

# Inside the Caliphate's Classroom: Textbooks, Guidance Literature, and Indoctrination Methods of the Islamic State

by [Jacob Olidort \(/experts/jacob-olidort\)](/experts/jacob-olidort)

Aug 5, 2016

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Jacob Olidort, a 2016-2017 Soref fellow at The Washington Institute, focuses on the history and ideology of Salafi movements and Islamist groups in the Middle East.



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Two years after the declaration of a caliphate by the Islamic State, the world has become well acquainted with the group's brutality, territorial expansion, apocalyptic narrative, and ability to stage large-scale terrorist attacks inside and outside the Middle East. Less discussed are IS textbooks and book-publishing activities. Our knowledge of the group's ambitions and ideas are based on texts leading up to the group's declaration of a caliphate, social media communications (in particular its English-language propaganda magazine, *Dabiq*, and videos), interviews with defectors, and leaked bureaucratic documents. Yet, to date, no systematic survey has been conducted of the Arabic-language books the group has published since June 2014.

*Inside the Caliphate's Classroom: Textbooks, Guidance Literature, and Indoctrination Methods of the Islamic State* fills this gap. In this comprehensive study, Jacob Olidort shows why these publications offer the policy community a number of lessons on ways to confront the Islamic State in the Iraq-Syria theater and beyond, as well as on the thorny issue of how individuals self-radicalize to its cause, even as the group loses territory.

## THE AUTHOR

[Jacob Olidort \(http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/experts/view/jacob-olidort\)](http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/experts/view/jacob-olidort), a historian of Islam and the modern Middle East, is a Soref Fellow at The Washington Institute, where his work focuses on Salafist political parties and the ideology of the Islamic State. His analysis has appeared in *Foreign Affairs*, the *Washington Post*, the *National Interest*, and *Lawfare*, among other publications. Dr. Olidort has taught at the Elliott School of International Affairs at George Washington University and is a term member of the Council on Foreign Relations. ❖

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