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### February 13, 2015: Why Does ISIS Have Any Support?

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Title: Why Does ISIS Have Any Support?

Date: 2015-02-13T18:11:00.000-05:00

2/13/2015—After all, everything about ISIS is repulsive to decent people. And that has nothing to do with the nature of one's religion. Its actions are horrifying to Muslims too. And yet it does attract thousands of Western youths. Why? I believe the reason is the emptiness of Western life—the bankruptcy of our ideals. The exhaustion of our tradition. Two hints of this from the New York Review of Books. Sarah Birke in *How ISIS Rules* attributes the growth of the group to the absence of “convincing ideologies” in the West. And Mark Lilla in *France on Fire* points out that Republican ideology collapsed in French schools in the 1970's and nothing really took its place. What do we believe in? Conservative and libertarian thought is at heart a corrosive individualism. Capitalism is greed. Technology is an addiction. And liberalism no longer believes in its proffered truths. Worst of all, we Americans have failed to build a political culture of affection and community. We hate each other. We mistrust each other. Why should young people find our way of life enticing?