Board from 1952-1975. The publication was distributed for free to all NSW Aboriginal stations and reserves, where it was keenly received by indigenous people, who had previously never had any information about their friends and relatives in other parts of the state (Higson, 2006). The NSW government adopted an assimilationist policy in order to transition rural indigenous people to an Australian way of life, thus attempting to replace the Aboriginal culture with a white Australian one (see Moran, 2005). This policy, however well-meaning, was similar to the action of early British colonialists who decimated or completely annihilated dozens of Aboriginal tribes in many other parts of Australia in the previous century. Instead of killing vast numbers of Aboriginal people, the NSW state government unsuccessfully attempted a form of cultural genocide.

The magazine was published monthly and included articles on education, sporting achievements of Aboriginal people, and roles outside the household which Aboriginal people could aspire to attain if they renounced their previous ways of life and adopted a mainstream white Australian identity. The magazine also included letters to the editor, a penpal section, garden and kitchen tips. Aboriginal people soon discovered that they could make the magazine work for them by sending in photos to the 'Roving Cameraman' section as the State Aboriginal Board moved families from region to region, and town to town. Thus, the magazine functioned as a clandestine missing persons service and undoubtedly resulted in many family reunions over the years.

Fig 3. Front covers of *Dawn,* Oct, 1952 and *New Dawn*, Apr, 1974

The ethnocentric text that accompanied the front cover (above left) of *Dawn* declares its political agenda very clearly:

'These happy Cootamundra girls, spick and span in their neat school uniforms, await the bus to take them into Cootamundra High School. These women of tomorrow are being given a training that will make life easier and sweeter for them and help their eventual assimilation into the white community.'

The *New Dawn* cover's (above right) accompanying text, 22 years later extends this illusion:

'Girls who stay at the hostel receive full board and keep for the weekly rent of $16. It provides them with a home away from home while they find their feet in the city… Most of them are helped in preparing their arrangements to go to Sydney by the local vocational officers of the Department of Labour. They are provided with their rail fare to the city, their first week's board, a living-away-from-home allowance, and $40 in cash for clothing.'

The magazine adopts a Homeric rhetorical strategy by telling (almost mythical) stories that reflect the sporting, educational and social success of fellow Aboriginal individuals who have adopted a white culture. Note the use of monetary handouts in the second passage. However, it is uncertain what real effect the magazine could have had on its intended audience. Very little research exists on the influence of this magazine. While it covertly assisted the reunions of many families, Aboriginal communities in the 50's, 60's and 70's remained isolated but united, and almost certainly were not swayed to adopt a white culture by reading a single monthly magazine. Reading *Forbes* magazine does not make one into a rich and powerful business person. The

magazine's emphasis upon showing its audience good models to mimic defies all logic from the political standpoint of the 21st C and understanding of intercultural communication theory. Culture is a hidden, unconscious set of norms, attitudes and behaviour (Archee, Gurney & Mohan, 2013). No government can change another person's culture, any more than we can change our own culture by willing it to happen.

The magazine's real effects were probably most strongly felt, ironically, by the rural and city white communities that were supposed to welcome the Aboriginal families into their bosom. Much of the population of Australia in the middle of the 20th C was extremely racist and unforgiving of Aboriginal stereotypes. They would not have been able to accept an Aboriginal family living in the middle of a country town or suburban neighbourhood as the magazine would have its audience believe. *Dawn* and *New Dawn* magazines must have seemed rather eccentric and unbelievable to the ordinary Australian who lived in the country or city at this time. The fact the magazine lasted over 20 years is indicative of the paternalistic and insensitive nature of the state at this period in time.

As of 2006, all copies of *Dawn* and *New Dawn* magazines have been digitized and archived by the Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islanders Studies and are freely available on the Web for anyone to view (McKenna, 2016). This archive has rare photographs of Aboriginal people and has been used to authenticate an individual's ethnicity, in many cases, enabling many Aboriginal Australians to claim state subsidies and entitlements. Once designed to remove Aboriginal culture, the online magazine is now validating its previous audience in the new millennium (see http://aiatsis.gov.au/collections/collections-online/digitised-collections/dawn-and-new-dawn).

Case Study 3: *Dabiq* magazine, 2014-2016, Islamic State

Dabiq online magazine appeared about two weeks after the founder of IS, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi announced the caliphate in July, 2014. This magazine is the pre-eminent publication of all the jihadist magazines, with IS producing 15 issues (as of Sep, 2016), about every two months or so, which is slow compared with *Signal*. It is distributed for free on the Internet in English, French, Russian, Turkish and Arabic with a readership most probably in the millions each month. Strangely, it was sold on Amazon.com as a hard copy edition from May 24 to June 6, 2015. For $22 one could order all 9 available editions delivered to your door in the USA. *Dabiq* is a professionally produced magazine with high quality photographs, and the outward appearance of a corporate in-house magazine.

The magazine, in reality consists of two distinct types of information. First and foremost, *Dabiq* is a collection of high quality, glossy images that create a visual narrative of fellow IS fighters placed in an almost mythic landscape, but surrounded by gruesome details of war – bombs, deaths, beheadings, camaraderie, and successful attacks around the world. Photographs, sometimes spread over double pages and depicting a violent, yet somehow heroic world for the would-be recruit, take up over 60% of a typical issue's content. The second type of information is given by the accompanying text, which is both doctrinal, and persuasive in terms of the religious necessity to wage war, and terrorist attacks on many other countries, both Muslim and non-Muslim because such countries are non-believers of IS's version of Islam. Cogent, religious arguments are put forward outlining the IS need for territory, the destruction of enemies, for medical supplies and doctors, and especially for new dedicated adherents.

As with *Signal,* it would be a mistake to write-off *Dabiq* as simply propagandist rhetoric. While the tone of the magazine is certainly populist and its central aim may be new recruitment, the actual text of the publication reveals a great deal more about IS, than other publications of this type. The very title of the magazine, *Dabiq* is a central part of the IS myth that the 'crusaders' of the West will meet their end at a future battle to end all battles in the town of Dabiq, Syria. Here the powers of good and evil will do battle, with good (IS) defeating their enemies of the West and its allies (Cameron, 2016). This apocalyptic myth is established in the premiere issue of *Dabiq* and often repeated in subsequent issues.

The main rhetorical mode from the beginning of Issue #1 is that of *ethos* or persuasion by the character or credibility of the source. The editors of *Dabiq* have created a highly believable publication, on par with any user-centred Western glossy magazine in terms of its page size, length, layout, and especially its visual content. Rather than a banal editorial, the magazine uses the power of doctrine and the word of Allah to justify this issue. For its target audience, nothing could be more authoritative or highly respected. *Dabiq* is similar to *Signal* magazine in that it uses a majority of photo content to create its own vision of the world and its own identity. Its messages are clearly visually portrayed so that even a totally illiterate person could follow its concepts and narrative. *Dabiq* can also easily be equated as a public relations targeted at both a world audience, and its own members.

However, *Dabiq* does not seem follow the expected precepts of previous propagandist literature. For example, much war propaganda tends to dehumanise its enemies, ridiculing them, and destroying their reputation wherever possible so that defeating the enemy is almost an act of mercy. Unpredictably, *Dabiq* refers to the coalition-led forces as 'crusaders' on a holy quest but doomed to failure. The term, 'crusaders' however is

ambiguous, and can be meant as a term of respect or a term of derision. The real crusaders of the Middle Ages have been portrayed as heroes by some, and as villains, who pillaged the countryside they travelled, killing thousands of innocent victims, and appropriating land in the name of the Catholic Church. These holy crusades consisted of several such sojourns, and often targeted Saracens (another term for Muslims) and Jewish people. Whether *Dabiq* is using the term respectfully, or as a term of contempt (or both) is not entirely clear.

An uncommon, but regular feature of the magazine is a column entitled, "In the Words of the Enemy" where various world leaders are selectively quoted along with their photos. Issue #14 has Ban Ki-moon, the previous Secretary-General of the United Nations speaking about IS. Ban Ki-moon's words are not censored, the excerpt is accurately quoted, but is not a damaging one:

> 'The recent expansion of the ISIL sphere of influence across West and North Africa, the Middle East and South and South-East Asia demonstrates the speed and scale at which the gravity of the threat has evolved in just 18 months. The complexity of the recent attacks and the level of planning, coordination and sophistication involved raise concerns about its future evolution. Moreover, other terrorist groups...are sufficiently attracted by its underlying ideology to pledge allegiance to its so-called caliphate and self-proclaimed caliph. ISIL has also benefited from the arrival of a steady stream of foreign terrorist fighters, who continue to leave their communities to replenish its ranks.'

While this quote reads like a CNN media report, it reveals how IS confidently uses its enemies words in order to further its own cause. *Dabiq* does not need to repudiate the speeches of leaders in the West, because it selectively appears that the leaders actually acknowledge IS successes in battle and in recruitment of new fighters. Taken out of context, the excerpt can be read as a statement of awe, even admiration. Such techniques are not aimed at an illiterate or impoverished working class. This is clearly rhetoric (*ethos*) that targets educated, middle class youth, who are being asked to observe the contention put forward by the United Nations, no less. If the UN can say these things, then perhaps IS is a worthwhile cause?

A similar rhetorical device is employed with some of the other photographs used in *Dabiq*, quite often obtained from Western news sources. The front cover of Issue #12 shows one of the victims of the Paris attacks on an ambulance gurney surrounded by concerned medics. This photograph is so similar to the dozens of other citizen journalism shots placed on the Web as evidence of the carnage of the Nov 13 attacks. The original photograph was probably taken by a bystander and can be found on a Sri Lankan website from the UK, and published just one day after the Paris attacks, (http://www.gossip9lanka.co.uk/2015/11/paris-attacks-more-than-153-killed-in.html). *Dabiq* seizes this photograph conveying tragedy and sadness, and makes it the front cover to celebrate the attacks, creating a sense of honour and respect for its own audience. The sub-title of this particular issue is 'Just Terror', and this not only echoes the Nike slogan, but also reiterates IS's righteous arguments that it is doing God's just and holy work. By using two antithetical concepts, 'justice' and 'terrorism', the magazine supplies the conclusion to an enthymemic syllogism – can justice and terrorism exist side by side? *Dabiq* is putting the argument forward and asking its readers to affirm their conclusion. The photograph asks the same question. This is spin taken to a wholly different level (see Galloway, 2016).

Fig 4. Front cover of *Dabiq* - Issue #12

Similar to *Signal* magazine, *Dabiq* offers up advertisements for its audience to savour, but the products it is recommending are external videos of still more celebratory events, case studies and information. The photograph below points to the Top Ten current videos that are recommended viewing for the audience.

The use of "Selected 10" is very congruent with the sensationalistic headings of bloggers and journalists who produce an endless stream of "Top Ten" headings comprising lists of noteworthy signs, concepts or events. *Dabiq* is appealing to a twenty-something male who has been brought up on a social media diet of videos and visuals, and may not wish to read long textual descriptions of IS doctrine or other material. Instead this would-be recruit can see the landscape of war, and experience stories laid out in familiar video narratives, along with voice-overs in various languages.

Fig. 5 Video advertisement from *Dabiq* - Issue #12

Colas (2016) has performed a content analysis with the first 14 issues and has produced the following chart, Table 1 of "simplified" topics. Colas remarks that given the content of *Dabiq*, it is religion and interaction with the West that takes up most space. Contrary to popular belief, emigration and successes against the West take up 8% of the content. If the assumed aim of the magazine is about recruitment via emigration to Syria, then why are these percentages so low? (See second last row of the table.)

Table 1: Summary of *Dabiq's* text content for 14 issues (from Colas, 2016[1])

Category	%
Religion	31
Interaction with the West	15
Military activities in ISIS territory	11
Biography/inspiration/advice	10
Criticism of jihadi groups	9
Other (front cover, advertising)	8
Governance	5
Commendation of jihadi groups	4
Emigration	4
Military activities against the West	4

Moreover, why does the magazine publicly criticise and commend other jihadist groups within its own organisation? Surely this is not in the best interest of IS or the recruitment cause? The answer lies in the audiences that *Dabiq* is reputedly targeting. Each issue contains articles and photographs, which are aimed at different kinds of readers. Would-be recruits are certainly one of the targets. The fact that *Dabiq* recurrently expresses its sovereignty over its captured territory is clearly aimed at Western policymakers, a secondary audience. The third, and much more debatable audience is that of disgruntled IS members who have experienced the hardships of jihadist life, and may be contemplating returning to their previous lives (Colas, 2016).

This multiplicity of audiences and purposes resembles *Signal* magazine from WW2, and is at odds with familiar ideas of what propaganda looks like. Categorising the entire text of a single article (or even photograph) involves complex decision making, since several themes may be involved within the one article. Moreover, emigration (and thus recruitment) as an article category, varies inconsistently over the magazine corpus, but was fairly constant in the first few issues, perhaps accounting for *Dabiq*'s reputation as a enlistment vehicle in terms of the corpus.

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[1]Reprinted and re-ordered from Colas, B. (2016). What Does Dabiq Do? ISIS Hermeneutics and Organizational Fractures within Dabiq Magazine, *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*.

The latest 88-page edition of *Dabiq* (Issue #15, Aug, 2016) has the sub-title of 'Break the Cross', shorthand for eradicating Christianity from the world. This issue is at odds with some of the previous editions and with Colas' (2016) proportional analysis of content. The main doctrinal argument is a familiar one, that Christianity is in fact anti-Islam, and that Christians need to be removed from the face of the planet by any means possible, or they need to convert to Islam. The images are eye-catching, and plentiful. Here are just two juxtaposed images appearing in the Editorial (p.4, and p.9):

Fig 6. Editorial photos of the Nice attack on Bastille Day, 2016 and soldier with kitten, *Dabiq* - Issue #15

One of the major differences between the latest edition of *Dabiq* and most previous issues is the number of articles in Issue #15 that narrate stories of conversion to IS' ideologies. Three articles totalling 14 pages or 17% of the entire issue are devoted to how two men and one woman converted to IS. This content is in contrast to many previous issues and may be an indication that IS is experiencing a slowdown in recruitment, or perhaps an increase in human losses, and needs to advertise in order to attract more soldiers. *Signal* magazine in the final years of WW2 markedly changed its content, reflecting Nazi failures and losses. Are we seeing a similar phenomenon given real IS territorial and human losses occurring in Iraq at present?

EPILOGUE

What is seldom discussed in current analysis is that a propaganda magazine may be seen to evolve over time, as organisational needs change, and often due to feedback as the authors of *Dabiq* learn their craft. Would a series of focus group readings over limited time periods over the last two years shed any new light on changing IS's objectives and needs over time? Are there links between various issues that might reveal continuing needs or inadequacies in IS policies or programs? Would use of qualitative concept/theme matching software (as opposed to content analysis) provide fresh insight? Scholars have not performed this kind of research to date. However, the kneejerk reaction to ban *Dabiq* as abhorrent propaganda certainly needs revising. Keeping one's friends close, but one's enemies (publications) closer, may be a useful motto in 2016.

The common thread uniting all three of these magazines is the use of imagery and text in order to create a seemingly imaginary world, which is at odds with reality. *Signal* magazine created a sanitised overview of the Nazi war machine; *Dawn* and *New Dawn* created heroic models to be emulated; and *Dabiq* extols the virtues of jihadist life while constantly reminding its readers of its underlying religious principles.

There is certainly a mythic quality to much of the content of all three magazines, especially *Dabiq*, itself named after the mythic location of the final apocalypse. The use of myth is used in a similar fashion to Greek rhetoric, that is, to persuade the reader of the truth of the argument being presented. In all three magazines readers are being asked to believe in and behave concurrently with a particular worldview that departs from mainstream orthodoxy maintained by most Western governments and the media. The magazines substitute their own idiosyncratic worldviews for those espoused by mainstream media, and ask their readers to make a leap of faith by believing and adopting the ideals, concepts and behaviour displayed in their respective pages. Rather than condemn these publications, we need to fully understand these ideologies, their respective audiences and create intelligent responses in order to counter such propaganda.

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