

# Why does ISIS make music?

## *ISIS Anashid and the Logic of Imagined Communities*

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### Introduction

Anashid are Islamic chants that have been popular for centuries across the Muslim world. ISIS has devoted significant resources to recording this “music,” and has released 96 anashid between August 2013 and April 2017.

**How do ISIS anashid contribute to ISIS’s broader political goals?**

### Background

Previous studies of ISIS propaganda have focused on classifying anashid, but have largely failed to propose a strategic theory connecting ISIS’s anashid to its broader socio-political goals. Other disciplines have proposed related causal theories, though in other contexts.

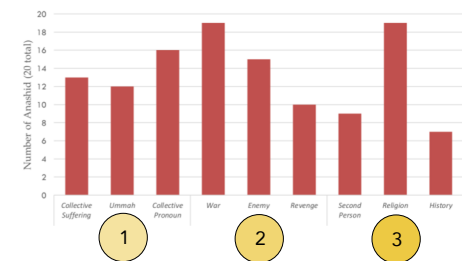


### Methodology

Selected sample set of 20 anashid to capture greatest possible variation, across time and language



### Discursive Content Analysis (lyrics)



### Non-Discursive Analysis (nasheed as an object)

- 1 Serve as a metric by which supporters can prove in-group status
- 2 Criticize form and morality of non-ISIS anashid
- 3 Gradually familiarize supporters with ideology Resilient to censorship

### Discussion

Understanding ISIS anashid requires working across literatures and treating ISIS propaganda as more than simple incitement to violent action. Within my strategic theory of ISIS anashid, distinctions fade between the listener, the supporter, and the attacker.