UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

SHADOWS IN THE COGNITIVE TERRAIN:

SUICIDE TERRORISM AND THE ROLE OF IDEOLOGY

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

By

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Norman, Oklahoma
2016

SHADOWS IN THE COGNITIVE TERRAIN:
SUICIDE TERRORISM AND THE ROLE OF IDEOLOGY

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Acknowledgements

I want to thank my thesis committee, John Fishel, Joshua Landis, and Alan McPherson, for putting up with this process, and all the people at the UWAC and TRAC who have been my mentors, friends, allies, and encouragers.

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Chapter 1: Introduction, the Individual Logic of Suicide Terrorism

Outside the Shia town of Fua in Syria, a young and frightened Uzbek militant named Jafar al-Tayyar sits in the open deck of an armored personal carrier. Jafar, barely in his 20s, bursts into tears. His comrades in Al Qaeda's al-Nusra front, one of two competing militant Islamist groups in Syria (the other being the Islamic State of Syria and Iraq (ISIS)), quickly surround the deck. They embrace and encourage the young man. One of his friends tells him, "Jafar, my brother, don't be afraid. When you are scared, remember Allah." Jafar responds, "I'm just scared I won't succeed."[1] Jafar composes himself, wipes his face, and starts to drive the explosives laden carrier along a barren road into town.

Al-Nusra members record the scene from two perspectives, with a handheld camera that catches the martyrdom encouragement and with a unarmed aerial vehical (UAV) that will catch the act of martyrdom itself. The UAV hovers into the sky, follows the car from a distance, tracks the car turning into downtown, and records an explosion from the center of town. The al-Nusra video narrator describes Jafar as the first martyr from Mawarannahr, the Arabic name for the area of Central Asia that straddles the borders of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Krygrstan, and Kazakhstan, likely mentioned to recruit more martyrs from Central Asia.

The event represents many trends, developments, and questions concerning modern suicide bombing campaigns:

- The human smart bomb, guiding a payload to a destination that otherwise could not be reached without sophisticated technology

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[1] Webb, Sam. "Suicide bomber bursts into tears and is comforted by jihadis before lethal attack in Syria." *The Mirror.* 23 September 2015. http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/suicide-bomber-bursts-tears-comforted-6497847

- The required organizational support and encouragement for the individual to go through with the attack
- The notion of national identity, or lack thereof, and the transnational (or supranational) component of modern suicide bombing campaigns
- The decision-making of the suicide bomber himself—his inner conflict and emotions
- The cult of martyrdom, to recruit future volunteers to replenish the arsenal
- The motivational power of sacred values (jihad, martyrdom) substantiating the act of martyrdom

More suicide attacks occurred in 2014 than in any previous year. The University of Chicago's Project on Security and Terrorism (CPOST) open source database registered 545 suicide attacks in 2014, beating the previous high of 525 in 2007.[2] The University of Maryland's Study of Terrorism and the Response to Terrorism (START) records a whopping 738 suicide attacks in 2014.[3] The Institution for National Security Studies of Tel Aviv records increases in suicide attacks from 2013 to 2014 in the following countries: Iraq (177%), Yemen (190%), Lebanon (333%, from 3 to 13), Afghanistan (94%), Nigeria (937%, from 3 to 32), and Libya (1000%, from 1 to 11).[4] Figure 1 below represents the dramatic increase in suicide attacks by year, displayed by target type (Total, Security-Military, Security-Police, Government, Civilian, and Informal Groups, which are attacks against competing insurgent groups).

The number of suicide attacks in Iraq in 2014 was the highest since 2008 and accounted for 45 percent of all such attacks in the world. As radicalized fighters return from conflicts abroad, many have been primed for suicide missions—and can bring that

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[2] Chicago Project on Security and Terrorism (CPOST). 2015. Suicide Attack Database (September 30, 2015 Release). [Data File]. Retrieved from http://cpostdata.uchicago.edu/

[3] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2015). Global Terrorism Database [Data file]. Retrieved from http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd

[4] Schweitzer, Yoram, and Ariel Levin, Eian Yogev. "Suicide Attacks in 2014: The Global Picture." The Institution for National Security Studies. INSS Insight No. 653, January 6, 2015. http://www.inss.org.il/uploadImages/systemFiles/No.%20653%20-%20Yoram,%20Ariel,%20and%20Einav%20for%20web522242107.pdf (Accessed 17 October 2015). 1.

mindset and institutional knowledge back home. Europol estimates that 3,500 to 5,000 jihadists returned to Europe from the conflict in Syria.[5] Suicide terrorism is not going away, as demonstrated by the October 2015 suicide attacks in France, the March 2016 suicide attacks in Belgium, and the continued suicide bombing campaigns in Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, and Nigeria.

Figure 1 –Global Suicide Attacks, by Target, by Year, All Time
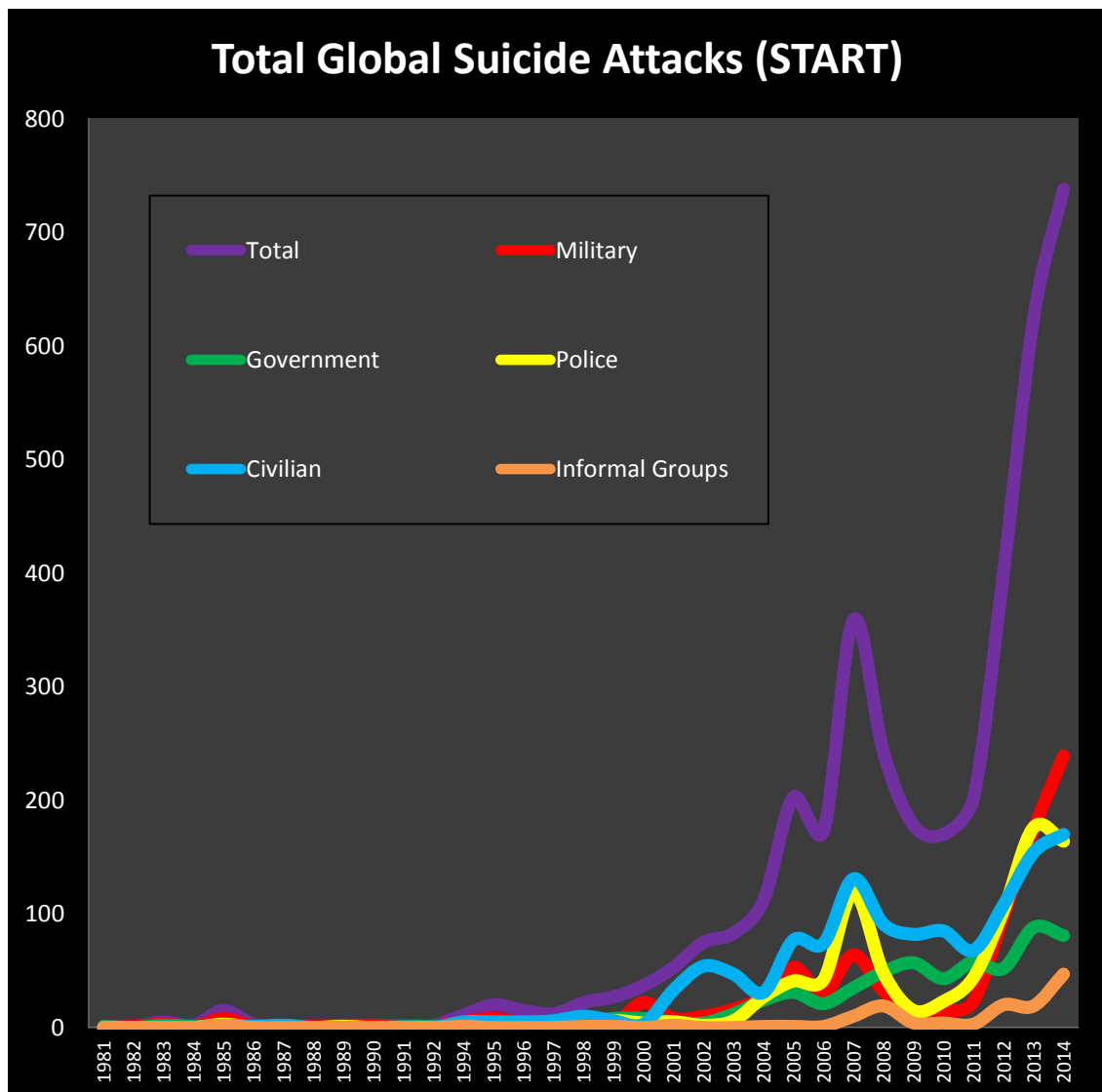
[5] Dearden, Lizzie. "ISIS: Up to 5,000 Jihadists could be in Europe after Returning from Terror Campaigns Abroad." *The Guardian.* 20 February 2016. (Accessed 23 March 2016).

In terms of effective kill rate, the suicide bomb is one of the most devastating attacks an organization can conduct. Suicide bombings kill more civilians than any other terror attack, including Improvised Explosive Devices (IED), with an average of twelve killed per attack. The conventional terrorist incident only kills one person per attack.[6] The leader of Al Qaeda, Ayman Zawahiri, describes the suicide bomb as the "most successful in inflicting damage on the opponent and the least costly in terms of casualties among the Mujahedeen."[7] Because of these characteristics, suicide bombing campaigns present a difficult challenge to security forces, particularly when these forces must provide security to soft targets. The second order effects of terrifying the enemy populace, which is the political center of gravity among democracies, increases its viability as a tool.

The purpose of this paper is to answer *why* individuals will voluntarily kill themselves to kill civilians, and in doing so, explain the dramatic rise in suicide attacks beginning in 2000. No model to explain suicide terrorism will work if it ignores the method of payload delivery. A suicide attack, by definition, is one in which the tactic succeeds *only* through the intentional suicide of the attacker.[8] Suicide terrorism

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[6] Hafez, Mohammed M. *Suicide Bombers in Iraq the Strategy and Ideology of Martyrdom*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2007. 9

[7] "Part 11 of New Book by Egyptian Islamic Jihad Leader Ayman Al-Zawahiri." Open Source Center. December 12, 2001. GMP2001121200008.

[8] Assaf Moghadam in "Suicide Terrorism, Occupation, and the Globalization of Martyrdom: A Critique of Dying to Win" (710) describes this tension in the discourse between suicide attack as an act of war and suicide attack as an act of terrorism. His discernment between the two is the characteristic of the target. It is an act in war if the target is a combatant (military target), it is an act of terrorism if the target is a noncombatant (civilian target). The dilemma in developing a theory for suicide terrorism is that hybrid organizations that have regular formations and terrorist cells operating among the masses use the tacti, and these groups use it to some varying degree against both military targets and civilian targets. The groups using the tactic do not make it easy for outsiders to dileneate between "war" and "terrorism" other than assessing on a group by group basis the varying use against targets.

conflates two separate moral acts—murder and suicide.[9] Thus, to explain the

phenomenon, we must incorporate the decision making of the individual to transgress

two separate moral boundaries.

In suicide terrorism, there are five motives why an individual will kill himself

and kill others. These motives may overlap to some degree, but they cover a spectrum

of external to internal drivers. The first external driver is *coercion*. Some suicide

bombers are forced by the organization to conduct a suicide attack. The Kurdistan

Worker's Party (PKK) and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) conscripted

their respective bombers, and those who would not go through with the act would be

ostracized from the community.[10] The second motive is *financial incentive*. In the

early 2000s, Iraqi's Saddam Hussein funneled money from the United Nations (UN)

oil-for-food program intended to feed Iraqi civilians to the families of Palestinian

suicide bombers, with payments to each family between $15,000-25,000.[11] Thus, some

Palestinians likely choose to become a martyr in able to help their struggling families.

The third motive is *revenge*, which straddles external and internal drivers. For example,

one female Chechen martyr conducted a suicide attack near the Russian military unit

responsible for the torture and death of her husband.[12] Similar stories can be found in

other suicide bombing campaigns. The fourth motive is to *escape from life*. Some

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[9] Lewis, Jeffrey William. *The Business of Martyrdom: A History of Suicide Bombing*. Annapolis, Md: Naval Institute Press, 2012. 43.

[10] International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism (Israel), and Interdisciplinary Center (Hertseliyah, Israel). Countering Suicide Terrorism An International Conference: February 20-23, 2000, Herzliya, Israel. Herzliya, Israel: International Policy Institute for Counter Terrorism, 2001. 113.

[11] Grace, Francie. "Saddam's Suicide Bomb Funds." *CBS News.* 17 November 2004. http://www.cbsnews.com/news/saddams-suicide-bomb-funds/

[12] Reuter, John. "Chechnya's Suicide Bombers: Desperate, Devout, or Deceived?" *The American Committee for Peace in Chechnya.* September 16th, 2004. 11.

suicide bombers may have been suffering from major depression disorder, and used the martyrdom narrative as a socially acceptable means to commit suicide.[13]

The focus of this paper is on the fifth group—those bombers that are inspired by an ideologically driven narrative that encourages and incentivizes murder-suicide. These true believers may be influenced by underlying psychological drivers, but these drivers are not necessarily depression nor suicidal thoughts. The psychological drivers become intertwined with the sacred values of the ideology, to the extent that the individual's needs and the needs of his perceived in-group are one and the same. This paper reviews research on social identity theory, intergroup hostility, suicide ideation, and the history of suicide terrorism's most influential organizations in order to explain how ideology influences the individual's will to become a suicide bomber.

Understanding the individual logic of suicide terrorism is vital to completely explaining the use of the tactic. The organization's political objectives, the role of culture, and the functional capabilities of the tactic in asymmetric warfare are important as well. But no explanation is complete unless it can address why the individual goes through with murder-suicide. The acknowledgement of the fifth group is important because measures can mitigate the other four groups. Coerced bombers are dependent entirely on the organization—defeat the organization, and the tactic is defeated. For example, there has not been a suicide attack in Sri Lanka since the Sri Lankan government defeated the LTTE militarily, specifically after the death of the LTTE leader Villapai Prabhakharan. Interdiction on external financial support can reduce the number suicide attacks among those motivated. If occupying forces do not wantonly

[13] Lankford, Adam. 2010. "Suicide Terrorism as a Socially Approved Form of Suicide".*Crisis: The Journal of Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention.* 31, no. 6: 287-289.

kill innocent civilians, then the revenge motive is reduced across a potential segment of the population. Albeit challenging, similar interventions are available to identify and assist depressed individuals that may seek to identify with a violent cause to fulfill a death wish. The fifth group, however, are difficult to mitigate. They are intractably opposed to a global system that is inimical to their self-selected identity, and there will likely always been an organization seeking to act on behalf of that ideology.

Suicide terrorism relates to two similar concepts in combat—suicide missions, and the intentional targetting of civilians—but conflates them into one act executed by individuals at the behest of non-state entities. Suicide missions in traditional warfare do not specify the manner of death. These missions gamble with life, but do not guarantee it. A soldier may fight to the death in a blaze of glory at the hands of the enemy, but in a suicide attack, he dies at his own hand. The only suicide attacks in military history compared to modern suicide bombing campaigns are the Japanese kamikaze attacks in World War II, which I discuss in Chapter 3.

Secondly, whereas civilians have been targetted in conventional war—such as the reciprocal bombing of civilians among participants in World War II (such as the attacks on London and Dresden) and the nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki— military objectives of nation-states to defeat the enemy's capability to sustain protracted warfare overlapped with psychological warfare. Nonstate entities practice suicide terrorism, and the prime or exclusive objective is to conduct psychological warfare against the populace. A reasonable historic comparison to the murder component of suicide terrorism is the dehumanization of out-groups that has led to mass violence and subjugation of those deemed inferior to the in-group in power. This includes the ethnic

caste system of Nazi Germany, the class and politics based system of the USSR, and the race based subjugation of Africans in slavery. An ethnic or political based narrative positioned in-groups and out-groups in such a way that resulted in dehumanization of the out-group, which makes it easier to kill and brutalize the out-group. The ideology behind modern suicide terrorism influences its adherents to dehumanize large groups of people in a similar manner.

The Three Cognitive Components for the Self-Selected Bomber

Both the dramatic rise in suicide attacks the past fifteen years and the willingness of individuals to commit murder-suicide result from three components: the *narrative* that leverages *sacred values* to describe the ideal *in-group* and why the *out-group* is the enemy, the psychological consequences of the in-group and out-group divide that incites *dehumanization* of the out-group, and the narrative of martyrdom that *removes the fear of suicide*. With some rare exceptions, the ideology of *Qutbism* influences all modern suicide bombing campaigns. Qutbism is the ideology of the militant Salafist writer Sayyid Qutb, whose seminal work *Milestones* is cited by Al Qaeda leaders.

Al Qaeda and its like-minded franchises have used Qutb's group categorization to justify a wide range of acceptable targets.[14] Qutb never argued for martyrdom operations—he was executed fifteen years before the first suicide bomb—but the Qutbist worldview creates a small in-group and a very large out-group. The Qutbist worldview presents a framework where the "them" represents nefarious forces beyond

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[14] I use the term Qutbism to describe the value of militancy that has defined the use of suicide terrorism since the late 1990s. Others have called this Islamic militancy, Islamic radicalism, or Salaf-jihadists, but I choose *Qutbism* for two reasons: first, it is not fair to Islam to paint the tactic with such a broad brush, and second, it is not fair to Salafists, many of whom are pacifists and opposed to the antics of Al Qaeda and ISIS. All Qutbists are Salafists, but not all Salafists are Qutbists.

simply being an Iraqi Shia or American civilian. To explain the psychological impact

of a strident in-group and out-group divide on intergroup hostility, I pull upon research

from social identity theory to demonstrate that strong in-group narcissism incites

individuals to harm representatives of the out-group.

The *sacred values* that lay the foundation for the Qutbist narrative orient the

individual to a strident new in-group identity. Anthropologist Scott Atran defines

sacred values as foundational beliefs about community, honor, justice, religion, and

similar core beliefs that provide collective identity to the in-group and personal meaning

to the group members.[15] Individuals and groups view these sacred vales as morally

inviolable, and act on them beyond what external observers may view as rational cost-

benefit analyses of success in political, military, or economic endeavors.[16]

Compromising on these values is a compromise of identity. Thus, Atran categorizes

agents as *rational actors* and *devoted actor.*[17] Groups and individuals can be a mix of

both, but the units of analysis involved in suicide terrorism reveal a divide between the

organization and the individual. The organization primarily is a *rational actor* acting on

sacred values to achieve tangible political objectives, while the individual is a *devoted*

actor acting on sacred values to achieve intangible objectives in this life and the next.

In a suicide bombing campaign, the rational actor needs an arsenal of devoted actors.

Sacred values structure the world and give it meaning, thus shaking these values

challenge the worldview itself. These values are the rationale for strategic end-states,

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[15] Atran, Scott and Robert Axelrod. "Reframing Sacred Values." *Negotiation Journal* (Harvard), 2008, 24, pp.221-246. 222.
[16] Atran, Scott. "Moral Imperatives and Democratic Dynamics in the Fight Against AQAP." In Chapman, Abigail and Janice Adelman. *Influencing Violent Extremist Organizations Pilot Effort: Focus on Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP).* Strategic Multi-Layer Assessment Office. 2011. 58.
[17] Atran, Scott and Robert Axelrod. 224.

objectives, and even the viable tactics to achieve those objectives. ISIS' suicide bombing campaign against civilians is the product of how the Qutbist narrative contorts selected sacred values from Islam. The world outside of pure Sunni Islam is *Jahiliyya* ("ignorance," *jahil* as adjective). All regimes in the world are *jahil,* and those who participate in the continuation of ignorance are like the pagan tribes that persecuted the Prophet Mohammed. Many so-called Muslims are *kuffar* ("infidels," *takfir* is the accusation of being an unbeliever), and are worse than non-believers. The ideal identity one can have is *shaheed* ("witness" or martyr, those killed in battle), on behalf of *jihad* (struggle in the name of God), against the *kuffar* and *jahil* regimes. Thus, the quickest way to actualize the benefits of martyrdom in the name of jihad is the martyrdom operation, the name Qutbists give for suicide attack. Qutbism is unique in that these sacred values are not necessarily inherited from the individual's upbringing. Radicalized individuals choose Qutbism, often renouncing the values of their family for a new separate identity.

When internalized sacred values become vital needs to the individual, the violation of those sacred values contribute to the willingness of an individual to attempt suicide. Suicidologist Edwin Shneidman identified *psychache* (unbearable psychological pain) as an integral component for a successful suicide. Psychache is the pain that results from the perceived discrepancy between the individual's *vital needs* and his ability to fulfill those needs in the present and future. What is considered a vital needs may vary from individual to individual—they include getting married, becoming a parent, receiving acceptance from loved ones, a sense of achievement, career

success—but they are foundational to the identity of the individual and his place in the world.[18]

Atran's definition of sacred values and Shneidman's vital needs overlap in the mind of the true believer. If the individual has internalized the sacred values of his in-group as his vital needs, and political realities violate those sacred values, then the individual may experience psychache on behalf of his community, nation, or religion. He internalizes the shaming of his in-group at the hands of the out-group, and view murder-suicide as a means not only to combat the enemy but to escape from the psychache caused by his immersion in the group identity. One Syrian said that his emotional trauma at American actions at Abu Ghraib drove him to become a suicide bomber in response to the shaming of his people.[19] The lack of a pure Islamic State for the Islamic *Ummah* (the collective community for all Muslims) may lead to psychache among true believers that have internalized this discrepancy between what should be and what is, and how the out-group has suppressed the fulfillment of a sacred value.

The heavenly rewards for martyrdom mitigates the fear of suicide. The cultural context surrounding the suicide bombing campaign in Palestine, particularly during the Second Intifada (2000-2005), created a cult of martyrdom that celebrated the martyr and promoted individual heavenly rewards for suicide. Whereas previous suicide campaigns would allude to some form of immortality, the Palestinian experience—borne of the complex politics and collective frustration with Israeli occupation—created

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[18] Psycache is one of three components in Shneidman's cubit model of suicide. The other two are stress (external pressure) and perturbation (perceived constriction of options for alleviating stress and psychache). When the individual has high stress, high perturbation, and high psychache, suicidal thought and attempt is likely. Ellis, Thomas E. *Cognition and Suicide: Theory, Research, and Therapy*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2006. 41.

[19] Hassan, Riaz. *Life As a Weapon: The Global Rise of Suicide Bombings*. London: Routledge, 2011. 56.

an incentivization for suicide that would be exploited outside the Palestinian conflict. Death for the cause was no longer a sacrifice, but an investment. Global and online media disseminated the cult of martyrdom to inspire individuals removed from the trauma in Palestine to become martyrs themselves. Saudis, Libyans, Syrians, and other fighters would cite the same themes from the cult of martyrdom as incentives to go into Iraq to kill Iraqi Shia civilians.

These two narratives—Qutbism's small in-group and large out-group, and the over-emphasis of heavenly rewards from the Palestinian experience—converged into the most devastating suicide bombing campaign the world has seen, ISIS' assault on Iraqi civilians that started two years after coalition forces invaded Iraq. ISIS heavily relied on self-selected volunteers from Saudi Arabia, Libya, Syria, and Morrocco, countries not directly connected to the coalition occupation in Iraq. These volunteers targeted civilians more often than any campaign other than the Palestinian groups against Israeli targets. ISIS is responsible for most of the attacks in Iraq since 2003, and approximately 38% of all suicide attacks across the globe have occurred in Iraq.[20]

The Cognitive Terrain

The cognitive terrain is the individual's imagined nation. It defines the characteristics of the in-group and the parameters of the group's expected political control in reality. Idealism is intrinsic to the cognitive terrain. The pure imagined nation embodies important sacred values that current nations fail to uphold, which means any sacrifice is necessary to make the translation between ideas and reality. If the sacrifice leads to heavenly rewards in the afterlife, then the sacrifice is even easier to

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[20] Based on START data. Afghanistan and Pakistan are responsible for 22 and 11 percent respectively, meaning approximately 71% of all suicide attacks have occurred in those three countries.

make. By emphasizing the sacred values as cognitive signposts of an ideology, we can identify the reflective beliefs that structure the rationale of militant groups and individuals. What distinguishes the cognitive terrain from nationalism is that the in-group identity of the cognitive terrain is self-selected and universal in its political consequences instead of an inherited national identity with local political emphasis. The entire global system plays a positive or negative role for the in-group—usually negative—and individuals acting on this belief seek to remake the world.

In suicide terrorism research, *cognitive occupation* refers to the perception among rebels that the international system and its powerful sponsors suppress the existence of a new state that best upholds critical sacred values for man. If there is a cognitive occupation on the minds of individuals and true believers, the cognitive terrain is the counter that is being occupied. The cognitive terrain represents the interaction between the sacred values of the imagined nation and the vital needs of the individual that drive action. It then addresses the three cognitive components for murder-suicide.

The cognitive terrain builds upon Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities.* Anderson explains how nationalism emerged from the shared belief that individuals living in separate villages and towns are actually connected into one larger in-group. This cognitive connection forms the belief across individuals that they are a people, and in turn the people becomes a nation.[21] Any bad event or tragedy that impacts one impacts all within the umbrella of the nation. Although a thorough review of Anderson's thesis is beyond the scope of this paper, Anderson's argues that literacy

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[21] Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* London: Verso, 2006. 36.

drove this shared belief, as individuals could read the same newspapers and books and conceive that others are sharing the same thoughts. In social cognition, the *Theory of Mind* states that since we know we have thoughts, we can imagine that others have thoughts as well. Thus, an individual reads the same literature as others do, and infers that the others are thinking the same thoughts. They mutually imagine a shared cognitive experience that connects individuals across time and space.

Although Anderson's Imagined Community and the cognitive terrain are related, there are five key distinctions which require a new concept to describe radicalism and by extension suicide terrorism. First, the term terrain refers to the implication of this shared identity on local, national, and global politics. Describing how a shared national identity is culturally constructed is one thing, but the identity must be assessed in terms of its political consequences. A group that represents an imagined community is likely going to act on its behalf at the expense of the current governing authority. The scope of the group's nationalist ambitions—the scope of the terrain—influences regional and international politics. Some nationalist ambitions are accommodable to international stability, other nationalist ambitions exacerbate regional strife independent of the moral justness of their political end-state, and yet other nationalist ambitions are pernicious in both end-state objectives and the process to reach said end-state. The Qutbist narrative, for example, aims to recreate an Islamic state that covers dozens of current nation-states, which would destabilize the Arab-Islamic world.

The second distinction is that the a universal narrative based on religion carries global stakeholder ramifications. The universal component in the Qubtist narrative differs from the constructed but organic nationalism of Anderson's imagined national

community. The "religious identity as nationalism" imagined community starts with a

cosmic explanation of the in-group and its place in the world, and then assigns a

national-politic from this expectation. Anderson's "nationalism as a secular religion"

imagined community starts in the opposite direction, as a collective identity builds

across villages based on shared language, which in turn becomes a form of secular

religion. The cosmic religious identity places the individual's in-group across national

boundaries and governments. Not all universal nationalisms need to be centered on a

religious identity, as Marxism influenced individuals to think in similar terms as

Qutbism. I discuss the similarities between the two ideologies in Chapter 2.

The third distinction is that the cognitive terrain recognizes that sacred values

are used to lay the foundation of the in-group's characteristics. The reason why

cognition is a necessary component to understand suicide terrorism is that the Qutbists

start with core beliefs first and then construct the national identity. Nationalism may

carry with it sacred values imbedded in the meaning of the national identity, but it is not

a requirement. There is no Qutbist in-group without sacred values.

The fourth distinction is that terrain implies variation of those values within the

decision making of the individual. Just as terrain varies in height, so too does the depth

of sacred values in the individual. Not all individuals within an in-group are going to

react to the sacred values of "honor," "nation," or "justice," nor are they going to

necessarily agree with the meaning of the values and how to implement said values in

the real world. Groups within a sub-culture can position and manipulate these values to

inspire future action or rationalize past action. Jihad means different things, and is

prioritized differently, among devout Muslims. A sacred value is not just a tenet within

a belief system but a transitive tool that connects the individual to his collective

identity. The value of martyrdom connects the bomber to the highest level one can

reach in relation to submitting to God. The value of jihad—as positioned by Qutbists—

drives individuals to connect to God through conflict. Groups that pursue jihad transfer

the benefits of associating with jihad, not just to the group, but to its members.

The fifth distinction is that the depth of religious belief is almost always self-

selected and carries inviolable beliefs compared to nationalism. The individual chooses

the depth of religious belief based on how the belief meets underlying needs or how the

sacred values attract the individual. Justin Barrett, professor of cognition and religion at

Oxford University, describes us as having two types of beliefs—*nonreflective beliefs*,

and *reflective beliefs*.[22] Nonreflective beliefs are intuitive beliefs earned through

experience that require minimal cognitive effort. We rarely know what these beliefs are

or how to communicate them verbally, yet they are basic to cognitive functioning.

Reflective beliefs are those we explicitly endorse and have derived from effortful

cognitive processing and reasoning.[23] In discussion of identity, reflective beliefs form

the basis of our identity, our in-group, how we choose and define sacred values, and

how we choose and define vital needs. Because of this, they are more difficult to

counteract than non-reflective beliefs. The cognitive terrain represents and describes

these sacred values that the individual has reasoned to be true and prioritized as

cornerstones for his identity, and the reflective nature of these beliefs turns them into

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[22] A thorough review of Barrett's work is beyond the scope of this paper, as he starts with building blocks of cognition and moves up to types of beliefs. It is important to note that beliefs need not be religious in nature. Barrett, Justin L. (2011-10-01). *Cognitive Science, Religion, and Theology: From Human Minds to Divine Minds* (Templeton Science and Religion Series) (pp. 48-49). Templeton Press. Kindle Edition.
[23] The conclusions may be fallacious or based on poor information, but the conclusion of a reflective belief involves a rational and evaluative process. The premises of reflective beliefs may be non-reflective beliefs, and non-reflective beliefs may have been a reflective belief at some point. For example, learning how to drive a car.

strongholds in the minds of true believers. Defeating the ideology is defeating the identity of the individual adhering to it.

The Structure of This Paper

In the section "Overview of Competing Theories" below, I discuss the role of organizational decision-making on suicide terrorism. I do this through a brief overview of previous theories of suicide terrorism, which represent organization-centric, individual-centric, and integration theories on suicide terroism. I also provide psychological explanations from Social Identity Theory (SIT) for how the socail categorization of a narrative leads to intergroup hostility, which in turn leads to the willingness to harm or kill members of the out-group.

In Chapter 2, I describe the role of Qutbism in influencing the in-group and out-group hostility of modern suicide terrorism. In Chapter 3, I provide a historic progression of the tactic from its original use by the radical Shia organization Hezbollah, to the Marxist-nationalist groups in Lebanon that followed Hezbollah's lead, and to the Marxist LTTE in Sri Lanka. I do this to provide a contrast as to how Qutbism changed suicide terrorism. The Shia Hezbollah originated the tactic, but the tactic's most prolific and pernicious expression found a place among Qutbist organizations. The gradual ideological transition to Qutbist suicide terrorism influenced the gradual transition to predominately civilian and police targets over military and political targets. In Chapter 4, I discuss the operationalizing of Qutb's ideology, particularly in Hamas, Al Qaeda, and ISIS. I discuss the critical origin of the cult of martyrdom in Palestine, and how ISIS capitalized on the Qutbist ideology of Al Qaeda and the cult of martyrdom to conduct the most devastating suicide bombing campaign

in history.[24] In Chapter 5, I summarize the conclusion of this paper and present brief

policy recommendations based on the individual's role in suicide terrorism.

Appendices 1 and 2 include graphs on number of suicide attacks by era, by country, by

target selection and by year.

Social Identity Theory: The Role of Group Identity on Hostility

The search for a new, superior, and satisfying social identity leads many

alienated Muslims to embrace the elite in-group constructed by the narrative of

Qutbism. Researchers have turned to SIT to understand how and why individuals turn

to a terrorist organization to find personal meaning.[25] The purpose of this section is to

demonstrate lessons from SIT that explain how a strong ideologically-based in-group

identity influences individual cognition and decision-making, specifically how the

identity leads to dehumanization of the out-group. Any ideology can have strong in-

group and out-group consequences—in fact, any artificial in-group and out-group

divide can lead to preferential treatment to the "us" at the expense of the "them."

However, Qutbism provides a selective in-group that possesses sacred truths, and casts

a large swathe of disdain for the rest of world trapped in ignorance.

Individuals derive a substantial portion of self-identity through association with

in-groups.[26] Evaluation is the core component of social identity, specifically evaluating

the value of groups and how group membership positively impacts the individual. The

result is a system that stratifies which social groups are better, and why the individual

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[24] A historic review of suicide terrorism for all groups is beyond the scope of this paper. This paper
reviews the key suicide bombing campaigns that represent ideological influence on the tactic.
[25] Gill, Paul. 2012. "Terrorist Violence and the Contextual, Facilitative and Causal Qualities of Group-
Based Behaviors". *Aggression and Violent Behavior.* 17, no. 6: 565 - 574. 568.
[26] Brewer MB. 2007. "The Importance of Being We: Human Nature and Intergroup Relations". *The
American Psychologist.* 62, no. 8: 726-38. 732.

should identify with the "good" group or why the individual's current group is better than others.[27] This reflective belief leads to positive distinctiveness, which is the personal esteem for aligning to a chosen religious, political, philosophical, or regional identity over others.

Henri Tajfel and his colleagues researched how individuals would treat each other if aligned into arbitrary social groups. His research demonstrated that simply categorizing individuals into two distinct but arbitrary social "tribes" could create in-group favoritism. In the *minimal group paradigm*, individuals allocate higher rewards to members of their own arbitrary social category compared to members in the out-group.[28] The criteria for social categorization are irrelevant. If this is the case, criteria imbued with a powerful cosmic narrative can merely intensify affinity for the in-group and suspicion to the out-group.

Narratives build the cognitive network that defines membership in the in-group and out-group and the meaning of each group to the individual.[29] They define the sacred values that individuals should embrace and act upon, show how those values are connected to the in-group, and shows what the cosmic consequences of those values are. These narratives underpin all religious, non-religious, philosophical, and political in-groups, and we, as individuals operate in multiple narratives with multiple in-groups at once. Narratives also help the brain to function, as the brain needs models to process information—and often creates narratives out of need.[30]

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[27] Chapman, Abigail and Janice Adelman. *Influencing Violent Extremist Organizations Pilot Effort: Focus on Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP).* Strategic Multi-Layer Assessment Office. 2011. 15.
[28] Brewer, 727.
[29] Chapman, Abigail and Janice Adelman. 9.
[30] The Medio Prefrontal Cortex (MPFC) and temporal lobes activate the social cognition evaluative network—it becomes active when people perceive others, and it infers mental states of others. The MPFC

The first step of dehumanization is depersonalization. *Entitativity* is the degree to which group members are seen as a single categorical unit.[31] The member of an out-group is not an individual, but an ambassador for "them." Ruminating about a person's group traits (whether ethnic, religious, or national) makes those individuals more psychologically distant and, in turn, depersonalizes those individuals.[32] Depersonalization does not inherently lead to dehumanization, but there is no dehumanization without depersonalization.[33] Thus, the Qutbist narrative categorizes people in groups, and processes each individual as a member of either the good group or the bad group. The civilians standing around the bomber when he detonates are not individuals, but representatives of an evil out-group obstructing the creation of an Islamic State.

Moral disengagement is a series of steps that individuals take to move past self-censured morality. The first step is the delineation between in-group and out-group, which results in depersonalization of members of the out-group. The next step is the ideological framing of the out-group as grossly inferior to the in-group. Ideologies that pit the out-group as the source of all that's wrong with the world and the in-group as the salvation of man are particularly strong in group narcissism.

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associates the value of information into different parts of the brain to induce different emotions in response to the information, depending on the valuation of the information. For example, when dealing with individuals dehumanized by a narrative, the MPFC processes the individual with the amygdala, which not only activates the "fight or flight" threat response, but also activates the "disgust" response. Thus, any narrative absorbed by the individual that has dehumanized an out-group merely rectifies the emotional fear and disgust when the individual thinks about that group. See Dillard, James Price. "Use of Narrative in Promoting and Countering Violent Extremism." In Chapman, Abigail and Janice Adelman. *Influencing Violent Extremist Organizations Pilot Effort: Focus on Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP).* Strategic Multi-Layer Assessment Office. 2011. 213-216.

[31] Carlston, Donal E. *The Oxford Handbook of Social Cognition.* 2013. 566.

[32] Carlston, 198.

[33] Gill, 568.

Group narcissism explains the steps for moral disengagement in the individual's

mind, which in turn contributes to dehumanization. Erich Fromm defined group

narcissism as a sublimation of individual narcissism. Whereas his work is not based in

cognitive research, recent research has validated the consequences of Fromm's

arguments on intergroup hostility. To survive, nature endows man with a great amount

of narcissism. However, we need to cooperate with others to survive as well. Thus,

extreme narcissism, to the point that it deters cooperation, is counterproductive. The

survival of a group depends on the fact that members consider the group's importance

greater than their own lives.[34] Thus, the individual *sublimates* his narcissism into the

identity of the group. In prehistoric or premodern times, this leads to tribalism. Since

industrialization has mitigated much of the urgent tribal (or familial) connection to

survive, the drive for social bonding becomes filtered into modern in-groups. Fromm

describes the consequence as:

> Individual narcissism is transformed into group narcissism, that the clan, nation,
> religion, race, etc., become the objects of narcissistic passion instead of the
> individual. Thus, narcissistic energy is maintained but used in the interests of
> the survival of the group rather than for the survival of the individual.[35]

Research shows that narcissistic in-group narcissism extends beyond national identity to

trivial in-group identity such as university affiliation.[36] Since group narcissism can

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[34] Group narcissism is often called collective narcissism or ethnocentric narcissism. They refer to the same underlying concept. Fromm, Erich. "Individual and Social Narcissism." From Sadler, William Alan. *Personality and Religion; the Role of Religion in Personality Development*. New York: Harper & Row, 1970. 117-134. 125. This observation is also found in Ibn Khaldun's argument on *asabiyya*, or "group feeling" on social and political movements. I discuss Khaldun and "group feeling" in the conclusion.

[35] Fromm, 121.

[36] de Zavala AG, A Cichocka, and M Bilewicz. 2013. "The Paradox of in-Group Love: Differentiating Collective Narcissism Advances Understanding of the Relationship between in-Group and Out-Group Attitudes". *Journal of Personality*. 81, no. 1: 16-28. 26.

extend to university affiliation, it can extend to religious, non-religious, and political group identity.

The lens of group narcissism creates a unique reflective belief for the individual, a syllogism of superiority that leads to conclusions about the self and others. The syllogism uses foundational sacred values that define the group and in turn transfer the quality of the group to the individual. In these syllogisms, we use values positioned or perceived to be better than other competitors. If the narrative provides sacred values that sanctify the in-group and by extension demonizes the out-group, the syllogism leads to particularly powerful conclusions. For example, "Jihadists are Real Muslims. I am a Jihadist. Therefore, I am a Real Muslim (by extension, you are not a jihadist, therefore, unlikely to be a real Muslim)." "All Christians are children of God. I am a Christian. Thus, I am a child of God (…you, on the other hand.)" "Atheists are enlightened. I am an atheist. Therefore, I am enlightened (you Christians, though…)." "America is the best country. I am an American, therefore I am the best…"

Group narcissism influences the individual member to harm opposing group-members that challenge the honor, pride, or value of the beloved in-group.[37] Researchers Golec de Zavala and his associates studied the relationship between group narcissism and hostility to out-groups. In their social research and subsequent statistical model, group narcissism predicts both animosity to out-groups and the willingness to hinder the out-group from obtaining goals with unambiguous hostile intentions.[38]

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[37] Golec de Zavala A, A Cichocka, and I Iskra-Golec. 2013. "Collective Narcissism Moderates the Effect of in-Group Image Threat on Intergroup Hostility". *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 104, no. 6: 1019-39. 1019. I use collective narcissism or group narcissism depending on the source, but they are interchangeable.
[38] Golec de Zavala A, 1037.

Neuroscientists have identified how the individual binds to the in-group identity from two observable angles. The first is *limbic resonance*. Magnetic resonance imagery shows how individuals' brain activities can become synchronized, which creates the mutual sensation among two or more individuals that they are interconnected. Limbic resonance is an observable neural pattern that occurs when the limbic systems across two or more individuals mirror each other through shared experiences.[39] Limbic resonance explains multiple social bonding processes, from falling in love, to deep friendship, or to any sensation of communion and unity with someone (or something) else, such as a religious experience or even a live concert. This leads to belonging, and is one way that the individual feels connected to his in-group.

At the chemical level, researchers have observed oxytocin as the hormone that strengthens in-group bonding and out-group hostility. Oxytocin contributes to multiple types of bonding between individuals, including romance, trust, benevolence, and social categorization. Dutch psychologists conducted a hormonal test on fellow citizens, with one group given an increase in oxytocin, and other a placebo. Both groups were asked to react to pictures and cultural objects associated with the Netherlands, and then to pictures and cultural objects related to two out-groups, Arabs and Germans. Compared to the placebo group, the oxytocin group demonstrated an increase in affinity with their own Dutch culture and increased antagonism to Arabs and Germans.[40] So whereas oxytocin does increase the individual's trust and love for his in-group, it also increases the level of distrust to the out-group. Thus, when oxytocin is created through natural

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[39] Goleman, Daniel, Richard E. Boyatzis, and Annie McKee. *Primal Leadership: Realizing the Power of Emotional Intelligence*. Boston, Mass: Harvard Business School Press, 2002. 48.

[40] De Dreu CK, LL Greer, Van Kleef GA, S Shalvi, and MJ Handgraaf. 2011. "Oxytocin Promotes Human Ethnocentrism". *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*. 108, no. 4: 1262-6. 1262.

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social bonding with an individual's in-group, the increase in oxytocin strengthens connection with the group and increases animosity to the out-group. Thus, the ideological categorization of in-group and out-group has psychological and interpersonal consequences.

Overview of Competing Theories: Organization-Centric, Individual-Centric, and Integration Approaches to Suicide Terrorism

Two themes reoccur when discussing the role of ideology in influencing group strategy and invidual behavior. The first is the interaction between organizational and individual motive. The organization may have practical political objectives to use suicide terrorism (rational actor), but religious fervor may motivate the individual (devoted actor). Since suicide terrorism requires the individual, understanding the individual motive is as necessary as understanding the organizational logic. When it comes to ideology, the organization may seek an end-state that is religious in nature, yet it calculates the means to achieve that end-state with political benchmarks. The in-group may not be the organization itself, but a broader identity that both the individual and organization act upon.

The second theme is that there is no pure adaptation of ideology in the world. Ideological and pragmatic motives, at both the group and individual level, will interact to lead to the implementation of specific tactics. The cognitive terrain is not meant to remove functional factors in suicide terrorism analysis, but to balance the functional with explanations for behavior that pragmatic political considerations cannot explain.

The historic use of female suicide bombers represents this tension between ideological beliefs and pragmatism. Originally, only secular or leftist oriented groups

(the LTTE, the Lebanese socialist groups, the PKK) sponsored female suicide bombers. Because Marxist ideology emphasized gender equality, the Marxist groups were comfortable with celebrating women bombers. However, there was a functional aspect as well—female suicide bombers maximized the effectiveness of women fighters. The female suicide bomber could kill as many as a male suicide bomber.

Originally, the religious groups of Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) forbade the use of female suicide bombers. Sheikh Ahmed Yassin of Hamas declared anyone who recruited a female bomber as "breaking Islamic law."[41] Nonetheless, after the first Palestinian female suicide bomber Wafa Idris became a popular Palestinian icon, Hamas reversed its stance and sponsored its first female suicide bomber two years after Idris' attack.[42] Al Qaeda, which originally placed similar restrictions on female bombers, eventually marketed martyrdom to women as well. Instead of being awarded the *houris,* the seventy virgins given to the male martyr in heaven, the female martyr becomes the "most beautiful angel in heaven."[43]

Although the primary focus of this paper is to explain ideological influence on individual decision making, the role of the organization is vital to a successful campaign as well. No matter how much motivation an individual may have, he is unlikely to have the resources, operational intelligence, and logistical wherewithal to successful execute a suicide attack on his own.[44] Both Hamas and the PIJ used three cells to conduct one

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[41] O'Rourke, Lindsey. "The Woman behind the Bomb; Suicide Attacks." *The International Herald Tribune*. August 5, 2008.
[42] Regular, Arlon. "Mother of Two Becomes First Female Suicide Bomber of Hamas," *Haaretz*. 15 January 2008.
[43] Dickey, Christopher. "Women of Al Qaeda." *Newsweek*. December 12, 2005. Page 26.
[44] United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan. *Suicide Attacks in Afghanistan (2001-2007)*. September 1st, 2007. http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/Afgh%202007SuicideAttacks.pdf 30.

suicide attack—one to gather intelligence on targets, another for recruiting and managing the martyr, and the third for preparing and transporting explosives.[45]

There are three social components in a suicide attack—the organization, the individual participating in the attack, and the population that the organization attempts to represent. In order for a suicide bombing campaign to sustain itself, all three components need to be in favor of its usage. However, these three units may not be synchronized ideologically. In some campaigns, such as the LTTE and the PKK, the organization coerces the individual to become a bomber. In the campaigns that rely on self-selected martyrs, such as Al Qaeda and ISIS, the self-selected martyrs may not volunteer because they believe or understand the process to the political end state.

The organization may conduct suicide attacks for a populace that finds it abhorrent, and the organization fails to garner support for sustained use of the tactic. For example, the PKK in the mid 1990s, the LTTE in the late 1980s through the mid-2000s, and the Chechen rebels in the early 2000s conducted suicide bombing campaigns at varying degrees of length, success, and devastation—yet the death or capture of their leaders ended or suspended those campaigns.[46] The death of Villipai Prabhakaran ended the LTTE suicide bombing campaign, the capture of Abdullah Ocalan ended the PKK campaign, and the deaths of Shamil Besayev and Omar Ibn Khattab undermined

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[45] Hafez, Mohammed M. *Manufacturing Human Bombs*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2006. 20.

[46] The PKK has resumed some suicide attacks since August 2015, however at this stage it is unclear if this is a sustained campaign. The first incident on August 2nd, and Turkey has accused the PKK of conducting other attacks in Turkey. See "Turkish Troops Killed in Kurdish militant 'suicide attack.'" *The Guardian.* 2 August 2015. http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/aug/02/turkish-troops-killed-suicide-attack-blamed-on-pkk (Accessed 3 May 2016).

the Chechen suicide bombing campaign.[47] This is different from Hamas's campaign during the Second Intifada, Al Qaeda and its connected franchises efforts across the globe, and ISIS's campaign in Iraq and Syria. In the latter set of groups, the deaths of leaders did not end the respective suicide bombing campaigns.

There are three types of theories on the role of the organization and the individual in suicide terrorism. The first is the organizational-driven approach to understanding the adoption of suicide terrorism, the second is the individual-driven approach, and the third is the integrated approach. All theories address the role of the organization, the individual, and the culture (the integration between the two, which stems from the respective population's sacred values) in some way, yet each of these categories prioritizes one over the others, and in doing so, blurs the other components.

The most recognized and cited organizational theory of suicide terrorism is Robert Pape's *nationalist theory of suicide terrorism*, which he articulates in *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism.* Pape argues that organizations conduct suicide attacks in order to force democratic societies to leave the lands perceived to be the occupied homeland.[48] The presence of occupation forces induces desperate measures to expel occupying forces. In Pape's analysis, groups use suicide terrorism because it works. In 1984, United States and French military forces left Lebanon after a series of devastating Hezbollah's suicide attacks.[49] The perception that Hezbollah's campaign expelled superior military forces encouraged the LTTE, the PKK, and even

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[47] The Chechen rebels pulled fighters from neighboring regions, such as Dagestan, and after the defeat of the Chechen insurgency, those groups initiated their own campaigns against Russian targets. However, the Chechen suicide bombing campaign itself was mollified by the defeat of its leadership.

[48] Pape, Robert Anthony. *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism*. New York: Random House, 2005. 4.

[49] There were many reasons with the US and France withdrew from Lebanon, namely the Lebanese President siding with Syria in the conflict over Israel. The perception however is that the barracks bombing forced the US and France to retreat.

Al Qaeda to use the tactic for their respective ends. This is the strategic logic for its adoption, as its usage will lead to a tangible political end-state for the repressed population. There is only one ideological component—nationalism—that motivates the organization, the individuals, and the population that provides direct or tactic support for the tactic. According to his statistical model, the existence of a democratic occupier over the homeland of natives that are a different religion of the occupier will predict the existence of a suicide bombing campaign at the statistically significant at .001%.[50] Thus, Pape's theory suitably explains the conflicts in Lebanon, Sri Lanka, Israel-Palestine, and Turkey where national liberation is an obvious motive.

His occupation-focused approach even explains—albeit through some contortion—the organizations heavily infused with religious rhetoric that seek to establish a new nation based on religious ideology. For example, in 2005, ISIS outright declared its intent to instigate a civil war between Iraqi Sunnis and Iraqi Shias, which theoretically would unite the Sunni world against Iraqi and Persian Shia. Out of that conflict, the united Sunnis would establish a new pure Islamic State that replaces all the blasphemous Arab governments in the region. ISIS conducted a devastating suicide bombing campaign against Iraqi Shia soft targets. There is a strategic logic to ISIS's use of suicide terrorism on non-combatants, even though ISIS's political end-state is based in the group's religious beliefs.

However, the complex strategy of attacking non-combatants with martyrdom operations in order to induce second and third order political consequences does not find itself in the videotaped wills of Iraqi suicide bombers or interviews with prospective bombers. From 2005 through 2008, most of the Iraqi bombers were Saudis,

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[50] Pape, 99.

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Syrians, Libyans, and Moroccans who entered Iraq to become martyrs by murdering Shia non-combatants. These bombers' wills cite the heavenly rewards given to the martyr and the value of killing infidels for the sacred sake of killing infidels as justification for murder-suicide. With two moral boundaries crossed, it strains credibility to equate the individuals' motives as nationalism across all suicide bombing campaigns—as Pape's theory does.[51] The desperate Lebanese Shia ramming his explosives-laden truck into a convoy of Israeli combatants is not the same as well-to-do Saudi traveling to Iraq to kill Iraqi civilians in the hopes that it *might* lead to a civil war that *might* lead to the creation of a new Islamic State. The former guarantees the removal of a certain number of enemy foot soldiers from his homeland, regardless of whatever events happen next in the conflict; the latter offers no tangible military or political gain, only conditional consequences based on other factors, all for terrain he never travelled to before his act of martyrdom.

The individual-centric approach seeks to explain why the individual decides to become a human smart bomb. In *The Myth of Martyrdom,* Adam Lankford argues that suicide bombers are genuinely depressed individuals, using the martyrdom narrative as a morally acceptable way out from the stigma of conventional suicide in Islamic cultures.[52] Although 60% of suicide terrorists did not appear suicidal according to Western definitions of suicidality, Lankford argues that cross-cultural approaches to suicidality show that some of the Islamic bombers may have been suicidal from non-

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[51] Pape's theory has been heavily criticized from different angles since the book's publication in 2005. The role of foreign suicide bombers in the Iraq conflict is one of the most visibly cited reasons, as Al Qaeda in Iraq was led by foreigners, who in turn sent foreign-born bombers to kill Iraqi civilians, which leads to questions as to who was the occupier (Mohammed Hafez, *Suicide Bombers in Iraq,* 89). In Chapter 5, I briefly present some of the criticisms of Pape's theory.

[52] Lankford A. 2014. "Précis of the Myth of Martyrdom…" 375. He conducts psychological autopsies of

Western perspectives.[53] Since there are strong cultural norms prohibiting suicide, the myth of martyrdom gives the suicidal the venue to commit suicide for a socially accepted cause.

Whereas Lankford also argues beliefs exist to funnel underlying behavior and emotions, he essentially does the opposite of Pape. Pape's approach is top-down, organization-centric, and presumptive that the individual motive and the organization's strategy are one and the same. Lankford looks at suicide terrorism motives from the bottom up, as underlying depressive emotions push the individual to find honorable ways to escape life. Lankford's research is important because he calls attention to suicidal factors previous researchers have ignored, however it projects a small sample size onto thousands of suicide attackers.[54] It also does not suitably explain the psychological factors leading to the murder component of suicide terrorism. Both perspectives dismiss individuals' perceptions of the world, of good and evil, of "us" and "them," and how these beliefs interact with real world constraints to influence dehumanization and decision making.

The integration approach attempts to bridge the organization and individual centric approaches, primarily through the role of the population and its culture. In *The Business of Martyrdom,* Jeffery Lewis argues that suicide terrorism, the human smart bomb, is a labor-intensive technology that closes the advanced weaponry gap between the superior force and the rebel force. The technology of suicide terrorism exists when

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[53] Lankford, Adam. 2012. "A Psychological Autopsy of 9/11 Ringleader Mohamed Atta." Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology. 27, no. 2. 155.

[54] Adolf Tobeñaa and Oscar Vilarroyaa argue that Lankford uncovered 130 cases that may fulfill criteria of "conventional suicide" due to depression, but that base rate not compelling to project on 3000+ attacks in the last two decades. Tobena A., Vilarroya O., and Vilarroya O. 2014. "Normative Seeds for Deadly Martyrdoms". *Behavioral and Brain Sciences.* 37, no. 4: 378-379. 378.

the three entities interact—the sponsoring organization, the individual willing to die, and the cultural constructs for martyrdom that connects the individual to the organization.[55] All three are necessary. The cultural construct of martyrdom completes the technology because it gives the individual the psychological safety to engage in murder-suicide. The biggest challenge for suicide terrorism to spread across conflicts is how to convince individuals to willingly kill themselves.[56] In some of these campaigns—the LTTE, the PKK—self-selection was not a dilemma, as they managed the payload deliverer through some form of physical or psychological coercion. However, among the Sunni groups, the martyrdom narrative based in perverted Sunni sacred values solved the problem of voluntary suicide, and allowed the tactic to proliferate from Palestine, to Afghanistan, to Iraq, to Chechnya, to Syria, to Nigeria, and to the foreign Sunni volunteers from the Western world that traveled to these regions to become martyrs.

One of Lewis' critical contributions is explaining the dichotomy between *exogenous control* and *endogenous control* of suicide terrorism.[57] *Exogenous control* represents centralized control over the tactic, and the ability of the organization to manage the demand for the technology within the culture. *Endogenous control* represents decentralized control over the tactic, as the organization receives influence from volunteers and independently managed cells to push the organizations to use suicide terrorism. In the 1980s and 1990s, suicide terrorism organizations like the PKK and LTTE exercised exogenous control. They manipulated and managed the bombers. Hezbollah and Al Qaeda practiced mixed control, recruiting some and receiving

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[55]Lewis, 15.
[56]Lewis, 35.
[57] Lewis, 237.

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volunteers. But the Palestinian groups in the Second Intifada, ISIS, and Boko Haram in Nigeria represented the move to endogenous control. The decentralized control exploited the public demand for martyrdom.[58] The cognitive terrain approach is a refinement of Lewis' work, identifying the culturally constructed sacred values (specifically, defined in suicide terrorism by the narrative of Qutbism) that inspire decentralized control of suicide attacks.

Note on Eras of Suicide Terrorism and Categorization of Targets

There are three main eras that structure the history of suicide terrorism. These eras are the Era of National Liberation (1981-1992), the Era of Religious Nationalism (1993-2004), and the Era of Fitna (2005-present). *Fitna* is the Arabic term for civil chaos, and the word I chose to represent the avalanche of suicide attacks the globe has seen since 2005. Since 2005, suicide attacks have primarily targeted civilians and local security. The development of Qutbist rebellion explains this transition in targets, the willingness of individuals to kill themselves and civilians, and the rise in suicide attacks.

Throught this paper, I categorize target selection into five variables: Security-Military, Security-Police, Government (including embassies), Civilians, and Informal Groups (competing insurgent or terrorist groups). I pull data from START, which is based out of the Univeristy of Maryland. The START database inherited data from the Worldwide Incident Tracking System, formerly of the National Counterterrorism Center and Office of the Director of National Intelligence. The START database codes each suicide attack with one of twenty-one different types of targets, which provides a high

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[58] Lewis, 243.

level of target granularity. Target types in the START database include business, religious institution, utilities, and maritime, among others.

In the Appendix, I chart the results of another database, the University of Chicago Project on Security and Terrorism (CPOST) for comparative purposes. The reason why I do not use CPOST data in the paper is because it creates only three categories for targets in suicide attacks: security, civilians, and political.[59] If the insurgency aims to replace the host nation government, it makes perfect sense to conflate military and police targets into one security variable. In order to build a counter-state, expelling or weakening all security forces from a region fits the objective of replacing the current state. This is simple insurgency logic, independent of the ideology of the insurgency.

However, if the insurgent is motivated to expel foreign troops occupying the country, attacking local police targets can actually retain the foreign presence to offset the loss of local police. Attacking foreign military personnel fits within a nationalist explanation of suicide terrorism. Attacking local police may explain overthrowing the current government, but does not necessarily explain nationalism unless the nationalism is revolutionary or transnational. Thus, strategic objectives are conflated with the

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[59] CPOST also codes its attacks in ways that reduces the number of attacks by Al Qaeda and ISIS. For example, CPOST codes the September 11th attacks as four attacks, instead of nineteen attackers. This pushes down the number of attacks by the likes of Al Qaeda, who sends multiple suicide attackers at one target, and keeps the attacks by the likes of the Tamil Tigers elevated, who would usually send one suicide attacker to bust open a security checkpoint and follow with conventional attacks. Thus, Al Qaeda can have nineteen self-selected suicide attackers on September 11st counted as four attacks, the Tamil Tigers can have ten coerced suicide attackers in ten different attacks (and counted as ten attacks), and the Tigers has the more prolific suicide bombing campaign. CPOST also does not include failed attacks, whereas the START database does. When trying to understand and track the hows and whys of suicide terrorism, failed attacks count. Also, tracking failed attacks may be able to assist security officials to identify which groups have had more successful attacks compared to others, and what insights that may lead on both the group's operational effectiveness as well as what it means for the group's radicalization and resolve skills.

targets—suicide attacks on police may be to weaken the new government and expel the foreign occupier, whereas suicide attacks on the military may only be to expel the foreign occupier.

It is necessary to separate police targets from military targets for two interrelated reasons. The first is that in many of these areas of conflict, foreign occupiers are military targets. These include American, British, French, or UN forces with troops on the ground. The security-police targets, however, only represent foreign forces if they are perceived as such by segments of the local population. Police forces may operate on behalf of a government foreign entities support, but the police are nonetheless members of the nation, oftentimes the same ethnic group, and embedded in the local community.

Secondly, conflating military and police targets misses the orientation of the perceived out-group on the part of the individual suicide attacker. Killing foreigners from a different religion is comprehensible. Killing fellow nationals that are from a different ethnic group fits within in-group and out-group hostility. Killing fellow countrymen to overthrow the government is yet another motive separate from the other two, at both an ideological and psychological level. Thus, when researchers build statistical models on the objectives of the suicide terrorist organization while using simple variable categories, the conclusions will be incomplete if foreign military targets and local police targets are treated the same. An attack on Afghan police forces is modeled the same as an attack on NATO coalition forces, even if there are no NATO forces on the ground in Afghanistan.

Chapter 2: Qutbism, the Ideological Foundation for Twenty Years of Suicide Terrorism

The Salafist Reaction to the West

Qutbism offers a simple narrative that explains why Islam has been victimized, who the villains are, and what means are justified to counterbalance this status.[60] While Islam and Western political values can coexist and various jurist branches of Islam are what would be considered liberal, Qutbism provides a pristine alternative to Islam's comparative weakness on the global stage. The rise of Salafism in the late 19th Century, the fall of the Caliphate after World War 1, the forming of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, and the Sykes-Picot agreement that parceled Arab-Islamic lands into European colonial mandates contributed to the strident ideological position of Qutbism. Muslims are to submit to God, and the Caliphate represents the authority of man's submission to God in the political sphere. With no Caliphate—no matter how flawed it was recognized for being in action—the direct connection to the state of Mohammad ceased to exist. Western values such as nationalism, imperialism, and industrialization contributed to its defeat, which reiterated the positioning of "us" (Muslims) versus "them" (the West).

Western modernization shamed the dignity of Arab and Muslim countries. To devout Muslims unconcerned to the "shame narrative," this meant little. But the shame narrative led to cognitive dissonance, because the comparison between what should have been true (the truth of the Qur'an, God's honor through the success of His people) and what was true (the comparative weakness of the Arab-Islamic World to the West)

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[60] Moghadam, Assaf (2011-02-24). *The Globalization of Martyrdom: Al Qaeda, Salafi Jihad, and the Diffusion of Suicide Attacks.* Johns Hopkins University Press. Kindle Edition. 183.

was unavoidable.[61] To compensate for this dissonance, there were two available responses. The first was that Islam was still good, which meant the West was wrong. The second was that the way Islam had been managed for centuries led to the dilapidation and submission of Islam to the powers of the West. Thus, the jurist systems that trained Islamic scholars into a civilized, adaptive, and liberal Islam (such as the Hanafi School), had in fact failed, and worse, were blasphemous.

This broad response emerged in the late 19th Century as *Salafism*, a term coined by political activist Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, and an ideology that influences many Muslims today. Salafi refers to "early followers," and represents the first generation of the Prophet that almost all Muslims (whether Sunni or Shia) view as the "Golden Age" of Islam. Many of the early 20th Century Salafists had liberal tendencies, and their call to a return to early Islam was intended to present a unifying force in the wake of secular nationalism. Scholars such as Rashid Rida admired the West's successes and sought an Islam that could learn from the West while retaining Islamic core values.[62]

In its more militant application, Salafism wipes the slate clean of all Islamic philosophical and jurist development since the early generation. These developments are *bida* ("innovations"), which blaspheme the pure revelation of God. The consequence is that normative meaning and positioning of Islamic values such as *jihad* ("striving in the name of God," against the threats to one's soul and/or against unjust governments), *tawhid* (the absolute unity of God in all spheres of life)*,* and *jahiliyya* (the ignorant pagan world prior to the pure revelation from God) are dismissed in the

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[61] Moghadam, *The Globalization of Martyrdom*, 83.
[62] Moghadam, *The Globalization of Martyrdom*, 57.

name of returning to the Golden Age. The true Muslim must think of himself as fighting alongside Muhammad against the pagan oppressors in the 7th Century.

For example, jihad literally means to strive or exert oneself in the case of God against an object or entity that is sinful, unjust, evil, or antagonistic to Islam.[63] In the 9th Century, jihad developed into meaning striving for God through self-improvement.[64] A few centuries later, the Sufi philosopher al-Ghazali codified self-improvement for the sake of God as the *Greater* Jihad.[65] The *Lesser* Jihad is the violent fight against unjust governments and unbelievers, ostensibly in defense for the faith. The Greater Jihad has been the normative approach to interpreting jihad in the Qur'an.

The conflict over jihad between its normative and Qutbist interpretations results from the challenge of *abrogation*. In all religious traditions, abrogation is the reconciliation between apparently contradictory beliefs through some justification that prioritize one belief over the other. Most religious texts that span centuries have some contradiction, whether big or small. In order to maintain theological cohesion, these contradictions have to be explained in some way that satisfies the common sense of believers. For Christians, the verses on the Old Testament that prescript violence against Philistines or against sinners are *abrogated,* corrected, and superseded by the message of the Gospel. For laymen, it's easy to infer the final word on prescriptive morality through chronology, with the most recent revelation (the Gospels being more recent than the Levite Law) the proper behavior toward members of the out-group. For Jews, the later prophetic books of the Old Testament and the rabbinic teachings in the

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[63] Firestone, Reuven. *Jihad: The Origin of Holy War in Islam.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. 16.

[64] Cook, David. *Martyrdom in Islam.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007. 148.

[65] Cook, David. *Understanding Jihad.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005. 34.

Talmud and Mishnah abrogate the ugly parts of the Torah (the first five books of the Bible). Abrogation thus provides context for passages to the laymen. In Islam, trained Islamic scholars and jurists play the critical role in explaining Islam to believers. The jurists explain the nuance of the Qur'an—which is not organized chronologically for the lay reader to easily follow—in a way applicable to modern times. Believers generally follow the legal school of their family, and may resort to a cleric of that school in requesting legal guidance over difficult modern social issues.[66] One way the Saudis deradicalize captured Al Qaeda members is to place them in a program of formal instruction in Islamic history, jurisprudence, and practice.[67] In other words, the Qur'an must be interpreted properly from the expert of Islamic historians, and not taken at face value where any verse that encourages jihad can be extracted to justify modern attacks.

The role of the jurist means little to militant Salafists. The militants embrace the view of jihad as expressed by Ribi, an early Islamic commander of the seventh century. As Arabs expanded eastward, Ribi gave Persian King Rustam a choice: "If you embrace Islam, we will leave you alone. If you pay the poll tax, we will protect you. Otherwise it is war."[68] There is no greater or lesser jihad—just expansion, with force if necessary.[69] Qutbists elevate jihad to become a Sixth Pillar of Islam, on the level with

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[66] Aboul-Enein, Yousef and Sherifa Zuhur. "Islamic Rulings on Warfare." *Strategic Studies Institute.* Army War College. October 2004. 3.

[67] Lewis, 206.

[68] Quoted in Kennedy, Hugh. *The Armies of the Caliphs Military and Society in the Early Islamic State. Warfare and history.* London: Routledge, 2001. 113. Sayyid Qutb refers to this incident in Milestones, 129.

[69] Historian of religion Reuven Firestone, in *Jihad: The Origin of Holy War in Islam,* argues that jihad in the Qur'an never meant personal striving, but in fact warfare. Because the Qur'an provides no chronological and historical context for its own message, it is difficult to present a case for any one interpretation of jihad from the Qur'an (Firestone 70). He performed a chronological exegesis from Qur'anic verses regarding jihad, using language and context to order the veres. From this, he argues that there is evolution of pacifism to warfare against unbelievers and the People of the Book. If one was to infer what the "final word" would be on jihad, this approach suggests the final word on jihad is warfare (Firestone 64). The aggressive stances such as Surah 9:29 ("Fight those who believe not in Allah…") are

the Five Pillars of Islam that all Muslims profess.[70] However, it is important to note

that many Salafists themselves due not promote offensive jihad, and instead appeal to

Da'wa, the nonviolent call to Islam, in order to spread the faith. In 1920, the Muslim

Brotherhood in Egypt started to reinvigorate Islam as an ideological force to counter

Western global intrusions. The Muslim Brotherhood was the first formal and modern

organization that attempted to implement and push for Salafist ideas.

Qutbism

Much of the ideological and theoretical development of militant Salafism did

not occur until the 1950s, under the influence of Sayyid Qutb. Qutb is to Islamic

militancy as Karl Marx is to Communism.[71] Qutb published two influential works in

the early 1950s, *Milestones* and *In the Shade of the Qur'an,* the latter of which is a

multi-volume commentary on the Qur'an that connects his ideology to specific Surahs

("verses") in the Qur'an. Milestones is Qutb's *Communist Manifesto,* as it articulates a

straightforward argument for why Salafist Muslims must embrace offensive jihad in

order to create the pure Islamic community. In the Shade of the Qur'an is Qutb's *Das*

Kapital, a dense justification of the worldview and its philosophical underpinnings.

In the *Communist Manifesto,* Marx pushed for a dictatorship of the proletariat to

control economic resources and remove the bourgeoisie from power, but Marx never

explicitly argued for gulags, show trials, forced starvation, and mass executions.

Nonetheless, the ideology of Marxism created the "good" in-group (the proletariat and

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late revelations in the Qur'an. This is not to discuss the veracity of what jihad means or does not mean,
but, in addition to the straight out bypass of jurisprudence by militants, Firestone may tap into *how*
Qutbists infer from their holy text what the strategic posture one should take towards the out-group.
[70] Moghadam, Assaf. "Mayhem, Myths, and Martyrdom: The Shi'a Conception of Jihad." *Terrorism*
and Political Violence. Volume 19; 2007: 125-143. 128.
[71] Moghadam, *The Globalization of Martyrdom*, 78.

the wise intelligentsia joining the right side of history) and the "bad" out-group (the capitalists, the West, the imperialists, and anyone on the wrong side of history). Marxist governments have used the dictatorship of the proletariat to justify its posture and violent actions toward the out-group. Qutbism is to Al Qaeda and ISIS' attacks on civilians, as Marxism was to the Baader Meinhof Gang's attacks against civilians. The difference between Marxism and Qutbism is that the latter pulls upon longstanding sacred values that provide personal immortality through death while fighting the enemy, which in turn incentivizes suicide attacks in ways Marxism does not.

Qutbism bluntly articulates the core sacred values that guide, like stars for navigating, the reader into certain conclusions about the state of the world and what good Muslims must do about it. Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966) influenced militant organizations that practice violence against civilians while claiming to fulfill Qutb's vision. In *Knights under the Prophet's Banner,* Ayman Zawahiri credited Qutb as the leader of the modern Islamic Salafist revolution.[72] Qutb never argued for suicide attacks—conceptually, it only existed as Japanese kamikaze attacks in World War II—and he never explicitly called for violence against non-combatants. However, he categorized non-combatants as representatives of *Jahiliyya* (the ignorant pagan world outside of God's pure revelation), he called for militant jihad against Jahiliyya, and he declared all who die practicing jihad against Jahiliyya were *shaheed* (witnesses to the faith, martyrs). This categorization leads to a militant posture toward all members of the out-group and the sanctity in confronting everything the out-group represents. Organizations inspired to operationalize Qutb's words—Hamas, Palestinian Islamic

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[72] Moghadam, *The Globalization of Martyrdom*, 72.

Jihad (PIF), Al Qaeda, ISIS, Boko Haram—would make the connection between jihad against Jahiliyya and martyrdom operations against civilians.

In the late 1940s, Qutb traveled to the United States to continue his studies. Some aspects of America he appreciated, but by and large, Qutb found American culture superficial. American relationships were based on quid-pro-quo status building, the churches were overly sexed, and America as a whole was hollow and pernicious. He observed and experienced racism first hand. He saw a black man beaten in the street. In another instance, he and his Egyptian friends were not allowed to enter a movie theater because the owner thought they were black. They protested, "But we're Egyptians" and the owner let the "black" Egyptians in, but it was not missed that black Americans were not allowed.[73] This along with other incidents led Qutb to conclude, "The Soul has no value to Americans."[74]

When he returned to Egypt, he found the worst aspects of Western culture infesting the Arab World—symbolized by Arab Nationalism and its vanguard the Egyptian President Gamal Nasser. Qutb joined the Muslim Brotherhood, and Nasser's security forces quickly arrested him for crimes against the regime. From an Egyptian prison, he published *Milestones*, which has been cited by radical Muslims since.[75] Within the book's given assumptions, *Milestones* explains what is wrong with the world and what the solution is. It gives a purpose to alienated Muslims seeking identity, purity, and historic connection to seminal events in religious history. The Nasser

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[73] Wright, Lawrence. *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11*. New York: Knopf, 2006. 19.
[74] Wright, 22.
[75] Cook, Understanding Jihad 103.

regime executed Qutb on August 29, 1966, at which point Qutb was eager to be a martyr: "I performed jihad for 15 years until I earned this martyrdom."[76]

In *Milestones*, Qutb argues that the world outside of pure Islam is in a state of ignorance that has led man to a precipice. To Qutb, the situation is desperate, with two destructive wars behind man and nuclear war possible. Man needs the vital values that only Islam provides to save mankind. Nationalism, capitalism, socialism, communism, and democracy failed to prevent past World Wars and will not prevent the next war.[77]

I argue that the pivot point that encourages an intellectual to embrace the conclusions of *Milestones* is one's disposition to the world outside of Islam. Because Islam is not truly practiced by its self- proclaimed rulers, the world is in a state of ignorance, or *Jahiliyya.* Jahiliyya refers to the pagan world in Arabia before Muhammad, when men worshipped idols instead of the one God. Qutb affirms that the first generation of the Message, the Salafi, is the greatest in the history of man, without comparison in Islam or the history of man. Since the Salafi fought pagan Jahiliyya, modern Muslims should emulate them. If conquest is justified in days of the Prophet, is it not when *Jahiliyya* has the potential to be catastrophic? Qutb puts it bluntly:

> The whole world is steeped in Jahiliyya… [It] is based on rebellion against God's sovereignty on earth. It transfers to man one of the greatest attributes of God, namely sovereignty, and makes some men lords over others. The result of this rebellion against the authority of God is the oppression of His creatures. Thus, the humiliations of the common man under the communist systems and the exploitation of individuals and nations due to greed for wealth and imperialism under the capitalist systems are but a corollary of rebellion against God's authority and the denial of the dignity of man given to him by God. In this respect, Islam's way of life is unique, for in systems other than Islam, some people worship others in some form or another.[78]

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[76] Wright, 31.

[77] Qutb, Sayyid. *Milestones.* International Islamic Federation of Student Organizations. 1978. 7. See also 11, 14-15, and 21

[78] Qutb, 15.

It is now not in that simple and primitive form of the ancient Jahiliyya, but one that is worse than the Jahiliyya of the Prophet.[79] Jahiliyya takes the form of claiming that the right to create values, to legislate rules of collective behavior, and to choose any way of life rests with men, without regard to what God has prescribed. Qutb referred to the Nasserite regime—and almost all other governments, for that matter, as a Jahiliyya regime.[80] Because of this, Islam and Jahiliyya are incompatible. There is no "half-Islam" and "half-jahiliyya"; the political ideologies of the West and Islam are mutually exclusive. Thus, any country opposing the pure expression of Islam is *Dar al-Harb* ("The House of War").[81]

To save mankind from jahiliyya, aggressive and militant jihad is necessary. Qutb cites Surah 8:39 as the proper definition of peace "Fight with them until there is no more persecution, and all religions are for Allah."[82] Jihad must be worldwide and aggressive because the stakes are global. Qutb positions the value of jihad as the tool for man's liberation, to "secure complete freedom for every man throughout the world by releasing him from servitude to other human beings so that he may serve his God, who is One and Who has no associates."[83] By positioning offensive jihad in such moralistic and global tones, it makes the practice almost ideal behavior:

> [To] establish God's authority on the earth; to arrange human affairs according to the true guidance provided by God; to abolish all the Satanic forces and Satanic systems of life; to end the lordship of one man over others, since all men are created creatures of God and no one has the authority to make them his

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[79] Qutb, 32.
[80] Moghadam, Assaf. "Mayhem, Myths, and Martyrdom: The Shi'a Conception of Jihad." 128.
[81] Qutb, 236.
[82] Qutb, Milestones 114. And Cook, Understanding Jihad 104
[83] Qutb, 127.

servants or to make arbitrary laws for them. These reasons are sufficient for proclaiming Jihad.[84]

Qutb, however, never specifically argues for how this jihad should take place. Like many ideologues, the operational implementation of his thought would fall to others. Bin Laden attended Qutb's younger brother's lectures in Saudi Arabia, absorbed Qutb's ideas, and sought to implement them.[85] Al Qaeda took beliefs about the state of the world (everything is Jahiliyya), the state of the enemy (all who suppress a true Islamic state are not only the enemy, but in the way of man's salvation), and turned them into an operational reality. Chapter 4 covers Al Qaeda's operationalization of Qutbism.

Radicalization: Characteristics of Self-Selected Qutbist Martyrs

Qutbist ideology explains the radicalization of individuals who do not have any underlying economic or emotional drivers for supporting terrorism. Although the demographics of radicalization cover both suicide terrorists and standard operatives, ideology contributes to both the organizational outlook and the values of the individual willing to become martyrs. Most of the September 11th attackers were not practicing Muslims prior to embracing the Qutbist narrative.[86] In Marc Sageman's research, only 25% of Al Qaeda members were deeply religious when young, 67% were secular, and the rest were converts from Christianity.[87] Sixty two percent attended university, and most have not experienced any trauma.[88] Many of the captured fighters in Iraq and Afghanistan had left comfortable lives in the Gulf States, Saudi Arabia, or Western

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[84] Qutb, 127.
[85] Wright, 79.
[86] Wright, 301.
[87] Sageman, Marc. 2008. *Leaderless jihad: terror networks in the twenty-first century*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 51.
[88] Sageman, 58, 62, and 65.

Europe.[89] The radicalized individual is not a reflection of his culture and environment; instead, he embraces an ideology that is a reaction against his environment.

Radicalized individuals are not psychotic, emotionally dysfunctional, or, with some exceptions, suffering from major depressive disorder. In *Driven to Death*, Israeli psychologist Ariel Merari interviewed captured Palestinian combatants: 15 were failed suicide bombers and 12 were standard operatives. Merari found that 53% of the would-be bombers were depressed and 40% were suicidal. Only 8% of the operatives exhibited symptoms of depression and none exhibited suicidal tendencies.[90] This gives credence to Lankford's theory that many suicide bombers are sublimating major depressive disorder and suicide-trajectory into the martyrdom narrative. However, even if we take Merari's data on captured Hamas bombers and project it onto ISIS's successful bombers, 60% of failed bombers did not exhibit suicidal tendencies.

The online dissemination of Qutbist propaganda exposed many individuals to an ideology that previous generations would not have been aware. By 2008, Al Qaeda and its likeminded allies operated 5,600 websites.[91] Army leaders in Afghanistan testified to capturing young insurgents who confessed to being indoctrinated online.[92] Prior to September 11th, the primary method of recruitment and radicalization for al-Qaeda

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[89] Curcio, Sharon. "Generational Differences in Waging Jihad." *Military Review.* July-August 2005.
[90] Merari, Ariel, Ilan Diamant, Arie Bibi, Yoav Broshi, and Giora Zakin. 2009. "Personality Characteristics of Self Martyrs/Suicide Bombers and Organizers of Suicide Attacks." *Terrorism and Political Violence.* 22, no. 1: 87. 94. See also Merari, Ariel. *Driven to Death: Psychological and Social Aspects of Suicide Terrorism.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2010. There are two objections with this research—first, failed suicide bombers may exhibit depression because they failed and were captured, instead of experiencing depression before the desire to be a martyr. Second, contemplating martyrdom is a form of suicide ideation, which may have led to noticeable suicidal tendencies once captured. However, Merari's data gives reason to believe depression does drive a certain number of suicide bombers.
[91] Weimann, Gabriel. "Al Qaida's Extensive Use of the Internet." *CTC Sentinel.* Vol 1, Issue 2: January 2008. 6-7.
[92] Pelley, Scott. "Jihad.com; Jihadists using Internet to Recruit and Train Warriors, Suicide Bombers." *CBS News Transcripts.* 4 March (2007). LexisNexis. Accessed 15 January (2009).

members was through face to face interaction. Since the Iraq war, the radicalization

process occurs online.[93] Radicalization has become increasingly homegrown in the

West, with no formal operational connection with Al Qaeda.[94] Recruitment is self-

initiated, and the Qutbist narrative grabs disaffected individuals looking for a just cause

to connect. Many recruits radicalized through online propaganda approached Al Qaeda,

Hamas, and ISIS asking to be sent as human bombs.[95]

     Online radicalization does not make the radicalized individuals any less

committed or passionate about the ideology. The intensity of emotions formed through

online communication compares to emotions developed in person.[96] ISIS members in

the field Skype with Muslims in Europe and the US, selling them on what belonging to

the Islamic State *means* to the individual. Once they enter the Islamic State, recruits

have learned the depths of their capabilities to brutalize human beings, whether it is

decapitating enemies or abusing sex slaves—all the while covering the television screen

when women appear because viewing them uncovered would be inappropriate.[97]

     The struggle for educated and relatively prosperous Muslims in the West to find

satisfaction in British, German, French, or American national identity is one of the

drivers of radicalization.[98] ISIS propaganda caters to this alienation, and markets the

romantic idea of the Caliphate as a place for Muslims to belong after exposure to the

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[93] United States. *Violent Islamist Extremism, the Internet, and the Homegrown Terrorist Threat Minority and Majority Staff Report ; Joseph Lieberman, Chairman, Susan Collins, Ranking Minority Member.* [Washington, D.C.]: [U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs], 2008. <http://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo29862>. 13.

[94] Perl, Raphael. *Trends in Terrorism: 2006.* [Washington, D.C.]: Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, 2006. 5.

[95] Speckhard, Anne. "Understanding Suicide Terrorism: Countering Human Bombs and Their Senders" in *Topics in Terrorism: Toward a Transatlantic Consensus on the Nature of the Threat*" (Volume 1) Eds. Jason S. Purcell and Joshua D. Weintraub <u>Atlantic Council </u>Publication 2005.

[96] Sageman, 114.

[97] Weiss, Michael; Hassan, Hassan (2015-01-29). *ISIS: Inside the Army of Terror.* Regan Arts. Kindle Edition. 2.

[98] Maher, Shiraz. "The roots of radicalization? It's identity, stupid." *The Guardian.* 17 June 2015.

hollow West.[99] Social networking forms a bond between the alienated and those already radicalized, creating a connection to the new in-group identity separate from the family's nationality. The global connection among alienated demonstrate that the ideal Imagined Ummah exists, and deserves its own government.[100]

In *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah,* Oliver Roy describes what he calls the deterritorialization of Islam, which in turn, has created a crisis of identity for many Muslims in the West. Two historic factors have influenced this crisis of identity—the first is the collapse of the Caliphate, which existed as an imperfect but nonetheless historic connection to the political establishment of Muhammad. The second is the diaspora of Muslims to non-Islamic Western countries in order to pursue economic opportunities that do not exist in the Arab-Islamic world.[101] Approximately 1/3 of Muslims live as a minority in a post-industrial society that has rendered family identity and extended neighborhood values secondary to individual achievement. The West's "exaggerated individualism" only reinforces a sense of isolation for many Muslims familiar with a communal way of life.[102]

The marginalization empowers the desire to envision a global Ummah that transcends the local Islam that has lost its currency as an acceptable social identity in the globalization era. For second and third generation Muslims, the concept of "home country" makes no sense; they are no longer aligned with their family's society of origin. It is more satisfying, as a social identity, to join an imaginary Ummah than a

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[99] Sinno, Sarah. "The defectors' handbook to destroying the Islamic State." *Daily Telegraph.* 23 September 2015.
[100] Sageman, 117.
[101] Roy, Olivier. 2004. *Globalized Islam: the search for a new Ummah.* The CERI series in comparative politics and international studies. New York: Columbia University Press. 4. 18.
[102] Moghadam, *The Globalization of Martyrdom,* 80-83.

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real country.[103] The imagined Ummah increases in relevancy, mainly so disaffected individuals can connect to an in-group larger than themselves and their neighbors' groups, while the generational Islam tied to specific jurist schools is less relevant. The traditional means of interpreting the Qur'an, often tied to regional jurist approaches for extracting the Qur'an's message for modern times, is abandoned in favor of a "fresh" reinterpretation of scripture. Islamists have had more success among educated youths in the West with a secular background than those youths attached to the traditional school of their parents.[104] In addition, an imagined global Ummah connects the Western Muslim to any oppressed Muslim elsewhere, and makes the victimization vivid and personal.[105] This conflict over identity will create the pool of Western recruits for Qutbist organizations.

For the radicalized, the Qutbist in-group operates in three tiers—the broad group of all Muslims (the Islamic Ummah), whom the Qutbists claim to act on behalf of. Within the broad group, there is the subset of Qutbists who believe they are fulfilling the sacred value of true submission to God. Within the subset of Qutbists are the shaheed, the martyrs who die to advance the pure Islamic state. The Islamic community acts as both an imagined nation and the out-group as needed. If Muslims are being persecuted by the infidel, then the Qutbists must fight on their behalf. If those same Muslims stand in the way of the advancement of a pure Islamic state, then they are *kuffar* and equally worthy of death.

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[103] Roy, 68.
[104] Roy, 59.
[105] Kramer, Martin. "Suicide Terrorism: Origins and Responses." *The Washington Institute for Near East Policy.* http://www.geocities.com/martinkramerorg/PapeKramer.htm

Chapter 3: Historic Review of Suicide Bombing Campaigns

The Shift in Ideology across Groups Led to Shift in Targets

Qutbist organizations did not invent suicide terrorism. The first suicide bombing campaigns started in the early 1980s as a tool for nationalist groups to offset the technological advantage of foreign occupiers. The groups that originated and propogated its use were influenced by a mix of social justice and nationalim (in the case of Hezbollah) and Marxism and nationalism (in the case of the LTTE and the Lebanese Socialist groups). This ideological foundation did the following—it limited the ambition of the groups to removing foreign troops on the ground, and it limited the stakeholders that identified with the cause. This contrasts with the Iraq, Afghanistan, Chechen, and Syrian conflicts, which created stakeholders based on religion. The latter conflicts received foreign fighters to fight and die for those respective causes based on the underlying religious overtones.

As a tool in asymmetric warfare, the nationalist-oriented groups used suicide terrorism to achieve tactical advantage in military engagements. Even the most dramatic and symbolic attacks of this era—the Hezbollah bombings of the American embassy in Lebanon and the American and French barracks in Lebanon—capsized the intelligence gathering capabilities of the US and France in Lebanon for years. Thus, the ideological foundation of nationalism framed the use of targets as primarily functional. Military and government targets comprised 53% and 18% of the 38 global suicide attacks between 1981 and 1992. The remaining target percentages were Police (11%),

Civilian (13%), and Informal groups (5%).[106] The number of total suicide attacks (38) in the Era of Nationalism is small compared to the number of attacks in the Eras of Religious Nationalism and Fitna (467 and 3,290 respectively). However, the ideological foundation of the originators of suicide terrorism and the trends in targets offer a contrast to how the infusion of religion into suicide terrorism expanded the number of attacks and altered the target focus. See Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Era of Nationalism, Global Suicide Attacks, By Year, By Target (START)

Year	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
Total Attacks	1	1	5	2	15	3	2	1	2	2	2	2
Military	0%	100%	60%	50%	53%	33%	0%	100%	50%	100%	50%	50%
Government	100%	0%	40%	50%	0%	33%	0%	0%	0%	0%	50%	50%
Police	0%	0%	0%	0%	20%	0%	0%	0%	50%	0%	0%	0%
Civilian	0%	0%	0%	0%	13%	33%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Informal Groups	0%	0%	0%	0%	13%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

The second era of suicide terrorism, the Era of Religious Nationalism, represents the use of suicide terrorism by primarily Qutbist influenced practitioners Hamas, Al Qaeda, and the Chechen rebels. The Palestinian and Chechen groups straddled religious end-state objectives with nationalist politics. Suicide bombing in guerilla warfare became a tool in terrorism, with an increase in the intentional attack of soft targets across multiple conflicts. Each of these groups pushed the boundaries of acceptable targets of suicide terrorism, justifying a step in one direction that a subsequent group would use to justify taking the next step.

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[106] Data on number of suicide attacks per year are taken from the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2015). Global Terrorism Database [Data file]. Retrieved from http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd Appendices 1 and 2 present graphs on suicide attacks by country, year, and target.

The organizations practicing suicide terrorism had tangible political goals for using the tactic, yet the volunteers would cite religious reasons—and more importantly, rewards—for volunteering to go through with the tactic. This would incentivize the individual to become a suicide bomber. In Palestine, a cult of martyrdom sprouted that transcended the political objectives of the sponsoring organization, to the extent that the suicide bombing wing of Hamas (al-Qassam Brigade) would conduct attacks despite explicit opposition by political leaders of Hamas. From 1994 to 2004—which includes a significant number of LTTE attacks and the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)—there were 467 total global suicide attack targets. The total target breakdown for this era is: Military (24%), Government (14%), Police (13%), Civilian (44%), and Informal Group/Unknown (4%).[107] Table 2 represents the breakdown of targets by year, and demonstrates how the spread of Qutbist ideological categories influenced the increase in civilian based targets.

Table 2 – Era of Religious Nationalism, Total Global Suicide Attacks, by Year, by Target (START)

Year	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Total Attacks	11	20	15	12	22	27	37	53	75	83	112
Military	45%	40%	27%	33%	32%	11%	59%	15%	13%	19%	24%
Government	0%	5%	7%	0%	18%	30%	22%	9%	5%	14%	21%
Police	0%	20%	27%	17%	0%	22%	11%	9%	3%	7%	24%
Civilian	45%	25%	33%	50%	45%	22%	8%	62%	72%	57%	28%
Informal Groups	9%	0%	0%	0%	5%	4%	0%	4%	0%	0%	1%
Unknown	0%	10%	7%	0%	0%	11%	0%	0%	7%	2%	2%

The third era of suicide terrorism, the Era of Fitna, represents the rise of ISIS, the Afghanistan and Pakistan Talibans, the Boko Haram in Nigeria, and Al Qaeda

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[107] Unfortunately, the START database has no data for 1993, and to be consistent with the data source, I do not include 1993 in these assessment. The CPOST database has 6 attacks for 1993.

franchises in Yemen, Syria (al-Nusra), and Somalia. ISIS has been conducting the most

devastating suicide bombing campaign in history since 2005. ISIS combined multiple

trends of the tactic up to this point: the strong in-group and out-group divide from

Qutbism, the ideological objective to build a new government based on the pure and

ideal religion, the dehumanization of non-combatants as *takfir* which justified the

murder of fellow Muslims, and the cult of martyrdom exported from Palestine to

incentivize the individual to commit suicide.

Table 3 – Era of Fitna, Total Global Suicide Attacks, by Year, by Target (START)

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total Attacks	203	173	359	242	178	170	202	401	624	738
Military	26%	17%	18%	13%	8%	9%	11%	24%	28%	32%
Government	15%	12%	10%	20%	32%	25%	29%	13%	14%	11%
Police	20%	24%	33%	20%	8%	14%	22%	26%	28%	22%
Civilians	38%	43%	36%	38%	46%	50%	34%	27%	25%	23%
Informal Groups	0%	1%	3%	8%	2%	2%	1%	5%	3%	6%

The organizations in this era have functional reasons for using suicide

terrorism—the insecurity in Iraq and Afghanistan gave these groups the space to

conduct attacks—yet even this does not fully explain why individuals were travelling to

Iraq to become a bomber, why the organizations used suicide terrorism instead of

conventional terrorist attacks, what type of government they are trying to create, and

why that type of government attracts stakeholders from out of the region. To

understand the dramatic rise in attacks in this era, the ideological basis and individual

internalization of this ideology matters. From 2005 to 2014, there were 3,290 total

global suicide attacks. ISIS suicide attacks in Iraq represents 41% of all attacks in this

era, and 14% of all suicide attacks in this era targeted Iraqi civilians. Table 3 above

charts the attacks for this era.

The Ideological Foundation of Suicide Terrorism in the 1980s

Marxist and social justice values influenced the originator and early adopters of

suicide terrorism, and this structured how these groups selected targets. The LTTE, the

PKK, and the Lebanese socialist groups adhered to Marxist rhetoric and worker's

revolution. Although explicitly anti-Marxist, Hezbollah believed in a class

consciousness similar to Marxist tenets, but this identification with the oppressed was

rooted in Sunni oppression of Shias and not dialectical materialism. Each of these

groups adopted the tactic before Qutbist organizations did. The purpose of a historic

review of suicide terrorism is twofold: to demonstrate that no ideology completely

monopolized the tactic, and to compare how Qutbist organizations changed the tactic

and its usage in comparison to previous suicide bombing campaigns.

The most notable suicide attacks prior to the 1980s were the Japanese kamikaze

attacks in World War II. In constrast to self-selected martyrs, the kamikaze pilots were

conscripted, and they were used exclusively against American military targets. Many

kamikaze pilots wrote in their diaries the disillusionment they had with the cause and

the fear for being selected in a kamikaze attack. However, the Japanese government

still appealed to Shinto and Buddhist values to justify the attack and encourage the

conscripted.[108] Secular-leaning organizations that conscript the suicide attackers, such

as the LTTE, will also use religious values to assist in the individual to go through with

the attack.

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[108] Lewis, 60.

William Pierce's *Turner Diaries* (1978) presented one of the most infamous fictional suicide attacks. The "protagonist" Earl Thomas crashes a crop duster armed with a nuclear bomb into the Pentagon, which allowed the Neo-Nazi Order to take over the world.[109] The Turner Diaries has influenced many white supremacists in the US and Europe, including those behind the 1995 Murrah Building bombing in Oklahoma City, yet there was not a rash of suicide attacks by white nationalists. One reason is that Pierce and his Neo-Nazism was explicitly anti-Christian, which limited its roots among a broader American culture. The fictional Earl Thomas renounced belief in an afterlife on his flight into the Pentagon. Timothy McVeigh, like his fictional hero, described himself as an agnostic.[110] Although there are multiple reasons why the white supremacist movement has not conducted both the conventional and suicide attacks to the degree that militant Qutbists have, one reason is because the substantiating ideology does not promise personal immortality, which is key to provide psychological safety to go through with suicide.

Suicide terrorism in the 1980s emerged in the waning days of the Cold War, which explains some ideological restraint in its usage in the Era of Nationalism. When the Cold War began, most rebel groups turned to the Soviet Union or Maoist China— both results of successful revolution—as ideological beacons for their own nationalist and socialist movements, particularly since many were combatting post-colonial enterprises that usually aligned with the United States' side of the Cold War. In some instances, the USSR would send actual materiel to nationalist movements that paid obeisance to the left side of the global political spectrum. But by the 1980s, the Soviet

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[109] Macdonald, Andrew. *The Turner Diaries*. New York: Barricade Books Inc, 1996. 204.
[110] O'Brien, Miles and Susan Candiotti, Jim Polk, and Ed Lavandera. "McVeigh's Comments Published in Buffalo Paper." *CNN Sunday Morning*. June 10, 2001. Lexis Nexis. Retrieved March 18th, 2008.

Union ceased to be a motivating force for global revolution and rebellion, and Chinese Chairman Mao Zedong's accommodation of US President Richard Nixon in the 1970s likewise betrayed revolutionary principles. The LTTE, the PKK, and the Lebanese groups were the last remnants of rebel fighters adhering to an ideology that lost much of its motivating power. In the 1970s, many of the transnational leftwing terrorist groups—the Japanese Red Army, the Baader Meinhof Gang, Carlos the Jackal— targeted and assassinated bourgeois civilians whom they believed represented the collective oppression of the proletariat. However, they did not conduct any suicide attacks, likely for three reasons: the tactic was invented after their defeats or deaths, the decline of Marxism limited support for the ideology outside of a few regions (such as Sri Lanka and Kurdistan), and, most importantly, the type of in-group and out-group divide is different in Marxism and Qutbism.

Marxism can (and has) created stakeholders globally for its cause, and it can (and has) created rigid in-group and out-group conflict with horrific consequences. The Soviet imposed Holodomor famine in Poland, the gulags, the show trials, the Cultural Revolution, and the Khmer Rouge are proof that Marxism can incite violent dehumanization. The lessons of group narcissism on intergroup hostility explain Marxist violence as well. The difference between cosmic Marxism and cosmic Islamic militancy is that, in Marxism, the potential in-group member is anyone who is oppressed, in any country in the world. The exploited workers and their intellectual advocates are allies. Thus, wanton attacks on civilians can theoretically undermine potential support for global workers' revolution. Capricious slaughter of civilians would merely push workers to rally around the former regime instead of the socialist

vanguard. The in-group and out-groups are intermixed, making separating the out-group difficult for a violent attack. For Marxists, as born by history, the reordering of man (and its pernicious consequences) occurs after they attain power.

For Qutbists, the in-group and out-group divide is easier to recognize and act on. The in-group and out-group are, for the most part, geographically and culturally separated, which makes it easier to target large out-groups without fear of contaminating the cause among the audience the Qutbists intend to win over first. If an ISIS suicide bomber goes into an Iraqi Shia marketplace and detonates himself, everyone who dies is an infidel and worthy of death. If a Marxist suicide bomber detonates himself in an American mall, he very well may kill many bourgeois enemies, but also many workers that the bomber is theoretically in his in-group. If a Shia suicide bomber detonates himself in an American mall, he will kill many in the "House of Oppressed," an in-group that the Shia radical theoretically identifies with (discussed below in Cognitive Terrain of Lebanese Bombers).

The role of religious identity mitigates much of the fear of suicide and creates a framework for pulling adherents from over the globe. Any stakeholder affiliated with the religion can self-select to defend the religion in any area where the religion is in conflict. Thus, a Westernized Muslim in London can identify with what happens to Iraqis—to the extent that the Westernized Muslim, who has never been to Iraq, can kill himself and fellow Londoners.

Hezbollah and Syrian Groups in Lebanon

The first suicide bombing campaign emerged from the complicated social and geopolitical politics in Lebanon. After World War II, Lebanon gathered four separate

religious groups—Sunnis, Shias, Maronite Christians, and Druze—into one country. The government was structured around a confessional system that ensured proportional representation for each group in different offices. The major positions went to the Sunnis and Christians, leaving Shias and Druze with limited access to political (and, by extension, economic) resources. Since Lebanon was a French protectorate between the World Wars, the political culture favored the Christians. The Christians (primarily) and Sunnis (secondarily) benefitted the most economically from the confessional system. For decades, Lebanon prospered, as it was a haven of market economics in a desert of Arab socialism. But in time, the social tension over the confessional system would take its toll and lead to a devastating civil war. The Shia demographic increased dramatically in the decades following establishment of Lebanon, and thus the Shia community was at a permanent disadvantage in accessing economic resources.

In 1970, King Abdullah Hussein I of Jordan expelled Palestinian activists and agitators from Jordan, who subsequently relocated to Lebanon. The expelled Palestinians from Jordan militarized southern Lebanon, and in turn strained the tense social, economic, and political high wire act of Lebanon. Syria invaded Lebanon in 1975, primarily to stabilize it and create a buffer against Israel. In 1982, Israel invaded to eradicate the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO)'s bases near the border that shelled Israeli towns and to destroy the PLO's political authority in the West Bank. Months later, the US and France sent ground forces into Lebanon to help PLO leadership escape to Tunis and to keep all combatants at bay.

Between the Syrian and Israeli incursions into Lebanon, the Ayatollah Khoemeini and his allies forced the Shah of Iran to abdicate. In the place of his pro-

Western government, the Iranian revolutionaries installed a theocracy of Shia legal scholars. These jurists represented the first beacon of Shia power since the end of the Abbasaid Caliphate almost a millenia before. The new government took an aggressive posture against the Shah's former allies, namely the US and Israel. The Iranian Revolutionary Guard (IRG) found an opportunity to expand Iranian influence in the Arab World to counter US influence, particularly through Arab Shia communities.[111] Soon after the Iranian revolution, the Ayatollah Ruhallah Khomeini sent over 1,000 IRG troops to Lebanon to train the local Shia in guerilla warfare.[112]

The first suicide bombing campaign resulted from Iranian sponsorship, tied to Iranian strategic objectives in the region. In December 1981, the Iranian-backed Shia group Al Dawa ("the Call") drove a bomb-packed car into the Iraqi embassy in Beirut, conducting the first suicide attack in a sustained campaign.[113] Many of the members of Al Dawa became members of Hezbollah ("the Party of God"). In April 1983, a suicide bomber drove into the US Embassy in Beirut, killing 17 American CIA operatives and embassy staff personnel and 46 Lebanese workers. Soon after, Iran ordered Hezbollah to conduct a "spectacular attack" against MNF forces.[114] On October 23, 1983, two suicide attackers detonated their vehicular suicide bombs on the US Marine and French barracks within minutes of each other, killing 241 Americans and 58 French servicemen. America and France were the two countries providing intelligence and materiel support, respectively, to Iraq during the Iraq-Iran war. Twelve days later a

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[111] Reuter, Christoph. *My life is a weapon a modern history of suicide bombing.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004. 57.
[112] Pedazhur, Ami. *Suicide Terrorism.* Malden, MA; Policy Press, 2005. 44.
[113] Moghadam, *The Globalization of Martyrdom.* Location 554.
[114] Tyler, Patrick. *A World of Trouble: The White House and the Middle East--from the Cold War to the War on Terror.* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009. 298.

suicide attack denonated on an Israeli convoy, killing 60. In February 1984, the

multinational forces left Lebanon. Soon after, other Lebanese groups joined in using

the tactic, and the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka would follow.

<p align="center">*Cognitive Terrain of Lebanese Bombers*</p>

Unlike Sunni militants, who prioritize jihad against unbelievers in the name of

theological differences, the Shia militant conception of jihad emphasizes combatting

oppression. Sunnis divide the world by the "House of Islam," where Muslims live,

against the "House of War," where unbelievers live. Hezbollah, on the other hand,

divides the world into "House of Oppressors" and the "House of the Oppressed," a

perspective formed from centuries of oppression at the hand of Sunnis.[115] Almost every

Hezbollah official speech has evoked this dynamic of oppressor and oppressed. To

radical Sunnis, Islamic identity is the top priority and social justice followed later. To

radical Shias, social justice is the top priority and Islamic identity follows. Because of

the oppression and oppressor narrative, the greater Shia "in-group" was not necessarily

just fellow Shias but victims of tyranny anywhere. Before the Iranian Revolution, Shias

would identify with left-leaning parties and political platforms.[116] The social justice in-

group perspective of Hezbollah would lead them to share tactics with left leaning

groups and, leading into the next era, militant Sunni groups oppressed by Israel and

Arab governments as well.

Sympathetic Shia clerics developed a theological justification for the tactic. Iran

and Hezbollah coined the phrase *al-amalyiat al-istishhadiyya* for suicide bombing,

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[115] Saad-Ghorayeb, Amal. *Hizbullah: Politics and Religion*. London: Pluto Press, 2002. 16.
[116] Nasr, Seyyed Vali Reza. *The Shia Revival How Conflicts Within Islam Will Shape the Future.* New York: Norton, 2006.

known as "martyr operation."[117] The Lebanese Shia theologian Ayatollah Sayyid

Mohammed Fadlallah set the rules for Shia use of suicide bombings. He argued, "We

believe that suicide operations should only be carried out if they can bring about a

political or military change in proportion to the passions that incite a person to make of

his body an explosive bomb."[118] To Sheikh Fadlallah the aim "is to have a political

impact on an enemy whom it is impossible to fight by conventional means, then his

sacrifice can be part of a jihad."[119] Fadlallah did not emphasize the individual rewards

of martyrdom; the reward was the advancement of the living cause.

There was little that was religious about Fadlallah's arguments, other than

referencing and justifying jihad under certain political conditions. He never used takfir,

tawhid, or other religious values that Qutbists used in order to demonstrate the

soundness of their actions according to the faith. However, the messenger provided the

sanctification of political objectives. Because a sheikh approved, the tactic was

acceptable. All of Hezbollah's targets during this era were military and political

entities.[120] In the 1980s, Hezbollah performed over 25 suicide attacks.[121] However, out

of 1,500 Hezbollah terrorist operations in the 1990s, the organization only performed

two suicide bombings. According to Hezbollah, they no longer needed martyrdom

operations because they developed the infrastructure in southern Lebanon for a

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[117] Moghadam, *The Globalization of Islam,* Kindle Location 568.
[118] Quoted in Pape, 31.
[119] Quoted in Martin Kramer, "Sacrifice and 'Self-Martyrdom' in Shi'ite Lebanon," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, vol. 3, no. 3 (Autumn 1991), pp. 30-47. 40.
[120] Using START data, however, START does not attribute suicide attacks to Hezbollah that they did not take credit for. Other researchers—Moghadam, Helmer, and Reuter, for example—attribute many unclaimed attacks in Lebanon to Hezbollah based on the identities of the bombers and tactical similarity.
[121] Reuter, 66.

paramilitary state.[122] By the late 1990s, Hezbollah no longer even had a suicide

bombing training program.

The Campaigns of the Nationalist-Marxist Organizations in Lebanon

In Lebanon, a second wave of suicide bombing campaigns followed Hezbollah's

initiative. These participating groups included the Syrian Baath Party, the Arab

Socialist Union, the Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP), the Lebanese Communist

Party, and the Nasserist Organization.[123] The suicide bombers in Lebanon were not all

devout Muslims. Of the forty-one known suicide attackers during the Lebanese

conflict, twenty-seven were from socialist or communist parties (even those who

conducted attacks on behalf of Hezbollah), three were Christian, and only eight were

Islamic radicals. However, it is fair to note that many of Hezbollah's attackers are

unknown.[124] Like Hezbollah, these groups primarily attacked military targets, as the

SSNP insisted it was not a terrorist organization because it refused to target civilians.[125]

The cult of martyrdom, which would become a staple of the Palestinian suicide

campaigns, started with these national-socialist groups, particularly through videotaped

wills. These tapes marketed the martyr's reason for dying for the cause. Jamal as-Sati,

one of the Lebanese Communist bombers, addressed in his testament that he was acting

on behalf of "the poor of the whole world."[126] Sati, however, came from a family of

respectable means in the Beqaa valley.

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[122] Reuter, 66.
[123] Moghadam, *Globalization of Martyrdom*, Kindle Location 568.
[124] Pape, 205.
[125] Gambetta, Diego. *Making Sense of Suicide Missions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. 80.
[126] Khosrokhavar, Farhad, and David Macey. *Suicide Bombers Allah's New Martyrs.* London: Pluto Press, 2005. 147.

The SSNP sponsored the first known female suicide bomber, Sana Mheidleh. On April 9, 1985, the 16-year-old girl rammed a car loaded with 440 pounds of explosive into an Israeli convoy, killing two Israeli soldiers.[127] Although Mheidleh was Shia, she made no mention of religion as a motivation in her letters and recordings that announced her intentions.[128] In her videotape, she declared this was her national duty, and she was glad to give her life for Hafez al-Assad.[129] Mheidleh, who did not know how to drive a car before the attack, stated, "All my life I have been thinking of a revolutionary action. I have decided to fulfill my duty toward the south." Mheidleh tied her sacrifice to national liberation on behalf of Greater Syria, a region that covers both Syria and Lebanon, as well as portions of Jordan, Iraq, and Turkey:

> When you see and hear me I will be dead. I choose death in order to fulfill my national duty. I hope I'll be able to kill the highest possible number of the enemy…Do not be sad for me. The south must be liberated.

The SSNP dispatched at least five more female suicide bombers by 1990.

Tamil Tigers Innovation, Adoption, and Use of Suicide Terrorism

Tamil Tigers' suicide bombing campaign shared underlying political factors with Hezbollah's suicide bombing campaign, particularly in the role of sacred values based in nationalism. One admirer of Hezbollah's campaign was Villipai Prabhakaran, the tyrannical leader of the LTTE.[130] The LTTE represented the Tamil ethnic group, a Hindu minority sharing the small island dominated by the majority Buddhist Sri Lankans. The dream of the Tigers was *Tamil Eelam,* their own Hindi homeland. This

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[127]Faramarzi, Scheherazade. "Girl Who Drove Car Bomb First Sent Mother Present." The Associated Press, (International News, April 12, 1985).
[128] Pedazhur, 142.
[129] Faramarzi. Subsequent quotes are from this article.
[130] Cronin, Audrey Kurth. *Terrorists and Suicide Attacks*. [Washington, D.C.]: Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, 2003. 5. And Fair, C. Christine. *Urban Battle Fields of South Asia Lessons Learned from Sri Lanka, India, and Pakistan.* Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2004. 38.

ethnic and religious tension led to a guerilla war from 1993 to 2009, which killed over 64,000.[131] The persecution of Tamils contributed to the willingness of Tamils to become suicide bombers, even if they were conscripted by Tamil operatives.

The LTTE carried out its first suicide bombing in 1989, six years after the MNF barracks bombing. Over the next decade, the LTTE's suicide bombing wing, the Black Tigers, became the most ruthless and most disciplined practitioners of suicide terrorism, responsible for more than half of the suicide attacks worldwide prior to Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003.[132] The LTTE has been the only Tamil group to conduct suicide attacks, and between 1989 and 2009, the Black Tigers executed 109 suicide bombing missions, causing over 1,200 deaths.[133] The Tigers used suicide bombings in conjunction with a conventional ground assault. A suicide bomber would ram a truck loaded with explosives into a camp, followed by LTTE regulars penetrating the base with light arms.[134] The LTTE were innovators, introducing the suicide bomb vest and the naval suicide bomb. LTTE boat bombs destroyed a third of the Sri Lankan navy.[135] The LTTE's target breakdown for its entire history is: Military (50%), Government (17%), Police (9%), and Civilian (17%).

There are two issues regarding the Tamil campaign worth noting. First, the Tamil suicide operatives were not self-selected. Recruiters actively selected the Black Tigers, and the chosen could not withdraw from planned operations without fear of

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[131] Fair, C. Christine. *Urban Battle Fields of South Asia Lessons Learned from Sri Lanka, India, and Pakistan.* Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2004. 24.

[132] Waldman, Amy. "Masters of Suicide Bombing: Tamil Guerillas of Sri Lanka." *New York Times.* January 14, 2003.

[133] Hassan, Riaz. 161.

[134] Fair, 37.

[135] Ramasubramanian, R. "Suicide Terrorism in Sri Lanka." *Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies.* New Delhi, India. August 2004. http://www.ipcs.org/IRP05.pdf 10. And Waldman, Amy. "Masters of Suicide Bombing: Tamil Guerillas of Sri Lanka." *New York Times.* January 14, 2003.

retaliation against their families. This contrasts with the martyrs in the Middle East, which are mostly self-recruiting and deeply committed to global ideology.[136]

Secondly, the LTTE have often been characterized as a secular organization, which is a misconception. The LTTE mixed Marxist rhetoric with Hindu sacred values. Like many of the organizations that emerged in the mid-1970s, the Tamil Tigers started as a revolutionary nationalist movement that paid loose obeisance to Marxist and international Leftist rhetoric. Prabhakaran established a Stalinist platform centered on his personality. In the 1998 document "Struggle for Tamil Eelam and the Liberation Tigers," the LTTE declared:[137]

> LTTE has resolved to work in solidarity with the world national liberation movements, socialist states, and international working class parties. We uphold an anti-imperialist policy and therefore we pledge our militant solidarity against western imperialism, neo-colonialists, Zionism, racism and other forces of reaction.

All LTTE members swear an oath to sacrifice their life for their land: ''I hereby promise that I am prepared to sacrifice my life and fight to create a free Socialist Tamil Eelam, which is the sublime aspiration of our Revolutionary Organization.''[138]

Despite the coercive recruitment, the LTTE nurtured a cult of martyrdom for its Black Tigers. The LTTE built holy shrines for martyrs and created five holidays honoring them.[139] The Black Tigers anticipated respect in this life and some form of immortality.[140] The LTTE constructed a statue of Captain Millar, the first LTTE suicide bomber. Tamils sold filmed suicide attacks, and billboards in Tamil areas

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[136] Atran, Scott. 2006. "The Moral Logic and Growth of Suicide Terrorism". *Washington Quarterly.* 29, no. 2: 127-147. 131.
[137] Mehta, Raj K. *Lost Victory: The Rise & Fall of LTTE Supremo, V. Prabhakaran.* New Delhi: Pentagon Security International, 2010. 68.
[138] Braun, R., and M. Genkin. 2014. "Cultural Resonance and the Diffusion of Suicide Bombings: The Role of Collectivism". *Journal of Conflict Resolution.* 58, no. 7: 1258-1284. 1264.
[139] Moghadam, Globalization of Martyrdom, Kindle Location 605.
[140] Lewis, 105.

displayed a cartoon showing women how to detonate in a way to kill as many as possible.[141] Tamil children could recite the names of martyrs.[142]

The Tamil Tigers relied on the Hindu concept of *tiyakam* from the Bhagavad-Gita. Tiyakam is the "voluntary abandonment of life," the taking of one's life as well as someone else's.[143] This is a specific type of sacred death, which LTTE extrapolated as a sacred form of murder-suicide. Likewise, Prabhakaran relied on Hindu constructs of "guru-ship" to justify his cult of personality and command obedience. He promoted himself as a descendant of the Chola Kings, which embodied the spirit of Tamil's glorious past.[144]

The LTTE collapsed so quickly after his death in 2009 because his personal brand was so vital to the LTTE culture. He formed a quasi-religion with him at the center of the Tamil universe, and every suicide attack went through him. LTTE operatives, other than leaders, did not meet Prabhakaran until selected as Black Tigers. Prior to each attack, the Tiger would get to enjoy dinner with Prabhakaran, for some an almost religious experience. "For us, he is mother, father, and God all rolled into one," one Tiger said of Prabhakharan. Another dying Tigress, who rammed a bulldozer into Sri Lankan lines and with limbs blown away, spat out water given to her by Sri Lankan soldiers, and died with "Annai, Annai (Elder Brother, referring to Prabhakaran)" on her lips.

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[141] Waldman, Amy.
[142] Bloom, *Dying to Kill.* 64.
[143] Hassan, Riaz. 169. And Lewis, 103.
[144] Pratap, Anita. *Island of Blood Frontline Reports from Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Other South Asian Flashpoints.* New York: Penguin Books, 2003. 103. Subsequent quotes are from the same citation.

Chapter 4: The Operationalization of Martyrdom and Qutbism:

Hamas, Al Qaeda, and ISIS

The Palestinian Campaigns

The Development of Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad

The Palestinian campaigns represented the confluence of nationalism and religion. Both Hamas and PIJ sprouted from the Palestinian wing of the Muslim brotherhood, the post-WWI leader in promoting Islamist political thought.[145] The First Intifada represented the long standing, grassroots resentment toward both Israel and the PLO, and thus gave groups such as the PIJ and Hamas, untainted by compromise, and energetically infused with religious confidence, the platform to confront Israel with extreme measures. Hamas and PIJ benefitted significantly from being "off brand" at the time of Palestinian frustration with the PLO, due to the PLO's concessions to Israel during the peace process. The PLO also disenfranchised many Palestinians due to a corrupt patronage system that provided differential access to the scarce economic resources and opportunities available to Palestinians—with preference given to PLO supporters for those jobs, scholarships, and similar economic assets.[146]

In the midst of the First Intifada (1987-1991), Hamas leader Sheikh Yassin declared Islam and Palestine as one. Ceding an inch of land was not permissible, which appealed to many Palestinians angry over PLO concessions.[147] In doing so, Hamas matched Palestinian grievances with Islamist politics and objectives. As much as 90%

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[145] Lewis, 147.
[146] Masters, Jonathan. "Council on Foreign Relations Backgrounder: What is Hamas?" *PBS.org. 20* November 2012. http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/hamas-backgrounder/ (Accessed 22 October 2015).
[147] Lewis, 146.

of Hamas's work was in social, welfare, cultural, and educational activities, which created a clientele base to build its organizational brand.[148]

In the late 80s, Qutbist influenced groups in Palestine started to consider martyrdom operations. In 1988, the founder of the Islamic Jihad, Dr. Fathi Shaqiqi, argued for the Palestinian cooption of Hezbollah's martyrdom operations. An ideological potpourri of Sayyid Qutb, Karl Marx, and the Ayatollah Khomeini heavily influenced Shaqiqi.[149] According to Shaqiqi, the suicide bombing (which he called a "Gift from God") fulfilled numerous Qur'anic requirements for striving in the cause of God—particularly, the commandment not to waver in the face of the enemy.[150]

Despite Hamas' Sunni orientation, Hamas turned to and received logistical support and military training from Iran.[151] Ideology influenced perceptions, strategy, and tactics, but ideological divide did not mean a divide in operational assistance or cooperation. Iran also provided much of the PIJ's operating budget, and the PIJ and Hezbollah conducted joint attacks in south Lebanon.[152] In the early 1990s, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin expelled 415 Hamas militants from the West Bank to Lebanon. Hezbollah accommodated Hamas in 1992 and trained the Sunnis in suicide terrorism.[153] Even though Hezbollah never paraded martyrs in Lebanon, Hezbollah impressed upon

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[148] Masters, Jonathan.

[149] Fisk, Robert. "Obituary: Dr. Fathi Shaqiqi." *The Independent.* 22 October 2011. http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/obituary-dr-fathi-shkaki-1580289.html (Accessed 16 November 2015).

[150] Hassan, Nasra. "An Arsenal of Believers" The *New Yorker.* November 19th, 2001. http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2001/11/19/an-arsenal-of-believers (Accessed 16 November 2015).

[151] Abū 'Amr, Ziyād. 1994. *Islamic fundamentalism in the West Bank and Gaza: Muslim Brotherhood and Islamic Jihad.* Indiana series in Arab and Islamic studies. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 82.

[152] Fletcher, Holly. "Backgrounder: Palestinian Islamic Jihad." *Council on Foreign Relations.* *http://www.cfr.org/israel/palestinian-islamic-jihad/p15984* (Accessed 16 November 2015).

[153] Hafez, *Manufacturing Human Bombs.* 18. And Lewis, 149.

the Palestinians the need to videotape martyrs and to exploit the media value of the martyr.[154]

Hamas and the PIJ conducted suicide attacks to derail the Oslo Peace Accords between Israel and the PLO.[155] The first suicide bombing in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict took place in the West Bank in April 1993, at an Israeli restaurant. In the 1990s, Hamas performed 24 suicide bombings, followed by 51 suicide attacks during the Second Intifada in the early 2000s.[156] Among all organizations during the Second Intifada, there were 147 suicide attacks in Israel and the occupied territories, with reports of 450 planned attacks.[157] For all years, the breakdown of targets in Israel and the Occupied Territories include: Military (21%), Government (1%), Police (3%), Civilian (69%), and the remaining unknown (5%).

Palestinian Use of Suicide Terrorism

Hamas and the PIJ represent the straddling over national political objectives and religious influence. In the context of this conflict, the trauma of the Palestinian experience constructed narratives about target acceptability and the religious rewards for martyrdom that groups removed from Palestine would adopt. Through the martyrdom narrative, the Palestinian groups incentivized suicide terrorism through the emphasis of individual rewards for suicide.

To the Palestinians, all targets were military. Since all Israeli civilians were soldiers, Israeli civilians were military targets. However, future bombers in Saudi

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[154] Lewis, 158.
[155] Hassan, Nasra.
[156] See Hassan, "An Arsenal of Believers", and Urquhart, Conal "Hamas in Call to End Suicide Bombings" *The Guardian.* April 9, 2006. http://www.theguardian.com/world/2006/apr/09/israel (Accessed 17 April 2006).
[157] Moghadam, *Globalization of Martyrdom*, Kindle Location 620.

Arabia, Chechnya, and Libya would make the same one-to-one comparison between military and civilian targets. The Saudi bomber who would enter Iraq to detonate at a Shia market had observed the Palestinian bomber enter a Sbarro and kill Israeli civilians. The artifice of the attack was carried over from one conflict to the next without context for why civilians were justified (or perceived as such) in the former.

This is why it is vital to discuss intergroup hostility and the consequences of the narrative of the in-group and out-group parameters. For Hezbollah and the Lebanese bombers, the enemies were the foreign military and political forces with boots on the ground—the United States, France, and Israel. There is no reason to think Hezbollah viewed the American, French, or even the Israeli people as the enemy worthy of suicide targets. The out-group was small. For the Tamils, the out-group expanded to include Sri Lankans as a whole, and the LTTE conducted some attacks against Sri Lankan civilians—however the homeland of Tamil Eelam was not to exist at the expense of a Sri Lankan homeland.

For Hamas and the Palestinian groups, particularly the Islamist groups that described Islam and Palestine as one and opposed the peace process, all Israelis were enemies—military and civilian. The out-group was large, at least for the region. For the Chechens, all Russians were the enemy.[158] For Al Qaeda, all Americans (and its allies) were the enemy. For ISIS, all who stand in the way of an Islamic State are the enemy—which includes Americans, Iraqis, Syrians, French, Belgians, and even Al Qaeda. The Palestinian groups started to conflate military and civilian targets, and in

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[158] The Chechen rebels pushed propaganda that Muslims were descendants of Adam and Eve, but Russians were descendants of Darwin's monkeys. Dolnik, Adam. *Understanding Terrorist Innovation Technology, Tactics and Global Trends*. Contemporary terrorism series. London: Routledge, 2007. 117.

doing so, created the framework that Al Qaeda and ISIS would use to justify civilian targets.

Similar to Sheikh Fadlallah with Hezbollah, the justification of targets for the Palestinian Islamist groups was the result from the messenger, not necessarily the ideological justification in and of itself. Hamas and the PIJ defended the transition of targets from hard military targets to soft civilian targets in three ways:

- In a democracy, the electorate is responsible for the decisions made by those in power, and the electorate pays the taxes that support military actions.
- Mohammed used catapults to hurl rocks over the walls of cities, and these rocks likely killed unarmed civilians.
- In the case of Muslims killed in the midst of suicide attacks, those Muslims that live among infidels or work in their interest are apostates worthy of death.[159]

In March 2002, Hamas conducted a suicide bombing outside the Park Hotel at Netanya, killing over 30 Israeli civilians, one of the deadliest attacks in the Second Intifada.[160] Although the Palestinian Authority (PA) condemned the attack, one year later, the PA sponsored a soccer tournament using the name of the martyr who conducted the attack, attempting to capitalize on martyrdom operations for its own value.

When the Palestinian groups conducted attacks in the mid-1990s, they did so to practice a coherent strategy of harming the Israel-PLO peace process. Hamas and the PIJ practiced exogenous control over suicide terrorism, managing it in strict control over each attack. However, Israeli assassinations of top Palestinian leaders gutted this strategy among Hamas' cells in the Second Intifada. This led to "organized anarchy," a bottom up approach to targets based on availability.[161] With an increase in popular support for suicide bombings among Palestinians, the Second Intifada demonstrated an

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[159] Cook, Understanding and Addressing… 55-56
[160] Lewis, 164.
[161] Lewis, 171.

endogamous control over the tactic, as the culture and the individuals willing to become bombers pushed Hamas, the PIJ, and even secular-leaning organizations to conduct suicide attacks to attract popular support. The symbolic attack became a value in and of itself, with organizations seeking to become associated with martyrdom. The bottom-up strategy reinforced the willingness to attack civilians. As a Hamas training manual notes, "it is foolish to hunt the tiger when there are plenty of sheep around."[162]

Popular support for suicide bombings, both as a concept and for the organizations practicing suicide terrorism, increased between intifadas. The Hamas organizers reiterated that if the Palestinian people opposed suicide attacks, Hamas would not pursue them.[163] In the first intifada, support for suicide operations did not surpass a third of Palestinians. By November 2000, support for operations was up to two-thirds of Palestinians polled, and popular support for Hamas rose to over 70%.[164]

The increased popular support for suicide attacks influenced increased organizational use of the tactic. In *Dying to Kill,* researcher Mia Bloom investigated the level of popular support Palestinian groups in Gaza and the West Bank for suicide attacks. She tracked bumps in approval ratings for the different Palestinian groups after conducting—or taking credit for—suicide attacks against Israel targets.[165] Fatah created the suicide bombing wing Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade (AAMB) as a response to the popularity of Hamas' martyrdom attacks. The AAMB's first attack occurred in

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[162] Bloom, Mia. 2004. "Palestinian Suicide Bombing: Public Support, Market Share, and Outbidding". *Political Science Quarterly.* 119, no. 1: 61-88. 79.

[163] Merari, Ariel. *Driven to Death: Psychological and Social Aspects of Suicide Terrorism.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2010. 174.

[164] Bloom, Mia. "Palestinian Suicide Bombing: Public Support, Market Share, and Outbidding." 65.

[165] See Bloom, Mia. *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2005. Whereas Pape's thesis argues that the organization conducts suicide attacks to influence an external audience, Bloom's thesis is that organizations conduct suicide attacks to compete for influence to an internal audience.

January 17, 2002. By mid-2002, the Fatah wing was conducting most of the suicide bombings.[166]

In the First Intifada, Hamas and the PIJ synchronized attacks to respond to progress in the peace talks between Israel and the PLO, but groups rarely claimed public acceptance of responsibility. In the Second Intifada, groups would mutually claim the same attack, demonstrating the change in support for suicide bombings.[167] Hamas and PIJ issued competing claims for the August 2001 Sbarro bombing, and Hamas and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) issued competing claims for the May 2002 market attack. As many as four different groups would take credit for any given attack. The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the PFLP, and the AAMB all co-opted the religious language of jihad from Hamas and the PIJ. The PFLP resurrected some measure of popularity after adopting suicide terrorism, leading to higher support in 2001 than in 2000 after conducting a handful of attacks. Groups would publish posters of martyrs, marketing the same martyr as their own.

In the Second Intifada, Palestinian networks operated in horizontal networks that responded to popular support rather than hierarchical structures receiving top-down orders.[168] There was closeness and cohesion in the networks, and leaders of cells did not hold senior positions. The Palestinian networks competed against each other, as cells would respond to other organizations' and even other cells' attacks. A horizontal network implies target selection based on opportunity and prejudice toward the out-group, with little attention paid to long term strategic benefits. The bottom up-approach

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[166] Moghadam, Globalization *of Martyrdom,* Kindle Location 635.
[167] Bloom, Mia. "Palestinian Suicide Bombing: Public Support, Market Share, and Outbidding." 65, 73, 74, 75.
[168] Pedazhur, Ami, and Ariel Perliger. 2006. "The Changing Nature of Suicide Attacks: A Social Network Perspective". *Social Forces*. 84, no. 4: 1987-2008. 1988, 1994.

is one factor that explains the sizable increase in civilian targets. The tactic is pushed

up, instead of managed, as in the LTTE and, to a certain extent, Lebanese campaigns.

In August 2003, Hamas condemned a suicide attack that disrupted the peace process.

The al-Qassam Brigades, the martyrdom operation wing of Hamas, nonetheless released

the martyrdom video of the bomber and took credit for the attack.[169] Hamas may have

been disingenuous in denying the attack, or it could be that Hamas did not have

structural control over the martyrdom operations.

Cognitive Terrain of Palestinian Bombers

The background of Palestinian bombers suggests that these martyrs were not

uneducated or poor.[170] In fact, most had comparatively high levels of education and

income relative to the overall Palestinian population.[171] Although these factors may not

mean that the Palestinian bombers were content with themselves and the world, it is

difficult to build an argument that personal deprivation motivates Palestinian bombers

en masse.[172]

Hamas only recruited bombers who understood the religious context of the

martyrdom operation; many recruits had large sections of the Qur'an memorized.[173]

Recruits had to read six specific chapters of the Qur'an: Baqara, Al Imran, Anfal,

Tawba, Rahman, and Asr, which focus on jihad, the rewards of martyrdom, and the

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[169] Levitt, Matthew. 2006. *Hamas: politics, charity, and terrorism in the service of jihad*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 224.

[170] Brym, Robert J., and Bader Araj. 2006. "Suicide Bombing As Strategy and Interaction: The Case of the Second Intifada". *Social Forces*. 84, no. 4: 1969-1986. 1971.

[171] Bloom, Mia. "Palestinian Suicide Bombing: Public Support, Market Share, and Outbidding." 81.

[172] One such depressed suicide bomber may by the first female suicide bomber, Wafa Idris. She was delivering bomb materiel to another cell, yet the bag detonated in public. It is unclear if it was intentional or not. However, she was recently divorced and unable to conceive children. Adam Lankford cites her example as evidence that many suicide bombers actually are depressed individuals looking for a socially acceptable form of suicide.

[173] Hassan, Nasra.

need for faith.[174] The future bomber would fast for extended periods, spend hours

praying each evening, and ask for forgiveness of all sins.[175] Whereas Sheikh Ahmed

Yassin never praised the personal rewards of martyrdom, Yassin justified suicide

attacks with Surah 2:190-1: "Fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against

you…slay them wherever you find them and drive them out of the place when they

drove you out, for persecution is worse than slaughter."[176]

Hamas' training involved instilling the religious importance to remove fear,

visiting the cemetery, and videotaping the will, which made it difficult for recruits to

back out.[177] The typical video testament involved the martyr reciting the Qur'an,

posing with weapons, praising jihad, and asking others to follow. The bomber watched

his video repeatedly in order to help confront the fear of death and internalize it or, as

one trainer described, "greet death like an old friend."[178]

Nasra Hassan interviewed over 250 Palestinian suicide bombing trainers and

failed suicide bombers to understand the mindset of these attackers. Many quotes from

Hamas operatives are reprinted below, because their words represent what other Sunni

martyrs in following campaigns will say and what inspires them, and the quotes state

their beliefs better than a summation would. The Hamas preparation for the bomber

emphasized the internationalization of Heaven:

> We focus his attention on Paradise, on being in the presence of Allah, on
> meeting the Prophet Muhammad, on interceding for his loved ones so that they,
> too, can be saved from the agonies of Hell, on the houris (the black-eyed virgins

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[174] Hafez, Mohammed M. *Manufacturing Human Bombs*. 24.

[175] Hassan, Nasra. "An Arsenal of Believers" The *New Yorker*. November 19th, 2001.
http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2001/11/19/an-arsenal-of-believers (Accessed 16 November 2015).

[176] Hoffman, Bruce. *Inside Terrorism*. New York, N.Y.: Columbia University press, 2006.
161.

[177] Forest, James J. F. *The Making of a Terrorist Recruitment, Training, and Root Causes.* Westport,
Conn: Praeger Security International, 2006. 157.

[178] Hassan, Nasra.

awarded to the martyr upon entering Heaven), and on fighting the Israeli occupation and removing it from the Islamic trust that is Palestine…It is very, very near—right in front of our eyes. It lies beneath the thumb. On the other side of the detonator.[179]

Hamas's leadership downplayed the specifics of the martyrs' heavenly rewards, as the discourse on the *houris* would become overtly sexual. Organizationally, however, its operatives treated the martyrdom videos less as a funeral and more a wedding celebration of the martyr to many beautiful women upon death.[180] In addition to the houris, the benefits of martyrdom included forgiveness of sins, the right to intervene on behalf of seventy relatives for entrance into Heaven, protection against the pain of death, and even the chance to play golf with Mohammed.[181] Hassan describes her interview with a Hamas imam, who explained that the martyr's first drop of blood washes away his sins instantly:

> On the Day of Judgment, he will face no reckoning. On the Day of Resurrection, he can intercede for seventy of his nearest and dearest to enter Heaven; and he will have at his disposal seventy-two houris, the beautiful virgins of Paradise. The Imam took pains to explain that the promised bliss is not sensual.

One of failed bombers described the sacred aspect of the plan:

> Our planner asked, 'What if the operation fails?' We told him, 'In any case, we get to meet the Prophet and his companions, Inshallah.' We were floating, swimming, in the feeling that we were about to enter eternity. We had no doubts. We made an oath on the Qur'an, in the presence of Allah—a pledge not to waver. This jihad pledge is called bayt al ridwan, after the garden in Paradise that is reserved for the prophets and the martyrs…All martyrdom operations, if done for Allah's sake, hurt less than a gnat's bite!

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[179] Hassan, Nasra. All Hamas quotes in this section are from Hassan's article.
[180] Cook, David, and Olivia Allison. *Understanding and Addressing Suicide Attacks: The Faith and politics of Martyrdom Operations*. Westport, CT; Praeger Security International, 2007.
[181] Hafez, Mohammed M. *Manufacturing Human Bombs*. 44.

Hassan's interviewees did not express the profile of suicidal persons. They were

educated, middle class or above, two were sons of millionaires, and all deeply religious.

Hassan's summation describes this fusion between nationalism and religion:

> I was told that in order to be accepted for a suicide mission the volunteers had to be convinced of the religious legitimacy of the acts they were contemplating, as sanctioned by the divinely revealed religion of Islam. Many of these young men had memorized large sections of the Qur'an and were well versed in the finer points of Islamic law and practice. But their knowledge of Christianity was rooted in the medieval Crusades, and they regarded Judaism and Zionism as synonymous. When they spoke, they all tended to use the same phrases: "The West is afraid of Islam." "Allah has promised us ultimate success." "It is in the Qur'an." "Islamic Palestine will be liberated." And they all exhibited an unequivocal rage toward Israel. Over and over, I heard them say, "The Israelis humiliate us. They occupy our land, and deny our history."

The Palestinian groups mastered the "cult of martyrdom" and the ritual

celebration of martyrs.[182] The West Bank and Gaza would have "Martyrs of the

Month," celebrating bombers like centerfolds or sports heroes.[183] In Jenin, the walls of

hospital waiting rooms were covered with posters and pictures celebrating the

Palestinian "martyrs." In Palestinian camps, teenagers traded "martyr" cards like

baseball cards. Martyrs were heroes and thus role models. With the Internet, the cult of

martyrdom and the individual rewards associated with murder-suicide would spread

from Palestine, into Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Libya. Operation Iraqi Freedom would

give these self-selected mesmerized by the narrative the chance to emulate martyrdom.

The Role of the Chechen Conflict in Driving Suicide Terrorism

There are two interrelated trends in the Chechen conflict that help explain the

transition to the Era of Fitna. The first is the cooption of a nationalist rebellion with

strong transnational Islamist overtones, which included the importing of tactics

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[182] Lewis, 158.
[183] Hassan, Nasra.

dissonant with the local folk Islam. The second is the influence of online media dissemination of mujahideen battling the infidel, which would change the face of the *mujahid* from the cloister of Middle East conflict, expanding the possibility of martyrdom-infused jihad with Muslims from any region.

Sufi Chechens initiated the first Chechen War for Independence. Traditionally, moderation and modernization characterized Chechen Sufism, and Chechnya was more democratic and socially liberal compared to other Islamic regions at the time.[184] President Dzhokhar Dudayev, despite declaring jihad against Russia in 1992, explicitly declared the Chechen Republic to be an institutionally secular state, and in fact warned against Islamic Fundamentalism taking hold of Chechnya.[185] Only five percent of the Chechens subscribed to the militant Islamist ideology imported by the foreign fighters.[186] During the first Chechen War, despite the examples of Hezbollah and the LTTE, the Sufi Chechens never used suicide bombings against Russia's incursion.

Between the first Chechen War and the second, Chechnya received a steady flow of jihadist fighters from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bosnia, and the Middle East, who co-opted the nationalist cause for their own objective of building emirates to support the neo-Caliphate. In 1990s, the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan, then funded by the Russians, blocked the advance of the Taliban. To weaken the coalition of warlords from the North, al-Qaeda decided to force the Russians to waste blood and treasure in Chechnya.[187] In 1994, Islamist elements in Afghanistan and Pakistan began nurturing

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[184] Kullberg, Anssi. "The Background of Chechen Independence Movement." The Eurasian Politician. 1 Oct 2003. <http://users.jyu.fi>. Accessed 10 July 2008. 2.

[185] Hughes, James. *Chechnya From Nationalism to Jihad.* [National and ethnic conflict in the 21st century]. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007.

[186] Speckhard, Anne and Khapta Akhmedova. 25

[187] Napoleoni, Loretta. "Chechnya's Terror Economy is Booming and its Bloody Trade is Being Exported." *The London Times.* Sept 9, 2004.

and training Shamil Basayev, a Chechen born fighter. Basayev and the Saudi Ibn al-Khattab established al-Qaeda training camps in Chechnya, creating enough trainees to mount an invasion of neighboring Russian republic of Dagestan that led to the Second Chechen War in 1999.[188] Within a year, Vladimir Putin's Moscow had reestablished control over most of the region. Besayev's group started its suicide bombing campaign in 2000, mostly to strike fear among Russians rather than to achieve clear military victory.[189] Between 2000 and 2003, 48% of Chechen suicide attacks targeted the Russian military, and only 12% targeted civilians. However, no Chechen suicide attack has occurred against a Russian military target since 2003, and overall, the Chechen groups and its nearby Dagestan allies are responsible for the following Russian target breakdown: Military (16%), Government (18%), Police (34%), and Civilian (28%).

Chechen guerilla leaders utilized various media platforms to disseminate the Chechen cause, and in doing so, changed the face of jihad. Khattab released dozens of tapes in a series called "Russian Hell," which framed the Chechen fight as part of global jihad. The tapes depicted ambushes and assaults on Russian forces, and became a recruiting tool distributed throughout a network of mosques as far as Indonesia.[190] Such propaganda, some of which is easily accessible online, marketed jihad to Muslims removed from the Arab in-group, essentially putting a Caucasian face (even though Khattab was Saudi) to global jihad. The consequence was that any Muslim of any background could enjoy martyrdom and bring about a new Islamic state.

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[188] Darling, Dan. "Special Analysis: Al-Qaeda in Chechnya". Winds of Change.NET. April 22, 2004. http://www.windsofchange.net/archives/special_analysis_alqaeda_in_chechnya-print.php
[189] Chivers, C.J. and Steven Lee Myers. "Chechen Rebels More Nationalistic then Islamist." The International Herald Tribune. 13 Sept. 2004. Accessed 8 July 2008. 2.
[190] Vidino, Lorenzo. "How Chechnya Became a Breeding Ground for Terror." The Middle East Quarterly.
Summer 2005. <www.meforum.org>. Accessed 12 June 2008. 2.

Al Qaeda

Al Qaeda Development of Suicide Terrorism

Globalization caters to Qutbism. Any ideology that transcends boundaries and creates a global in-group against any local out-group can flourish. The flat world makes the spread of ideas and imagery instant. Muslims cognitively identify with fellow Muslims suffering at the hands of oppressed infidels thousands of miles away, which is emotionally traumatizing.[191]

With the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Bin Laden found the opportunity to use the incursion as a means to unify Muslims to combat the Jahiliyya regimes in the Arab world. Bin Laden and other Arab leaders joined the fight late against the Soviets in Afghanistan. On April 17, 1987, Bin Laden led his first attack on an Afghan Government post; the Arab mujahideen lacked preparation and retreated in humiliation by one machine gunner.[192] Nonetheless, this new in-group acted like they were decisive conquerors, riding the back of the Afghan mujahideen who truly engaged the Soviets. In 1988, Bin Laden formed *Al Qaeda al-Jihad*, "The Base of the Jihad." Al Qaeda bridged disparate local jihadist groups—such as Ayman Zawahiri's Egyptian militant group—into one globalized effort to strike at the sponsors of regional tyrants in the Arab World. The US would be the prime target, so that the US would stop supporting Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Israel, Turkey, and the international system in the Middle East.

The Palestinian Abdullah Azzam was one of Bin Laden's professors and early co-leaders. Azzam, who recruited many Arab mujahideen to Afghanistan to fight the Soviets, argued that the mujahideen must fall in love with death and become infatuated

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[191] Moghadam, *The Globalization of Martyrdom,* 84.
[192] Wright, 115.

with martyrdom.[193] Azzam's book *Lovers of the Paradise Maidens tell* stories of

mujahideen killed while fighting for God and *Virtues of Martyrdom in the Path of Allah*

describes the rewards of the martyr, including the infamous seventy-two member *houris*

and the power to intercede for seventy members of the martyr's family.[194] These

descriptions incentivized martyrdom, and they become a common strain in any conflict

involving radicalized Sunnis. Azzam prioritized liberating Jerusalem and opposed

discussion of *takfir*, which is calling fellow Sunnis unbelievers because they do not

adhere to Salafist theological assumptions.[195] Zawahiri on the other hand endorsed

takfir and prioritized revolution in American-sponsored Arab countries, which required

confronting the US.[196] Azzam was killed in Pakistan in 1989, possibly with Bin

Laden's knowledge. The death of Azzam assured that Bin Laden's main influencer

would be Zawahiri, who was the Al Qaeda advocate of martyrdom operations.

   The Sunni background of Al Qaeda meant little to Bin Laden when it came to

learning from successful Shia militants. Bin Laden considered Hezbollah experts and

sent his people to learn from them—particularly about the bombing of the US barracks.

Bin Laden's operatives went to Beirut, took careful notes, and returned with the

operational concepts and knowledge necessary for the 1998 embassy bombings.[197]

During the guilty plea of Ali Muhammad for the US Embassy bombings, Muhammad

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[193] Lia, Brynjar. "Doctrines of Jihadi Terrorist Training." *Terrorism and Political Violence.* Vol 20, No. 4; October (2008).
[194] Moghadam, *The Globalization of Martyrdom,* 41.
[195] Kuffar are unbelievers, takfir the act of accusing someone as an unbeliever. Much like the concept of jihad, Qutbists do not monopolize the phrase of takfir. There are Muslims who call Al Qaeda and ISIS takfir, however Al Qaeda and ISIS are so synonomous with its usage that I use it to refer to Qutbist definition of kuffar as anyone who is not a Salafi practicing offensive jihad.
[196] Moghadam, *The Globalization of Martyrdom,* 28. 42.
[197] Horowitz M.C. 2010. "Nonstate Actors and the Diffusion of Innovations: The Case of Suicide Terrorism". *International Organization.* 64, no. 1: 33-64. 34.

confessed to setting up meetings in the early 1990s between Bin Laden and Imad

Mugniyeh, the operational planner behind the Beirut barracks bombing.[198]

In 1998, UBL issued the fatwa that declared that all Muslims have the duty to

kill Americans, to liberate Jerusalem, and to remove foreign forces from Holy Land.[199]

In an ABC interview that year, Bin Laden argued, "We do not differentiate between

those dressed in military uniforms and civilians. They are all targets."[200] To justify

civilian targets, Bin Laden quoted Surah 9:5: "[F]ight and slay the pagans wherever ye

find them, seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them."[201]

Although Al Qaeda never had any working relationship with the Palestinian

groups, it extracted the justification and cosmic martyrdom associated with Palestinian

suicide attacks out of the Middle East. The martyrdom operation became the symbol to

advance the goals of the Qutbist movement, and any Western symbol—or Westerner—

became a legitimate target. In doing so, Al Qaeda expanded permissible targets in

war.[202] With the help of globalization, Al Qaeda incentivized self-starting franchises

and cells to attack these targets, insisting that the Salafi generation's Islamic conquest of

Jahiliyya should never have stopped. No other group has invested the time, effort, and

money to exploit suicide terrorism as Al Qaeda.[203]

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[198] United States v. Ali Mohamed, No. S(7) 98 Cr. 1023 (S.D.N.Y.), 20 October 2000. addition, according to Rohan Gunaratna, Bin Laden reached out to Iran, as Iran received 10% of Osama's outgoing calls from Afghanistan from 1996-98. (See Gunaratna, Rohan. 2002. *Inside Al Qaeda: global network of terror*. New York: Columbia University Press. 10.)

[199] Juergensmeyer, Mark. *Global Rebellion: Religious Challenges to the Secular State, from Christian Militias to Al Qaeda*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008. 202.

[200] Moghadam, *The Globalization of Martyrdom,* 95.

[201] "World Islamic Front Statement of Jihad against Jews and Crusaders," 23 February 1998. www.fas.org/irp/world/para/docs/980223-fatwa.htm (Accessed 13 April 13, 2016).

[202] Moghadam, *The Globalization of Martyrdom,* 65.

[203] Moghadam, *The Globalization of Martyrdom,* 6-7.

Bin Laden transformed regional conflicts between Arabs and Muslims living under ugly regimes in the Middle East into global conflicts with the US and its allies.[204] The strategic objective of the September 11th attacks was to provoke a disproportionate US military response that would have the second order effect of waking up the "slumbering nation of Islam," rallying it to confront the West.[205] Al Qaeda planned to erode US military power by spreading its military and intelligence forces while making the US hemorrhage money. As summarized by Bin Laden, "each of Al-Qaida's dollars defeated one million American dollars, thanks to Allah's grace."[206] As Al-Zawahiri argues, jihadists must be patient—this is a generational game—as empires do not fall in a moment but in decades.[207]

Cognitive Terrain of Al Qaeda Bombers

In 1997, Islamic philosopher Abu Ruqaiyah published "The Islamic Legitimacy in Martyrdom Operations." He defines martyrdom operations as attacks "performed by one or more people, against enemies far outstripping them in numbers and equipment, with prior knowledge that the operations will almost inevitably lead to death."[208] Ruqaiyah cites controversial Surahs of the Qur'an at face value (such as Surah 9:5), and concludes, "Evidences from the Qur'an and the Sunna (Muslim law)….clearly demonstrated the 'Islamic bombing assault' or the 'martyrdom attack' is Islamically legitimate as far as it is within the framework of Islam." In fact, suicide bomber

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[204] Lewis, 197.

[205] Dobrot, Lawrence Andrew. "The Global War on Terrorism: A Religious War?" *Carlisle Paper in Security Strategy.* Nov 29, 2007. http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/pub822.pdf . 9.

[206] Moghadam, *The Globalization of Martyrdom,* 38.

[207] "Part 11 of New Book by Egyptian Islamic Jihad Leader Ayman Al-Zawahiri."

[208] Ruqaiyah, Abu. "The Islamic Legitimacy of The "Martyrdom Operations." *Nida'ul Islam Magazine.* January 1997. Online at: http://www.ict.org.il/Article/209/The%20Islamic%20Legitimacy%20of%20The%20Martyrdom%20Operations (Accessed 2 March 2016). Following quotes are taken from this source.

martyrs are superior to martyrs killed by other means. The extent of Ruqaiyah's influence is unknown; however, Al Qaeda and ISIS have echoed his arguments to justify martyrdom operations against civilian targets.

Jihadist manuals confiscated in Iraq and Afghanistan and disseminated online translate Islamic military history into modern operational systems. For example, the *Muaskar al-Battar* manual itself refers to *al-Battar,* a sword carried by the Prophet Muhammad. The manual provides lessons learned from the fights in Iraq and Afghanistan, practical guerilla warfare advice, and spiritual guidance. It also cites Sayyid Qutb, reiterates Qur'an verses on the battles of Mohammad, describes how to take apart and reassemble a machine gun, recommends a CrossFit daily workout for physical fitness, and presents poems praising the heavenly reward of the martyr.[209] The 180-page Al Qaeda manual, *Military Studies in the Jihad against Tyrants,* reiterates war-centric Surahs from the Qur'an and makes reference to battles led by Muhammad, presenting them as scripts for how the mujahideen should fight.[210] Qutbists routinely cite the same Surahs in these manuals to justify martyrdom operations, namely the command to strike terror in the enemy and to not turn from the enemy.[211]

In order to attract supporters, Qutbists must create and sustain intense individual motivation for sacrifice.[212] To this end, Al Qaeda must frame the enemy a moral

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[209] "Muaskar Al-Battar." *Radical Islamist Culture, Credo and Communications Series*. Issue 2: 7 July (2008).

[210] Schwartz-Barcott, T.P. *War, Terror and Peace in the Qur'an and in Islam: Insights for Military and Government Leaders.* Carlisle, PA: Army War College Press; 2004. 11.

[211] On striking terror, Surah 8:57, "If you come to them in war, deal with them so to strike fear in those who are behind them, that they may remember." On fighting without retreat, Surah 8:15-16, "O you who believe, when you meet those who disbelieve marching for war, turn not your backs to them. And those who turn his back to them on that day…he incurs Allah's wrath and his refuge is hell."

[212] Gompert, David C. "Heads We Win: The Cognitive Side of Counter-Insurgency." *RAND*. Santa Monica: 2007. 19.

monster to justify the most powerful sacrifice one can make. In Bin Laden's November 22, 2002 "Letter to America," Bin Laden presents a laundry list of evils the US has committed, covering every possible political angle one can conceive. This includes the occupation of Palestine, American intrusions in Somalia, tacit support for Russia against Chechnya and India against Kashmir, the denial of Sharia law, the theft of oil wealth, the bases in Saudi Arabia, the sanctions against Iraq that led to starvation, the denial of God in politics, the usage of usury (even though forbidden by all religions), the propagation of alcohol, President Bill Clinton's sexual indiscretions, polluting the earth, refusal to sign the Kyoto Accords, and finally, dropping nuclear bombs on Japan.[213] Bin Laden places essentially every possible negative characteristic at the United States' feet, and offers Islam as the solution. To prospective recruits, positioning the enemy in such terms guarantees that one's death will be noble and rewarded by a just God standing in judgment of such a cosmic criminal. The alternative is Islam, which Bin Laden's describes in the same letter:

> It is the religion of the tawhid of Allah, sincerity, the best of manners, righteousness, mercy, honor, purity, and piety. It is the religion of showing kindness to others, establishing justice between them, granting them their rights, and defending the oppressed and the persecuted…It is the religion of jihad in the way of Allah, so that Allah's Word and religion reign supreme. And it is the religion of tawhid and agreement in obedience to Allah, and total equality between all people, without regard to their color, sex, or language…

To Al-Zawahiri, the best tactic to fight for justice was martyrdom operations:[214]

> The need to concentrate on the method of martyrdom operations as the most successful way of inflicting damage against the opponent and the least costly to the Mujahideen in terms of casualties.

Al Qaeda's franchise in Iraq will make the most of this logic and rationale.

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[213] Ibrahim, Raymond, Ayman Ẓawāhirī, and Osama Bin Laden. *The Al Qaeda Reader*. New York: Doubleday, 2007. November 22, 2002. 199. Subsequent quote below as well.
[214] "Part 11 of New Book by Egyptian Islamic Jihad Leader Ayman Al-Zawahiri."

ISIS

ISIS Use of Suicide Terrorism, Trends in Targets

ISIS exploited suicide terrorism to its most atrocious conclusions. Unlike the previous campaigns, ISIS enthusiastically attacked civilians, which represented a plurality of targets in most years. Although ISIS was not the only organization conducting attacks, by 2006, the Department of Defense believed ISIS was responsible for 90% of the suicide attacks in Iraq.[215] The majority of suicide attacks began taking place more than a year and a half after the fall of the regime.[216] Table 4 presents the trend in targets in Iraq, particularly from 2005 through 2012, when civilians composed almost half of all attacks. In 2013, ISIS suicide attacks resurged with open confrontation against Iraqi military and police forces.

Table 4 - Iraq Suicide Attacks, by Target (START)

Iraq	Total	Military	Government	Police	Civilian	Informal
OIF (2003-2004)	86	22%	26%	29%	22%	1%
Fitna (2005-2012)	775	12%	12%	27%	44%	4%
ISIS Resurgence (2013-2014)	579	32%	8%	30%	23%	5%
For All Years	1440	21%	12%	28%	34%	4%

ISIS violated even some of its own broad Islamic in-group norms, using martyrdom operations against Shias and Sunni collaborators. In *Suicide Bombers in Iraq* (2007), Mohammad Hafez documents that in the first few months of OIF, 100% of suicide attacks targeted the American-led coalition forces. But by 2006, less than 10% targeted coalition forces, 50% targeted Iraqi security forces, and almost 40% targeted

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[215] "Four Suicide Bombers Behind Last Week's Mosque Attack, the U.S. Military Says" Associated *Press.* 14 April 2006.

[216] Hafez, Mohammed M. *Suicide Bombers in Iraq: The Strategy and Ideology of Martyrdom.* Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 2007. 93.

primarily Shia civilian targets.[217] These suicide attacks would kill more civilians than coalition soldiers by a great margin, and children were more likely to die than adults.[218] ISIS conducted suicide attacks against everyone *except* the foreign occupiers, and relied on *non-suicide attacks*—IEDs, sniper attacks—against coalition forces.[219]

Bin Laden insisted on a conciliatory approach to handling Shia and Sunni conflict, yet ISIS made Shias the prime target in suicide operations. Ideology influenced ISIS' end-state objectives (a pure Islamic state) and the hatred of Shias and non-Salafist Sunnis, but there were pragmatic political reasons for inciting civil war. Abu Musab Zarqawi's intended to force a civil war between Sunnis and Shias, with suicide terrorism a valuable tactic to enflame Shia hatred.[220] If Al Qaeda can attack the US in order to force the US to invade countries in the Middle East, which would induce Muslims to side with Al Qaeda, then Al Qaeda in Iraq can attack Shias in order to force Shia reprisals against Sunnis, which would unite Sunnis on the side of Al Qaeda in Iraq.

Hafez described this as a *system disruption* strategy, using martyrdom operations against Iraqi civilians to destabilize the government and spark sectarian warfare.[221] Suicide attacks would cast the Iraqi government as incompetent, incapable or unwilling to provide security.[222] Denying the new government the chance to stabilize itself created the terrain for Al Qaeda in Iraq to establish the Islamic State.

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[217] His numbers differ slightly from mine from START data, but they are close. Hafez, Mohammed M. *Suicide Bombers in Iraq.* 104.

[218] Hicks, Madelyn Hsiao-Rei, Hamit Dardagan, Peter M Bagnall, Michael Spagat, and John A Sloboda. 2011. "Casualties in Civilians and Coalition Soldiers from Suicide Bombings in Iraq, 2003–10: a Descriptive Study". *The Lancet.* 378, no. 9794: 906-914. 906.

[219] Hafez, Mohammed M. *Suicide Bombers in Iraq: The Strategy and Ideology of Martyrdom.* 77.

[220] Intercepted Al Qaeda in Iraq document summarized in Hafez *Suicide Bombers in Iraq* 75.

[221] Bernstein-Wax, Jessica. "Studies: Suicide Bombers in Iraq are Mostly Foreigners." *McClatchy Newspapers.* 8 August, 2007.

[222] Jaber, Hala and Ali Rifat. "Suicide Bombers Head to Iraq From Damascus." *Times Online.* 7 October, 2007.

Either the US would stay in Iraq and continue to bleed, or Iran would play a stronger hand in Iraq to protect Shias, either of which would further alienate Sunnis. This civilian targeting outlived Zarqawi's death in 2006 and continued until open confrontation with Iraqi forces began in 2013.[223] Sunnis that aid the new Iraqi government were also targets, even competing Sunni insurgent groups.[224] In 2007, when the Islamic Army (IA) refused to submit to the Islamic State, ISIS attacked the IA, killing 30 members.[225]

Prominent civilian attacks include the February 22, 2006, suicide bombing of the Shia "Golden Mosque," which destroyed the golden dome and touched off widespread Shia reprisals against Sunnis nationwide.[226] In early 2006, a suicide bomber detonated himself at the Shia shrine of Imam Hussein, killing 63.[227] Near the same time, a suicide bomber killed 56 police recruits in Ramadi. In early 2007, a suicide bomber attacked a predominantly Shia market and killed over 100.[228] In September 2007, a suicide bomber struck a Sunni tribal leader's house near the Syrian border.[229]

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[223] See Smith, Dough and Louise Roug. "130 Killed in Iraq bombings" Chicago Tribune. January 6, 2006. "Four Suicide Bombers behind Last Week's Mosque Attack." Associated Press Worldstream. April 14, 2006. "Some of the deadliest attacks in Iraq." Associated Press. August 14th, 2007. Reid, Robert H. "Suicide Bomber Strikes Iraqi Funeral, Kills Mourner." Associated Press Worldstream. May 1st, 2007.
[224] See Juhi, Bushra. "Bombings Strike Towns in Northern Iraq; Sunni Tribal Leader's House." Associated Press. Sept 26, 2007. And "Suicide Car Bomber Strikes Police Convoy near Market in Kirkuk, Iraq." Associated Press. October 11, 2007.
[225] McCants, William (2015-09-22). *The ISIS Apocalypse: The History, Strategy, and Doomsday Vision of the Islamic State* (Kindle Locations 554-561). St. Martin's Press. Kindle Edition.
[226] Katzman, Kenneth. *Al Qaeda in Iraq Assessment and Outside Links*. [Washington, D.C.]: Congressional Research Service, 2008. <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/terror/RL32217.pdf>.
[227] Smith, Doug and Louise Roug. .
[228] Gamel, Kim. "Suicide Truck Bomber strikes in mainly Shia area in Baghdad, killing more than 100 people." *Associated Press Worldstream.* 3 February, 2007.
[229] See Juhi, Bushra. "Bombings Strike Towns in Northern Iraq; Sunni Tribal Leader's House." Associated Press. Sept 26, 2007. And "Suicide Car Bomber Strikes Police Convoy near Market in Kirkuk, Iraq." Associated Press. October 11, 2007.

Adjustments made by coalition forces to counter suicide attacks contributed to the reduction of suicide bombs against military personnel, but countermeasures do not explain why Islamic groups transitioned to soft targets instead of abandoning the tactic altogether. For example, during this same time in Afghanistan, the Taliban primarily used suicide attacks against coalition forces and rarely civilians, despite the fact that they were fairly unsuccessful in causing any significant damage to coalition forces.[230]

Suicide Bombers in Iraq provides three key observations, the final critical in understanding the role of the cognitive terrain in explaining suicide terrorism: the suicide bombers in Iraq target Iraqis and not the occupiers, the group pursuing this strategy is Salafist in ideology, and finally, that the suicide bombers themselves are not Iraqis.[231] Only 10 percent of the suicide bombers in Iraq were native Iraqis.[232] The majority of suicide bombers in Iraq were foreigners, many of them wealthy Saudis and Kuwaitis that were smuggled into Iraq via Syria.[233] Most of the foreign bombers came from educated, middle class families, attracted to the recruiters' intellectual and theological appeal.[234] ISIS was not fighting the occupier—it *was* the occupier.

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[230] Motlagh, Jason. "Analysis: Taliban Upgrades Jihad Strategy." *United Press Institute*. 26 September, 2006. The Afghan Taliban was not as invested in global jihad as fellow Qutbist organizations. Since the Taliban was a governing entity and planned to return to power, it did not want to alienate civilians. This contrasts with the Pakistani Taliban, which did target civilians compared to the Afghan iteration. The Pakistan Taliban was a secessionist movement. The target breakdown for the Afghan Taliban from 2005-2014 out of 824 total attacks: Military (22%), Government (25%), Police (27%), and Civilian (21%). Of those four groups, civilians were the least targeted. The Pakistani Taliban (Tekrit I Taliban Pakistan, TTP) target breakdown for the same period out of 411 attacks is: Military (18%), Government (14%), Police (19%), Civilian (40%), and Informal Groups (5%). For the TTP, Civilians were the most targeted.
[231] Hafez, *Suicide Bombers in Iraq: The Strategy and Ideology of Martyrdom*. 89.
[232] Parker, Ned. "Saudis' Role in Iraq Insurgency Outlined." The Los Angeles Times. July 15th, 2007. Page A1.
[233] Hafez, *Suicide Bombers in Iraq*, 178
[234] Nordland, Rod and Babak Dehghampisheh. "Surge of Suicide Bombers; The Iraq War Has Turned into a Veritable 'Martyr' Factory, Unlike Any Seen in Previous Conflicts." *Newsweek*. 13 August, 2007. Page 30.

In Saudi Arabia and Syria, a network of Qutbist imams recruited volunteers, and forgers created new identities for the wannabe martyrs' journey across Syrian-Iraqi border.[235] In the summer of 2003, safe houses along the Syrian-Iraq border were established, as well as passages through dunes to smuggle fighters.[236] One of the most prominent smuggling cells was at Sinjar, near the Iraq-Syria border. American forces captured and closed this entry point in 2007, and in doing so, confiscated a series of documents that demonstrated the nature of these foreign fighters entering Iraq. The Sinjar cell was responsible for up to 90% of all foreign fighters entering Iraq.[237] These "Sinjar records" documented which countries the foreign fighters came from and for what reasons. The records included surveys for the incoming fighters on their jihadist aspirations, and even questions on the quality of the smugglers.

The records contained biographical sketches of over 700 foreign fighters that listed hometowns and other details of fighters smuggled into Iraq since August 2006. In the records, 41% of fighters came from Saudi Arabia, 19% from Libya, 8% from Syria, 8% from Yemen, 7% from Algeria, 6% from Morocco, and 2% from Jordan.[238] The median age was 22-23, 43% were students, and universities were a critical recruiting ground. On the requested role in the fighting the enemy, 56% wanted to be suicide bombers. By nationality, 50% of Saudis came to be bombers, but 85% of Libyans, 92% of Moroccans, and 66% of Syrians signed up to be a bomber. Many of these Saudi

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[235] Jaber, Hala and Ali Rifat. "Suicide Bombers Head to Iraq From Damascus." *Times Online.* 7 October, 2007.

[236] Abdul-Ahad, Ghaith. "Outside Iraq But Deep In the Fight." *Washington Post.* 8 June, 2005; A01.

[237] Oppel, Richard A. Jr. "Foreign Fighters in Iraq Are Tied to Allies of U.S." *The New York Times.* 22 November 2007. http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/22/world/middleeast/22fighters.html (Accessed 27 November 2015).

[238] Felter, Joseph and Brian Fishman. "Al Qaida's Foreign Fighters in Iraq: A First Look at the Sinjar Records." *Combating Terrorism Center.* 19 December, 2007. http://ctc.usma.edu/harmony/pdf/CTCForeignFighter.19.Dec07.pdf. 7. 16.

bombers were married, well educated, and in their late 20s.[239] In 2005, Reuven Paz

conducted a study of the social origin of the Saudis killed in Iraq, and he concluded that

the Saudis entering Iraq came from respected tribes and families, and had never

participated in attacks prior to entering Iraq.[240] After the closure of the Sinjar cell, the

flow of foreign militants entering Iraq to fight for ISIS fell by half.[241]

Cognitive Terrain of ISIS

In December 2004, Usama Bin Laden identified conflict in Iraq as a "golden

opportunity" for jihadists to engage and defeat the United States.[242] Thus, Al Qaeda

needed someone with the network and passion to take the fight to the coalition. They

turned to the Jordanian Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi, who embraced a toxic mixture of

militant Salafism—his mother enrolled him in the Salafist Al-Husayn Ben Ali Mosque

in Amman—and brutal criminality, deal-making, and networking—learned after he

spent time in a Jordanian prison.[243] Despite Zarqawi's brutality and fixation on the

Sunni-Shia divide, his 'rolodex of terrorism' earned in prison provided a practical asset

to Bin Laden's operations against the US in Iraq. The value of the contacts with

smugglers and black market operatives are worth more than perfect philosophical union.

Bin Laden and Zawahiri though Zarqawi was too extreme. However, Al Qaeda gave

Zarqawi their blessing as well as some assistance—200,000 US dollars, a small sum

compared to their capability—to create a front against coalition forces.

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[239] Glasser, Susan B. "'Martyrs' In Iraq Mostly Saudis." *Washington Post.* 15 May, 2005.
[240] Moghadam, *The Globalization of Martyrdom,* 188.
[241] Yates, Dean and Sean Maguire. "Foreign militants entering Iraq down 50% - Petraeus." *Remote Post.* 11 February, 2008.
[242] Blanchard, Christopher M. *Al Qaeda Statements and Evolving Ideology*. [Washington, D.C.]: Congressional Information Service, Library of Congress, 2006.
[243] Weiss, 2. 15. 12.

Al Qaeda aimed to win the hearts and minds of Sunnis before laying the groundwork for an Islamic State.[244] Zarqawi, however, cared little for Muslim popular opinion. In 2005, ISIS published a "Why do we fight" document, which outlined the four reasons for Al Qaeda in Iraq: restore the Caliphate and Sharia, reject the rule of Shia, oppose democracy, and prepare for judgment day.[245] Even after Zarqawi was killed in June 2006, Al Qaeda in Iraq declared an emirate without Al Qaeda's consent in October 2006.[246] Despite private misgivings, Al-Qaeda presented a united front in public and endorsed the establishment of the Islamic State in 2006.

ISIS' dragging of the Al Qaeda brand through the mud via intra-Muslim warfare frustrated Al-Qaeda's inner circle. Every ISIS excess stigmatized Al Qaeda, yet the latter could not denounce the group it endorsed. Whereas Al Qaeda's end goal was the same as ISIS—an Islamic State in the Middle East—Al Qaeda abhorred the promptness of ISIS' intransigent franchise in Iraq. Al Qaeda heard about al-Baghdadi's appointment as emir of the Islamic State in 2010 through the media. Zawahiri declined Baghdadi's offer to make an explicit public pledge to Zawahiri after Bin Laden was killed, setting the stage for the divorce.

ISIS under Zarqawi, his successor Abu Ayyub al-Masri, and the so-called Caliph Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi introduced two sacred values to reignite the product life cycle of "the cult of martyrdom" in the cognitive terrain of Qutbists. These two values are the *Caliphate* and *the End Times.* One Australian ISIS supporter Anjem Choudary describes the importance of the Caliphate: "[Before the Caliphate], maybe 85 percent of the Sharia was absent from our lives…These laws are in abeyance until we have *Khilafa*

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[244] McCants, Kindle Locations 188-191.

[245] Hafez, Mohammed M. *Suicide Bombers in Iraq: The Strategy and Ideology of Martyrdom.* 73.

[246] McCants, Kindle Locations 233-242. Following paragraphs, 314-317. 738-740. 1329-1332. 1340.

(Caliphate) and now we have one."[247] Theoretically, all Muslims must immigrate to

new Caliphate, something which ISIS carefully markets. In one of its advertisements,

ISIS placed the phrase of the traditional witness of the faith, "No god but God.

Muhammad is the messenger of God," next to, "The Islamic State: A Caliphate in

Accordance with the Prophetic Method."[248] Additional messaging includes, "Rush O

Muslims to your state. Yes, it is your state. Rush, because Syria is not for the Syrians,

and Iraq is not for the Iraqis."[249]

The belief in and celebration of the End Times reinforced the martyrdom

narrative that incentivized suicide terrorism. If the End is near, then planning for a

future is irrelevant. Judgment Day is near, so the believer will give an accounting

before God soon. In 2012, thanks to all the regional chaos, half of all Muslims in the

Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia believed the end was near and expected the

Mahdi (the prophesied redeemer of Islam) to arrive.[250] If there is a good reason to

assume the End Times are near, it merely pushes martyrdom as a possible decision.

ISIS is different from every other jihadist movement in that apocalypticism

influences the decision making of the organization. For highly devout Muslims, the

apocalypse is a good thing to be welcomed, as it means God (through his Prophet Jesus)

will eradicate all injustice on earth.[251] Zarqawi would stir apocalyptic expectations,

citing ISIS's behavior as acting in line with prophetic fulfillment.[252] According to the

ISIS' chief judge, Zarqawi's replacement al-Masri announced the Islamic State in 2006

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[247] Wood, Graeme.
[248] McCants, Kindle Locations 2196-2199.
[249] Weiss, 1.
[250] McCants, Kindle Locations 469-470.
[251] Wood, Graeme.
[252] McCants, Kindle Locations 1783-1786. 525-528.

because he believed the Mahdi Muslim savior would come within the year. For that to happen, the Caliphate had to be in place. At the end of the Cold War period, apocalypticism was unpopular among modern Sunnis, associated with Shia obsession with the Mahdi. Al Qaeda views ISIS' apocalypticism with disdain.

In this eschatology, Roman armies (roughly translated, depending on convenience, as the European Union, the US, or the UN) will invade the fields of Dabiq near Aleppo. Dabiq will be where the Islamic armies turn the tide and defeat the invaders.[253] Syria is mentioned in Islamic prophecies as site of final battles of the apocalypse, thus its continuing violence merely strengthens the belief that these prophecies are coming real.[254] Turkey's entrance into the Middle East increased commentary on the end times on social media, with comments from ISIS supporters such as, "Turkey's entry into the war will permit the foreign invasion of northern Syria, meaning from the plain of Dabiq. The battles [of the End Times] have grown near!" In 2013, ISIS sacrificed significant forces these fields, despite these fields lacking any strategic value aside from symbolic value and the fulfillment of beliefs.

ISIS relied on its Palestinian martyrdom narrative to soften the fear of suicide. The removal of Saddam Hussein provided the opportunity for Qutbist spectators of the Palestinian conflict to explore its possibilities. ISIS campaign managers describe their foreign suicide bombers as overly impatient martyrs, pining for the rewards of jihad immediately.[255] Sheik Adnan Khamese Jamiel, leader of the Albu Alwan tribe in Ramadi, described the recruitment pitch, "The bad imams tell the young people to go to

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[253] Wood, Graeme.
[254] McCants, Kindle Locations 1724-1728. Quotes below, 1818-1824.
[255] Ghosh, Bobby. "Professor of Death." *Time.* 17 October 2005.
http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1118370,00.html (Accessed 27 November 2015)

Iraq and fight the American Army, because if you kill them or they kill you, you will go to paradise."[256] Preachers in Saudi Arabia created videos, "Where are those striving to defend their religion? Where are the lovers of virgins in paradise? Where are the seekers of the Garden of Eden?"[257] Zarqawi released videos of the "marriage ceremonies" of past martyrs, with the videos reiterating how each attacker is promised his own black eyed houris.[258] Time magazine interviewed one of the bomb makers, who described the martyrs: "In their last days, these men are usually thinking of God and paradise…Sometimes they like to hear about the rewards that are awaiting them."[259]

One bomb-maker named Ahmed, who had a degree in chemistry, recruited his own brother to be a bomber. He described his brother before he set off on his attack: "He had a smile on his face…He knew he was crossing to a better place where he would meet his maker as a martyr."[260] One Saudi bomber was about to be married, yet he would talk of how "he wished to drink a sip from the sustenance of paradise while a virgin beauty wiped his mouth."[261] One Syrian, who was engaged to a college educated woman, refused to consummate the marriage. He said of his wife, "She begged me to let her come along so that we could carry out a joint mission, she told me that would be the best honeymoon, in heaven together."[262] He had no Islamic inclinations prior to the Iraq war, but viewed every Iraqi woman as his mother or sister, and every boy his brother. Redeeming lost honor in Abu Ghraib inspired some bombers as well. One

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[256] Oppel, Richard A. Jr. "Foreign Fighters in Iraq Are Tied to Allies of U.S."
[257] Moghadam, *The Globalization of Martyrdom,* 206.
[258] Cook, David, and Olivia Allison. *Understanding and Addressing Suicide Attacks.* 79
[259] Ghosh, Bobby. "Professor of Death."
[260] Jaber, Hala and Ali Rifat. "Suicide Bombers Head to Iraq From Damascus." *Times Online.* 7 October, 2007.
[261] Glasser, Susan B. "'Martyrs' In Iraq Mostly Saudis." *Washington Post.* 15 May, 2005.
[262] Jaber, Hala and Ali Rifat. Following quote from this article as well. The wife of one bomber bragged that her husband now enjoyed the "beautiful girls of heaven." (Moghadam, Globalization of Martyrdom, 193).

Saudi bomber claimed that when he gets to heaven, he planned to marry a woman named Fatimah who US forces allegedly abused in Abu Ghraib.[263]

In interviews with the media, Iraqi suicide bombers described the internalization of the Qutbist ideology. In 2005, Bobby Ghosh of Time interviewed Marwan, an Iraqi martyrdom recruit. Although brief, Marwan's responses crossed off a checklist Qutbist factors, including the role of a strident in-group and out-group divide, group narcissism, and the heavenly rewards of suicide terrorism. He expressed eagerness for the rewards of martyrdom. "I can't wait…I am ready to die now," Marwan stated.[264] He yearned for a global Islamic state, with "no alcohol, no music and no Western influence." Marwan described the wisdom of his ISIS leaders and superiority of their perspective, "jihadists are more religious people…you ask them anything—anything—and they can instantly quote a relevant section from the Qur'an." He said that the "Qur'an says it is a duty to bring terror to the enemy, so being a terrorist makes me a good Muslim." If he kills any innocent people in the attack, he believes God will ask them to forgive him. He describes how he thinks God will view him, "The only person who matters is Allah—and the only question he will ask me is 'How many infidels did you kill?'"

[263] Nordland, Rod and Babak Dehghampisheh. "Surge of Suicide Bombers; The Iraq War Has Turned into a Veritable 'Martyr' Factory, Unlike Any Seen in Previous Conflicts." *Newsweek*. 13 August, 2007. Page 30.

[264] Ghosh, Bobby. "Inside the Mind of an Iraqi Suicide Bomber." *Time*. 26 June, 2005. http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1077288,00.html (Accessed 27 November 2015).

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Shadows in the Cognitive Terrain: Competition Over Sacred Values

The shadows in the cognitive terrain are sacred values defined and positioned by sub-cultures and organizations in contrast to normative interpretation. Conceptually, what separates a foundational sacred value from a simple definition is that groups compete over the value's meaning. A chair is easily defined and can be seen by an observer regardless of upbringing, background, or culture. But, the true meaning of the American sacred value of "freedom" is debatable, and this debate incites competition over its meaning and which identity represents the true meaning of freedom. How that concept is truly defined by the individual American—there is a big difference in interpreting freedom *from* compared to freedom *of*—impacts his politics, his behavior, his expectations, his emotions, and his view of groups with competitive interpretations.

The positioning of these sacred values strengthens current in-group identity or creates a new in-group identity based on their reinterpretation. The internalization of the aberrant sacred values becomes vital needs to the individual seeking a new group identity. The Qutbist identity is relatively new within Sunni Islam. If the positioning of the sacred value creates a *superior* identity compared to subordinate groups, the reflective belief in this superiority triggers a group narcissistic posture that strengthens the will of the individual to depersonalize and dehumanize the out-group.

For example, Christians used the book of Philemon to rationalize the perpetuation of slavery for many centuries. In Philemon, Paul told the runaway slave Onesimus to return to his master. Since Philemon is a part of the Bible, believed to be God's infallible or inspired Word, believers inferred divine sanction for slavery based

on the sacred value of "God's Word." Of course, the book of Philemon does not promote the normalization of slavery, and there were other Christians who used other sacred values in "God's Word" to promote the abolition of slavery. However, the use of Philemon to defend the existence of slavery is undeniable, and influenced the way believers for centuries viewed the relationship between Christianity and slavery. There are Christians who use statements against miscegenation in Leviticus to oppose intermarriage between whites and blacks. This is a gross misuse of the type of inter-marriage Leviticus protests.

Likewise, Qutbists position martyrdom, jihad, and the pure Islamic state to inspire and justify suicide bombings. These interpretations contort normative interpretation of those values. There is much more in Islam that would condemn murder-suicide than promote the behavior. However, it is ignorant to pretend that this competition does not exist and ignore the basis for the Qutbists' conclusions. Competition over the values of jihad, tawhid, and martyrdom merely induces some to take extreme definitions in order to justify a distinct in-group as superior to others. Group narcissism can still be found in the shadows of sacred values, and through death, the martyr connects to the highest form of self in Heaven. Suicide terrorism is one of the most pernicious executions of this group narcissism, because of the extreme exchange involved to purchase the highest and best identity.

Vital Needs and the Cognitive Terrain: The Case of Jake Bilardi

On March 11th 2015 at a checkpoint in Ramadi, eighteen year old Australian Jake Bilardi detonated a suicide bomb that killed seventeen Iraqis. Bilardi documented

his radicalization in a series of blogposts leading up to his martyrdom operation.[265] He described himself as an atheist growing up in affluent Melbourne, passionate about international politics. He hated the American occupation of Iraq and the Israeli occupation of Palestine. In one of his posts, he describes his anger with the global system that pushed him to Qutbism and need for violent revolution:

> The turning point in my ideological development [began with] my complete hatred and opposition to the entire system Australia and the majority of the world was based upon. It was also the moment I realized that violent global revolution was necessary to eliminate this system of governance and that I would likely be killed in this struggle.[266]

In another post, he describes how he debated among different ideologies that offered an alternative to the unacceptable system of democracy, "Socialism? Communism?? Nazism???... It was Islam that for me stood out as easy to understand and was shockingly consistent with established historical and scientific facts."[267] His father described Jake as having psychological problems; he was bullied at school and suffered from paranoia.[268] He converted to Islam after the death of his mother, and interacted with members of ISIS online. By 2014, he was radicalized. He intended to conduct a terrorist attack in Melbourne, but decided the attack would call too much attention. He traveled to Iraq and volunteered to become a suicide bomber. When in

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[265] Rafiq, Harras. "Confessions of Australia's Teenage Suicide Bomber." *The Daily Beast.* 16 March 2015. http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/03/16/confessions-of-australia-s-teenage-suicide-bomber.html (Accessed 1 May 2016).

[266] Weiss, Michael. "How ISIS Picks its Suicide Bombers." *The Daily Beast.* 16 November 2015. http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/11/16/how-isis-picks-its-suicide-bombers.html (Accessed 1 May 2016).

[267] Hume, Tim. "'Blog' of suspected Australian teen terrorist Jake Bilardi reveals path to ISIS." *CNN.* 13 March 2015.
 http://www.cnn.com/2015/03/13/asia/australia-isis-bilardi-blog/ (Accessed 1 May 2016).

[268] "Jake Bilardi's father blames himself for teenager's death as suicide bomber in Iraq." *The Guardian.* 22 March 2015.
http://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2015/mar/23/jake-bilardi-father-blames-himself-teenagers-death-suicide-bomber (Accessed 1 May 2015).

Iraq, Bilardi told a BBC reporter, "I came here chasing death, I might as well kill as many kuffar as I can."[269]

The tragic story of Bilardi represents how an ideology can give a new identity to disaffected individuals that need purpose, particularly an identity based in righteous anger that places the adherent above the oppressive world. Bilardi's psychological problems fit within Adam Lankford's *Myth of Martyrdom* thesis. However, the ideology transforms the wounded into a true believer. There is no reason to think Bilardi's emotional anger at the injustice of the world was anything less than a betrayed sacred value. He did not start off with tawhid or a unified Ummah as core sacred values to his identity, but a righteous reaction to injustice in the world itself. After converting to Islam, the new sacred values framed his righteous anger. In a prior generation, he would have likely joined a Marxist or fascist organization seeking to unmake the modern world. ISIS is the current vanguard pooling disaffected Westerners' meaning.

Sacred values act in the mind of the individual from two angles: *pull* sacred values and *push* sacred values.[270] Pull values are those ideals that inspire the individual. Push values are those that the individual embraces to meet some underlying psychological need. When discussing the individual's will to commit to martyrdom, this is the difference between someone finding the sacred values of martyrdom and its rewards inherently appealing and attractive (pull), and someone who turns to martyrdom because he is depressed and looking for a way out (push). Nonetheless, the

[269] "Jake Bilardi: The radicalisation of an Australian teen." *BBC News.* 12 March 2015. http://www.bbc.com/news/world-australia-31845428 (Accessed 1 May 2016).

[270] Adapted from push and pull motivation, in Elster, Jon, and Jon Elster. *Explaining Social Behavior: More Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. 88.

sacred values at work play a critical role, whether as a tool for inspiration or rationalization.

Underlying psychological factors do not undermine the role of ideology in explaining the outcome, just as the ideology does not undermine the role of underlying emotional factors. The destructive narrative is more pernicious for the emotionally disturbed seeking to escape life, because the narrative turns the suicidal into murderers as well. The fourth and fifth groups of self-selected martyrs are closer than they are separate because they are both centered on a search for meaning. For the ideologue, the ideology offers an identity that makes the group member a part of an esoteric elite superior to the rest of the world. Truth and salvation comes through the ascension of the precious tribe. For the emotionally disturbed, the ideology that saves the world heals many wounds and offsets personal shame. The lack of a safe, strong, and attractive local identity drives both.

The missing local identity creates a void that adventure and revolution provides. As of 2014, there were 370 Belgians among ISIS compared to 70 Indonesians.[271] Indonesia is the largest Muslim country in the world, yet the call to for Indonesians to join ISIS is comparatively small compared to the Islamic community in Belgium, which represents 4-6% of the total Belgian population (11 million, 440,000 to 660,000). One Belgian fighter described his reason to join ISIS with the simple phrase, "it's boring in Belgium."[272] Prosperity and personal economic security gut the urgency of life and

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[271] Sparrow, Jeff. "Miranda Devine was Right; Jake Bilardi was Radicalized by the Banality of Life." *The Guardian.* 18 March 2015. http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/mar/18/miranda-devine-is-right-jake-bilardi-was-radicalised-by-the-banality-of-life (Accessed 1 May 2016).
[272] Ibid.

mute the sacred values that meet core psychologic needs over community, nation, faith, and interdependency.

Civilization requires banality. The specialized division of labor that produces a wide variety of goods and services needs stability, repetitiveness, and commitment. However, underlying needs for meaning, for belonging to a group, for cosmic significance, remain despite basic needs being met. If anything, prosperity pushes the underlying psychological needs for identity to the forefront. The goal for a civilized society should be to find sacred values in the mundane, to find meaning in civilization, and to build bonds across diverse communities within a nation, so that alienation from the larger nation is uncommon. The United Kingdom has started to push for inculcating British identity in the schools, to ensure that a common national identity is rectified that spans religion and ethnic background.[273] In other words, so that all Britons—whether Christian, Muslim, or non-religious—find being British a satisfying in-group.

In the 14th Century, the Arab historian and founder of sociology Ibn Khaldun described *asabiyya* ("group feeling") as the social power that drives the rise and fall of societies.[274] Group feeling is the psychological and emotional bond that the individual has for the group in which he is a member. It is the fundamental glue for civilization. If the individual has strong group feeling, the greater chance the individual will fight and defend the group and its politics. If group feeling weakens among the members of a society, then a new group with superior group feeling will overthrow the decayed

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[273] Maher, Shiraz. "The roots of radicalization? It's identity, stupid." *The Guardian.* 17 June 2015.
[274] Sidani, Yusuf M. 2008. "Ibn Khaldun of North Africa: an AD 1377 Theory of Leadership".*Journal of Management History.* 14, no. 1: 73-86. 78. See also Ibn Khaldūn, Franz Rosenthal, and N. J. Dawood. *The Muqaddimah, an Introduction to History*. [Princeton, N.J.]: Princeton University Press, 1969. Khaldun's theory has started to regain some currency in sociological research. See Lawrence, B. B. (2015). Ibn Khaldun/Applying ibn khaldun: The recovery of a lost tradition in sociology. *The Middle East Journal, 69*(2), 318-319. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com/docview/1675910554?accountid=12964

society. Although societal collapse may be a step too far in this analysis, we can see

how the weak group feeling both for and among local in-groups drives individuals to

find in-groups that have strong group feeling. Since social identity is a necessary

component to individual identity, the "weak" local in-groups are unacceptable options

to internalize. This freedom to choose a new in-group drives individuals to find the best

in-groups, with the best rewards, yet based in the core sacred values that the local in-

groups fail to uphold. Thus, local and national leaders need to construct strong group

feeling for local and national identities, so that the radicalized in-groups do not have an

identity void to penetrate.

This leads to the consequences of self-selected national identity, and the role of

cognitive occupation in suicide terrorism. Robert Pape's *Dying to Win* argues that

occupation causes suicide terrorism. The United States' interactions in the Middle East,

whether in regards to troops on the ground or heavy handed sponsorship, causes suicide

terrorism. Israel's occupation of Palestine causes suicide terrorism. Thus, Robert

Pape's policy recommendation is that democracies should not occupy the homeland of

nationalists.

As stated in chapter 1, Pape's theory has been criticized from different angles.

Assaf Moghadam argues that Pape's definition of occupation is vague, as it essentially

makes any international conflict an occupation.[275] According to Michael Horowitz,

Pape's statistical model no longer predicts the nationalist theory of suicide terrorism

with data updated since 2005.[276] Jeffery Lewis argues that the relationship between

occupation and suicide terrorism is spurious, as underlying societal conflict leads to

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[275] Moghadam, Assaf. 2006. "Suicide Terrorism, Occupation, and the Globalization of Martyrdom: A
Critique of Dying to Win". *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism.* 29, no. 8: 707-729. 722.
[276] Horowitz, 35.

both the occupation and the usage of suicide terrorism.[277] Scott Atran objects to Pape's

methodology to explain a complex human phenomenon with a statistical model, since

any statistical model only proves correlation and not causation.[278] Atran's full critique

of Pape's occupation theme is as follows:

> When Egyptian Bedouin are dying to kill European tourists and the Egyptians
> who cater to them; when British citizens blow themselves up along with other
> British because of the country's involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan; when
> jihadis exclusively target co-religionists linked to the secular government in
> Bangladesh, which is not a particularly close friend of the United States or its
> allies; when Malaysian bombers kill Australians and Balinese Hindus in
> Indonesia as "self-defense" in a "clash of civilizations" between Islam and the
> United States; and when Arabs from more than a dozen countries rush to
> embrace death in Iraq in order to kill Shi'as, who are probably more supportive
> of Iran than they are of the United States, it is quite a stretch to identify the
> common thread as a secular struggle over foreign occupation of a homeland,
> unless "secular" covers transcendent ideologies, "foreign occupation" includes
> tourism, and "homeland" expands to at least three continents.[279]

Qutbist ideology regards a hint of Western influence as evidence of occupation, thus

lines are blurred between actual occupation and cognitive occupation.[280] Since the

cognitive terrain is relative to the characteristics of the sacred values among

communities, any in-group can use Pape's argument as justification for occupation. To

the Marxist, the capitalist world system occupies the legitimate means of production.

The concept of cognitive occupation is worthy of discussion, and how Pape's

thesis explains the desire to recreate the Caliphate. To Qutbists, the European empires

carved up the Ottoman Empire into Western-sponsored governments that stand in the

way of a recreated Caliphate. The real nation is the Islamic Ummah, which requires a

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[277] Lewis, Jeffrey William. *The Business of Martyrdom: A History of Suicide Bombing*. Annapolis, Md: Naval Institute Press, 2012. 14.
[278] Atran, Scott. 2006. "The Moral Logic and Growth of Suicide Terrorism". *Washington Quarterly*. 29, no. 2: 127-147. 130.
[279] Ibid, 134.
[280] Moghadam, *The Globalization of Martyrdom*. Location 5721.

pure Islamic State. Any structure in the way of a pure Islamic State is a type of occupation. For Qutbists, the Arab-Islamic governments are occupiers. For Muslims in the Arab-Islamic world, the artificial governments carved from Sykes-Picot Agreement weaken the cognitive allegiance to being Syrian, Iraqi, or Lebanese.

This interpretation works from a constructivist perspective. The imagined Ummah is another type of Benedict Anderson's Imagined Communities. However, there are three problems with this approach in relation to the Pape thesis. First, implicit in Pape's thesis is a moral component, based in two assumptions. The first assumption is that all nationalism is equally just (or unjust), and the second is that a suicide bombing campaign is one of the worst consequences of inter or intrastate conflict. Foreign agents need to remove themselves from local nationalist-based conflicts, and countries would do best to heed the ambitions of nationalist-secessionist movements that perceive the government as occupier.

The problem with treating all nationalist movements as equal is that the religious-based nation is essentially universal, whereas the traditional national liberation movement is local. Not all constructed national identities are equal, particularly in regard to global consequences. The aspirations of the Tamils or Kurds to have their own nation-state are similar to each other, but they differ from the aspirations of Qutbists to unravel the internationally sanctioned order in the Arab World. The Tamils and Kurds are attempting to find a means to participate in the global system; the Qutbists are seeking to overthrow the global system. Thus, it may be better for regional and global to suffer a suicide bombing campaign than it is to concede the nationalist aspirations of Qutbists.

The second problem is the strategic logic of suicide terrorism works if rebels perceive the tactic to be successful. The cycle of the tactic's adoption would be greatly reduced if the strategic objectives of its practitioners were intentionally obstructed. The third problem is competing claims over terrain complicates acknowledgement of nationalist ambition. According to Qutbist thought, Spain is occupying the Caliphate as well, and thus Spain must stop occupying itself. The Israel-Palestine issue is an example of this, as each group has sacred values that are intractable.

Policy Implications for the Individual Logic of Suicide Terrorism

The recommendations below are intended to address the lessons from this argument on policy, specifically the role of identity on decision-making. Because of the scope of this paper, the policy recommendations are broad strategic objectives for Western nation-states in terms of both domestic and international policy. This is not intended to demonstrate "how to defeat ISIS," nor to provide such vague goals that are not implementable, but instead show how nation-states should consider the role of ideology in suicide terrorism.

All tools of statecraft must be on the table to confront suicide terrorism organizations. The Pape thesis argues that occupation causes suicide terrorism, but the end-state objectives of groups such as Al Qaeda and ISIS are worse than the existence of a suicide bombing campaign. As horrible as a suicide bombing campaign is, the collapse of many Middle Eastern governments at the expense of a reestablished Caliphate is worse. The process would lead to more deaths and social upheaval. This is not an argument for occupation, but an argument *against* removing from the table military intervention or support to perceived occupying governments.

Western governments must celebrate the greater national in-group and demonstrate how their respective national identities overlap with core sacred values of minority communities. Western governments must embrace diversity without sacrificing a larger identity that connects everyone into one larger "people." The United States and Canada have some of the highest patriotic rates among Muslims in the West.[281] The European countries do not. This is a problem with nationality on the European continent, as their national identities center on ethnicity first and cognitive identity second. It is possible for Muslim immigrants in America and Canada to believe they are American and Canadian compared to Muslim immigrants in Germany or France to believe they are German or French. Instilling national identity to European Muslims is necessary to bond minorities with the national in-group. Domestic agencies must conduct outreach to minority communities and integrate them into the national identity in a way that is respectful, inclusive, but nonetheless oriented toward integration. Ibn Khaldun warned that when a society loses "group feeling," societal decay is the result.[282] Although the countries of Belgium and France losing some Muslims to ISIS may not be complete societal decay, the evidence suggests that these foreign fighters have no group feeling to established local or national in-groups.

The hesitancy of European countries to embrace national identity as a unifying force must stop, a remnant of World Wars that are over 75 years old now. The dismantling of national identity has created a void that strident and radical belief

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[281] Based on 2008 data, more Muslims believed in the American dream than non-Muslims. See Sageman, 97. See also "Muslim Canadians increasingly proud of and attached to Canada, survey suggests." CBC News. 27 April 2016. http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/grenier-muslim-canadians-environics-1.3551591 (Accessed 3 May 2016).

[282] Sidani, Yusuf M. 2008. "Ibn Khaldun of North Africa: an AD 1377 Theory of Leadership".*Journal of Management History.* 14, no. 1: 73-86. 79.

systems can exploit. This is not without controversy and peril as the British

government's attempts to project British values into British Muslim communities has

been met some various degrees of resistance—not just from the Muslim community, but

from British subjects clinging to the sacred value of tolerance over social integration.[283]

Nonetheless, nation-states must leverage agencies, non-profit organizations, and even

firms to build community and group feeling internally.

Work with Salafis, not against them. Strict Salafi schools are the most

vociferous and effective opponents of violent jihad.[284] The Salafi label has been

villainized, but most Salafis are not militant jihadists and they reject ISIS. The *Da'wa*

call to Islam is the main course of spreading Salafism. The first priority of the Salafi is

personal purification and religious observance. Avoiding fitna (internecine warfare

among Muslims) is a sacred value in Islam that Qutbists routinely violate, yet Salafis

believe that propagating fitna is one of the worst crimes a Muslim can commit.[285] This

takes wisdom on the part of nation-states, as American officials publicly embracing

Salafist preachers would likely tarnish their message and mitigate their effectiveness.

Nonetheless, there are ways with Influence Operations (IO) that American and Western

operatives can work behind the scenes to promote and assist the effort of Salafist

preachers to counter the Qutbist message.

Publicly appealing to "moderates" in a religion does little to create a

bandwagon against radical ideologies. Most devout individuals take their faith

seriously and resent being called moderate, and most individuals attracted to radicalism

want nothing to do with moderation. Work with the faithful and devout to sustain

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[283] Maher, Shiraz. "The roots of radicalization? It's identity, stupid." *The Guardian.* 17 June 2015.
[284] Wood, Graeme.
[285] Ibid.

global security. As mentioned above, publicly embracing certain religious leaders or themes may be counterproductive, but it is equally counterproductive to message a stance as "secular" or "moderate," which polarizes Western strategic objectives among the devout, both internally and externally.

Identify the sacred values underpinning the martyrdom narrative and demonstrate that those sacred values have been abused. For example, the argument that the martyrdom operation is not suicide—which is forbidden in Islam—is weak. Finding ways both domestically and internationally to spread the religious arguments against martyrdom—without contaminating the messenger—would help to weaken the conviction in the individual prospective bomber that martyrdom leads to heaven.

Promote mental health awareness among minority communities. Push messages on the virtue of mental health assistance to families of young men, considered prime recruiting ground for ISIS. Few parents genuinely want their children to immigrate to Iraq to fight and die for the Islamic State. Promote the value—and honor—in seeking psychiatric help for the good of the family.

This paper integrates research from anthropology, social cognition, and intergroup hostility to understand how ideology influences the decision to commit murder-suicide. The Qutbist ideology structures who the bad guys are, why they are worthy of death, and why death is not the end. Combatting the sponsoring organization is necessary, but confronting the underlying ideological assumption is necessary as well.

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Appendix 1: Graphs, Number of Suicide Attacks Total by Era

The following graphs are intended to visualize trends in targets by selected countries and eras. I note the database START or CPOST for each graph.

Figure 2 – START: Suicide Attacks Total, by Country, by Year
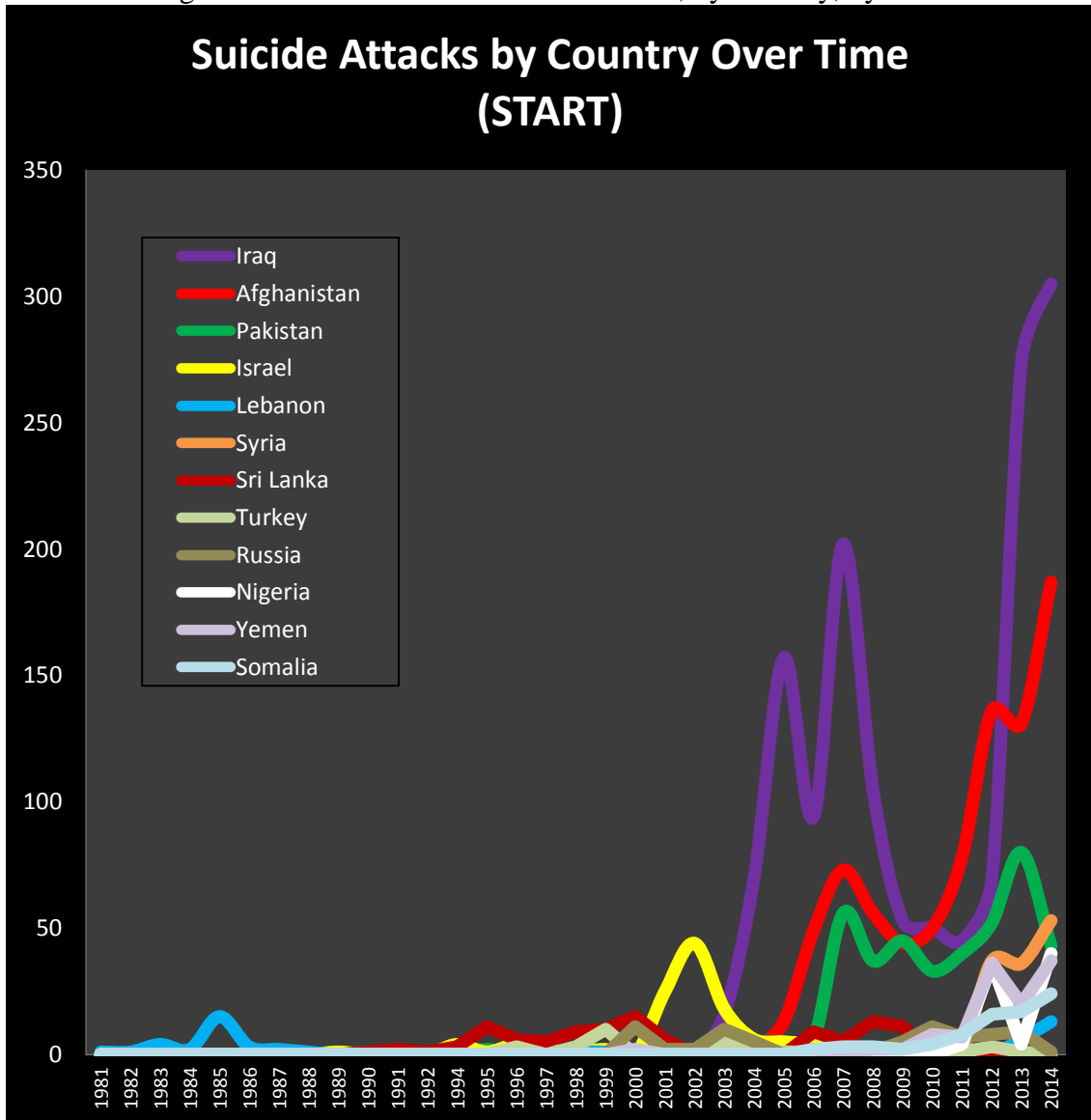
Figure 3- CPOST: Suicide Attacks Total, by Target, by Year
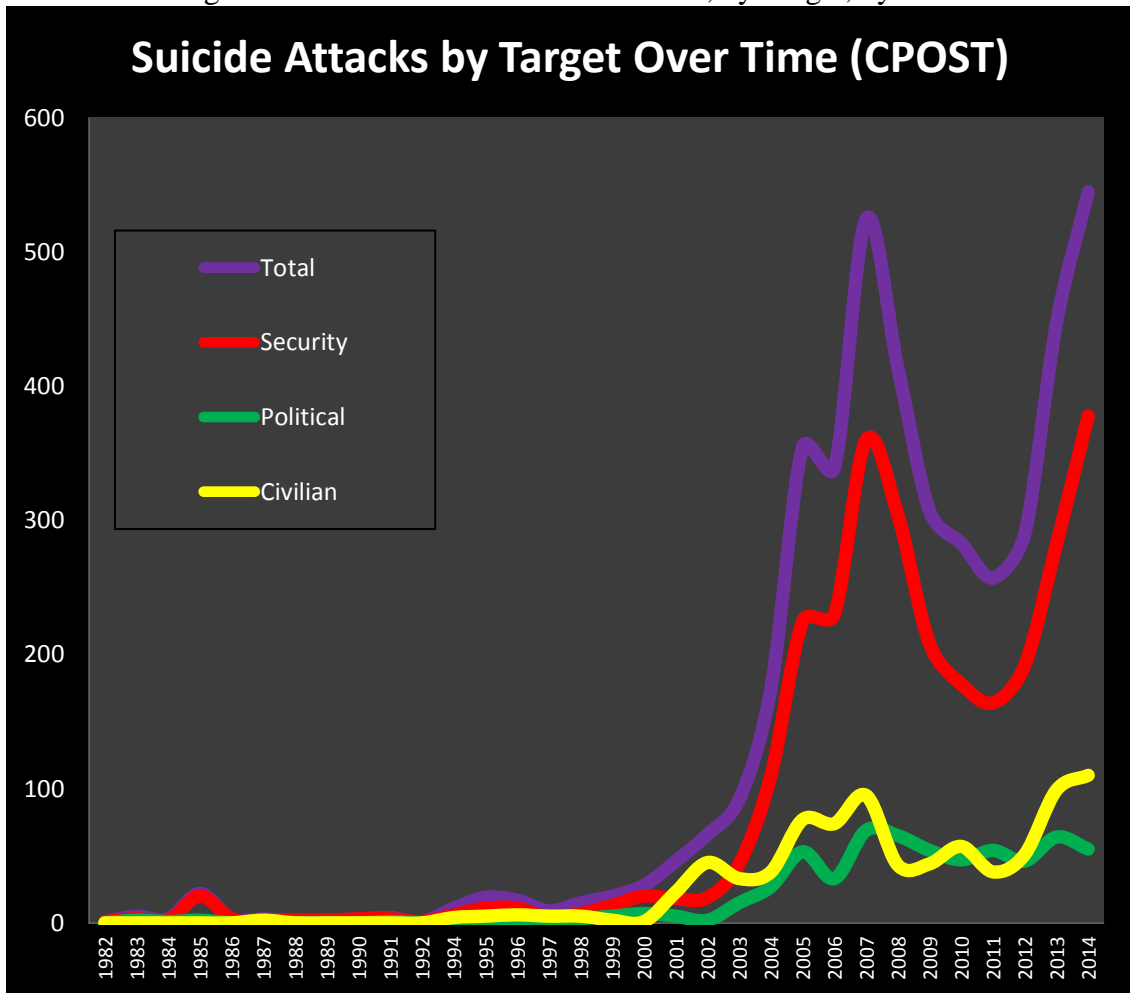
Figure 4 – CPOST: Suicide Attack Target Breakdown, All Time
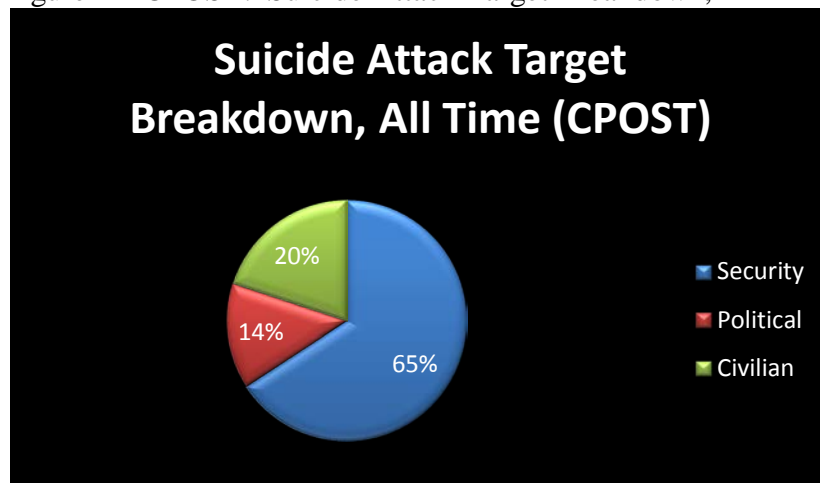
Figure 5 – START: Suicide Attack Target Breakdown, All Time
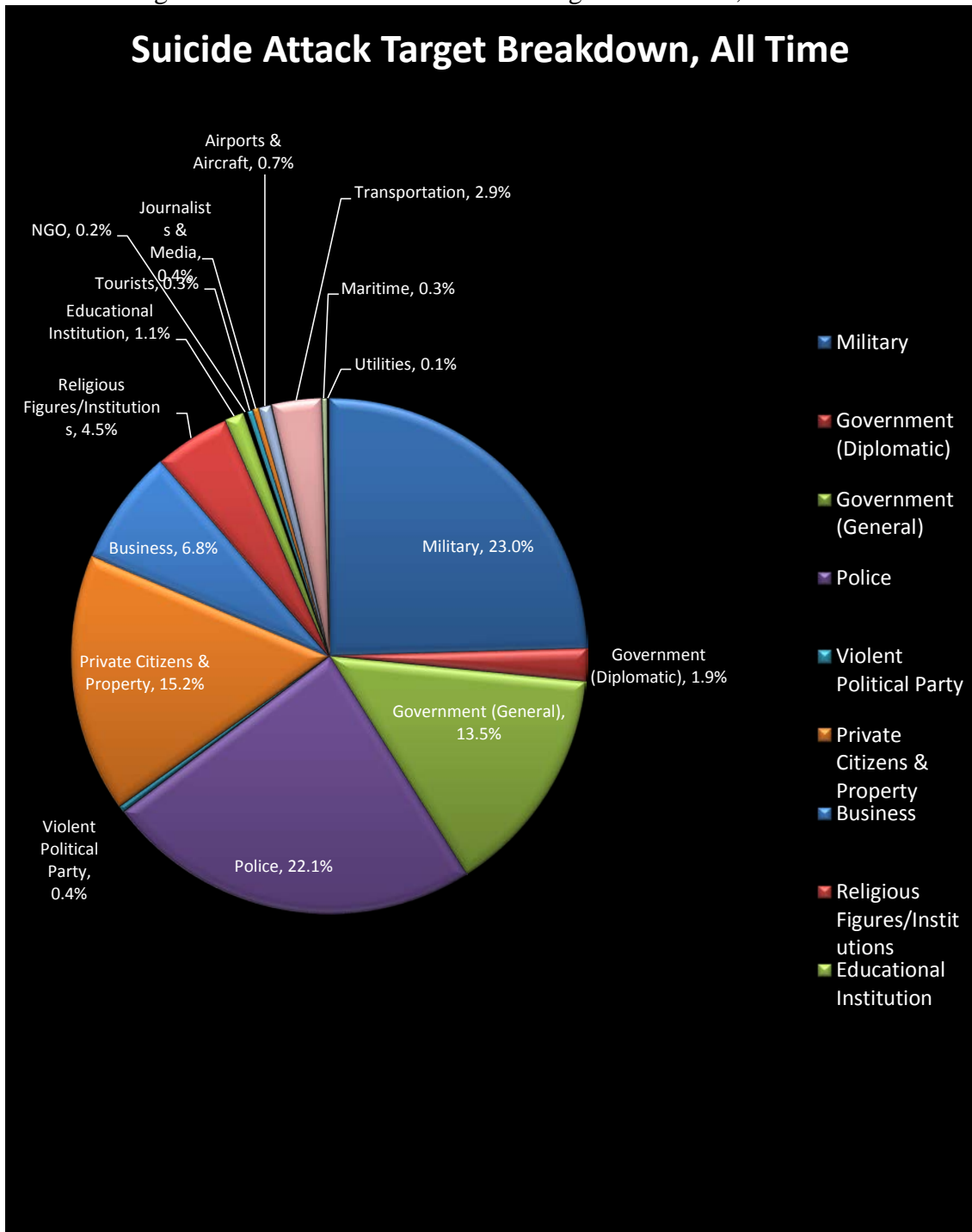
Figure 6 – Era of Nationalism (1981-1992), Target Breakdown

Era of Nationalism Targets (START)

- Military
- Government
- Police
- Civilians
- Informal Groups

5%
13%
11%
53%
18%

Figure 7 - Era of Religious Nationalism (1993-2004), Target Breakdown

Era of Religious Nationalism Targets (START)

- Military %
- Government Total %
- Police %
- Civilians and Infrastructure %

1%
24%
44%
14%
13%
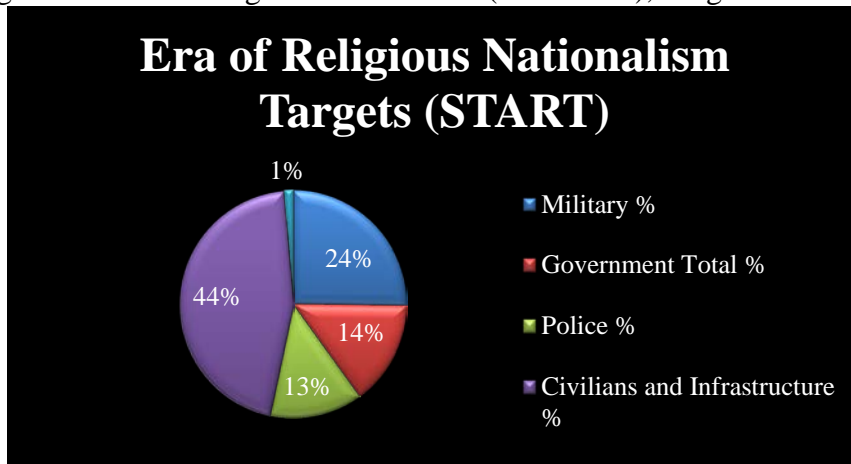
Figure 8 – Era of Fitna (2005-2014), Target Breakdown

Era of Fitna Targets (START)

- Military %
- Government Total %
- Police %
- Civilians and Infrastructure %

4%
23%
32%
16%
24%
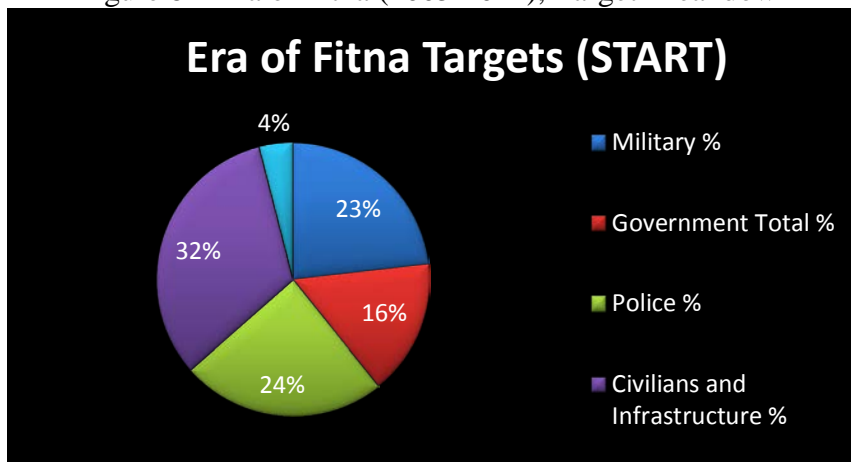
Appendix 2: Graphs, Number of Suicide Attacks by Country

Figure 9 – Lebanon, Total Suicide Attacks, By Year, By Target
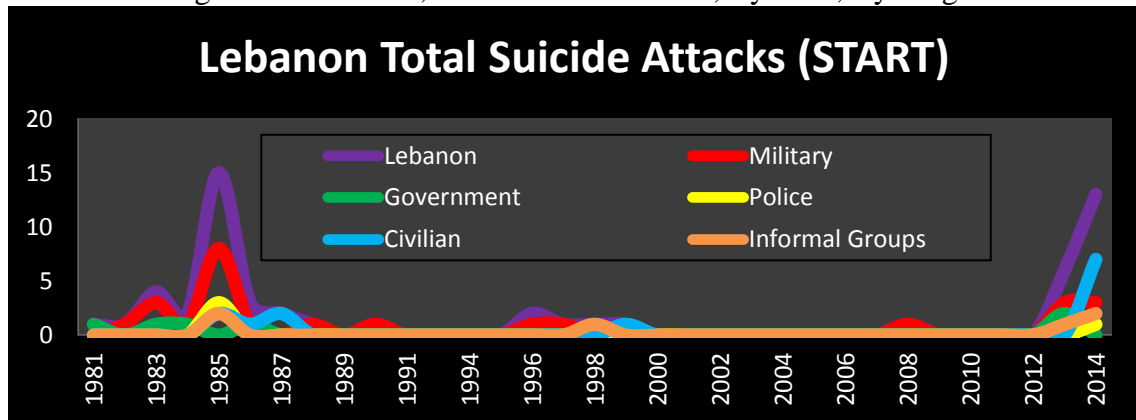
Figure 10 - Sri Lanka, Total Suicide Attacks, By Year, by Target
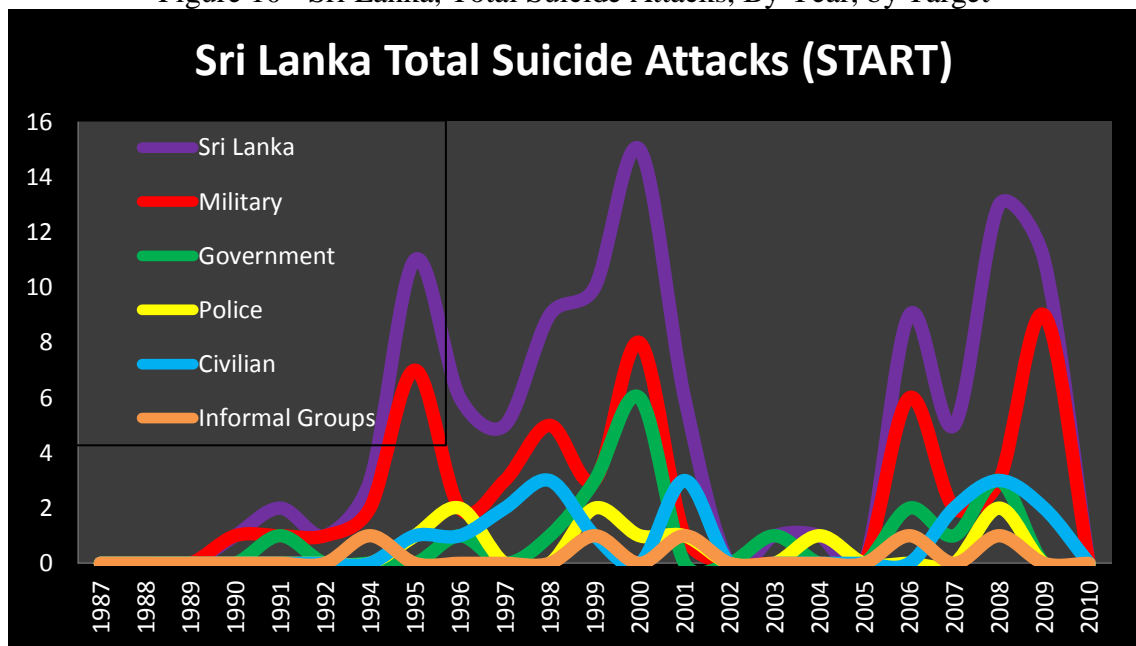
Figure 11 - Turkey, Total Attacks, by Year, by Target
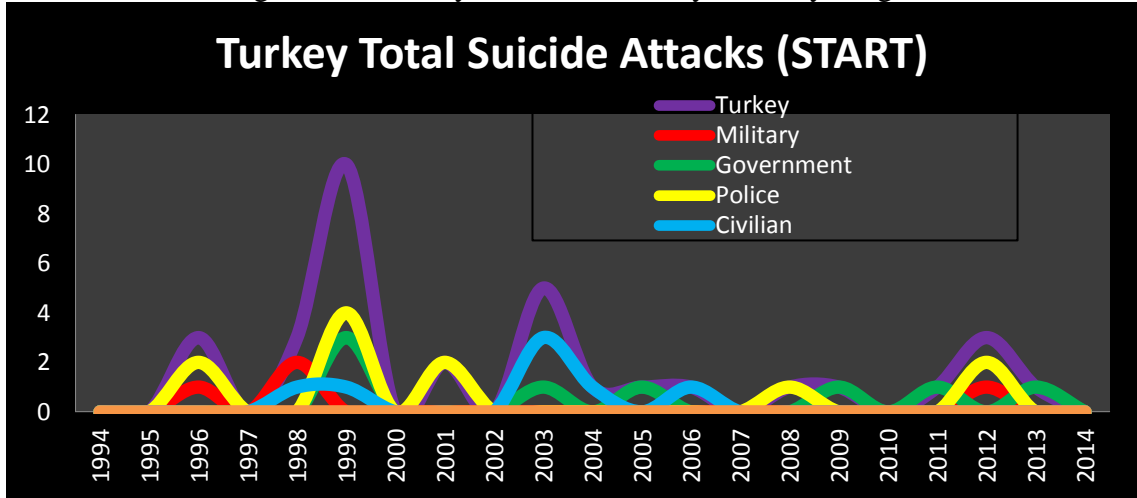
Figure 12 - Russia, Total Suicide Attacks, By Year, by Target

131
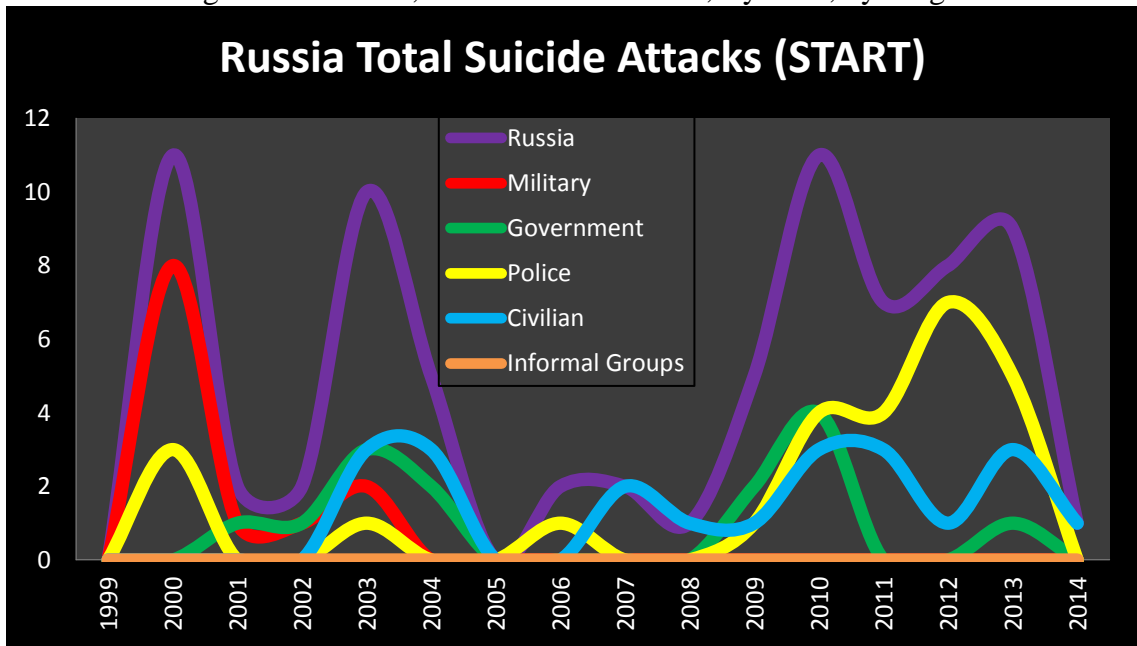
Figure 13 - Israel and Occupied Territories, Total Attacks, By Year, by Target
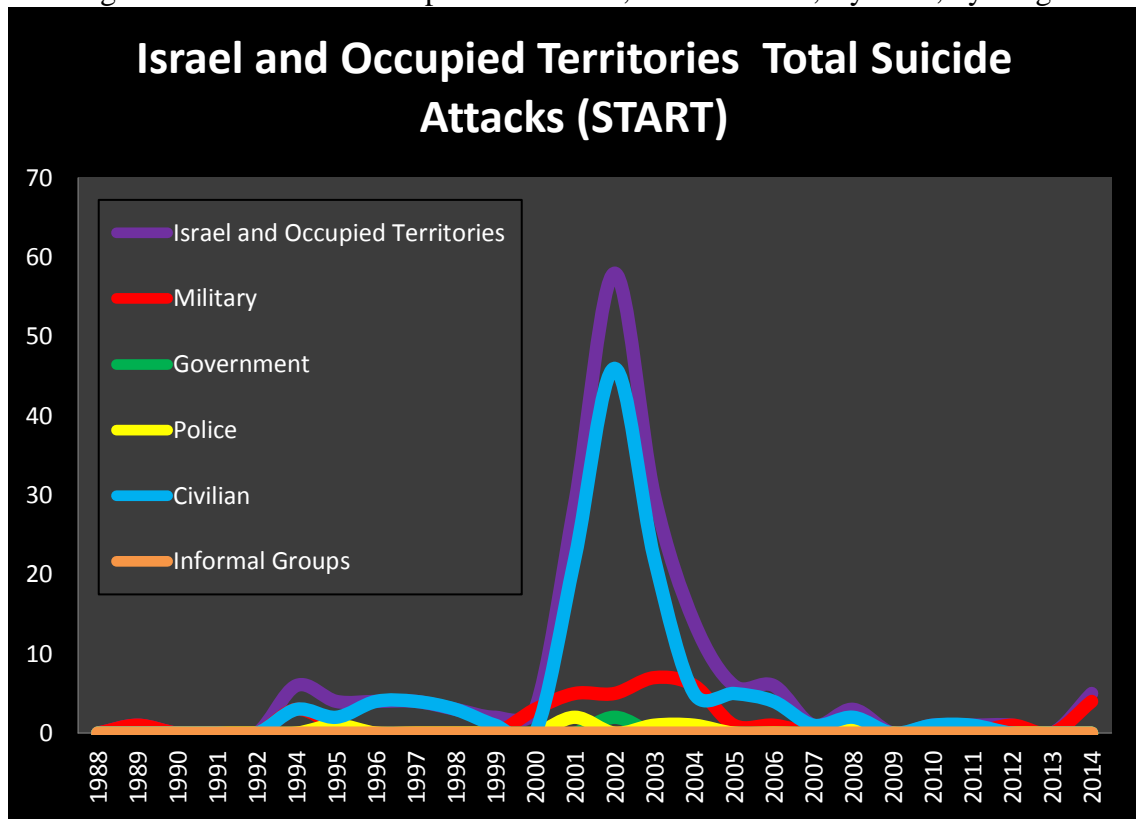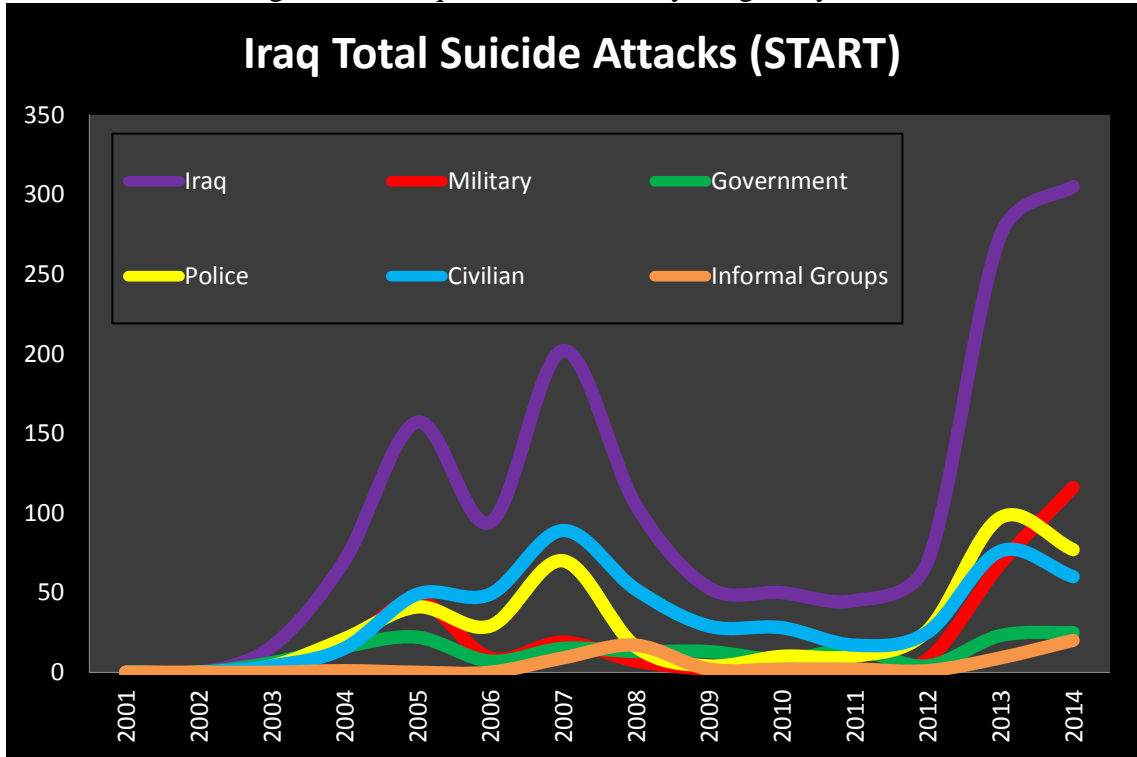
Figure 14 - Iraq, Total Attacks, By Target, By Year

Figure 15 - Syria, Total Attacks, By Target, By Year
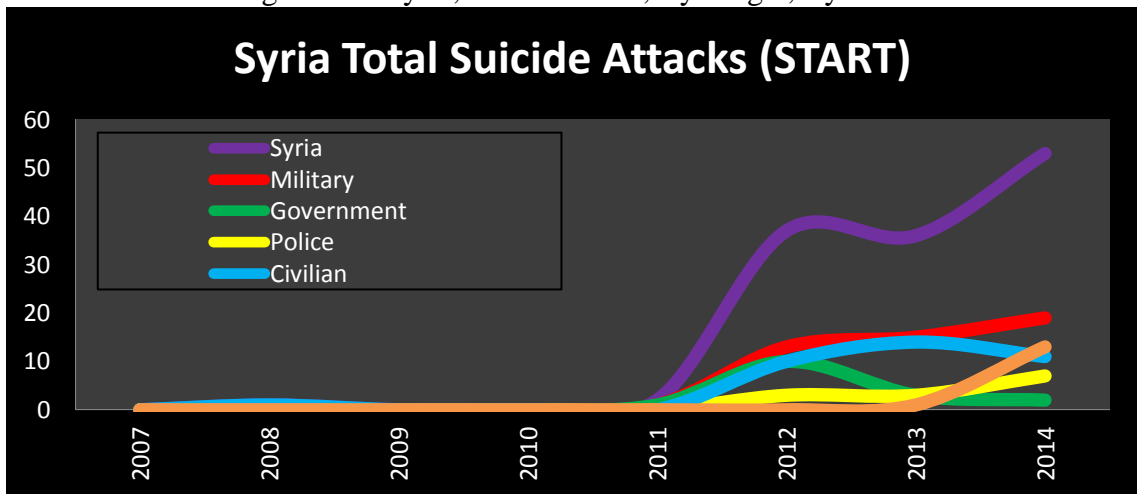
Figure 16 – Pakistan, Total Attacks, By Target, By Year
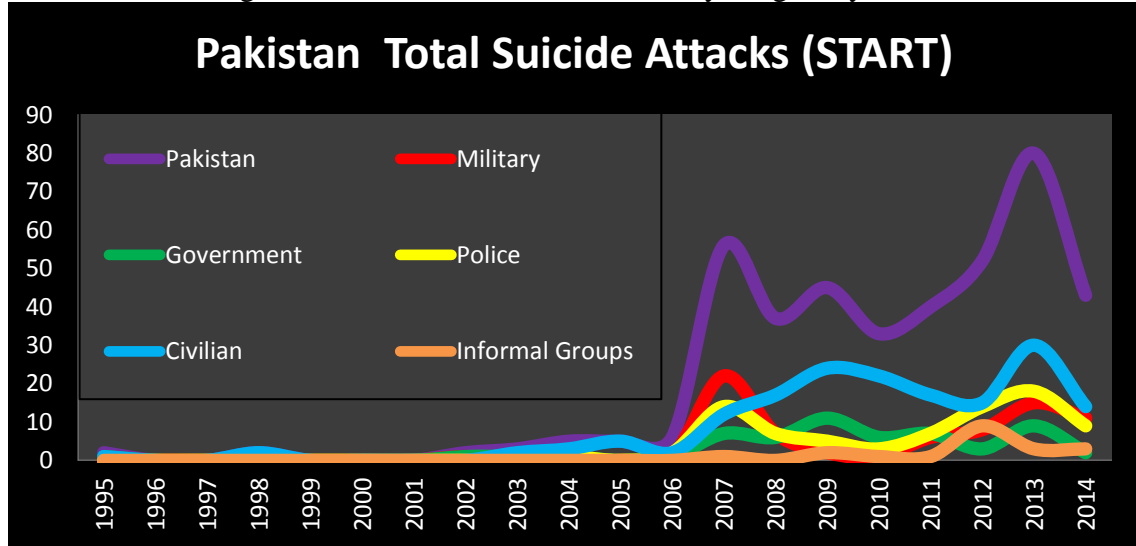
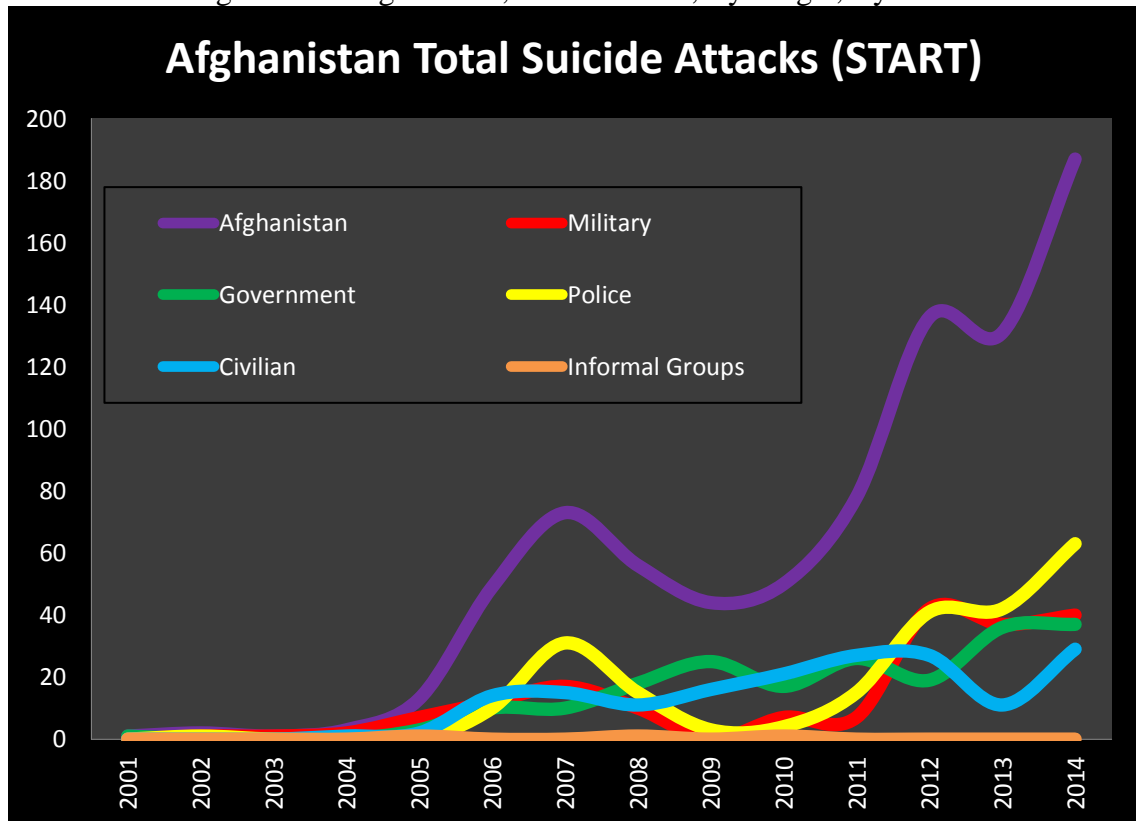Figure 17 – Afghanistan, Total Attacks, By Target, By Year

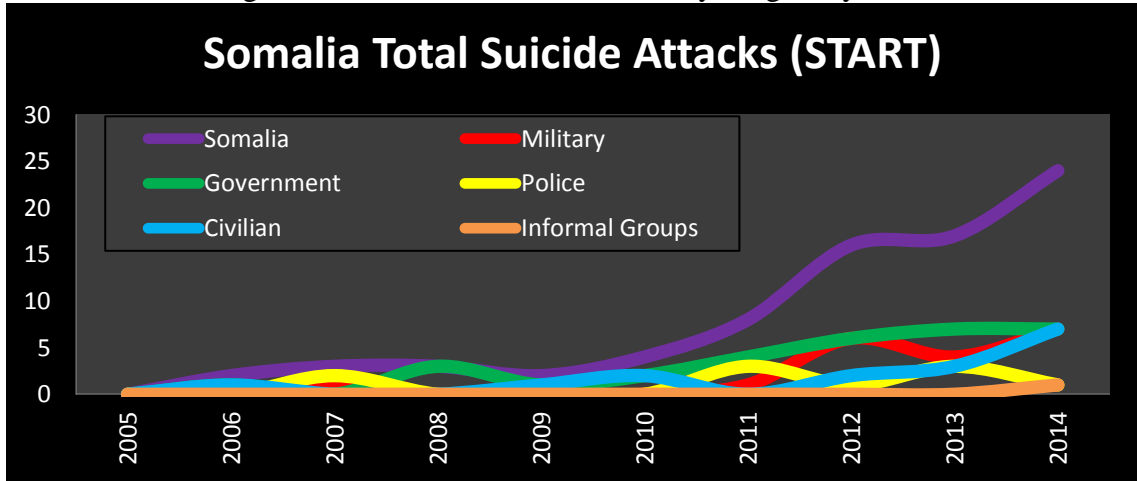Figure 18 - Somalia, Total Attacks, By Target, By Year
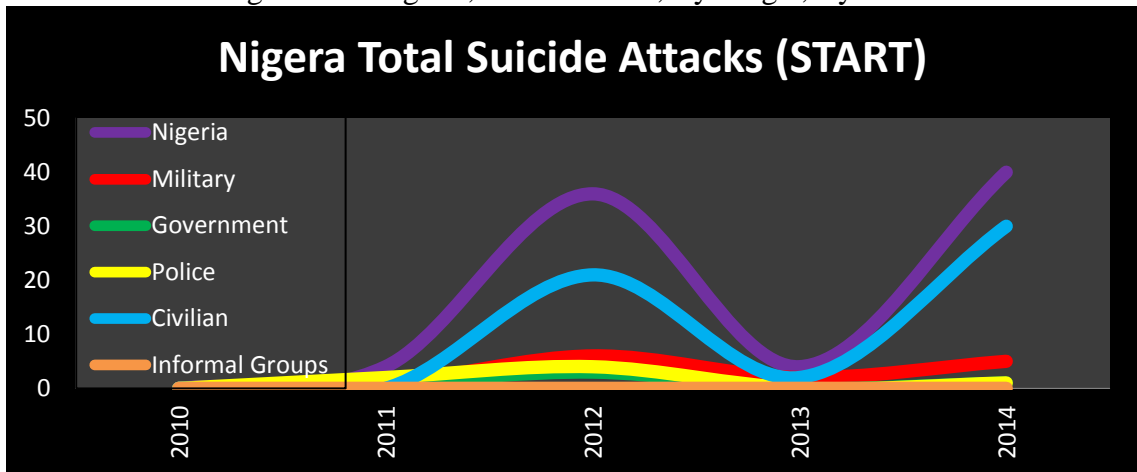

Figure 19 - Nigeria, Total Attacks, By Target, By Year

Figure 20 - Yemen, Total Attacks, By Target, By Year