

Clara Beyler
ICT Researcher

Messengers of Death:

Female Suicide Bombers

Introduction	3
Review of the attacks : a history of female suicide blasts.....	4
In Lebanon	5
In Sri Lanka.....	5
In Chechnya	5
In Israel	5
The terrorist infrastructures supporting these women.....	6
The Turkish case: the PKK	6
The Sri Lankan case: the LTTE	7
The Chechen Rebels	7
The Palestinian case: the Fatah Tanzim.....	7
Different rationalizations for the same terrorist attack.....	8
In the name of God: use and abuse of religious interpretations.....	9
In Sri Lanka	9
In Lebanon.....	9
In the Palestinian territories and Chechnya	9
In Turkey	10
A fight for the people, supported by the people.....	10
Sri Lankan society	10
Palestinian society	11
A worldwide perspective	12
Influence of the media	12
The female bomber and its impacts	13
Conclusion.....	14
APPENDIX	16
In Lebanon	16
In Turkey.....	17
In Chechnya	18
In Israel	18
SOURCES.....	20
ENDNOTES.....	30

Introduction

Using human beings as ticking bombs was originated by the Hizballah during the 1980s in Lebanon. Suicide bombing has since been employed in many different countries, and used by various terrorist groups such as: the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade and others. These disparate examples can be grouped together under the phenomenon of suicide terrorism, defined by Boaz Ganor, director of the International Policy Institute for Counter Terrorism (ICT), as "the operational method in which the very act of the attack is dependent upon the death of the perpetrator." Even more importantly, he says, suicide terrorism is aimed at "striking a blow to public moral." [1] The terrorist organization benefits from the success of the suicide attack in several ways. First, the terrorists fulfill their aim of slaughtering human beings, and, second, they grab the attention of the media, focusing on a nationalistic or religious cause. Terrorist organizations using a strategy of suicide bombing have added a new focus to terrorism, placing the emphasis on the perpetrators, and not only on the victims. [2] One of the most surprising developments has been the way in which suicide terrorism has opened the stage for the entry of female combatants, who are increasingly involved in what was once a male-dominated arena.

Women's access to the most extreme form of participation in terrorism occurs for various reasons, with distinct differences from one group to another. In Turkey or Sri Lanka, this activism has its own history, where women were allowed to fully participate even in the early stages of these organizations. However, Palestinian women suicide bombers or the isolated terrorist in Chechnya have emerged more recently, and they appeared against all expectations. A patriarchal structure dominates all the societies of the different countries where these terrorist organizations are located. However, within this patriarchal cultural frame, women have been allowed to be involved, and their participation has been planned. Women are literally and metaphorically dying to be more involved in armed conflict, nonetheless, it does not prevent them from being exploited. When men conduct the suicide missions, they are motivated by religious or nationalist fanaticism, a trait that is shared by women. But there is a difference between men and women suicide attackers: women consider combat as a way to escape the predestined life that is expected of them. When women become human bombs, their intent is to make a statement not only in the name of a country, a religion, a leader, but also in the name of their gender.

Women's willingness to participate in terrorist activities is used both on an internal and an external level. On an internal level, the leaders and/or the men of the terrorist groups use women's eagerness to kill others and themselves. On an external level, women become exploited by the world at large. The media too becomes a player, portraying female kamikazes as the symbols of the utter despair of the "freedom fighters", rather than mere cold-blooded murder of civilians. However, highlighting women's exploitation does not undermine the fact of women's willingness to participate.

Gentle, submissive and nonviolent are adjectives that are most often used to refer to female

behavior, or its idealization. This common stereotype is exploited by the terrorists in order to magnify their cause. On the one hand, despite the prejudices describing women as good wives and mothers, they are still capable of murder by committing a suicide bombing. On the other hand, even when their behavior turns to this extreme form of violence, society interprets it as the result of an unjust and desperate situation.[3] The media justifies and often legitimizes these criminal acts that contradict our axioms and assumptions about the “weaker” sex.

Dealing with this comparative research study is particularly demanding for the following reasons:

- There are not enough reports with descriptions of the cases.
- There is not enough documentation on how these women were treated in terrorist groups, like the SSNP, or amongst the Chechen rebels.
- The few reports that we do have mostly been conducted by male researchers and from a man’s point of view, which might be inherently gender biased, either consciously or unconsciously. One could imagine the importance of having a woman’s perspective on the topic that would bring certain elements to light that had gone unnoticed by male researchers.
- There are not enough testimonies; it is important to include more women on the research side to conduct interviews with the women who did not go through with their missions, because the female researchers might be more credible in the eyes of the female terrorists.
- It is very difficult to profile these murderers, especially the Palestinian ones, who come from every educational, religious, social and personal background.[4]
- As Georges-Abeyie writes “if we are to comprehend more fully the role of women as terrorists,” and that of women as suicide bombers in particular, “we must recognize that women comprise a self-conscious, dynamic sector of our society which often perceives itself to be an oppressed majority –a majority oppressed not only because of religion, ...or national origin but also because of sex.”[5]

A review of the attacks: the history of female suicide blasts

Women suicide bombers have conducted attacks in Lebanon, Turkey, Sri Lanka, Chechnya and Israel. Female suicide bombing needs to be understood within the framework of the patriarchal societies in which these women originated, and by taking into account how deeply rooted the values are which separate the female roles from that of the male. In every culture from which female suicide bombers have originated, women are restricted to the private sphere: taking care of the home and the children. While women stay at home, men’s tasks are conducted in the outer world.

Societies are organized around the dichotomy that man is the productive warrior and woman the reproductive womb. However some organizations, such as the LTTE or the PKK, have welcomed women’s involvement into the male dominated public sphere of the terrorist group. Other organizations, like the Chechen rebels or Palestinian terrorist organizations, are more reluctant to

give women full membership status -as defined as adequate training, even if the male dominated leadership allows them to go on martyrdom missions. The cases of female suicide bombers in Chechnya and Israel are particularly interesting in as much as such events came as a surprise not only to the victims, but also to the members of the terrorist groups themselves.

In Lebanon

The first suicide attacks conducted by women were organized by the Syrian Socialist National Party, the SSNP/PPS in Lebanon in 1985. Out of 12 suicide attacks conducted by the SSNP, women took part in 5 of them. [6]Of the suicide bombings conducted by the PKK in Turkey, 66 % (14 out of 21 suicide attacks) were carried out by women (this number includes both successful and thwarted attacks). [7]

In Sri Lanka

“Women participated in about 30 to 40% of the group’s overall suicide activities.” The LTTE credited suicide bombings number close to 200, and, to this day, they remain leaders in suicide bombing attacks. [8] Because these cases are so numerous, they are not going to be described in this essay. The Tamil Tigers is the only terrorist group that has targeted and killed important political representatives using suicide bombings. One of the most famous and successful of these attacks is the one committed by the woman who murdered India’s former Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi. Dhanu, a young Tamil woman, exploded herself during a political rally held by Rajiv Gandhi just before the Indian elections on May 20, 1991.

In Chechnya

One of the biggest losses inflicted upon the Russian army was conducted by twenty year old Hawaa’ Barayev. However, it is difficult to compare what seems to be a unique and onetime attack to other countries that have been targeted by more than one female suicide bomber.

In Israel

Wafa Idriss was the first female Palestinian suicide bomber when she blew herself up in 2002, and she was quickly imitated by others. Although some of the Palestinian women did not commit the attacks they had planned because they were arrested by the IDF before they could commit the lethal attacks. Others seem to have refused to carry out the bombings for several different reasons, a phenomenon that still needs to be further analyzed. “Out of the 20 suicide bombings since the beginning of the year 2002, 4 have been committed by women.” [9] In the first six months of 2002, women have participated more and more in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and represented one fifth of the suicide killers. [10] The rapidity and willingness of other women to imitate female suicide bombers, and the present inability to profile them point to a changing situation to which society needs to understand and adapt. [11]

The terrorist infrastructures supporting these women

All these attacks could be achieved only because these women were already part of the terrorist infrastructure of the groups to which they belonged. Some groups, such as the LTTE or the PKK have allowed women to participate on every level of the group's activities – both the physical and psychological training. Suicide bombing became the next logical step. Groups such as the Chechen rebels or the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade do not enforce “gender equality”: women do not participate in their terrorist activities, yet they were accepted as would be martyrs to carry out suicide bombings in the names of these organizations. [12]

The Turkish case: the PKK

Founded in 1987, the PKK was directed since its creation by its founder Abdullah Ocalan. The group opted for a suicide terrorism *modus operandi* in 1995, conducting its first suicide bombing shortly thereafter. Since the founding of the PKK, women took part in all of the group's activities. They were trained and prepared under the same “Spartan lifestyle” conditions as the men. [13] The PKK's internal governing rule was one of violence for both genders: the more violent one was, the better off they were. [14] In the 1990's, the well-trained militia of the Kurdish terrorist group numbered as many as 20,000 members, both men and women. [15] Although the “number of female recruits was substantial, no reliable data is available.” [16]

The PKK claimed to be different from the other institutions of Turkish society, but also from its own background: Kurdish society is traditionally described as feudal and tribal. [17] The Kurdish terrorist organization was the only structure that offered women a choice other than the traditional one of wife and mother. The group offered women the opportunity to be upgraded to the status of warrior. [18] Within the organization, women would not be defined as a man's subordinate anymore, nor as wives or mothers. For the first time they were offered the option of being productive. They were allowed to be active on the battlefield and to conduct suicide bombings. It is, perhaps, more appropriate to say they were allowed to be destructive instead of reproductive. [19]

Professor Ergil lists various reasons why women were chosen for the suicide bombing missions. [20] Amongst them, is the fact that women's physical performance on the battlefield could not equal men's. Hence they were more willing to accept a mission that could make up for their lesser physical capacity. Women, social prejudice working to their advantage this time, have not and usually do not undergo the same security body checks as men, especially when disguised as pregnant women.

The women in the PKK found an opportunity for freedom from the expected limited role that Kurdish society offered them in an already biased Turkish world. So when they became full members, the organization was not just an organization: “it provided them with a lifestyle”, and replaced the family to which they could not or would never return to. [21] [22] As members of the terrorist group, they were bound by Ocalan's orders, and had only one choice: going through

with the suicide missions for those he chose. [23]

Sri Lanka and the LTTE

Other LTTE members call the women's fighting commando unit the Birds of Freedom.-why start off with this fact and then not follow up on it at all in the next sentence? The number of armed fighters in the LTTE is estimated at 10,000 to 18,000 people (exact numbers are unavailable), of which, according to the Sri Lankan military, half are women. Many of the fighters are recruited when they are children, and some carry out suicide missions as early as the tender age of 10. [24]

Women in the LTTE have been present since its creation by Velupillai Prabhakaran. Women have not been stigmatized because of their gender: they go on suicide missions like men; there even seems to be a preference to use females, and young boys, because of their innocent appearance. [25] They are trained and prepared like men, they are given arms, and taught how to use them; they must carry with them a cyanide capsule in case they are caught. In an interview with an ex-LTTE cadre currently in hiding, the French philosopher Bernard-Henri Levy reports that part of their training includes hiding a hand-grenade in women's vaginas. This exercise was also imposed on all the other non-virgin members in the training camps. [26]

Tamil society is a traditional one, and some women perceived the LTTE as an entity that would allow them to "do something like the others." "We are given moral support by our leader and we have reached this position only because of him" declared one female corporal. [27] The report by the BBC points out the importance, similar to the PKK case, of a charismatic and unchallenged male leader, Prabhakaran. Women have carried out numerous suicide attacks for the LTTE and their passage to their target was eased because they were searched less thoroughly than the men, while their dress allows them to hide the bombing device more easily.

The Chechen Rebels

The Chechens have claimed responsibility for the suicide bombing of Hawa' Barayev on their official website. [28] This was not the case for another female suicide bomber, Luisa Gazueva, whose suicide attack was unclaimed. [29]

The Palestinian case: the Fatah Tanzim

Fatah Tanzim has used women for gathering information, even on the battlefield. In the 1970's, for instance, Leila Khalid, among others, took part in terrorist actions. [30] But it is only since 2002 that women have attained parity with men on every level of terrorist involvement.

Women committing suicide bombings are an unexpected offset of the anti-Israeli atmosphere that dominates the Palestinian controlled territories, surprising both the IDF and the Palestinians. Evidence of this surprise can, in part, be derived from the fact that Palestinian clerics had to take control of the phenomenon by announcing fatwas in order to justify events they had not planned.

The hatred of the Israelis, reinforced by the environmental pressure has influenced women as well, and has given birth to a new kind of woman: the Palestinian suicide bomber. [31]

The women who committed suicide bombings volunteered on a freelance basis and voiced their willingness to conduct them. According to claims made by the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades after the bombings, these women's self declared wish to become a "martyr" was fulfilled. However, not all terrorist organizations have been willing to help them. Hamas, for instance, is not interested in allowing women into its ranks. [32]

The Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, however, affiliated with Arafat's Fatah, did help women to conduct suicide attacks. This terrorist organization, born with the Intifada Al Aqsa in October 2000, is more secular than other more Fundamentalist organizations such as Hamas. However, women's involvement in the Fatah Tanzim is relative: no woman to this day has been reported as a ranked member of the group.

When women get the opportunity to enter a terrorist organization, they "are eager to assert their equality with men as fighters for a cause" by carrying out the final mission. [33] In these groups, women have a history of activism in the organization and receive adequate training. [34] This was not the case in Israel, however, where women volunteered to carry out suicide missions, and were recruited for that purpose shortly after having made their offer. Not all organizations have the same gender equal opportunities, even if all of them have allowed and supported –at least logistically- female suicide bombers. There seems to be a certain degree of coercion evident to induce some of the women to conduct the attacks, but we do not know to what extent, because we lack figures and detailed reports on women's involvement in some of these organizations. [35] [36]

Different rationalizations for the same terrorist attack

The concept of self-sacrifice is "*culturally rooted... and can be valued by specific national or religious communities. However, it is not specific to any given culture.*" [37]

One of the important aspects of these groups' actions is the legitimization of the suicide attacks. Differences can be drawn between religious and more nationalist centered organizations. The Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, or the isolated case in Chechnya involve religious values, as opposed to the LTTE and the PKK, where religious preoccupations do not become the common ground - even if people do share the same religion. [38] [39]

In the case of the Sri Lankan and the Turkish organizations, the main and unique rallying criterion is the establishment of a land of their own, based upon a common nationality and the veneration of their leaders -Vellupilai Prabhakaran for the Tamils, and Abdullah Ocalan for the Kurds- and not on religion. "The Tamil suicide bombers are not the product of a religious cult, but rather followers of a cult of personality", writes Sprinzak. [40] However, even once the main criterion has been defined, society may intervene. In the case of religiously oriented terrorist

groups, society does not always apply or approve of certain fatwas. In addition, the native minorities of the terrorists do not always welcome the suicide bombing policy of these groups. While the spectrum of reaction -from legitimizing to criticizing- is quite broad within the international community, with internal dissensions in the Arab and Western worlds (as are interpretations by the feminist community or the media).

In the name of God: use and abuse of religious interpretations

In Sri Lanka

Even if there is religious unity among the Hindu Tamils, the members of the LTTE do not justify their actions by religious pretexts. The organization functions around Prabhakaran's orders, which are never challenged, and always implemented. Gunaratna describes Prabhakaran as: "maintaining a tight control, he is the final authority on each and every major issue. For some, he is a demi-god." [41] Hence if Prabhakaran allowed women to participate, that is the reason they are allowed and encouraged to join rather than any practical use for them. The LTTE has justified women's involvement as "its way of assisting women's liberation and counteracting the oppressive traditionalism of the present system." [42]

In Lebanon

Interestingly, the SSNP did not proclaim fatwas at the time. Supposedly, a female member of Hizballah woman conducted the last suicide bombing of the period before Israel left South Lebanon and, at the time, the spiritual leader of the Hizballah, Fadlallah, did not make any statement. It is only in 2002 that he has approved of female suicide bombers.

In the Palestinian territories and Chechnya

Chechen and Palestinian terrorist groups justify the murder of soldiers or civilians by a misinterpreted and manipulated faith. In Chechnya, Hawa Barayev was strongly supported by religious fatwas after she became a martyr. Her suicide attack has been defined as a mujahedah (a fighter) who died as a shaheedah (martyr). However, the fatwa proclaimed in her name under the title "Did Hawa Barayev commit suicide or achieve martyrdom?" was not signed by anyone. [43] On Chechen pro-rebel internet sites, details are given as to what a woman's role is in the jihad. Their participation is required, but mainly by adhering to traditional roles. They are not required, nor advised, to commit suicide attacks, because "the situation is not that desperate yet" but they are entitled to cling to their ancestral role of care takers, moral supporters, sustainers of food and medical care, and raising of children. [44]

In Turkey

The members of the PKK shared the same Muslim beliefs, but Islam was not an important feature. As Professor Ergil states, it is even “doubtful that religion played any role in suicide bombing.” The incentive and justification for suicide attacks were all based on Ocalan’s orders. The leader had such power and influence on the group’s members, that they did not need the pretext of religion, for Ocalan himself reached the status of God in the organization. It was on this god-like leader’s orders that suicide bombings started. It was also on his command that they stopped.

According to the level of religiosity, terrorist organizations have different policies concerning women and suicide bombing. Saudi Arabia stated a couple of years ago its refusal to legitimize suicide bombings as martyrdom. [45] However, since August 1st 2001, “the High Islamic Council in Saudi Arabia issued a fatwa encouraging Palestinian women to become suicide bombers.” [46] A respected Muslim scholar in Egypt, Al Qaradawi has, for his part, refused to equate martyr attacks and suicide, like most Muslim scholars from the Arab world. [47]

The spiritual leader of the Fundamentalist Hamas, Sheikh Yassin first declared on January 31, 2002 to *Al-Sharq al-Awsat* concerning women suicide bombing that they would only be allowed to conduct them if chaperoned by a man. [48] In a second statement, dating from February 2, 2002 to the same newspaper, Yassin eventually granted a woman’s right to launch a suicide attack alone only if it does not take her more than 24 hours to be away from home. [49] Even if Yassin has approved of women as shaheedas, it is important to notice that none of the suicide attacks conducted by women have been organized nor claimed by his terrorist organization, Hamas. In the case of the suicide bomber Dareen Abu Aisheh, she is even reported to have gone first to Hamas to volunteer, but was turned down. [50] Even if, in theory, Hamas supports female suicide bombings, de facto, they do not apply nor lack it for a more practical reason according to Yassin, at the present time, they cannot even use all the male volunteers. So they do not need to use women for the time being. [51]

A fight for the people, supported by the people

“It is a woman who blew herself up, and with her exploded all the myths about women’s weakness, submissiveness, and enslavement.” [52]

In many societies –such as the Kurdish, the Palestinian or the Tamils- there is a glorification of and reverence for suicide attacks. Crenshaw highlights this idea when she states: “the martyr glorifies both himself and the cause. This is a powerful redemptive myth. Salvation is attained through sacrifice... The truth of the cause is established by the individual’s willingness to sacrifice everything in its behalf.” [53]

Sri Lankan society

Women of the LTTE did not have many options as women. According to different reports, a

great number of them had been raped, and hence their status as women was “nullified”, for they had been stained by the enemy. [54] [55] One option was left though: because they could not be considered women, they could undertake a man’s task that would redeem their status (of victims of rape) by dying for a good cause. Cutter even states “acting as human bombs is an understood and accepted offering for a woman who will never be a mother. Family members often encourage rape victims to join the LTTE.”

Palestinian society

Organizations only implement suicide terrorism systematically if their community approves of its use. [56] This is the case with the patriarchal and traditionalist Palestinian society of the West Bank, which is more secular than the Gaza Strip where Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad are stronger. The terrorist groups who claim most of the suicide attacks approve of women suicide bombers. It seems that Palestinian women in general have more rights and are allowed to chose political action, such as suicide bombing. Compared to other Muslim societies, the Palestinian woman has more opportunities and more freedom than her sisters in Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and other Fundamentalist countries. “... The Palestinian women can vote, hold office, drive cars and own property. They are vocal in what is still primarily a patriarchal society.” [57] Women have equal access to universities; they are not confined to their homes, and they do not have to wear the veil (tchador.) [58] Even if they live in patriarchal societies, they still have some space to be part of the political process, and to support suicide bombing. The difference is that up until recently they were supporting it passively, but now they want to actively participate.

The women that conducted the suicide attacks are revered as heroes, their pictures hung on walls. Hundreds of Palestinians showed up at their funerals to pay their respects. [59] [60] Even if the Palestinian population has celebrated their deaths at their staged funerals/memorial demonstrations, in reality, the fact that these attacks were conducted by women was a shock to Palestinian society, where men are in charge of terrorist groups, and never sought women’s participation. Palestinian women were not one of their intended political targets. Fassihi describes a gathering of Palestinian men and women, at a Woman’s Center, to “reflect on what once was unthinkable.” [61] Women taking such actions can be seen as the reflection of women’s involvement in Palestinian society. Just as they are involved in relatively more aspects of life in Palestinian society, they also became more involved in the ultimate terrorist act, suicide bombings.

In the Muslim world, women suicide bombers have entered immortality by carrying out attacks. When they were alive, the women who committed these actions were just women. However, from the moment they killed Israelis, they died as martyrs, achieving redemption. [62] The only way to become respected citizens was to die. However, they might not have expected to be revered as martyrs, nor was that necessarily their sole intention when they decided to carry out the attack.

One of the motives for committing the attack was to transcend human mortality, but there was also another more practical incentive of an economic nature. The families of suicide martyrs benefit from a financial compensation. When male suicide bombers commit their attacks, they have an economic incentive: a reward of 25,000 US Dollars, funded by Iraq will be handed to their families to honor them, and compensating for the death of a “hero.” The *Jerusalem Post* has pointed out that a parallel for women might exist who wish to improve their family’s economic situation in much the same way. [63]

A worldwide perspective

Influence of the media

One of the aims of suicide bombing is to obtain media coverage. The use of women provides a new media dimension, which the terrorist group intends for the media to interpret as an indication of a worsening situation. Bassiouni writes, “These acts ... are conducted in the most dramatic manner so as to draw media attention to the event and maximize its media-created impact. The perpetrator anticipates and relies on media coverage in the planning and execution of his terror-inspiring acts while the media, in covering such acts... further his objective of producing a social impact that would not otherwise occur.” [64]

The Sri Lankan terrorist organization has very good media coverage and has learned well how to manipulate that coverage in their favor. Gunaratna found that “recent evidence confirms that the LTTE has manipulated a number of human rights groups in the West into supporting them, but they have also gained excellent access to media organization.” [65]

A new facet in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has emerged because of female suicide bombers. This recent phenomenon has allowed the media to give a new dimension –a gender one- to an enduring conflict. [66] Female participation in the conflict is being manipulated by terrorist organizations, which intend to use the image of a female suicide bomber to distort worldwide public opinion. The media becomes a victim of this strategy by describing female bombing actions as the only way for these women to express their frustration; a testimony of utter despair.

The fact that these actions are cold-blooded murders planned by men who often manipulate their female human bombs never seems to be mentioned, as if that side of the story is irrelevant. “The campaign (of suicide bombing) has been designed to obscure the wickedness of ethnic mass murder by seeking to place the killer on the same moral plain as his targets –both are seen to be victims.” [67] And to that extent, they have been successful in appearing as victims, particularly reinforced by women’s recent participation. The media also have the responsibility to point out the fact concurrently, that “suicide bombing is not just a tactic... it overwhelms the political goals it is meant to serve; it creates its own logic. Martyrdom became not just a means, but an end.” [68]

In the beginning, the Arab world was stunned, but quickly started to praise the boldness of the women who conducted the attacks. At the present time, Arab religious leaders have given their permission, even if sometimes restricting them. Meanwhile, Saddam Hussein declared his intent to erect a memorial monument for Wafa Idriss. And, in the aftermath of the first female suicide bombing, Fatah officials stated their intent to create a special female suicide bombers’ unit in the name of Wafa Idriss. [69]

Arab women are very proud of these killers’ actions, which have been interpreted as the emancipation of their sisters, who “will not settle for being mothers of martyrs” anymore. [70] The gate of what is now interpreted as women’s freedom, combat, has been opened, and many

women rejoice in this new path. Women's participation in suicide attacks has fulfilled one of the intended aims: it has allowed the Palestinian terrorist groups to generalize the conflict. Reports have indicated that women in other Arab countries support Palestinian women opting to become suicide bombers. For instance, they have "taken to the streets" in support, something which had never happened before. [71]

The feminist community has often interpreted these actions as an improvement in women's status in these patriarchal societies. They have misinterpreted murders as acts of emancipation. As Donnelly stated, "it is not a step forward in feminism but a step backward for humanity." [72]

Many scholars have pointed out differences between a male and female terrorist. Laqueur points out that "the female members proved to be tougher, more loyal and fanatical." [73] If there is indeed such a difference, and in particular concerning suicide bombing, C. Goldsmith found the best explanation for it: "the terrorist women have translated the battle of the sexes into a battle against society in general." [74] Women have channeled the frustration imposed by their roles in society into a criminal behavior. Within the terrorist infrastructure, they think they can exploit their dynamic not as women, but as human beings. This is where their mistake lies: they will always be defined by their gender, and will be used because of what society perceives as a more gentle and innocent appearance rather than an intrinsic quality.

The female bomber and its impacts

For the generations of post-suicide bombers, one problem caused by these women is that children have a new kind of heroes to look up to: suicide bombers. They take them as role models, and want to grow up to die. [75] It is alarming especially in places like Sri Lanka where children represent half of the population. The problem is that, "One generation has already seen and become influenced by nothing but war, anti-government and pro-LTTE propaganda... A boy or a girl ... would have heard only of violence against the Tamils... By the time they grow up into young adults, members of their immediate family or extended family will have experienced violence... One generation has been completely wasted by war." [76]

What applies to the Tamils can also be said to apply to the Palestinians and the Chechens. [77] There will be problems in places where children represent a majority of the population, and are not educated to look for long-term solutions instead of dreaming of becoming suicide bombers.

The culture of martyrdom is not only supported within these societies, but is also supported by the media. Because of the idealized view of suicide attacks, not only are the killers respected and glorified in their societies, but they receive sympathy from a large part of the international community. From the moment these women become symbols, it becomes impossible for a society to turn down the symbols of what they consider to be a "fight for freedom."

Another problem, pointed out by Bassiouni, is that the success of suicide bombing and the “media-attention given to terror-violence encourages further incidents of the kind... may encourage that group –or others- to repeat these attacks in order to keep the public’s attention on its goals or ideology.” [78] Women -the new actors on the suicide bombing stage- also willing to be part of the process, have been offered the task, while their participation was used to “keep the public’s attention” in enduring conflicts.

Women suicide bombers took the opportunity to affirm themselves as human beings after having failed to or been denied the ability to affirm themselves as women. In Sri Lanka for instance, they did so because it was the only role they could take after having failed as women within their own society. For others, it was a way of emancipation that only terrorism was ready to offer them, as in the case of the PKK. However, for all of the cases, there have been various degrees of coercion and manipulation, yet with one qualifying paradox: the fact that these women could be part of such a man’s sphere, in spite of their patriarchal societies.

Because of the actions of female suicide bombers, their sisters will pay a high price for it. It opens a new door for sexual harassment, at least from the part of the military (specifically in the case of Sri Lanka), and public humiliation (in societies where honor and modesty are the only recommendations for a woman’s behavior). One way, though, to prevent this from happening is to involve more women in the male dominated police and military.

If more women were included in the field of security, they would be able to conduct body searches without the sexual/embarrassing complications that arise when done by men. Encouragingly, as Max Singer declared, “There is no room for negotiation about practical life-saving measures.” [79] Such measures are already planned for implementation. In Sri Lanka, the police are reported to have declared their intention to create a special operations team comprising both male and female military personnel. [80]

Have these women really opened the gate for female emancipation in their society of origin? It does not seem to be the case for the Chechens, the Tamils, or the Kurds, nor the Palestinians. The context of inclusion must be noted, female suicide bombings have occurred within terrorist infrastructures and with certain limits. Women’s participation has been included, to some extents, in times of war; it is doubtful that it would have taken place in times of peace.

Conclusion

When dealing with female suicide bombings, specifying the terrorist organization and background society becomes important. The reasons for women’s participation in deadly attacks vary greatly from one country to another, according to the factor of the background societies. It is hard to generalize among all cases, for this phenomenon is too recent and the attacks too few.

Either not enough research has been conducted yet on the phenomenon or the sample size is too small to make effective generalizations.

However, some similarities exist between specific country cases. In Sri Lanka or in Turkey, suicide bombing was commonly imposed upon the female members of the terrorist organizations. Both the Tamils and the Kurds share common features such as very traditional societies where women's roles are determined and static. The LTTE and the PKK offered women the opportunity that no other structure could ever offer them, with a background of feminism supporting their participation. The two groups were commanded by charismatic, unchallenged, and non-challengeable leaders, that trained women, just like men, to kill and die for the cause. Women were also eager to prove their devotion to the group, or were dictated to do so, as has been pointed out earlier concerning Sri Lanka. [81]

According to several of the preliminary studies that have been done on Palestinian female bombers, they represent a new model of suicide attackers. So far they are the only ones who volunteered for such missions. They are not trained nor were they prepared psychologically for the suicide attack. They did not need it for two reasons: first, they are not welcome in the paramilitary terrorist factions, dominated by men. Even if the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades have assisted women with bombings, they remain the only organization that has done so, and, even there, women are not welcome in the ranks of the fighters. The second reason is they do not need to be psychologically prepared is because the anti-Israeli propaganda has already influenced them, acting as a giant frantic "brainwash" session. Hatred and fanaticism already prevail in the Palestinian controlled areas, feeding off itself and perpetuating itself in an endless loop. [82] Palestinian women differ from the ones from other countries because they had options, they could have had a future, yet they deliberately refused it, and chose to die for the sake of martyrdom.

The SSNP/PPS does not exist anymore, nor does the PKK. Concerning future women suicide bombers in Chechnya, it is an unwelcome phenomenon, with critics far outweighing supporters. The LTTE will go on recruiting women, as they represent a useful wo/manpower, because they are less suspicious to opposing security forces and therefore have a better chance of success with these kinds of attacks.

Female suicide bombers appear to be one of the most extreme forms of exploitation of women, who become objectified, even if they think that their choice is subjective. It is by accepting their mission or volunteering for suicide bombings that they acquire the status of an object. When they agree to go on the missions, they become weapons in the hands of the men of the terrorist organizations.

APPENDIX

In Lebanon

The first suicide attack occurred on April 9, 1985, in Bater Al Shuf Jezzín when a young woman, Khyadali Sana who had joined the Party 3 months before, drove a suicide car which exploded near an IDF convoy, killing two Israeli soldiers and wounding two others. She stated that her motive was to “avenge the oppressive enemy.” From the Merari database.

In the Security Zone of Ras Al Bayda, on July 9, 1985, a 28 year old woman, Kharib Ibtisam carried on a suicide attack on an SLA post wounding 2 to 6 Israelis. She recorded a videotape, wearing a red hat and dressed in uniform, in which she asked her parents to forgive her, and stating her wish “ to kill as many Jews and their assistants as she could.” From the Merari database.

On September 11, 1985, in Hatzbaya, Lebanon, a suicide attack was perpetrated by 18 year old Khaierdin Miriam on an SLA checkpoint, wounding two people. From the Merari database.

On November 26, 1985, in the Falous village of Jezzín, in South Lebanon, a suicide attack on a SLA checkpoint, was conducted by 17-year-old Al Taher Hamidah. According to estimates, the car was packed with at least 100Kg of explosives.

On July 17, 1986, in Jezzín Lebanon, a 26-year-old woman, wounding 7 people, perpetrated a suicide attack targeting Lebanese agents. Norma Abu Hassan blew herself up when she saw soldiers searching for her. From the Merari database.

Another female suicide bombing was recorded in Lebanon on November 14, 1987. A 37-year-old woman, Shagir Karima Mahmud, carried an explosive charge hidden in a bag into AUB Hospital, in Beirut causing the death of 7 people, and injuring 20. From the Merari database.

On November 11, 1987, a similar attack was carried out at Beirut airport, by a 20 year old Sunni woman, Sahyouni Soraya when the suitcase she was carrying exploded too early and killed its carrier as well as 6 people and injured 73. In both cases, the charge was activated by a remote control, therefore it is possible that the women did not know their bags contained explosives. From the Merari Database.

In Turkey

On June 30, 1996, the first female PKK suicide bomber killed 6 Turkish soldiers, and injured 30 people. The explosives were strapped to her stomach as if she were pregnant.

On October 25 of the same year, a 17 year-old PKK activist launched a suicide bomb attack at the police headquarters in Adana, killing 5 people and injuring 12. Laila Kaplan was disguised as a pregnant woman.

Four days later, on October 29, in Sivas, 2 policemen and one civilian were killed in a suicide attack carried out by Otas Gular, a 29-year-old woman. The female PKK activist was dressed as a pregnant woman, and was accompanied by another member of the group. It was the third suicide bombing, all three committed by women, to use the appearance of maternity. Ocalan had urged his troops to imitate Hamas by becoming human bombs.

On November 17, 1998, Ozen Fatma, a PKK suicide bomber killed herself with a bomb strapped to her body in Yuksekova, outside a police station in southeast Turkey. She missed her main target, which was a military convoy. Nevertheless, 6 people were wounded in the attack.

On December 1st, 1998, in a small supermarket frequented by Turkish soldiers in Lice, a Kurdish woman blew herself up in a suicide attack. Fourteen people were injured.

A woman set a bomb outside an army barracks in East Turkey on December 24, 1998, killing herself and a passer-by, and wounding 22 people.

On March 4, 1999, a woman set off a bomb in the main square of Batman, Turkey. Four people were wounded; it seems that the bomb blew up prematurely, and the alleged target was a police station in the square.

On March 27, 1999, a 21 year-old woman, Esmâ Yurdakul, killed herself in a suicide attack in Istanbul. 10 people were injured.

On July 5, 1999, Rusen Tabanci, 19, flashed the “V for victory,” and detonated the bombs strapped to her body in Adana, wounding 17 people.

In Chechnya

On June 9, 2000, a young Muslim woman, Hawa Barayev, drove into a building housing Russian Special Forces, in Alkhan Kala, killing 27 soldiers. She was connected to the Chechen rebels who defended her in a very strong stand on their website. Hawa's last words were: "I know what I am doing, paradise has a price, and I hope this will be the price for Paradise." For the attack, a man accompanied the young suicide bomber, but this fact is not often referred to. [83]

According to the *English Pravda*, on November 29, 2001, a female suicide bomber, Luisa Gazueva, attempted to kill Commander Gaidar Gadzhiev in Urus Martan, killing 2 people, and wounding her target and his bodyguard, who later died of his wounds. [84] She was the young widow (in her late twenties) of a former member of an armed group. The rebels did not associate themselves with her attack, although she must not have acted completely alone.

In Israel

On Jan. 27, 2002, a 28-year-old woman walked into a shopping district on Jerusalem's Jaffa Road and blew herself up. Wafa Idriss, the perpetrator, killed one man, and wounded ninety people. She was divorced, without children, and worked as a paramedic for the Red Crescent. She lived at the Amari Refugee Camp near Ramallah. There are some questions about whether it was really intended, or if the bomb exploded too soon.

The second suicide bombing perpetrated by a woman occurred on February 27, 2002. 21-year-old Daren Abu Aysheh blew herself up at the Israeli Maccabim roadblock in West Ramallah (West Bank), wounding four Israelis. She was a student at Al-Najah University in Nablus, and came from the village of Beit Wazan, in the West Bank. She went to Hamas to volunteer, but was turned down. She was single, and her parents said she was religious.

On March 29, 2002, Ayat Akhras, an 18-year-old girl blew herself up in a Jerusalem supermarket in Kyriat Hayovel, killing two Israelis. She had previously taped a martyr statement. The Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades (allied to Arafat's Fatah) claimed responsibility. She was engaged to Shali Abu Laban, and came from the Dehaisha Refugee Camp, near Bethlehem.

On April 12, 2002, Andaleeb Takafka, a 20-year-old girl from Bethlehem, detonated a belt full of explosives at a Jerusalem bus stop, killing six Israelis, and injuring sixty. She was a Tanzim operative from Bethlehem.

Some women were arrested before the intended attacks, while others refused to carry out the

bombings. These women are Tawriya Hamamra, Arin Ahmed, Shefa'a Alkudsi, and Shiriz Rabi.

On May 30, 2002, Tawriya Hamamra was supposed to carry out an attack in Jerusalem. She volunteered for the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, and received an hour of training. This 25-year-old woman from a village near Jenin in the West Bank, said in an interview that her reasons for conducting such an attack were personal, and not political. She backed out, and was caught afterwards by the IDF. [85]

The 20 year old Arin Ahmed from Bethlehem, a student in Business Administration, volunteered to carry out an attack to avenge the death of her Tanzim fiancée. She was supposed to commit the bombing in Rishon LeTzion during the last week of April 2002, along with another martyr, the 16-year-old Issa Badir, who went through with his mission, and blew himself up. She changed her mind and did not carry out her attack. She was arrested in June 2002 by the IDF.

A 26 year old divorced mother of a young child, Shefa'a Alkudsi planned to commit a suicide bombing. She was arrested by the IDF on April 11, 2002.

On June 13, 2002, a 15-year-old girl from Bethlehem confessed after interrogation by the IDF that the Tanzim had recruited her through her uncle, for the purpose of conducting a martyr mission.

On June 14, 2002, Israeli security forces apprehended two female would-be suicide terrorists. [86]

On July 27, 2002, Umayya Mohammed Danaj, a 28-year-old woman, was arrested on her way to commit a suicide bombing in Israel. [87]

SOURCES

ABC News Internet Site

(http://www.abcnews.go.com/sections/world/DailyNews/srilanka000106_blast.html); “Death Wish: Suicide Bombers Have Historic Links and Tactical Advantages” (<http://www.abcnews.com>); January 30, 2002 (<http://www.abcnews.go.com/sections/world/DailyNews/suicide020416.html>).

Al-Ahram Weekly, May 3-9 2001.

Alfonso Chardy, “Parents Try to Keep Kids from Becoming Suicide Bombers” (<http://www.macon.com/mld/macon/news/3331730.htm>).

The American International Public Affairs Committee Internet Site (<http://www.aipac.org/documents/commanderoffaithfulner.html>).

Ana Cutter, “Tamil Tigresses, Hindu Martyrs” (<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/sipa/PUBS/SLANT/SPRING98/article5.html>).

The Anti-Defamation League Internet Site (http://www.adl.org/Israel/israel_thwarted_attacks.asp).

The Atlantic, September/October, 2000.

Arutz 7, June 1, 2001 (IsraelNationalNews.com).

BBC News Internet Site, December 2, 2001

(http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/world/middle_east/1249937.stm); January 1, 2002 (http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/south_asia/newsid_1789000/1789503.stm); January 29, 2002 (http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/south_asia/newsid_1789000/1789503.stm); January 30, 2002 (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/world/middle_east/1787000/1787510.stm); January 31, 2002 (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/world/middle_east/1794000/1794382.stm); April 30, 2002.

Bernard-Henri Levy, *Reflections on War, Evil, and the End of History* (France: Grasset and Fasquelle, 2001).

Boaz Ganor, “Defining Terrorism, Is One Man’s Terrorist Another Man’s Freedom Fighter?” (Herzlia: ICT Publication, 1998), pp. 12-17. “Suicide Attacks in Israel” (Herzlia: Countering Suicide Terrorism, An International Conference, The International Policy Institute for Counter-

Terrorism, 2001), pp. 140-145.

Catharine Goldsmith, "Terrorists Because They are Women" (*Intersec*, 1992), pp. 263-4.

Chechen Pro-Rebel Internet Site *Azzam.com* and *qoqaz.net*
(<http://66.96.205.195/~azzam/qoqaz/html/profileshawaa.htm>,
<http://victorymartyrdom.150m.com/martyrs.html>,
<http://66.96.205.195/~azzam/qoqaz/html/articlesistersinjihad.htm>).

Cherif Bassiouni, *Perspectives on Terrorism* (USA: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1985).

The Christian Science Monitor, April 16, 2002.

The Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers Internet Site (www.child-soldiers.org/report2001/countries/sri_lanka.html).

Courier International, June 20, 2002.

The Daily Mirror, October 16, 2001.

Daniel Georges-Abeyie, *Perspectives on Terrorism* (USA: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1985).

Dawn-International Internet Site, April 2002 (<http://www.dawn.com/2002/04/02/int3.htm>).

"Did Hawa Barayev commit suicide or achieve martyrdom?"
(http://www.geocities.com/sadiqurnet/islamic_ruling_martyrdom.html).

Dogu Ergil, "Suicide Terrorism in Turkey: the Workers' Party of Kurdistan" (Herzlia: Countering Suicide Terrorism, An International Conference, The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, 2001), pp. 105-114, 118-128.

Donna Abu-Nasr, "Saudi: Suicide Bombings, Not Terrorism", April 16, 2001
(http://www.dunamai.com/articles/Islam/Saudi_suicide_bombings_not_terrorism.htm).

Ehud Sprinzak, "Rational Fanatics", *Foreign Policy Magazine*, September, 2000.

Elaine Donnelly, "The Suicide Sisterhood", *National Review Online*, April 26, 2002.

Eli Karmon, "The Arrest of Ocalan: the Last Stage in the Turkey-PKK Showdown", ICT Internet Site (http://www.ict.org.il/articles/ocalan_arrest.htm).

The English Pravda Internet Site (<http://english.pravda.ru/hotspots/2001/11/30/22499.html>,
<http://english.pravda.ru/hotspots/2001/11/29/22395.html>,
<http://english.pravda.ru/region/2001/12/11/23396.html>).

Eric Herren, "Counter Terrorism Dilemmas" from the ICT Internet Site
(<http://www.ict.org.il/articles/articledet.cfm?articleid=432>).

Eviatar Ben-Zedeck, "The Rise and Fall of the Israeli Female Warriors of the Chen" (Draft prepared for presentation at the Biennial International Conference of the Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society (IUS), Baltimore, Maryland, October 19-21, 2001).

Far Eastern Economic Review, June 1, 2000.

Farnaz Fassih, "On Gaza Women explore new trend: female suicide bombers", Newhouse News Service, July 14, 2002
(http://www.cleveland.com/world/plaindealer/index.ssf?/xml/story.ssf/html_standard).

Jane's International Security News, September 17, 2001.

The Jerusalem Post, August 6, 2001 and January 28, 2002.

G. R. Perlstein and H. J. Vetter, "Women and Terrorism: the Need for Research", *Defense Analysis Report* (Great Britain, 1991), p. 96.

The Guardian Unlimited, January 28, 2002 and March 30, 2002.

Human Rights Center Memorial Internet Site, "Terror with Terror."
(<http://www.memo.ru/eng/memhrc/texts/terror.shtml>).

International Herald Tribune, June 22-23, 2002.

Islam About Internet Site (<http://www.islam.about.com/library/weekly/aa051801a.htm>).

Islam On Line Internet Site, "Dareen Abu Aysheh: Number Two Woman Martyr", February 28, 2002 (<http://www.islamonline.net>).

Israeli Defense Forces Internet Site, "Prevention of Suicide Attack That was Planned to be Carried out by a Woman", May 22, 2002
(<http://www.idf.il/english/announcements/2002/may/22.stm>) and "Subject: Special Information on Shahid Wafa Idriss", February 14, 2002
(<http://www.idf.il/Involvement/english/document1.html>).

Israel Embassy Internet Site, "The Exploitation of Palestinian Women for Terrorism", May 18, 2002 (<http://www.israelemb.org/articals/2002/April/2002042201.html>).

The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs Internet Site, "Use of Ambulances and Medical Vehicles by Palestinian Terrorist Organizations" February 14, 2002
(<http://mfa.gov.il/mfa/go.asp?MFAH01690>).

Israel National News Internet Site, "PA Encouraging Women Suicide Bombers"
(<http://www.israelnn.com/news.php3?id=20488>).

Jessica Stern, *The Ultimate Terrorists* (USA: Harvard University Press, 1999), pp. 81-85.

JewishWorld Review Internet Site, February 5, 2002,
(http://www.jewishworldreview.com/0202/women_warriors.asp).

Laurence Zelic Freedman and Yonah Alexander, *Perspectives on Terrorism* (USA: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1985), pp. 25, 71-84, 177-200.

Martha Crenshaw, "Suicide Terrorism in Comparative Perspective" (Herzlia: Countering Suicide Terrorism, An International Conference, The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, 2001), pp. 24-26.

Michael Sheehan, "Fundamentalist Terrorism: Introduction" (Herzlia: Countering Suicide Terrorism, An International Conference, The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, 2001), pp. 62-63.

Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) Internet Site, "Wafa Idris: the Celebration of the 1st Female Palestinian Suicide Bomber, Parts I and II," February, 2002
(<http://memri.org/bin/opener.cgi?Page=archives&ID=IA8402> and
<http://memri.org/bin/opener.cgi?Page=archives&ID=IA8302>).

M. Goldin, "Palestinian Woman Bomber Bows out of Suicide Attack", Reuters at

yahoonews.com, May 30, 2002.

Middle East Times, February, 28 2002 (http://www.metimes.com/2k2/issue2002-14/women/fadlallah_condones_female.htm).

The Los Angeles Times, June 10, 2002.

Le Monde, June 12, 2002.

Muttaqun Internet Site, "Suicide According to Quran and Sunna."
(<http://www.muttaqun.com.suicide.html>).

National Review Internet Site, "Suicide Sisterhood", April 26, 2002
(<http://www.nationalreview.com/comment-donnely042602.asp>); "They've Got the Power, Confusing Diplomacy and Reality in the Mideast", July 24, 2002
(<http://www.nationalreview.com/comment/comment-singer072402.asp>).

The New York Times, April 15, 2002 and June 21, 2002.

The Palestinian Media Watch Bulletin, March 12, 2002 (<http://www.science.co.il/Arab-Israeli-conflict/Articles/Marcus-2002-03-12.asp>).

PKK Party Program, Chapter 3, ICT Internet Site
(<http://www.ict.org.il/documents/documentdet.cfm?docid=27>).

Reuven Paz, "Suicide Terrorist Operations in Chechnya, An Escalation of the Islamist Struggle", from the ICT Internet Site. "The Saudi Fatwa Against Suicide Terrorism", The Washington Institute for Near East Policy Internet Site, May 2, 2002
(<http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/watch/Peacewatch/peacewatch2001/323.htm>). "The Islamic Legitimacy of Suicide Terrorism" (Herzlia: Countering Suicide Terrorism, An International Conference, The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, 2001), pp. 86-93.

Rohan Gunaratna, "International and Regional Implications of the Sri Lanka Tamil Insurgency", from the ICT Internet Site (<http://www.ict.org.il>). "Suicide Terrorism: a Global Threat", *Jane's Intelligence Review* Internet Site
(http://janes.com/security/international_security/news/usscole/jir001020_1_n.shtml). "LTTE Child Combatants", *Jane's Intelligence Review*, July, 1998. "Suicide Terrorism in Sri Lanka and India" (Herzlia: Countering Suicide Terrorism, An International Conference, The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, 2001), pp. 97-104.

Shaul Shay, "Suicide Terrorism in Lebanon" (Herzlia: Countering Suicide Terrorism, An International Conference, The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, 2001), pp. 130-132.

S. Jordan, "The Women Who Would Die for Allah," January 14, 2002.

"Sri Lanka" (http://www.childsoldiers.org/report2001/countries/sri_lanka.html).

The Sunday Times, March 15, 1998 and March 5, 2000 and March 5, 2002.

The Times Internet Site (<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,482-337310,00.html>), "Sri Lankan Police Order Female "LTTE suspect" to Strip Publicly at Gunpoint"
(<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,482-337310,00.htm>).

USA Today, April 22, 2002.

Vered Levy-Barzilai, "On Suicide Bombers and Humanity"
(<http://www.indybay.org/news/2002/06/133996.php>).

Walter Laqueur, *The Age of Terrorism* (USA: Little, Brown and Company, 1987), p.80.

Yoram Schweitzer, "Suicide Terrorism: Developments and Characteristics" (Herzlia: Countering Suicide Terrorism, An International Conference, The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, 2001), pp. 75-83. "Suicide Bombings: the Ultimate Weapon?", ICT Internet Site (<http://www.ict.org.il/articles/articledet.cfm?articleid=373>).

Waheeda Carvello, "The Impact of Marginalizing Women in the Islamic Movement" (Paper presented at the Seerah Conference, The Institute of Contemporary Thought and Crescent International, 2000). Muslimedia Internet Site (<http://www.muslimedia.com/archives/movement00/wom-move.htm>).

The Washington Post, July 14, 2002; June 25, 2002; April 11, 2002 and April 27, 2002.

"Worst Form of Child Labor"

(<http://www.globalmarch.org/worstformsreport/world/srilanka.html>).

ENDNOTES:

- [1] Boaz Ganor, *Countering Suicide Terrorism: an Overview* (Herzlia: Countering Suicide Terrorism, An International Conference, The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, 2001), p. 134.
- [2] Martha Crenshaw, *ibid.*, p. 26.
- [3] Whether Western, Muslim, or both, they are all patriarchal. Like Ben-Zedeff justly points out: “in the Western culture –basically patriarchal-... man is supposed to be a killer, while a woman is not.” Eviatar Ben-Zedeff, “The Rise and Fall of the Israeli Female Warriors of the Chen” (Draft prepared for presentation at the Biennial International Conference of the Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society (IUS), Baltimore, Maryland, October 19-21, 2001), p. 8.
- [4] Sprinzak reports that Ariel Merari, a psychologist teaching at Tel Aviv University, “concluded there is no single psychological or demographic profile of suicide terrorists.” Ehud Sprinzak, “Rational Fanatics”, *Foreign Policy Magazine*, September, 2000.
- [5] Daniel Georges-Abeyie, *Perspectives on Terrorism* (USA: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1985), p. 84.
- [6] Yoram Schweitzer, *Countering Suicide Terrorism: an Overview*, p. 82.
- [7] Yoram Schweitzer, *ibid.*, p. 82.
- [8] Yoram Schweitzer, “Suicide Bombing the Ultimate Weapon?”, ICT Internet Site (<http://www.ict.org.il/articles/articledet.cfm?articleid=373>).
- [9] Farnaz Fassihi, “Gaza Women Explore New Trends”, Newhouse News Service, July 14, 2002 (http://www.cleveland.com/world/plaindealer/index.ssf?xml/story.ssf/html_standard).
- [10] Itaf Alayan was arrested by the IDF before committing a suicide bombing in Jerusalem. She was released in 1993, when the Oslo Agreements were signed, according to the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) Internet Site, “Wafa Idris: the celebration of the 1st female Palestinian suicide bomber, Part I and II,” February 2002 (<http://memri.org/bin/opener.cgi?Page=archives&ID=IA8402>).
- [11] The female suicide bombers that successfully conducted the attacks, and those who did not, ranged from every social, educational, professional and religious background.
- [12] However, Al Aqsa has declared that they will have soon training squads for women.
- [13] Ergil writes about “the extraordinary conditions PKK fighters have to confront due to the fugitive nature of the group –incessant battles, constant fleeing, hiding in caves and caverns, sharing everything..., crossing borders into foreign lands...” Dogu Ergil, “Suicide Terrorism in Turkey: the Workers’ Party of Kurdistan” (Herzlia: *Countering Suicide Terrorism*, An International Conference, The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, 2001), p. 111.
- [14] Dogu Ergil, *ibid.*, p. 112.
- [15] Dogu Ergil, *ibid.*, p. 106.
- [16] Dogu Ergil, *ibid.*, p. 121.
- [17] Dogu Ergil, *ibid.*, p. 106.
- [18] Dogu Ergil, *ibid.*, p. 109.

[19] Most of the suicide bombings were not executed on a volunteer basis: they were handpicked for their missions, but involved “a considerable degree of coercion.” Dogu Ergil, *ibid.*, p. 113.

[20] Concerning the SSPN/PPS, Schweitzer refers to the romantic incentive of some of the women who conducted the attacks in the name of the organization. Apparently, in some cases “romantic feelings were involved.”

[21] Dogu Ergil, *ibid.*, p. 128.

[22] Laqueur makes an interesting comment on women’s participation in German terrorist groups, which it could apply to the women in the PKK: “having cut themselves off from society, women found the way back, to their families or to a normal life, more difficult.” Walter Laqueur, *The Age of Terrorism*, (USA: Little, Brown and Company, 1987), p.80.

[23] Ocalan acknowledged women’s willingness to participate in the “freedom fight,” as illustrated by the *PKK Party Program*, in which he defines women as having “an enormous social revolutionary dynamic.” *PKK Party Program*, Paragraph 3.

[24] The international media reported the story of a 14 year old girl who had been kidnapped when she was 8 by the LTTE, and stayed in the group up until her arrest by Sri Lankan forces. (<http://www.globalmarch.org/worstformsreport/world/srilanka.html>).

[25] Which encourages laxity on the part of the army when patting down people.

[26] Bernard Henri-Levy, *Reflections on War, Evil and the End of History*, (France: Grasset and Fasquelle, 2001), p. 56.

[27] BBC News Internet Site

(http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/south_asia/newsid_1789000/1789503.stm).

[28] Pro-rebel Chechen Internet Site

(<http://66.96.205.195/~azzam/qoqaz/html/profileshawaa.htm>).

[29] The explosive belt that she carried for the attack had to be furnished by an armed group or person. However, no one admitted responsibility nor help for an attack that fulfilled the aim of the rebels: to kill and scare the Russians. She may have been motivated out of personal revenge for relatives of her and her husband who were part of an armed group that was killed by the Russian army.

[30] During the first Intifada in 1987, women were amongst the violent protestors. However, women were more active in their important role as mothers, raising their children with stories and ideals of martyrdom.

[31] Much of the infrastructure in the PA controlled zone, like schools and hospitals, are managed and funded by Hamas, and sensitize the women as well to the holy war and martyrdom. However, the rhetoric is intended for the Palestinian population as a whole rather than specifically targeting the Palestinian women.

[32] It is ironically paradoxical that Hamas originated from the Muslim Brotherhood, which had its equivalent in the Muslim Sisterhood, and that gave importance to women as fighters of the Jihad as well.

[33] G.R. Perlstein and H.J. Vetter, “Women and Terrorism: the Need for Research,” *Defense Analysis Report*, p. 96.

[34] The Chechens encourage women to join the jihad as evidenced by the Chechens' recommendation of what a sister's role should be.

[35] However, one does wonder with regard to coercion: is this a tool used on both men and women, but is simply talked about because we are dealing with women? Does it occur for men too, and just goes unnoticed?

[36] Such was the case for the PKK as Professor Ergul has stated, but there are also assumptions regarding the LTTE (which recruits young girls), and with the Fatah Tanzim, regarding women who claim to have doubts and refuse to carry out the missions for which they volunteered.

[37] Martha Crenshaw, *Countering Suicide Bombing*, p. 29.

[38] Hence not many women participate in fundamentalist groups' terrorist activities, for a woman's role is often described in the Quran as a passive role, limited to the household and children's raising.

[39] We can also note the importance of absolute, extremely charismatic and unchallenged leaders, such as Ocalan for the PKK and Prabhakaran for the LTTE.

[40] Ehud Sprinzak, "Rational Fanatics".

[41] Rohan Gunaratna, ICT Internet Site (<http://www.ict.org.il/articles/articldet.cfm?articleid=57>).

[42] The Coalition to stop the use of Child Soldiers Internet Site (www.child-soldiers.org/report2001/countries/sri_lanka.html).

[43] http://www.geocities.com/sadiqurnet/islamic_ruling_martyrdom.html

[44] It is recommended though that girls benefit too from the apprentices of Jihad training as a part of children's education. The role of woman is important because when the fighter cannot work, hence provide income for the family, then she is required to take on that task. Chechen Pro-Rebel Internet Site *Azzam.com* and *qoqaz.net* (<http://victorymartyrdom.150m.com/martyrs.html>, <http://66.96.205.195/~azzam/qoqaz/html/articlesistersinjihad.htm>).

[45] *Al-Ahram Weekly*, May 3-9 2001. Reuven Paz highlights the same point in "The Saudi Fatwa against suicide terrorism", The Washington Institute for Near East Policy Internet Site, May 2, 2002.

[46] *Jane's International Security*, September, 2001.

[47] Arutz 7, "More on the Muslim View of Suicide Bombing", June 1, 2001.

[48] *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, January 31, 2002. MEMRI.

[49] *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, February 2, 2002. Ibid.

[50] *Jerusalem Post*, March 1, 2002.

[51] *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, January 31, 2002. MEMRI.

[52] *Al-Sha'ab*, February 1, 2002. Ibid.

[53] Martha Crenshaw, *Countering Suicide Bombing*, p. 26.

[54] Ana Cutter, "Tamil Tigresses, Hindu Martyrs".

[55] Rape is used as a tactic in war. By raping the women, men hurt both genders at the same time. Not only do they get to humiliate the women, but they also attack the very basic structure of the society, the family unit. By undermining a population at its very roots, the rest will crumble very quickly. Women, as the victims of rape are ashamed, terrified and stained forever on a psychological and physical level. The husbands and the families of the victims feel ashamed too, and often reject these war victims. In these societies, the honor of a man is proved and saved by the “purity” of his wife or mother’s. If a woman’s “integrity” (of the womb) is stained, the men will not be willing to reintegrate her into the family.

[56] The Palestinian Media Watch has translated a survey from *Al-Ayyam* reporting that 96% of female university students expressed support for suicide attacks”. *Al-Ayyam*, February 7, 2002. Ehud Sprinzak, *Rational Fanatics*.

[57] Farnaz Fassihi, “Gaza Women Explore New Trend: Female Suicide Bombers”. Newhouse News Service, July 14, 2002
(http://www.cleveland.com/world/plaindealer/index.ssf/?xml/story.ssf/html_standard).

[58] However, as the Arab Human Development Report 2002 points out, even if there are some improvements in gender equality in education for instance, “these achievements have not succeeded in countering gender-based social attitudes and norms that exclusively stress women’s reproductive role”. *The Washington Post*, July 14, 2002.

[59] IDF Internet Site, *The Jerusalem Post*.

[60] BBC News Internet Site, “Symbolic Funerals for Female Bombers”, January 31, 2002.

[61] Farnaz Fassihi, “Gaza Women Explore New Trend: Female Suicide Bombers.”

[62] It also seems that some were stigmatized when they were alive. For example, Wafa Idriss was divorced because she could not have children.

[63] *The Jerusalem Post*, January 28, 2002.

[64] Cherif Bassiouni, *Perspectives on Terrorism*, p. 181.

[65] Rohan Gunaratna, “International and Regional Implications of the Sri Lanka Tamil Insurgency”, ICT Internet Site (<http://www.ict.org>).

[66] This raises some questions about the presence of female terrorists in other locales. In Sri Lanka for instance, it is not something special, but is that because women are more integrated in social activities? Or is it just because it has been a long time since they began to participate in the fight of the Tamils?

[67] Times on Line Internet Site (<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,482-337310,00.htm>). Article by Michael Gove, “These Killers are Neither Hopeless Nor Victims, Sympathy for Suicide Bombers is a Sign of Western Moral Failure.”

[68] *The Atlantic*, September/October, 2000.

[69] The Palestinian Media Watch Bulletin Internet Site (<http://www.science.co.il/Arab-Israeli-conflict/Articles/Marcus-2002-03-12.asp>).

[70] *Al-Aqbar*, February 1, 2002. Memri, “Wafa Idris: the Celebration of the 1st Female Palestinian Suicide Bomber, Part II”,
(<http://memri.org/bin/opener.cgi?Page=archives&ID=IA8402>).

- [71] *The Christian Science Monitor*, April 16, 2002.
- [72] *Jane Review*, April, 2002.
- [73] Walter Laqueur, *The Age of Terrorism*, p. 80.
- [74] Catherine Goldsmith, "Terrorists Because They are Women". (*Intersec*, 1992), pp. 263-4.
- [75] Macon Internet Site (<http://www.macon.com/mld/macon/news/3331730.htm>).
- [76] Rohan Gunaratna, ICT Internet Site (<http://www.ict.org.il/articles/articledet.cfm?articleid=57>).
- [77] For example, in Gaza, half of the inhabitants are under 15 years old.
- [78] Cherif Bassiouni, *Perspectives on Terrorism*, p. 184.
- [79] National Review Internet Site "They've Got the Power, Confusing Diplomacy and Reality in the Mideast", July 24, 2002 (<http://www.nationalreview.com/comment/comment-singer072402.asp>).
- [80] *Sunday Times*, March 5, 2000.
- [81] Ergil mentions it concerning the PKK and notes that it was encouraged by the male dominated PKK leadership as an appropriate venue for women who are physically weaker than men. Dogu Ergil, *Countering Suicide Terrorism*, pp. 107, 122.
- [82] Which includes the women that want to fight too. A vicious circle has been set in place, wherein the attacks justify the Israeli reoccupation and increased restrictions on the population. Then the reoccupation and harsher Israeli security measures encourage more suicide attacks, which are viewed as the best method to end the occupation.
- [83] Reuven Paz theorizes that other rebels, located near the explosion, might have triggered the explosives by remote control, rather than the suicide bombers themselves. Reuven Paz, "Suicide Terrorist Operations in Chechnya", ICT Internet Site (<http://www.ict.org.il/spotlight/det.cfm?id=443>).
- [84] The English Pravda Internet Site (<http://english.pravda.ru/hotspots/2001/11/30/22499.html> and <http://www.memo.ru/eng/memhrc/texts/terror.shtml>).
- [85] Israeli Defense Forces Internet Site, "Prevention of Suicide Attack That was Planned to be Carried out by a Woman", May 22, 2002 (<http://www.idf.il/english/announcements/2002/may/22.stm>).
- [86] The Anti-Defamation League (http://www.adl.org/Israel/israel_thwarted_attacks.asp).
- [87] The Anti-Defamation League (http://www.adl.org/Israel/israel_thwarted_attacks.asp).

