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# **The Representation of Women in Terrorist Propaganda:**

A Comparative Analysis of the Al-  
Khanssaa Brigade Manifesto and Al  
Qaeda Manifesto

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## **Resumen**

El papel de la mujer ha evolucionado considerablemente a lo largo del tiempo, marcado por la resistencia y adaptación constante. Han desempeñado un papel importante en el establecimiento de las sociedades. Sin embargo, a pesar de este progreso, han sido utilizadas como activos para escenarios radicales. Existe un creciente interés en los círculos de seguridad internacional por el creciente compromiso con las organizaciones terroristas. Esta tesis investiga dos manifiestos diferentes, uno de Al Qaeda y otro de la Brigada Al-Khanssaa del ISIS, con el fin de examinar cómo se retrata a las mujeres en la propaganda yihadista. El estudio pretende arrojar luz sobre las percepciones de las mujeres y su papel mediante el análisis de estos escritos.

**Palabras clave:** Análisis Crítico del Discurso, Mujeres, Terrorismo, Manifiesto, Al Qaeda, Estado Islámico

## **Abstract**

Women's roles have evolved considerably over time, marked by constant resistance and adaptation. They have played a significant role in founding societies. Yet in spite of this progress, they have been used as assets in radical scenarios. There is growing interest in international security circles regarding the increasing engagement with terrorist organizations. This thesis investigates two different manifestos, one from Al Qaeda and the other from ISIS's Al-Khanssaa Brigade, in order to examine how women are portrayed in jihadist propaganda. The study intends to shed light on the perceptions of women and their roles by analyzing these writings.

**Keywords:** Critical Discourse Analysis, Women, Terrorism, Manifesto, Al Qaeda, Islamic State

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# Introduction

From resistance and adaptation, the role of women over the years has been one filled with obstacles. From ancient civilizations to modernity, women have been tireless forces, forging the very fabric of society with their courage and determination.

In ancient cultures, women were revered as deities embodying fertility, wisdom, and divine power. However, with the rise of patriarchal societies, their status was restricted to domestic and reproductive roles. Despite such constraints, women found ways to make their voice be heard. This resistance laid the groundwork for more overt challenges against entrenched norms. The 20th century suffragette movement built a platform to establish women's right to vote, equality before the law, and authority over their own bodies as well as breaking workplace barriers and stepping into professions traditionally held by men.

Today women's role continues to evolve. They lead companies, governments, and social movements with a renewed vision of equity and justice. Despite ongoing challenges such as the wage gap and gender-based violence, the legacy of pioneering women and the momentum of the current generation inspire progress towards a future where every woman is recognized, valued and celebrated.

However, it cannot be denied that they have also been instrumentalized in extremist contexts. Within this dynamic, the participation of women in terrorist groups like the Islamic State (among others) has garnered increasing interest in global security circles. They have emerged as key actors in these organizations and have raised a series of crucial questions. The interest of the author for this topic stems from a broader concern with how gender dynamics are leveraged into ideological conflicts worldwide. This thesis investigates the portrayal of women in two distinct jihadist manifestos, one from the Islamic State and another one from Al Qaeda to shed light on how these groups understand what the role of women should be. The subject is relevant since women's role in these terrorist movements are often overlooked or misunderstood, making this analysis necessary for developing a comprehensive understanding of jihadist tactics and recruitment strategies.

# 1. Objectives and Research Questions

The purpose of this research is to analyze the status of women and their portrayed role in the propaganda of two different terrorist organizations. The main goal is to conduct an analysis of the narratives presented in two manifestos. Women by the Islamic State by the Al-Khansaa Brigade on the Women of the Islamic State, and The Role of the Women in Fighting the Enemies by Yusuf bin Salih al-Uyari, member of Al Qaeda.

Moreover, the study aims at exploring the values that are championed and the tone that is set in each manifesto, and how each group establishes its language format to justify their action, mobilize, and recruit. The comparative analysis will highlight the kinds of narrative used to engage and influence their intended public.

In line with the previously mentioned motivations, the **objectives** of this study are as follows:

1. To perform an analysis of the key topics described in the manifestos, and how women are represented.
2. To explore how women are instrumentalized in the manifestos to their favor.
3. To compare the values, they resort to and the tone both manifestos use.

To achieve these objectives, the following research **questions** have been selected to guide the research:

1. How are women perceived in the manifestos?
2. How are women instrumentalized?
3. How might the values and tone differ from one manifesto to another?

## 2. Historical and Political context

When examining terrorist groups like the Al-Khansaa Brigade which is an affiliate of the Islamic State and on the other hand Al Qaeda, there needs to develop a historical and political context. In this section, the thesis will explore the realities within which they have always operated. These groups arise due to long-standing conflicts. For instance, the Islamic State set up Al-Khansaa Brigade in Raqqa, Syria to serve as moral police for women that enforces strict rules upon them. Conversely, Al Qaeda has taken a key role in global jihadism. Through the manifestos analyzed in this thesis, these groups have articulated a narrative that not only justifies their violent acts, but also seeks to recruit and motivate their followers to take violent actions.

### 2.1 The Al-Khansaa Brigade

In this context, the rise of the Brigade needs to be placed within the political and social changes that were happening in Syria and Iraq specifically. The political crisis resulting from the 2011 uprising against Bashar al-Assad's regime in Syria produced such a power vacuum that many factions exploited it, including Al Qaeda, which eventually split into ISIS in 2013. The fallout of the social structure of the region witnessed further degradation as the civil authority broke down. This environment allowed ISIS to present itself as the authoritative stabilizing force in a society forced to live in turmoil. Through its enactment of authoritarian Sharia law, it offered the promise of order and governance of Islam. It cannot be denied that the establishment also demonstrated the employment of women within jihadists contexts, which complicated conventional expectations of women by such frameworks (Crisis Group, 2016).

The Al-Khansaa Brigade, an all-female police force established by the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIS), emerged in early 2014 in Raqqa, Syria. According to Hamou (2015) this group was named after a famous female poet of the pre-Islamic era, Al-Khansaa, who converted to Islam and wrote elegies for her killed brothers. The brigade was created after some individuals disguised as Muslim women committed several assassinations of ISIS's members. This pushed the terrorist organization to set up a women's brigade whose function would be to guard the checkpoints, monitor that women were women and not men dressed as women. It was set up this way because ISIS does not entrust men to arrest women since it could lead to major

problems. Therefore, by using women to arrest women, they get the tribes on their side (Hamou, 2015a).

The formation of this brigade marked a strong landmark in the process of ISIS embedding their power over every sphere of life in the civilian population of the territories they occupied. Regarding the principal ideological goals of this brigade, it aimed to serve as moral and legal guardians, to uphold social order according to the standards stipulated by ISIS, and to propagate its model through propagandistic dissemination. The brigade was assigned the duties of making the women abide by the dress code, avoiding any interaction with men in public places, and generally being obedient to the other rules that ISIS considered appropriate for a Muslim woman. This brigade is known to have used brutality by arresting and physically degrading women in Raqqa. They even followed activities such as conducting house raids and even employing physical punishments which were described as the methods ISIS practiced enforcing its authority. Coupled with straightforward violence the brigade actively engaged in indoctrination and recruitment of local and foreign women, especially British, which enlisted the unit as a means of broadening the scope and influence of ISIS both in terms of gender and geography (Hamou, 2015b).

As described by Speckhard and Shajkovci (2018) the efficacy of the messages disseminated by the brigade can be attributed to their appeal to specific segments of the female population dissatisfied with the societal norms prevalent in their respective communities. Due to the provision of worthwhile direction some women found purpose and religious duty within the brigade. The underlying causes – ranging from socio-political grievances and sectarian strife to personal crises and ideological radicalization – facilitated the resonance of the brigade's message.

## 2.2 Al Qaeda - Yusuf bin Salih al-Uyari

Yusuf bin Salih al-Uyari can be named as one of the most fundamental members of Al Qaeda. He carried out his activities during the period of change and development of the organization in the early 2000s. His contributions were significant not only in outlining the strategy but also in the political thought of the terrorist organization after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001.



This was evident when after the terrorist attack on one of its most important symbols, the United States of America, Al Qaeda was quick to exploit the momentum it had gained in order to advance its anti-Western fundamentalist political agenda. With his ideological zeal he quickly became a central figure in expanding the group's operational and ideological reach (Meijer, 2004a).

Al-Uyari's work included the promotion of decentralized jihad, which became a hallmark of the strategy. This approach allowed for the creation of independent cells that could operate autonomously, thereby increasing the difficulty for global security forces to track and dismantle the network. According to Meijer (2004b), he was in fact known for being the head of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. Two significant US military operations—in Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003— along with other global conflicts led to the backdrop of his activities. These invasions were portrayed by Al Qaeda as campaigns by the Western nations against the Islamic nations and *umma* (Muslim community) thus proving vital in mobilizing fighters and supporters. Al-Uyari's rhetoric exploited these sentiments, amplifying feelings of injustice and the urgency to respond through jihad. One of these works includes the manifesto *The Role of Women in Fighting the enemies* published in 2004, before getting killed. He highlighted the justifications and methods by which women could participate in jihad. The timing of the publication of the manifesto, as noted by Baines & O'Shaughnessy (2014) corresponds to the relevant period of the increased activity of dissemination of online propaganda marking an early example of Al Qaeda's efforts to reach a diverse audience via online platforms, and in this case women.

### 3. Theoretical Framework

#### 3.1 Critical Discourse Analysis

Discourse, an indispensable element of social interaction, is defined by scholars in the field of linguistics and social sciences as a versatile concept that reflects diverse perspectives and analytical frameworks. Henry Widdowson characterizes discourse as a subject that, despite its popularity, remains elusive and vaguely defined – a concept both “in vogue and vague” (Widdowson, 1995). Siegfried Jäger views it as the flow of knowledge through history, a flow that not only determines individual and collective events but also forms societal actions that subsequently wield power (Capolei, 2016). Norman Fairclough describes discourse as a particular way of representing the world, a representation that varies according to the social positions of the groups and individuals who uphold these views. Ruth Wodak considers it a complex set of interrelated linguistic acts, both simultaneous and sequential, which manifest across the broad spectrum of social fields of action as a semiotics of interrelated themes, frequently appearing as oral or written productions, and often in the form of “texts”. Teun A. Van Dijk further simplifies this by defining discourse as a “communication event occurring in a social situation”. All these interpretations highlight the nature of discourse, which serve as a lens through which power structures and social realities of our world are showcased (Abdul Galil Shalaby, 2009).

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) evolved from Critical Linguistics, which in turn revisited functionalist concepts, notably those of Halliday, and theories originating from the French school. These elements were integrated into a unified theory designed to systematically decipher ideology in the media. The aim is to systematize discourse analysis, thereby transforming it into a more stable and defined method of work. Critical Linguistics argues that discursive practices can shape vital practices. Starting from these vital practices, Critical Discourse Analysis seeks to elucidate how texts reflect power relations and contribute to the reproduction of ideologies that support them. It represents a critical perspective on knowledge production, an analysis of discourse undertaken with a distinct “attitude”. It makes a focus on social matters, especially on how discourse perpetuates the creation of dominance (Amoussou & A. Allagbe, 2018). From a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) perspective, individuals possess an ideology, a worldview, specific intentions, goals, and purposes. Language users are part of a network of power and relationships of domination and resistance, which shape social structures, always in tension

between equality and inequality, identity and difference. Social identities of individuals are constructed, maintained, and changed – often challenging due to the prevalence of stereotypes (Todolí Cervera et al., 2006a).

The most distinguishing feature of CDA is its “critical” aspect, keeping the data from distance and placing them within a social context, taking a political stance, and focusing on self-critique. Ideology is seen as an aspect of uneven power relations. CDA further works on the social contexts within which symbolic forms are used and deployed. Text serve as battlegrounds that display the marks of competing discourses and ideologies struggling for supremacy. Power is affiliated with relations of difference, that is, the effects that differences bring in social structures. Collective power translates into the influence people create in members' minds. In this one sentence: if one is to categorize power by language, power is expressed by language. Power intervenes when there is a challenge to achieve (Todolí Cervera et al., 2006b).

Social actors involved in a discourse do not rely on their individual experiences and strategies but draw from the collective framework of perception. Socially shared representations act as a link between the social system and individual cognitive systems. Such representations have been discussed as a mass of concepts, opinions, attitudes, assessments, images and explanations, products of everyday life that are nourished by communication (Todolí Cervera et al., 2006c). Members of social groups share this representation. Teun van Dijk (2004) highlights three relevant forms of representation: knowledge (personal, group, cultural), attitudes, and ideologies.

Power relations are at the core of what CDA studies; how discourse constructs and legitimizes power dynamics within any given society, making it particularly relevant to this bachelor's thesis. Terrorist manifestos typically seek to assert ideological dominance and justify actions underpinned by unequal power relations. By analyzing how these manifestos construct authority and influence, and how language is used to legitimize radical ideologies and provide moral or political justification for violence, CDA reveals the underlying power structures and how language contributes to their maintenance and expansion. It does not treat texts as standalone entities but views them as deeply embedded within their sociopolitical contexts. This aspect is crucial for understanding terrorist manifestos, which are steeped in the historical and cultural milieus that

give rise to particular ideologies. By contextualizing these manifestos within their broader sociopolitical settings, this analysis provides insights into not just the content of the texts but also the external factors that influence their creation. In addition to this critical lens is particularly relevant when analyzing these manifestos, which frequently contain direct assaults on democratic norms and human rights. CDA not only aids in identifying the linguistic and rhetorical features of these texts but also engages in a broader critique of the ideologies they espouse. It helps to expose and challenge the destructive narratives at the heart of terrorist propaganda.

Critical Discourse Analysis offers a potent analytical framework for studying the texts of manifestos produced by terrorist groups, due to its emphasis on the relationship between discourse and societal structures of power and domination.

## 4. Methodological Framework

This section will provide the criteria of the selection of the material, including their sources for consultation, followed by an elucidation of the methodology employed in analyzing the manifestos.

### 4.1 Constitution of the Corpus and Selection of Documents

The documents to be analyzed are of propagandistic nature, these documents aim to attract supporters, recruit members, and most of all instill fear and uncertainty. The selection of these manifestos has been made according to the criterion of relevance and interest for this study. The reason why these manifestos hold a particular relevance for this study stems from the fact that there are few analyses of these specific texts compared to other more frequently studied texts. Such as the analysis of the online magazines Dabiq and Rumiya. This provides a unique opportunity to contribute and shed light on the specific discourse techniques used for their composition. Moreover, manifestos, in general, tend to target multiple audiences simultaneously, however, these specific manifestos portray what the role of the women should be therefore it is mainly targeted to women.

The time frame of this study begins in 2004 and ends in 2014. These dates are not coincidental but respond to a series of events. As mentioned in the historical and political context section, 2004 marked a year since the invasion of Iraq, making it a crucial moment for Al Qaeda's continuity. The group changed certain strategies and tactics to justify radicalization and, notably, endeavored to integrate women into their ranks, culminating in the publication of the manifesto. On the other hand, 2014, was also marked by another historical event: the establishment of the caliphate in Iraq by the Islamic State (France & France, 2014). It marked a shift into how this jihadist group addressed and involved women in their operations, moving from actively calling on them to fight during the 2000s to adopting more passive roles 10 years later, reflecting the strategic adaptations within these groups.

The manifestos have been selected based on several reasons. First, the thematic relevance focused on women which provides the foundation for conducting the analysis. Secondly, since

the manifestos are from two completely different armed groups it increases the depth of the comparative analysis. The association of the Al-Khansaa Brigade with ISIS and Yusuf Bin Salih Al-'Uyayri with Al Qaeda provide a representation of distinct ideologies and operational tactics within the jihadist spectrum. The choice is also supported by an obvious gap in the existing research. Both documents have not been studied in the literature to date. Hence, the present research offers new insights into how jihadists groups use narrative structures and communication strategies to target their audiences. On the one hand, Al-'Uyayri's manifesto is one of the earliest that exists in-depth on the subject and thus has had a considerable influence on jihadist narratives about women. On the other hand, the Al-Khansaa brigade's manifesto reflects the recent changes in jihadist strategies towards women which represent the changes in jihadist propaganda and recruitment practices over time. Finally, one pivotal aspect of this bachelor's thesis lies in the feasibility of its analysis, and the accessibility to these two manifestos enables the research to proceed. The availability of both allows the research to take place.

#### 4.2 Qualitative Analysis of the Manifestos

In this section, the methodology for this analysis to have a rigorous theoretical basis will be extensively detailed. This analysis will be conducted using both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

As for the qualitative analysis, since this thesis is based on the theoretical framework of Critical Discourse Analysis, the author has decided to use Fairclough's Sociocultural Method. Fairclough (2006) advocates for the inclusion of texture study when analyzing a text, emphasizing its focus on form and organization over content commentary. He points out how to analyze the various aspects that can explain the ideologies exposed using language in the texts. These are vocabulary, transitivity, mood and modality, interactional control features, topicality, politeness, presuppositions and ambiguity. Vocabulary use reveals ideology, transitivity shows power relations, humor and modality the establishment of certainty and authority, interactional control features shape discourse, topicality in the prioritization of issues, politeness strategies the management of social relations, presuppositions the establishment of implicit assumptions, and ambiguity the discovery of double meanings. These are all elements involved in the framing of ideologies and the manipulation of discourse.

This qualitative research will be supported by quantitative research with the use of Voyant Tools software. This software is used in text analysis and performs statistical calculations on the text entered by the user. The software has an integrated data visualization tool to manage a vast number of analytical operations within the text. In addition, this type of tool allows for data representation in trend graphs, thus detecting trends. The analysis will be established on three pillars: a quantitative dimension, a qualitative dimension and a comparative study.

### 1. The *initial quantitative analysis* using Voyant tools.

The first step will be the quantitative dimension using the Voyant Tools tool. This tool will help to identify frequent words, and extract keywords from the manifestos. The obtained results will serve as the foundation for the qualitative analysis. This tool will aid in the identification of frequently occurring words, thereby facilitating a more nuanced examination of the subjectivity and representation of women within the texts.

### 2. *Qualitative analysis* based on Fairclough's socio-cultural method.

The quantitative analysis will be complemented by a qualitative analysis based on Fairclough's sociocultural method. In accordance with the findings of the quantitative analysis the texture of the texts will be analyzed. This establishes a microscopic look at the vocabulary and the usage of specific words and phrases to communicate ideologies. In addition, Fairclough's method analyzes *transitivity* to understand the power relations in the text. It also assesses the *modality* of the modal verb and the moods of the sentences. All of these will point to the level of certainty and authority presented in the text. The analysis also includes *interactional control features* in which the text controls the interaction in turns, the topic, and the structuring of the dialogue. In this regard, topicality will also be considered: that is, how topics are introduced and prioritized in the text to frame the reader's perception. *Politeness* as a strategic means of social contact and the identification of underlying *assumptions* and *ambiguous* expressions in interpretation in the sense that they contribute to the ideological framing of a text will also be part of this analysis.

### 3. *Comparative analysis*

Finally drawing from the analysis there will be a comparative analysis of the two manifestos.

## 5. Related Work

The following section will review the existing literature on the analysis of terrorist groups' manifestos that establish a significant precedent for the present study.

The study titled *"Is there a language of terrorists? A comparative manifesto analysis"* by Julia Ebner, Chris Kavanagh, and Harvey Whitehouse (2022) is of major interest to this bachelor's thesis since it provides a framework for understanding how extremist ideologies are communicated through text. They used ethnographic content analysis of fifteen manifestos to examine if relevant factors such as "identity fusion"<sup>1</sup> can be identified through texts. The theoretical framework used in the study is based on the "identity fusion plus threat" model, which combines research on group alignment, "psychological kinship", and altruism for forecasting how the merging of individual identities and group identities as well as the perceived threats can motivate violent extremist behavior. Thus, the study provides a theoretical approach to identifying linguistic markers in narratives capable of predicting violent versus nonviolent outcomes, to be used for early detection, to prevent individuals and groups at risk from engaging in violence before it is too late (Ebner, Kavanagh, & Whitehouse, 2022a).

The findings suggest that "linguistic proxies"<sup>2</sup> along with factors such as narratives of existential threat, the justification of violence within the group as well as dehumanizing language, can be identified and are common in the writings of potential terrorists. The method allows for the prediction of the probability of individuals participating in violent extremist activities.

Another relevant study for this bachelor's thesis is the one conducted by Drăgoi (2018). The author analyzes the impact that Daesh's jihadist propaganda magazine Dabiq has on the violent radicalization process, particularly among European youth. The discussion provides insight into how Daesh leverages the basic psychological and social needs to attract and brain-wash individuals who are going through personal crises where they are susceptible and vulnerable,

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<sup>1</sup> Identity fusion is a type of group cohesion where a person's identity blends with the identity of a group.

<sup>2</sup> A method to measure linguistic features indirectly. It is used to analyze aspects in the language that are difficult to identify directly. For example, a linguistic proxy might be the frequency of specific words as an indicator of other patterns. For instance, the use of words like "martyrdom" or "jihad" at a high frequency could be a proxy for a text's radicalization.



providing them with an identity and a reason for being. As described by the author the manifesto incites a Manichaean perception of the world, framing the Western as the devil and exalting the jihadist struggle as a superior cause. The study uses a semiotic analysis of texts and messages to detect how meanings that propel radicalization are built. It was found that this narrative in addition to justifying violence, provides a perception of heroism and belonging for readers who resonate with what they are reading (Drăgoi, 2018).

Finally, Bulferetti's (2023) study focusing on ISIS specific strategies and narratives to recruit Western women and persuade them to migrate to ISIS-controlled territories is of relevance to the present research. It highlights that ISIS utilized three main gender narratives:

1) inviting to undertake 'Hijrah' (migration) as an honorable and essential duty for building the Ummah (Muslim community), 2) calling on women to participate in violent jihad and contributing to the establishment of the Islamic State, and 3) convincing women that living in the Caliphate will allow them to escape the corruption of the Western world and live a devout and pure Islamic life. The methodology employed in this study includes critical discourse analysis and qualitative content analysis, exploring the language used by ISIS in their magazines and other types of writing to understand how they encode women. The study explores and proclaims how ISIS metamorphosed its themes to coincide with the anxiety and expectations of women in Western contexts, emphasizing their role in shaping and nurturing the new Islamic reputation. In addition to this, it assesses the outcomes of counter-terrorism with respect to the particularity of British women who joined ISIS, specifying the need to develop female-entered counter-terrorism measures (Bulferetti, 2023).

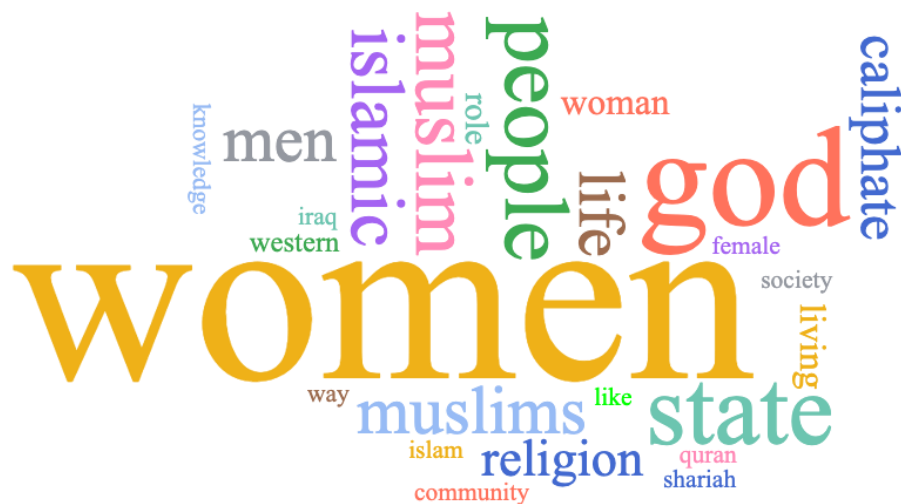
From the aforementioned studies the following conclusions can be drawn: Arguably, the most significant conclusion is that the main goal of this bachelor's thesis is not the pursuit of formulating counterterrorism policies. Rather, the main objective is the detailed analysis of the messages conveyed in the manifestos of the corpus. Notably, Bulferetti's (2023) study aligns with the thematic scope of this study. Consequently, this research will adopt a theoretical framework grounded in Critical Discourse Analysis. Moreover, to endow this study with substantial merit and to distinguish it from existing literature, a comparative analysis of the two manifestos will be undertaken. Central to this comparative framework will be an exploration of the divergent interpretations each manifesto presents regarding the role of women in terrorism.

## 6. Analysis of the Manifestos

### 6.1 Analysis of the Al khansaa brigade Manifesto

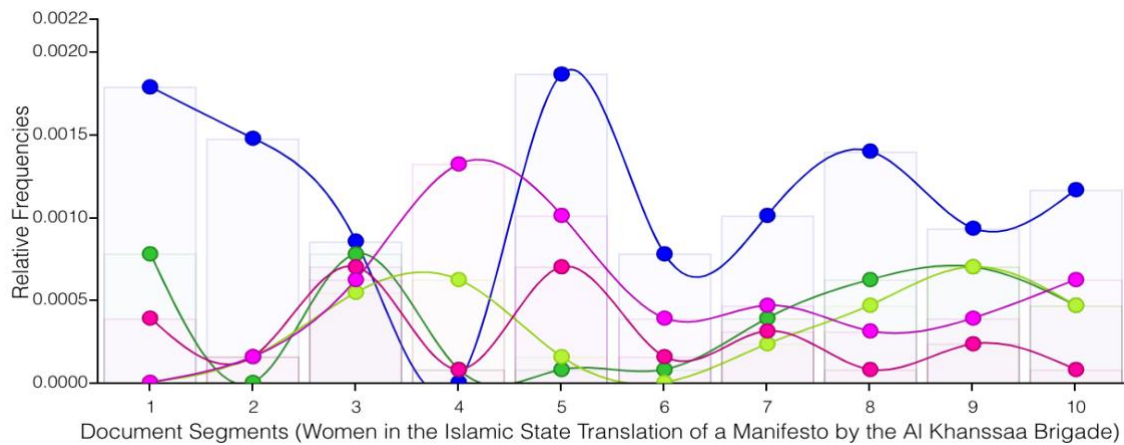
#### 6.1.1 Quantitative Analysis

Upon uploading the document to the Voyant Tools website, the analysis revealed that the text comprises a total of 12,882 words and 2,729 distinct word forms. After the exclusion of terms deemed irrelevant for the analysis, such as "analysis," "foundation," and "quilliam," the corpus analysis identified the most frequently occurring words as follows: "women" appears 145 times, "god" 68 times, "state" 51 times, "people" 43 times, and "muslim" 37 times.



**Figure 1.** Word Cloud of the Al-Khansaa Brigade Manifesto

The word cloud visually represents the frequency and significance of words within the source text, with the size of each word reflecting its frequency and importance. Notably, the prominence of the word "women" stands out, indicating its high frequency in the text.



**Figure 2.** Relative Frequencies Graph of the Al-Khansaa Brigade Manifesto

The partitioning of the text into a specific number of segments is the starting point of segmentation. Given the total number of words, the text has been separated into ten equal segments using Voyant Tools. This arrangement allows to compare the sections equally without making them too challenging to analyze. On the one hand, less segments would mean less detail and less ability to detect patterns and peaks that could be important to grasping the document's structure and main points. However, if there were more than ten, the segments would get so small that the frequent changes of word usage between segments would make the variances between segments less significant and more challenging to understand.

The graph indicates the relative frequencies of certain words across different segments of the manifesto. The x-axis represents the document segments, numbered 1 through 10, and the y-axis represents the relative frequencies of the words. There are four lines representing different words, each color-coded as follows: blue for "women," dark green for "state," light green for "people," and pink for "god," and dark pink for "muslim."

The graph enables a helpful assessment of thematic evolution of the manifesto, using keyword frequency to identify the focus of the text across the segments. The prominence of the word "women" shows a relatively high frequency in segments 1 and 5, with peaks and troughs, using a framing technique that emphasizes the topic of women as both an introduction and conclusion, thereby encapsulating the central narrative. The substantial fluctuations in the middle segments imply a continuous, though variable, engagement with this topic. The dark green line for "state" has a notable peak in segments 1 and 3. These peaks could indicate that there several sections

where the state—possibly its role or definition—is discussed in-depth. The light green line for "people" appears to have a peak in segment 3 and another smaller peak in segment 9, which point to sections where the discussion is more centered on societal considerations. The pink line for "god" has a high relative frequency in segments 4 and 10, indicating these might be segments incorporating a religious dialogue. Such emphasis might be aimed at bolstering ideological claims with religious mandates, a common tactic in doctrinal texts. The magenta line for "muslim" remains relatively low compared to the other terms but shows slight increases. This pattern suggests that discussions regarding Muslims are not the central focus but are periodically revisited, possibly to align certain viewpoints with broader Islamic perspectives or to address the audience's religious identity in reinforcing the manifesto's messages.

Having all things considered, this first analysis not only shows how words are arranged but also provides a glimpse at the thoughtful structure of the manifesto's content, indicating how specific topics are presented, highlighted, and then brought up again to influence the reader's comprehension and reaction to the text. By language and topic focus to inform narrative flow and emphasis, this kind of analysis deepens our understanding of the document's rhetorical and persuasive strategies.

### 6.1.2 Qualitative Analysis

#### 6.1.2.1 Vocabulary

When examining the vocabulary of this manifesto, the use of certain words manifests interpretations that categorize and construct reality in a certain way that shape what the role of women should be.

"Here, we are not going to present a list of the negatives that are caused in communities from the "women's emancipation" narrative. These are apparent, unhidden from the distant observer, let alone the close observer. Rather, women have this Heavenly secret in sedentariness, stillness and stability, and men its opposite, movement and flux, that which is the nature of man, created in him. If roles are mixed and positions overlap, humanity is thrown into a state of flux and instability. The base of society is shaken, its foundations crumble and its walls collapse." (Al-Khansaa Brigade, 2015, p. 19)

Words such as "*emancipated*", "*liberated*" and "*sedentary*" are by no means neutral; on the

contrary, they are statements with built-in values to go against Western views of the role of women. This manifests itself in the simple contrast between the position of women in Islamic societies and the Western perspective, so that already at first glance there is a difference in the conceptualization. Likewise, the prevalence of the use of the word “*sedentary*” and the reverse usage of the way it refers to “*the man*” gives an example of a very overdetermined verbal trace that, although it does not say so overtly, refers to a very enduring assumption of the roles each (women and men) take.

Beyond any connotative and evaluative dimension, the terms “*Caliphate*,” “*mujahideen*” or “*sharia*” are terms so forceful in their meaning that they provoke in the reader an immediate interpretative bias about Islamic governance and legislation.

“to live a sedentary life within the so-called Caliphate, to be exposed to their “rightful masculinity” would not only right the wrongs felt by the “Muslim community” today, it would allow a woman to be a better Muslim.” (Al-Khansaa Brigade, 2015, p. 7).

In contrast, the term “*protection religion*” in the veil policy discourse, as opposed to the derogatory term “*liberated*,” in quotation marks, which refers to Western women, shows clear favoritism for Islamic policy and disdain for Western women. Such examples of language use also illustrate how language itself has a use that is not merely descriptive, but constitutive of reality from certain ideological standpoints.

“Women may recover their rights, and “protection religion” is the first and the foremost of the 5 necessities that the Shariah came to uphold and maintain. In the years of mental and military colonialism, this right was banned by force or persuasion. Faces were forcibly revealed for identity checks to denote national identity. Woman would not be allowed to travel out of the country unless they had a passport with a photo of their face in it. Daily life was facilitated by this and jobs and houses were permitted only to those who were unveiled and life was made difficult for those who remained decent” (Al-Khansaa Brigade, 2015, p. 28)

“The model preferred by infidels in the West failed the minute that women were “liberated” from their cell in the house.” (Al-Khansaa Brigade, 2015, p. 19)

#### 6.1.2.2 Transitivity

A salient aspect is the frequent use of the passive voice and nominal forms. This choice affects the representation of women, in so far as where they are portrayed as mere objects, stripping them of agency and rendering them as completely passive. This reinforces the manifesto's idea that women should play a more passive role in society. The use of the passive voice, especially when it is said that Western values are being applied (*"women were 'liberated'"*), not only takes away any merit from them, but also underlines that Western civilization acts as an impersonal and omnipresent evil. These linguistic features contribute to creating an image of women with a more passive social role, which aligns with the general vision of the manifesto.

*"The model preferred by infidels in the West failed the minute that women were 'liberated' from their cell in the house."* (Al-Khansaa Brigade, 2015, p.19)

#### 6.1.2.3 Mood and Modality

The manifesto's tone makes several linguistic structures that present an authoritarian and dogmatic perspective on social roles. This implies observing indicative mood which states facts and subjunctive mood. Modality involves the use of modal verbs (such as can, may, must, should) to indicate likelihood, ability, permission, and obligation. In this context, the grammatical structures used, mainly modes and modalities, provide implicit nuances on the flexibility and interpretation of the roles. Declarative sentences are the most frequently linguistic feature used to establish rules clearly and unambiguously. They are used to make statements such as *"there are other causes for which it is permissible for certain women to leave her home in order to serve society..."* (Al-Khansaa Brigade, 2015, p.22). These types of declarative sentences implicitly address the ideology of social roles in a dictatorial manner. Implying that other options are non-negotiable and cannot be tolerated. The use of sentences such as *"it is allowed..."* or *"should..."*, emphasizes the authority, as these expressions imply a high level of command. In the sense that it is not simply a description of the situations, but also morally and legally binding behavior and practice towards the way of life. Even the deontic modality<sup>3</sup> is relevant, especially in situations

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<sup>3</sup> A rule that is perceived as absolute and without room for doubt or reinterpretation. Therefore, it is not only the norm that is transmitted but also the ideology about the socially rigid structure about the norm.

of religious prescriptions. Such as “*It was decreed by God...*” (Al-Khansaa Brigade, 2015, p.20), denotes not only the immutability of the rules, but also elevates the value of discourse, where divine authority and law justifies and sustains the necessity and authority of the norm.

#### 6.1.2.4 Interactional control features

The text prioritizes domestic duties of women over their participation in public space thereby shaping the reader’s interpretation towards supporting a conservative view on gender. More so, it is the claim about what “*sedentarization*” that has been mentioned before of women and the realization of their presence in public space imply that determines the course of discourse thus reiterating established gender norms.

“It is always preferable for a woman to remain hidden and veiled, to maintain society from behind this veil. This, which is always the most difficult role, is akin to that of a director, the most important person in a media production, who is behind the scenes organising.” (Al-Khansaa Brigade, 2015, p.7)

Moreover, given the monologic character of this document, where only one opinion is presented without counter arguments, this appropriates ideological discursivity in such a way as to exclude any sense of actual dialogue and consideration of possible alternative perspectives. This not only limits outgoing discussion but also demarcates a boundary beyond which there can be only one possible interpretation of the text. In addition to this, rhetorical questions are employed to lead readers toward already known conclusions. Therefore, not just from the reader’s but also from the writer’s end does this question suggest its answer.

“In short, this is the sorry situation of women in the Gulf. We have also given an idea of life for women the state of the Caliphate. Which picture is better? Which is purer? And which abode is more worthy for living?” (Al-Khansaa Brigade, 2015, p.40)

#### 6.1.2.5 Topicality

In terms of thematic strategies, this document selects specific themes and positions them strategically. Specifically, it uses the strategy of topicality, which means selecting and positioning certain topics to highlight specific ideological conflicts over gender roles between Western and

non-Western societies. The first aspect of this strategy implies that thematic choices are influenced by ideological orientations and preferences. The document dedicates a lot of space to the criticism of “*excess emancipation*” and the criticism of cultural erosion. This criticism not only stands out from ideological preferences but also highlights the mass broadcast of the cultural erosion of the West.

The second aspect consists of a careful thematic choice that omits and minimizes some aspects such as educational aspirations, personal agency and choice, as well as opposition within the community. Rather it focuses on key ideological points in repetition. The manifesto uses the foreground and background information penetration technique, consisting in presenting the main ideas foreground. Issues that could be critical or lead to disagreement are placed in the background and are barely mentioned in the context of the general discourse. Thanks to this strategy, this document focuses on specific ideologies that it defends which can be encapsulated in just one word: patriarchy.

“The problem today is that women are not fulfilling their fundamental roles, the role that is consistent with their deepest nature, for an important reason, that women are not presented with a true picture of man and, because of the rise in the number of emasculated men who do not shoulder the responsibility allocated to them towards their ummah, religion or people, and not even towards their houses or their sons, who are being supported by their wives. This idea has not penetrated the minds of many women.”  
(Al-Khansaa Brigade, 2015, p. 17)

#### 6.1.2.6 Politeness

The author of the manifesto employs politeness tactics that are pivotal for comprehending their approach to addressing and engaging with their audience. The manifesto uses face-threatening acts by depicting Western views as threatening to the dignity of the woman, which can be perceived as an attack to those societies that hold these Western Values. Yet, it strengthens the image of its target audience by reaffirming their cultural values and thus enhancing through these means their sense of identity and cohesion within their group. Positive politeness strategies, on the one hand, include the use of the first-person plural not only in forming solidarity but also in aligning the reader with the views of the document. This approach makes the reader resonate with the text to develop a sense of belonging and agreement with the norms



and values expressed. *“Our treatise concerning Muslim women in life does not differ from the treatise concerning the Muslim community in any way – rather, it is derived from it and taken from it”* (Al-Khanssaa Brigade, 2015, p. 17).

Negative politeness, on the other hand, is evident in the avoidance of directive orders to the reader. Instead, the manifesto uses third-person directives or passive constructions. *“Verily God has ordained this sedentary existence for women, and it cannot be better in any way, for He is the Creator and He knows what works and what does not in religion”* (Al-Khanssaa Brigade, 2015, p. 19). This mechanism makes the guidance seem less intrusive and thus more acceptable without imposing too direct or confrontative authority. These politeness tactics not only diminish the potential threats to the image of the readers who may not be perfectly in line with the proposed values but also facilitate the incorporation of these views in the worldview of the audience and hence make ideological norms more effectively internalized and with less resistance.

#### 6.1.2.7 Presuppositions

When reading through this manifesto, it is evident that certain presuppositions are made. One of the presuppositions is that the reader's ideology matches the manifestos' ideological background. Another presupposition of the manifesto is assuming that readers think negatively about Western gender roles and hold a positive attitude towards Islamic ones. This means that since the authors of the manifesto believe that the reader appreciates the content of what they read, these arguments do not have to be entirely proven right because whoever resonates with this it has already aligned these values. These aspects rest on cultural as well as religious assumptions. The manifesto does not just say this but relies on some general understandings about such societal norms. Consequently, this makes the manifesto even more persuasive while accentuating an ideological allegiance between author and readers. These unspoken assumptions reinforce the communicative efficiency by exposing their self-evidence and making them generally acceptable to all concerned parties. Thus, the ideological structure is reinforced and perpetuated.

#### 6.1.2.8 Ambiguity

There is an immense amount of ambiguity in the studied manifesto, which is not the result of imprecise wording, but rather a deliberate choice that enriches the ideological narrative. Thus, ambiguity is not the result of loose language; rather, it is a purposeful strategy that widens the message's scope and adaptability. To enable the text to successfully navigate the obstacles of social and cultural interaction without sacrificing its force and significance. As said before the examined document uses strategic ambiguity to expand the meaning of the text and reach a wider audience and therefore becoming an essential technique for its rhetorical adjustment which is aimed at persuading its audience. It can be demonstrated, for instance, when using such terms as "*sedentary lifestyle*". This phrase could be interpreted differently; it can imply an exalted social position while at the same time signifying women's limited role. Such uncertainty allows plausible deniability and a scope for interpretation that changes depending on the circumstances or its public opinion.

Moreover, the document benefits from vague language which intentionally leads its audience to different interpretations of its ideas. By doing so, this strategy does not just widen the audience base but also makes it possible to apply it in various contexts without compromising on its central message. The text's ability to mean different things without diminishing its underlying relevance or power is one way it sustains its dominance across diverse cultural environments as well as societies. Consequently, ambiguity is not just the result of lack of precision.

### 6.2 Analysis of the Al Qaeda Manifesto

This manifesto centers on the ideological and practical roles of women within the context of Jihad, portraying them as key players to the ideological and battlefronts.

#### 6.2.1 Quantitative Analysis

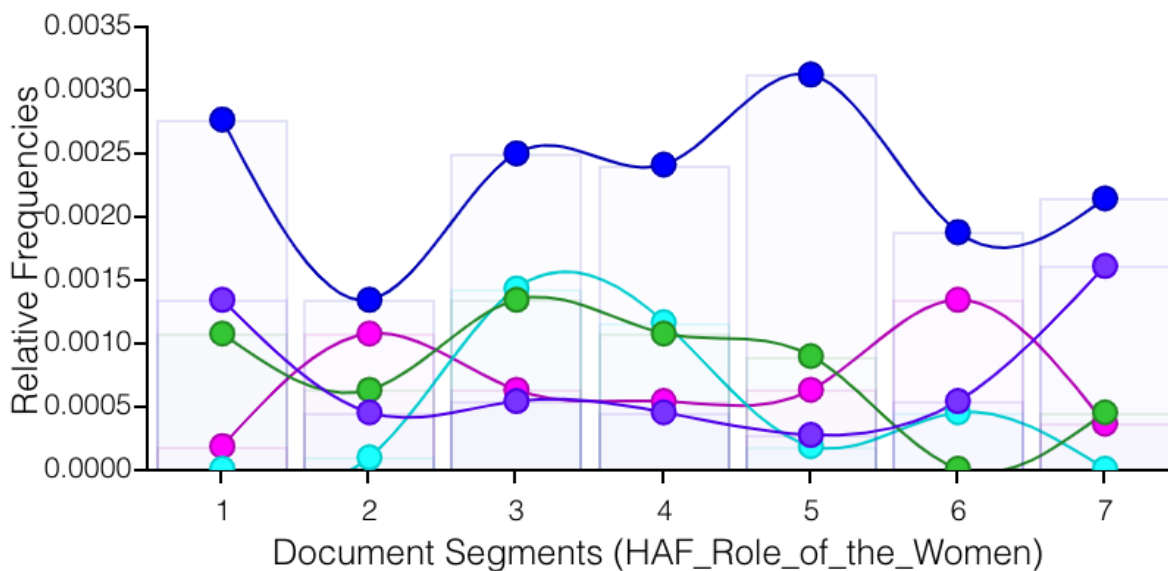
When uploading the manifesto in the Voyant Tools. This corpus contains a total of 11,246 words, with 1,801 unique word forms. The words "bin," "al," and "said" have been removed to achieve

a better analysis. The most frequently occurring words include "Allah" (181 times), "messenger" (61 times), "jihad" (58 times), "women" (53 times), and "umm" (37 times).



**Figure 3.** Word Cloud of the Al Qaeda Manifesto

The word cloud provides a visual description of the frequency and importance of words within the source text, with the size of each word corresponding to how often it appears. Significantly, the word "allah" is particularly prominent, highlighting its frequent occurrence in the document.



**Figure 4.** Relative Frequencies Graph of Al Qaeda Manifesto

The relative frequencies graph offers a detailed view of how key themes are distributed throughout the manifesto. By examining the patterns of the word frequencies, one can infer the document's structure, focus, and rhetorical strategies. Contrary to the other manifesto where the segments were divided into 10, in this one they have been divided into 7 because the

software suggested it.

The consistent and prominent peaks of the word "Allah" (blue line) in segments 1, 3, and 5 suggest that these parts of the document emphasize theological or divine aspects, framing the discourse around religious legitimacy and divine will. The fluctuations indicate shifts in thematic focus, with certain sections reinforcing religious authority more than others. This strategic placement underscores the document's reliance on divine authority to validate its arguments.

The word "jihad" (purple line) shows peaks in segments 1 and 7, indicating that the discourse on jihad is strategically placed at the beginning and towards the end of the document. The document is introduced and concluded by discussions with a strong emphasis on the concept of jihad, highlighting its significance to the overall narrative.

The significant peaks of the word "women" (pink line) in segments 2 and 6 highlight sections where the role of women is discussed in detail. The high frequency in segment 6 suggests an in-depth exploration of women's roles, possibly addressing expectations and duties. The strategic placement of these discussions indicates that women's roles are a central theme, integrated throughout the document to maintain a continuous focus on their importance.

The word "messenger" (green line) with an isolated peak in segments 3 indicates targeted discussions on the Prophet and his teachings. Using prophetic references to provide religious justification and moral guidance for the roles and actions described. This suggests a strategy to legitimize the discourse by linking it to prophetic traditions, thereby strengthening the document's authority and appeal to its intended audience.

The word "umm" (light blue line) that means mother in Arabic, shows a relatively low but consistent presence across all segments, with a peak in segment 3. This implies a recurring, albeit less dominant, focus on maternal roles and familial contexts. The reference might serve to reinforce traditional values and the importance of women's roles within the family, aligning with the broader ideological framework of the document.

The high frequencies of "Allah" and "jihad" in segments 1 and 7 suggest that the document uses these segments to frame its arguments within a divine and combative context. This strategy aims to inspire and mobilize its audience by emphasizing religious duty and the necessity of jihad. The middle segments, particularly segments 5 and 6, show a focused discussion on women's roles, intertwined with references to the "messenger" to provide religious backing. This indicates a detailed exploration of the expectations and duties of women, aiming to align their roles with the broader goals of jihad and religious adherence.

## 6.2.2 Qualitative Analysis

### 6.2.2.1 Vocabulary

The manifesto uses vocabulary with a carded religious meaning such as *"jihad"*, *"ummah"* and *"crusade"* in order to put the reader in context. As the text progresses, it begins to much specific terminology that is directed towards what a woman's role should be. Such as *"female fighter"* which is interesting as it elevates position of women not only as passive followers but imply a much more active role as participants in the jihad, which leads to the conclusion that the role of women is interpreted in a completely warlike context. Examples are *'battlefield'* and *"enemy"* which are framed in this ideological struggle.

"she insisted on entering the battlefield. The Mujahidin tried to dissuade her due to the danger of the situation, but it was futile, for she had sworn that she would fire at the enemy with her weapon." (the Role of the Women in Fighting the Enemies, 2004, p.14)

### 6.2.2.2 Transitivity

It is evident that women are assigned a notably active agency, in fact to argue for this role they make use of historical examples of when women actively participated in battles. This challenges the passive constructs that are typically associated with women in much more passive roles. Furthermore, to reinforce this idea that women must take a more active role, an emotional appeal is made to how the Muslim community has suffered humiliation by what they consider to be enemies and calls for action to remedy this (jihad). These historical examples of women are

of the stories of Umm Umara or Safiyyah Bint Abdil-Muttalib among others.

"Safiyyah Bint Abdil-Muttalib...said, 'So I veiled myself, and I took a pole and came down from the fortress to him, and I hit him with the pole until I killed him and cut off his head...'" (the Role of the Women in Fighting the Enemies, 2004, p.8)

#### 6.2.2.3 Mood and Modality

Regarding the modality, it is observed how women are challenged in a very direct way, urging them to take roles based on a historical and religious legacy. Phrases like "*you must rise and fulfill your obligatory role*" (the Role of the Women in Fighting the Enemies, 2004, p.8) use an imperative mood that emphasizes the need and urgency to fight. Furthermore, the use of modal verbs such as "*must*" and "*should*" when discussing obligations regarding fighting and supporting jihad reflects a high degree of modality highlighting the great need to act in this way and especially that they do not have other alternatives. Therefore, it is seen that this text is clearly ideological and leaves little room for harsh questioning.

"she must participate in it with all of her capacity and with all of her passion. And her participation does not mean the conclusion of the struggle - no. Rather, her participation is counted as a pillar from amongst the pillars that cause victory and the continuation of the path " (the Role of the Women in Fighting the Enemies, 2004, p.4)

#### 6.2.2.4 Interactional Control Features

The document frequently addresses women directly as "my honored sister," creating a direct and personal connection. This rhetorical strategy is intended to galvanize women, making the discourse more immediate and pressing. The text does not invite dialogue but presents a monologic argument where the author's view is the only one articulated, aiming to persuade the reader without offering a platform for response or rebuttal.

"Therefore, you must be aware, my Muslim sister, that your mission is greater than what you imagine. You are responsible for a..." (the Role of the Women in Fighting the Enemies, 2004, p.4)

#### 6.2.2.5 Topicality

From this document the thematic choices are the following: struggle and religious duty, reinforcing the idea, once again, that women should not only be followers of the movement, but are also an essential part of the ideological part and the struggle. physics to restore the dignity of Islam.

"Islam was not victorious in its radiant times over the disbelieving nations who were greater than it in power, in number, and in wealth except when the woman was up for the responsibility, for she is the one who raises her children upon the Jihad, and she is the one who guards the man's honour and wealth if he goes out for Jihad, and she is the one who is patient and helps her children and her husband remain patient in the pursuance of this path. So the saying, 'Behind every great man is a woman' is true of the women of that time, so we could say, 'Behind every great Mujahid is a woman.'" (the Role of the Women in Fighting the Enemies, 2004, p.4)

#### 6.2.2.6 Politeness

It makes use of several forms of politeness, first, it acknowledges the historical value of women and compares them to contemporary women as revered figures. One example of politeness is, as it has been mentioned above, "*my honorable sister*" to mitigate potentially threatening acts in the face of urging women to support potentially deadly activities.

#### 6.2.2.7 Presuppositions

As for assumptions, the text assumes that the reader shares a belief in the value and necessity of women's participation in jihad. It also presupposes a shared reverence for Islamic historical figures and narratives, using these as a basis. And that the reader agrees with the fundamental ideological positions it promotes.

#### 6.2.2.8 Ambiguity

The manifesto exhibits considerable ambiguity; on the one hand, it does ask for active participation, but it does detail the forms that this should take which leaves room for interpretation. Furthermore, there is a double meaning in the way in which the document uses

religious references since these can be interpreted in different ways depending on the beliefs and level of knowledge of the reader.

### 6.3 Comparative Analysis of Al Khanssaa and Al Qaeda Manifestos

In a detailed analysis using Voyant Tools, the Al Qaeda and Al-Khansaa Brigade manifestos reveal distinct thematic focuses and structural strategies, yet both are deeply rooted in religious and social themes. The Al Qaeda manifesto, comprising 11,246 words with 1,801 unique word forms, frequently invokes the term "Allah," which appears 181 times, underscoring its theological grounding. This contrasts with the Al-Khansaa Brigade manifesto, which contains 12,882 words and 2,729 distinct word forms, with a significant emphasis on "women," mentioned 145 times, highlighting its focus on gender roles within an ideological framework.

Both documents strategically place key terms to frame and reinforce their narratives. The Al Qaeda manifesto uses words like "Allah" and "jihad" prominently in the beginning and end segments, emphasizing the divine call to action and framing the discourse within a religious context. This is mirrored in the Al-Khansaa Brigade's treatment of the word "women," which peaks notably in the opening and closing segments, suggesting a narrative structure that introduces and concludes with a strong focus on gender roles. However, while the Al Qaeda manifesto shows a rhythmic placement of terms such as "jihad" and "women" to punctuate theological and social roles at strategic points, the Al-Khansaa Brigade through the segmentation done it allows a continuous, though variable, thematic exploration, with significant discussions on the state and religion evidenced by peaks for "state" in segments 1 and 3 and, "god" in segments 4 and 9.

Moreover, the Al-Khansaa Brigade's graph indicates a more consistent engagement with societal and religious themes, utilizing keywords like "people" and "god" across different segments to enrich the ideological discourse. This approach contrasts with the Al Qaeda manifesto, where the strategic positioning of the word "messenger" in targeted segments links prophetic traditions with the roles and actions described, strengthening its authority and appeal to its intended audience.



In essence, the Al Qaeda manifesto's structured approach aligns closely with theological justifications and combative roles narrating the story of different women who have fought for jihad, whereas the Al-Khansaa Brigade's manifesto presents a broader discussion on gender roles, intertwined with governance and societal considerations, enveloped by religious justifications.

In examining the language and thematic content of the two texts concerning the role of women, there is a significant contrast in the portrayal and expected roles as dictated by their respective ideological stances. The first manifesto uses loaded vocabulary which are far from neutral. These terms, embedded with values, starkly contrast the Islamic and Western perspectives on women's roles. Similarly, the use of terms like "Caliphate", "mujahideen", and "sharia" immediately introduce a bias towards Islamic governance, critiquing Western interpretations of these concepts.

Furthermore, the mood and modality in the brigade's manifestos are predominantly declarative and authoritarian, employing phrases that leave little room for alternative interpretations, such as "it is allowed..." or "should...". This authoritarian stance underscores a rigid interpretation presenting them as non-negotiable. This rigidity is further reinforced using passive voice and nominal forms, which depict women as passive participants within society, thereby aligning with the text's conservative vision. On the other hand, Al Qaeda's manifestos, adopts a markedly different approach. It employs an active vocabulary with terms like "jihad", and "female fighter", suggesting a valorization of women's participation in conflict. The imperative mood is dominant, with calls to action such as "you must rise and fulfill your obligatory role", which underscores the urgency and necessity of women's active involvement in jihad. This high modality, employing "must" and "should", portrays women's roles as divine duties, leaving no room for ambiguity about their importance.

The interactional features of both texts also highlight their distinct approaches. The first manifesto analyzed shapes the reader's interpretation by prioritizing traditional domestic roles for women and presents Western influences as harmful, employing a monologic structure that dictates a specific viewpoint without offering space for counterargument. Conversely, the second manifesto directly addresses its readers, using phrases like "my honored sister" to personalize

and intensify the call to action, while its monologic nature aims to persuade without offering a platform for response.

Thematically, the Brigade criticizes the Western concept of liberation for women, viewing it as cultural erosion and advocating for a return to traditional values. It carefully selects themes that highlight ideological conflicts over gender roles, emphasizing a sharp divide between Western and Islamic views. Al Qaeda's text, however, centers on struggle and religious duty, reinforcing the notion that women are not only followers but crucial participants in both the ideological and literal battlefronts.

While both texts use language and thematic elements to advocate for specific views of women's roles within their ideologies, they present contrasting visions. The first text promotes a traditional, passive role, focusing on the negative impacts of Western influence, whereas the second text encourages an active, combative role, emphasizing women's participation in jihad as both a duty and an honor. The use of vocabulary, mood, and thematic choices in each text serves to propagate distinctly different ideals concerning gender roles and societal norms.

## 7. Conclusions

The aim of this bachelor's thesis was to explore how women are portrayed in the propaganda of two terrorist groups: Al Qaeda and the Al-Khansaa Brigade of the Islamic State. The study attempted to evaluate what their respective roles should be through the Fairclough Socio-Cultural Method. The research questions sought to comprehend how women are regarded and exploited in both papers, as well as the contrasts between the two manifestos.

The manifesto of the Al-Khansaa Brigade primarily calls on women to play traditional, submissive roles, rejecting Western values and advocating for a return to traditional Islamic established standards. The technical terminology used in the paper carries strong negative elements related to Western ideology. The way the text is written, women are portrayed as the terrorist organization's objectives and the males who support them in a passive manner. In addition to further restricting women of agency, the passive voice and nominal forms encourage the idea that women should stay in the background and assist men who take an active role in the jihad. In contrast, the Al Qaeda manifesto portrays women as active participants in the jihad. The language employed seems to elevate women's involvement in hostilities. The manifesto uses a mandatory tone, emphasizing the importance and urgency of women's participation in jihad.

Both works' interactive elements draw attention to their different strategies. The manifesto of the Al-Khansaa Brigade places an emphasis on women's traditional home responsibilities and denigrates Western practices by using a monologic structure that forces one point of view on its opponents without allowing for counterarguments. This arrangement restricts the range of topics that can be discussed and strengthens one interpretation of the text. However, the Al Qaeda manifesto addresses its followers directly, personalizing and energizing the call to action. By establishing a direct and intimate link, this rhetorical device invites women to join the jihad.

The ideology of the Al-Khansaa Brigade centers on a critique of the Western cultural decay and highlights the significance of women upholding traditional roles to maintain societal stability. It positions issues that draw attention to ideological disagreements over gender roles between Western and non-Western countries. The text places less emphasis on conversations about personal agency, choice, and educational goals in favor of restating important ideological themes

to support its conservative viewpoint. In contrast, the Al Qaeda manifesto emphasizes struggle and religious responsibility, emphasizing the notion that women are critical participants in both the ideological and physical battles to restore Islam's dignity. It portrays women's participation in jihad as both a duty and an honor, using historical and religious analogies to legitimize and valorize it.

The comparative analysis conducted for the study showed that although both manifestos aim to mobilize and recruit women, they do so use distinct rhetorical and thematic approaches. The Al-Khansaa Brigade emphasizes the value of traditional values and the risks of Western influence while advocating for a submissive, supportive role for women. On the other hand, Al Qaeda promotes a more confrontational and active role for women, portraying their involvement in jihad as a noble and vital obligation.

Future research might investigate how language evolves in jihadist propaganda over time and how it adapts to changing political and social contexts, which could provide useful insights into the dynamic character of extremist speech. To improve the accuracy and breadth of these investigations and enable the discovery of patterns and changes in language use, sophisticated computational linguistics instruments and corpus analysis software can be employed.

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