

# SUICIDE BOMBERS IN HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Hardly a day passes without bad news coming out of Iraq. By now we are accustomed to the daily headlines: “String of bombings kills Shia civilians in Baghdad,” “Suicide bombers target police recruitment center,” “Five U.S. soldiers killed by roadside bomb.” However, nothing is more mind-boggling to observers of this conflict than the pace of suicide attacks in Iraq. From March 22, 2003, to August 18, 2006, approximately 514 suicide attacks took place there.

Even though suicide attacks account for a very small percentage of overall insurgent violence in Iraq, which includes the use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), rockets, snipers, and hit-and-run-operations, the rate of suicide attacks in the Iraqi insurgency has surpassed the number of suicide operations by all previous insurgent groups combined, including those by Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka, and Hamas in Israel.<sup>1</sup> More important, despite their relatively small number in the overall insurgency, suicide attacks have a disproportionate impact on political developments in Iraq because of their targets, lethality, and psychological potency.

It should not have turned out this way. Those who planned the war on Iraq assumed it would be relatively easy to topple the regime and rebuild its institutions. The war was presumed to be a solid stepping-stone to major political restructuring in the Middle East, the likes of which had not been seen since the formation of modern Arab states following World War I. The regime was fragile, unpopular, defeated on the battlefield time and again. Remove the leadership of the defunct Baathist party and the people would applaud, welcome the coalition with open arms, and accept its plans unquestioningly. Iraq is not like Afghanistan, U.S. officials repeatedly said. It is rich in oil, steeped in secularism, and has intellectual and technocratic elites capable of taking the helm and administering the

state. Above all, it had a developed opposition in exile that had been working with the United States and other Western governments to prepare for the new order in Iraq. Things seemed to be in place for a swift victory, one that might have shocked and awed even the coalition by exceeding all its expectations. By May 2003, nearly two months into the invasion, things seemed to be on track. “Mission accomplished,” the banner read. The coalition did not see them coming—the insurgents, the suicide bombers.

Since the invasion of Iraq in March 2003, more than 3,100 American soldiers have been killed and 23,000 wounded.<sup>2</sup> Estimates of Iraqi deaths since the invasion in March 2003 range from as low as 57,000 to as high as 650,000; the actual toll of Iraqi deaths, injuries, displaced, and disappeared may never be known.<sup>3</sup> Instead of becoming a flourishing democracy in the U.S. camp, Iraq has plunged into anarchy and ethnosectarian political strife that is tearing the country asunder.

Rather than deliver a clear message to terrorists around the world that the United States would not brook an attack on its homeland and stand idly by in the face of murderous terrorism, the occupation of Iraq has delivered the opposite message: Islamic resistance and martyrdom can defeat a superpower, just as jihadists did against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan during the 1980s. Involvement in Iraq has not strengthened the United States and made it more secure in the face of extremism; instead Iraq has turned into an inviting war zone for jihadists seeking a place to call home after the fall of Afghanistan’s Taliban regime in late 2001. Today Iraq has entered a civil war whose duration, scope, and magnitude have yet to crystallize. Talk has faded of a pluralist democracy that could serve as a guiding light to other authoritarian regimes in the region. Iraqis just want an end to the bloodshed and the insecurity. Many in the United States just want to get out.

What went wrong? Who are these insurgents? Where did they come from? What do they want? Why are they deploying suicide bombers? Why are they killing their own people? What will it take to stop them? Is it too late? Answers to these questions are central to salvaging the situation in Iraq and ending the bloodshed. This book delves deep into the Iraqi insurgency to map its political and strategic divides and explain the patterns of suicide violence therein. We cannot answer all these questions yet, but the broad outlines of the insurgency and the suicide bombings within it are becoming clearer as time passes.

Suicide attacks in Iraq arose after a U.S.-led invasion of the country and a subsequent occupation by multinational forces. Yet the overwhelming majority of suicide attacks in Iraq has targeted Iraqi security forces and Shia civilians, not coalition forces. The perpetrators of these suicide bombings appear to be mainly non-Iraqis who volunteered to fight and die in Iraq. Many came from Saudi Arabia, but substantial numbers have come from Europe; neighboring Arab states such as Syria, Kuwait, and Jordan; and North Africa. Most of the bombers appear to be connected to transnational networks associated with “second-generation” jihadists who trained in Afghanistan during the 1990s or militants fleeing arrest in their home or host countries. These suicide bombers have dragged Iraq into civil war because their attacks overwhelmingly target Shia police and civilians. They are also foiling U.S. plans to stabilize the country and turn it into a democratic regime and a solid ally in a sea of religious radicalism, entrenched authoritarianism, and hostile states with nuclear ambitions. Understanding this phenomenon, therefore, is vitally important for U.S. national security, foreign policy in the Muslim world, and the war on terrorism.

In previous suicide bombing campaigns, observers asked what motivated ordinary men and women to strap explosives around their bodies, walk into crowded public places, and blow themselves up to kill themselves and others around them. In Iraq the questions have become much more complex: What motivates non-Iraqis to make their way to Iraq to kill fellow Muslims? Why are Saudis flocking to die in Iraq? What motivates a Tunisian living in Italy and a female Muslim convert living in Belgium to go to Iraq to kill people they have never met or from whom they have not felt direct oppression? How could a country like Iraq, which never experienced suicide terrorism before 2003, produce the largest arsenal of “martyrs” ever seen in a comparatively short time? Why are the Shia and Iraqi security forces the main targets of the suicide bombers? The vexing questions seem endless.

In this study I try to answer some of these questions, drawing extensively on national and international, open-source intelligence and papers of record; primary sources from insurgent groups, such as their online documents and videos; and some interviews with U.S. service personnel who are currently in or have returned from Iraq. It is too early to make definitive statements about the identities of the suicide bombers, where they come from, what motivates them to fight and die in Iraq, and why recruiters have successfully mobilized such a large number of them in a

relatively short time. Therefore, the findings of this book must be seen as preliminary and subject to further research. However, it is possible to broadly sketch the phenomenon of suicide bombings in Iraq from the limited information available. This study may serve as one of many that fill the gaps in our knowledge about the insurgency in Iraq and suicide terrorism in general.

## HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON SUICIDE BOMBINGS

Since the early 1980s many insurgent and terrorist groups, including secular nationalists, Marxists, and religious fundamentalists, have adopted the tactic of suicide attacks to coerce governments into making concessions, changing policies, abandoning territory, or desisting from negotiations.<sup>4</sup> I use the terms *suicide attacks*, *suicide bombings*, and *suicide terrorism* interchangeably. Despite some controversy as to what to label or how to define this phenomenon, I view suicide terrorism as a premeditated attack by an individual who willingly uses his or her body to carry or deliver explosives to attack, kill, or maim others.<sup>5</sup> These attacks usually target civilians, but they could accompany conventional battlefield attacks against soldiers. Key to this definition is the requirement of self-immolation to execute an operation—the death of the bomber is a necessary part of carrying out an attack. This is different from a high-risk operation, where the death of the attacker is likely but not inevitable in the execution of an assault.

Moreover, suicide bombings are different from operations in which the attackers fight to the end in the hope of achieving martyrdom. In the latter, although the intent is still to die, the death of the individual is not necessary for the operation to take place. This narrow definition of suicide terrorism focuses mainly on the bombers known to have killed themselves in Iraq, not all the transnational volunteers in the Iraqi insurgency.

The introduction of suicide bombings in the modern world is most commonly associated with the Japanese kamikaze pilots of World War II. The imperial government of Japan organized and sanctioned kamikazes against the U.S. naval fleet in the Pacific in a last-ditch effort to forestall the allied invasion of the Japanese mainland. Although there can be no doubt that some kamikazes volunteered wittingly for their mission, others were ambivalent about what they had been compelled to undertake.<sup>6</sup> The kamikazes did not fit neatly into the category of suicide terrorists because they

were military men who attacked military targets, not civilians. However, as the phenomenon of suicide attacks has evolved since the 1980s, discrimination between military and civilian targets has all but withered away.

Suicide attacks were reintroduced during the 1980s, beginning in Lebanon. The most dramatic were the suicide bombings of the U.S. embassy and U.S. and French peacekeeping forces in Beirut in 1983. Their significance stems not only from the high casualty rate they produced—a total of 299 killed and hundreds wounded—but also from their demonstration effect. The subsequent withdrawal of multinational forces from Lebanon sent the message that suicide attacks were an effective tactic. This form of violence continued during the 1990s, mainly by Hezbollah against Israeli targets in southern Lebanon.<sup>7</sup> During the 1990s, Palestinian groups deployed thirty-three bombers in twenty-six separate attacks against Israeli targets. However, the pace of attacks increased many times during the second Palestinian uprising known as al Aqsa intifada. From October 2000 to February 2005, approximately 116 suicide attacks took place.<sup>8</sup>

Suicide missions are not limited to the Middle East or to Islamic groups. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in Sri Lanka have perfected sophisticated suicide missions, which succeeded in killing the former prime minister of India and the president of Sri Lanka. According to Gunaratna, since July 5, 1987, the date of its first suicide operation, LTTE has carried out at least 250 suicide attacks. The Tamil Tigers set a new precedent by training children for and deploying women in suicide operations.<sup>9</sup> The Marxist Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in Turkey and ethnonationalist and Islamist Chechens in Russia also used suicide terrorism. In both places female bombers played a major role in the attacks.<sup>10</sup>

Since the 1980s suicide attacks have spread to Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Britain, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Pakistan, Palestinian territories, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Tunisia, Turkey, the United States, Uzbekistan, and Yemen. The question is why.

## THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON SUICIDE BOMBINGS

Studies of suicide terrorism around the world have produced a number of plausible explanations. Some argue that oppression, injustice, and personal

trauma produce a dual desire for escapism and revenge, leading those physically and psychologically injured to volunteer for suicide missions.<sup>11</sup> Others point to the strategic logic of suicide attacks in the context of occupation and asymmetry in power between occupier and occupied.<sup>12</sup> Still others explain this phenomenon by referring to factional competition between groups and the dynamic of “outbidding,” whereby one group adopts deadlier measures against a hated enemy to outdo its competitors and, consequently, garner greater public support, financing, and recruits.<sup>13</sup> Some cite religious fanaticism and the cult of martyrdom produced by fundamentalist groups and worldviews.<sup>14</sup> Still others contend that the explanation of suicide terrorism lies in the interaction among individual motivations, organizational strategies, and societal conflicts.<sup>15</sup> All these explanations are reasonable, and therefore I will evaluate them in the conclusion in light of the evidence from Iraq.

What makes suicide terrorism an intriguing puzzle is the inability of experts to identify a common socioeconomic, religious, or psychological profile of the bombers. Although some of the suicide bombers are poor, others come from middle-class or affluent families; some come from impoverished societies (such as Egypt, Syria, or Pakistan), while others come from relatively well-developed countries (such as England, Italy, or Saudi Arabia). Many of the suicide bombers are Muslims, but before the second Palestinian uprising and the invasion of Iraq in the first decade of the new millennium, most suicide bombers came from non-Muslim countries or were secular nationalists, not religious fundamentalists. Both men and women carry out suicide attacks. Educated and uneducated individuals volunteer to be martyrs. The majority of the bombers have been in their teens and twenties, but more than a few were in their middle or senior years. Many of the bombers had previous histories of violent activism, but equally prevalent were bombers who carried out only one violent political act in their life: a suicide attack. Some were traumatized by ongoing conflicts, but others seem to have identified with the suffering of coreligionists or compatriots, even though they did not endure direct personal suffering at the hands of their victims. The only thing experts seem to agree on is that suicide bombers are normal individuals; they are not “crazy” or born with a psychopathology that predisposes them to violent activism. This finding, of course, is of limited value and does not aid in identifying, let alone combating, suicide terrorists.

Profiling suicide bombers may not be possible, but researchers have identified four critical advantages to suicide terrorism that explain its appeal across militant groups:

- Tactical effectiveness in comparison to conventional terrorism;
- Ability to communicate strategic messages to target audiences;
- Potent psychological impact on targeted countries;
- Ability to enhance the legitimacy of insurgent organizations among their constituent publics.

Suicide bombings in Iraq have introduced a fifth element: destroying an emerging democratic government and sparking a sectarian civil war.

## TACTICAL ADVANTAGES OF SUICIDE BOMBINGS

Suicide terrorism is one of the means for weak groups to coerce strong opponents into making concessions or changing their policies. Observers point out four tactical advantages to this strategy.

**Kill Ratio.** Suicide terrorism on average kills and injures more people with a single attack than does any other form of terrorism. According to one estimate, conventional terrorist attacks since the early 1980s have killed on average less than one person per incident, whereas suicide attacks during the same period have killed on average twelve people per incident. Through suicide terrorism those seeking to coerce opponents can impose unacceptable human and material losses, on average twelve times deadlier than conventional terrorism, on the targeted countries.<sup>16</sup>

**Smart Bombs.** Suicide terrorists are “smart bombs” that can pinpoint their targets, walk into highly secure areas, make last-minute adjustments in their plans, and choose the time of detonation to inflict the greatest damage. In Israel, in at least two incidents bombers changed their targets minutes before their operations because they noticed extra security presence near their original targets. In one recent incident in Iraq, the suicide bomber waited for crowds to gather before setting off his explosives, killing scores of civilians. This tactical flexibility is rare in conventional terrorist attacks or even with the most expensive and technologically advanced weaponry.

**Cost-effectiveness.** Suicide bombing is an attractive option for terrorist groups seeking a cost-effective way to inflict the greatest possible damage

on their opponents with the least number of cadres. In highly repressive environments where recruitment is difficult, terrorist groups become conscious of the need to cause the greatest damage without sacrificing many valued assets. Suicide terrorism allows them to inflict mass casualties with one or a few bombers. If we assume that a suicide attack kills at least three times as many people as a conventional terrorist attack, it would require three separate attacks to achieve what one suicide bomber could achieve in a single mission. Also, suicide operations do not require complicated escape plans that put other organizational personnel at risk of capture.

Some may question the assertion that suicide attacks are cost-effective. A more efficient use of resources demands that groups protect the lives of their members so they can attack more than once. This is especially important if recruitment is difficult and insurgents are waging a war of attrition against a powerful foe that cannot be defeated through a few mass-casualty attacks.<sup>17</sup> A suicide bomber can strike only once; a living militant can attack again and again. This criticism, however, assumes that terrorists are operating in security environments where they can attack and then evade arrest or death for an extended period. In some conflict areas this may be the case, but in places such as Israel or Saudi Arabia vigilant security services often can capture and punish militants after they have acted once or twice. For example, Palestinian militants have learned through experience that attacking a military post in the West Bank through conventional hit-and-run operations probably will result in their capture or death, because Israel has a long history of protecting its personnel in danger zones. Less risky tactics, such as firing homemade rockets or exploding roadside bombs, rarely kill their targets, making them less effective as coercive tactics.<sup>18</sup> In these circumstances it might be more effective to engage in mass-casualty attacks and lose one bomber than to engage in conventional, low-casualty attacks and assume the risk of protecting a wanted terrorist. Given the substantial difference between the kill rate of a suicide attack and that of a conventional operation, some groups might deem it more cost-effective to lose one member in a mass-casualty suicide operation than to send several militants on operations repeatedly to achieve the same kill rate.

In addition, every organization, even informal groups, engages in a division of labor in which the most experienced and skilled members are protected to maintain the organization, while those with fewer skills can be sacrificed for the cause without loss of organizational continuity.<sup>19</sup> Finally, not all violent groups are pursuing a strategy of attrition. Some

pursue a strategy of sabotaging peace, as some Palestinian groups tried to do during the Oslo peace process from 1993 to 2000.<sup>20</sup> Others follow a strategy of agitation, in which the goal is to induce the state to overreact by excessively repressing a category of people such as workers, Muslims, or Sunnis. Such repression can turn these people into supporters of terrorists. Many of the anarchists and other left-wing terrorists in Europe and Latin America adopted this strategy in the past. The attacks of September 11, 2001, could arguably be seen as a form of agitation in the Muslim world. In such instances, the desire to succeed in producing mass casualties (or destroying hard targets) can override the need to protect valuable personnel. In Iraq suicide attacks are not about waging a war of attrition or “death by a thousand cuts,” but producing sectarian polarization that can mobilize Sunnis behind the most extreme and marginal faction in the insurgency.

**Group Security.** Suicide terrorists are less likely to be captured and forced to reveal their recruiters’ modus operandi. Even if the mission fails to kill or injure anyone besides the suicide terrorist, the recruiters of the terrorist remain undetected, able to recruit others for future operations.

## SUICIDE TERRORISM AS STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

Suicide terrorism is intended not only to kill; it also is an effective form of strategic communication with the targeted countries, as well as the international community and the terrorists’ own constituency.<sup>21</sup> Observers of this phenomenon point out at least five strategic messages that suicide terrorists seek to communicate.

**Determination.** Suicide attackers send the message to the targeted country that they are so determined to achieve their goals that they are willing to die for their cause. Suicide terrorists’ willingness to sacrifice their lives voluntarily is often interpreted as the ultimate testimony to the righteousness of the cause. This extraordinary commitment cannot be deterred easily by the threat of counterterrorism. The targeted country, therefore, is coerced into addressing the terrorists’ underlying demands.

**Commitment to Escalate.** Suicide attacks heighten expectations of future attacks in three ways. First, suicide terrorists often issue prerecorded statements that they are part of an ever-growing pool of “living martyrs” awaiting the opportunity to serve their cause. Second, by breaching societal taboos and international norms on the use of violence, they make

threats of escalation appear credible. If they did it once, surely they are likely to do it again. Third, groups that send suicide bombers are under internal organizational pressure to continue such attacks, so that the deaths of the initial “martyrs” are not in vain. Failure to continue on this path without achieving the organization’s major objectives could demoralize the organization’s members.

**Deterrence of Neutral Observers.** The extraordinarily destructive nature of suicide terrorism sends a message to uncommitted allies to stay on the sidelines lest they become targets of mass-casualty attacks. For example, the suicide attacks in Britain on July 7, 2005—clearly intended to coerce Britain to abandon its support of the United States in Iraq and Afghanistan—also included a message to other governments, including Italy and Denmark, to reconsider their current alliance with the United States.

**Shaming the Enemy.** Suicide attacks send the message that oppression by the targeted country has reached such unbearable levels that ordinary men and women are willing to kill themselves to end it. In reaction to conventional terrorism against civilians, the natural tendency of neutral observers is to sympathize with the victims of terrorism. However, suicide terrorism, generally speaking, shifts sympathy toward the perpetrators of violence because they are seen as victims of intolerable oppression; otherwise they would not have taken such extraordinary measures for their cause. However, there are limits to this aspect of suicide terrorism. Suicide attacks can result in a public backlash if the attackers appear to be unrestrained in their killing of noncombatants, especially civilians in their constituent group. Suicide bombings in Saudi Arabia that killed innocent Muslims resulted in a public outcry against the terrorists. Similarly, the massacre of schoolchildren in Beslan, Russia, resulted in worldwide condemnations of Chechen terrorists.<sup>22</sup>

As in the case of public backlash, international support is likely to decline after the initial wave of sympathy for the suicide terrorists. International backlash emerges when suicide terrorism is no longer localized within conflict zones but instead diffuses worldwide. In Europe, for example, sympathy for Palestinian suicide bombers waned as suicide attacks spread to America on September 11 and subsequently to countries around the world. This decline in international support stems partly from international diplomacy to counter suicide bombings, as more and more countries feel the effects of this form of terrorism.

**Solicitation of Recruits.** Suicide attacks serve as a wake-up call to the terrorists' constituent publics, asking them to make similar sacrifices for the cause. Suicide terrorists try to achieve this goal in four ways. First, suicide terrorists are likely to capture national and international media attention because of the extraordinary nature of their mission. Suicide terrorism is shocking and seemingly incomprehensible, attracting worldwide media attention. Media coverage helps terrorists publicize their grievances and solicit support in the form of financing, political support, and volunteers. Their prerecorded statements contain messages to the supporting public to join the struggle; otherwise the sacrifices of the "heroic martyrs" will be in vain. This is especially the case with female suicide bombers, who send the implicit message that women have risen to the challenge, so it is men's turn to do the same. Second, suicide terrorists send the message that their target enemies are vulnerable to attack; they are not invincible. In other words, suicide attackers try to empower weaker parties by showing them the way to inflict maximum pain on their enemies. Third, suicide terrorists foster a culture of martyrdom by highlighting the "heroism" and sacrifice of their members. Groups such as Hamas in the Palestinian territories, the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka, and al Qaeda honor their suicide bombers with video montages, poems, commemorative books, songs, posters, or monuments. The veneration of suicide terrorists reduces public inhibitions against suicide and killing civilians.

## PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT

Suicide bombing, like other tactics of terrorism, is a form of psychological warfare. It is intended not only to kill and demonstrate commitment to a cause, but also to demoralize the public of the targeted country. Demoralization of the general public is intended to weaken its resolve in the face of adversity and induce it to pressure its government to compromise or change policies. Suicide attacks are more potent than conventional terrorism in their psychological impact. Two elements of suicide terrorism make it a powerful tool of psychological warfare.

**Intimate Killers.** Suicide attacks rarely distinguish between combatants and civilians. In this respect, they are not different from other forms of terrorism. However, unlike conventional bombs, which often cannot distinguish between the old and the young, men and women, soldiers and civilians, human bombs can make these distinctions because they walk

among their victims, hear their voices, and look into their faces. The intimate nature of suicide terrorism is psychologically damaging because the killers appear to be callous and exceptionally cruel. Furthermore, suicide attacks are carried out by individuals who often appear undistinguishable from their victims, heightening the sense of insecurity among the general public. One cannot profile suicide terrorists because they purposely disguise themselves during their missions to look like their victims.

**Unprecedented and Incomprehensible Threat.** Suicide attacks are not new in history, but the general public views them as an unprecedented threat to its security because of their relatively recent revival. The public's unfamiliarity with this tactic, at least initially, naturally raises its anxiety and apprehension about this "new" form of terrorism. Moreover, suicide terrorism is not easily comprehensible; indeed, it appears illogical or downright crazy to the general public. After all, would rational persons kill themselves to kill others? Terrorist groups often seek to make suicide attacks appear motivated solely by the "love of martyrdom," while their enemies are motivated solely by the "love of life."

The apparent illogic of suicide attacks is disconcerting because it implies that the terrorists are not people with whom one could reason. Moreover, their willingness to die implies that they cannot be deterred. However, the psychological impact of suicide terrorism lessens over time through the process of normalization; its shock value diminishes as the tactic becomes overused. So there are limits to the psychological potency of suicide attacks. For example, in Israel the general public has become resilient in the face of such attacks. Suicide bombings are seen as tragic but not unprecedented or incomprehensible. People have become accustomed to them. Normalization is also achieved through government efforts that quickly repair the scene of the attack and restore it to its original condition, encouraging the public to proceed as it did before the attack.

## ENHANCING ORGANIZATIONAL LEGITIMACY

Suicide terrorism is directed not only against the targeted country. It is also oriented toward enhancing the legitimacy and appeal of the terrorist group for its constituent public. Suicide terrorism might increase the legitimacy of terrorist groups among their societies in two ways.

**Factional Competition.** Groups that deploy suicide attacks appear the most daring, heroic, and sacrificing. These qualities naturally raise their legitimacy among the public in the context of conflict with outside groups. For example, in the case of Israel, suicide bombings by Hamas during the Oslo peace process years did not raise the appeal of the organization because the public was supporting the peace process. However, when the second Palestinian uprising broke out in late 2000, Hamas's use of suicide bombings increased its appeal tremendously because the public saw the attacks as just retribution against a powerful enemy that was unwilling to compromise peacefully. Other groups, such as the secular Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, felt forced to emulate Hamas by using suicide terrorism. Similarly, the Lebanese Hezbollah was a new actor on the political scene when it first deployed suicide attacks in 1983 against U.S. and French targets. The success of those attacks resulted in its meteoric rise in popularity among the Shia population in southern Lebanon, marginalizing its Shia competitor, Amal. Today Hezbollah is a premier Islamic organization because of its perceived sacrifices for the cause of liberating southern Lebanon from Israel's presence.<sup>23</sup>

**Induce Repression.** Suicide terrorism naturally induces an initial strong response from the targeted country. Repression is generally undesirable for terrorist groups because it forces them to divert their human and material resources away from the struggle. However, when the terrorist group lacks general appeal or a hospitable environment, indiscriminate repression following suicide attacks can create anger toward the repressive regime and sympathy for the terrorists. Historically, several terrorist groups sought to provoke their governments into taking extremely repressive measures against the population to compel a passive public to take action on the side of the terrorists. Some have argued that al Qaeda's 9/11 attacks were intended to induce a strong American response in the Muslim world, which al Qaeda assumed would compel Muslims to take its side.

Many of the elements present in previous campaigns of suicide terrorism also can be found in the Iraqi insurgency. Insurgent groups that utilize this tactic do so in the name of tactical effectiveness, strategic necessity, and psychological effect. They also use their attacks to show that they are legitimate actors willing to pay the ultimate price to liberate the land and purge it of foreign impositions and local collaborators. However, several aspects of suicide bombings in Iraq are unique in the contemporary history of suicide terrorism. While researching this book, I concluded that

current researchers on suicide terrorism would have to refocus their analytical lenses to describe, let alone explain, the rise of suicide bombings in the Iraqi insurgency.

## A SOCIAL MOVEMENT FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS

One of the most puzzling aspects of suicide attacks in Iraq is the transnational character of many of the bombers. These suicidal militants were not homegrown but came from as far away as Europe and North Africa. Even those from neighboring countries such as Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Jordan assumed tremendous risk in making their way into Iraq and paid the ultimate price once they got there. Moreover, these transnational “martyrs” were mobilized by informal networks, not states or formal organizations that could provide them with money, airline tickets, or a consolation package for their surviving families. Finally, these willing “martyrs” killed fellow Muslims; more Iraqis than non-Muslim foreign occupiers have died at the hands of suicide bombers.

In this study I apply a social movement approach to solve the puzzle of the transnational “martyrs” in Iraq. Such an approach explains how groups outside state structures mobilize collective action to make demands for reform or revolution. Mobilizing collective action consists of more than calling on people to rise up or take to the streets; it involves framing social ills as threats and opportunities for action, networking among activists and their constituencies, building formal and informal organizations, forging collective identities and alliances, making claims against opponents and states, and motivating individuals to assume personal costs when the benefits of success are not readily apparent.

In other words, the dynamics of mobilization in social movements are not too different from the dynamics of transnational terrorism. Specifically, suicide terrorism by transnational activists in Iraq and social movements both involve actors “in conflictual relations with clearly identified opponents; ... linked by dense informal networks; [and sharing] a distinct collective identity.”<sup>24</sup>

Social movement approaches have a distinct advantage over purely political, psychological, or cultural approaches because they are interdisciplinary and multipronged. They analyze relationships among political environments, organizational dynamics, and cultural frameworks.<sup>25</sup> Above

all, they seek to explain collective action at three levels of analysis: individual involvement, organizational strategies, and sociopolitical facilitators of activism.

These three levels of analysis—individual, organizational, and societal—are necessary to understand suicide terrorism in Iraq. Consider the following scenario. A Tunisian Muslim living in Europe is angry about what is going on in Iraq and is highly motivated to “do something.” Despite his high motivations, this would-be insurgent cannot act on his own, generally speaking, unless he knows other individuals in groups willing to indulge his desire to fight in Iraq. Immediately, we begin to see the interaction between individual motivations and preexisting organizational ties or networks.

But why would groups make the effort of helping would-be insurgents and take the associated risk if they did not deem it advantageous in some way to do so? If this Tunisian arrived in Iraq looking to carry out a “martyrdom operation,” the groups that would equip him with the explosives would do so not because they wanted to fulfill his death wish, but because they saw some benefit coming out of his impending mission. Without a clear purpose, or a strategy perhaps, the group would not undertake this effort—not on a consistent basis, anyway. Therefore, individual motivations must align with the group’s strategy or objectives. Without this symbiosis, suicide terrorism would not get off the ground.

But what shapes the group’s strategy and objectives? Do groups merely make up objectives and strategies independent of their surroundings and the mix of opportunities and constraints confronting them? The answer is clearly no. Also, how are these groups able to recruit so many bombers and operate with the frequency seen in Iraq? Do they merely have excellent organizational skills and persuasive leadership, or are the political and security environments facilitating their activities? If the latter is true, as is often the case, then we can see how organizational strategies interact with societal conflicts and the broader political and security contexts. In short, there is no escaping the interdependence of individual motivations, organizational objectives, and societal conflicts in the making of suicide terrorism.

The social movement approach is not a unitary theory that makes law-like propositions concerning collective action. Rather it is an analytical approach that yields a number of concepts or mechanisms that could be used to understand different forms of collective action or contentious

politics.<sup>26</sup> The following social movement concepts are helpful in explaining suicide terrorism in Iraq: *political opportunity structures, strategic framing, mobilization structures and networks, and repertoires of action, modularity, and diffusion*. These concepts comprise an explanatory schema that is not necessarily generalizable beyond Iraq; but it is not clear that a generalizable theory of suicide terrorism is currently attainable.

## POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURES

Political opportunity structures refer to political environments, systems, or alignments that create opportunities for collective action that previously did not exist.<sup>27</sup> Political contenders operate in environments that shape opportunities for and constraints on collective action. Some political environments make collective action nearly impossible. For example, highly repressive regimes that suppress any form of extra-institutional mobilization make it difficult for political contenders to call for marches and protests. Other contexts, however, combine constraints and opportunities, or threats and incentives, making collective action thinkable.

For example, in their study of transnational advocacy networks, Keck and Sikkink highlight how domestic political blockage in authoritarian states, combined with the availability of international support networks, creates opportunities for national advocacy groups to engage in transnational activism to put international pressure on their own governments (the “boomerang” strategy).<sup>28</sup> Similarly, a number of social movement theorists have shown that globalization and the rise of regional and international governmental organizations guided by neoliberal economic doctrines created new threats to organized labor and environmental advocates as well as opportunities for social movement cooperation across borders.<sup>29</sup> These examples suggest that the political context shapes both the rise and strategies of collective action.

Social movement theorists and political scientists point to a number of factors that could generate or constrain opportunities for collective mobilization, including whether or not the system is partially or completely open to political contestation; availability or absence of influential allies, as well as elite unity or fragmentation; the strength and nature of state repression; differential policing strategies; transition from authoritarianism to democracy; and new threats to organizational survival.<sup>30</sup>

The concept of political opportunity structures as applied to suicide terrorism in Iraq shows how shifts in the post-9/11 security environment around the world and the toppling of the authoritarian Baathist regime in Iraq created new threats and opportunities for global jihadists to mobilize Muslims for martyrdom in Iraq. The rise and pace of suicide attacks in Iraq are intimately linked, on the one hand to the sense of siege radical Islamists felt as they lost hospitable havens in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Europe, and on the other hand to the opportunities generated by the unpopularity of the Iraq war in the Muslim world, the legitimacy crisis of official Muslim leaders that stemmed from their failure to halt the invasion of Iraq, and the rise of a nationalist insurgency in Iraq. This mix of threats and opportunities made Iraq a “field of dreams” for the new global insurgents.

## STRATEGIC FRAMING

Humans are not robots or laboratory rats that respond automatically to external commands or stimuli. Mobilization involves framing a problem, attributing blame for it, suggesting solutions, and motivating collective action with material and moral incentives.<sup>31</sup> All these mobilization tasks are intricately connected to issues of identity. Social movement theorists recognize the complexity of identity formation and have contributed greatly to understanding how collective identity emerges.<sup>32</sup>

One of the most important concepts to emerge from social movement theory is cultural framing, which refers to “conscious strategic efforts by groups of people to fashion shared understandings of the world and of themselves that legitimate and motivate collective action.”<sup>33</sup> A frame is an “interpretive schemata that simplifies and condenses the ‘world out there’ by selectively punctuating and encoding objects, situations, events, experiences, and sequences of action within one’s present and past environment.”<sup>34</sup>

Frames also can be thought of as “condensed symbols” that situate contemporary actors and their experiences within historical narratives that are intelligible, meaningful, and suggestive of certain courses of action.<sup>35</sup> The symbols are “condensed”—that is, they express a series of ideas and retrieve a number of familiar images that are mythically, if not logically, coherent. Liberation theology, for example, sought to reframe the ubiquitous and familiar notions of sin and salvation to enable activists

to contest existing power structures in Latin America. Sin was no longer defined as personal impiety or wrongdoing, but rather as structural sin, generated by economic and political arrangements that oppress people and produce flagrant inequalities. Salvation was disconnected from its transcendental origins and framed as worldly historical salvation that demands activism to produce social justice on earth.<sup>36</sup>

The term strategic framing connotes the use of discourse and symbolism for political aims. Framing is strategic because it selectively draws from shared identities, histories, revered symbols, rituals, and narratives to mobilize people for action. It is not an objective process; it is replete with subjectivity and strategic choices from the “tool kit” of tradition.<sup>37</sup> Insurgents choose some symbols, texts, and narratives while they downplay or entirely ignore others that may contravene their strategic aims. Movement activists celebrate certain identities while suppressing others, depending on their objectives.<sup>38</sup>

The concept of strategic framing is helpful in explaining how global jihadists marshal ideological, theological, and emotional claims to appeal to potential recruits, legitimize themselves in the insurgency, justify violence against Iraqis, deactivate self-inhibiting norms against killing fellow Muslims, and counter the claims of established authorities. Above all, jihadists forge the myth of heroic martyrdom to motivate militants and newcomers to jihad to sacrifice themselves for heavenly rewards and to erase the shame of humiliation.

The ability of transnational jihadists to frame self-sacrifice as martyrdom was connected to earlier public support for martyrdom in Palestine and Lebanon. The normative context in which Muslim publics gave suicide operations privileged legitimacy made the mobilizing tasks of global jihadists easy; they were able to marshal the same texts, arguments, and rituals to justify suicide attacks. To the extent that additional arguments were necessary to justify attacks on fellow Muslims, the transnational jihadists managed to extend the framing of suicidal violence as martyrdom by drawing on cultural and political beliefs concerning humiliation inflicted by foreigners, the illegitimacy of collaboration with occupiers, and threats to female honor by strangers.

## MOBILIZATION STRUCTURES AND NETWORKS

Mobilization structures are the formal and informal organizational vehicles through which people mobilize for and engage in collective action. They range from informal, decentralized networks to formal, centralized professional associations and social movement organizations. Social movement theorists recognize that opportunities and frames alone are not sufficient to persuade people to challenge authorities. Collective action requires preexisting social ties and organizational settings from which to draw recruits, resources, and leaders.<sup>39</sup>

The concept of networks in social movement theory has, oddly enough, remained undefined. However, the concept often refers to private and public ties, whether direct or indirect, among individuals, clusters of individuals (such as social clubs or tribes), groups, and organizations (all of which are often referred to as nodes). These links could include friends and family, coworkers and colleagues, acquaintances and neighbors in social or religious organizations, activists across a number of political organizations or even borders, and so on.<sup>40</sup>

One of the strongest findings in social movement theory is that network ties greatly facilitate collective action, insurgency, and terrorism.<sup>41</sup> Formal mobilization structures are rarely the starting point for social movement activism, especially in the context of repressive political systems in which vigilant authorities heavily monitor or suppress formal organizing.

Networks facilitate mobilization in five ways. First, they often link individuals who are already committed to a cause or a social category, creating a “catnet” (category x network) or, more simply, a “collective we.”<sup>42</sup> It is much easier to mobilize people with a shared sense of identity than to struggle to forge a new one. In addition, networks reduce the cost of information transmission between individuals, allowing for repeated political exchanges between the nodes in the network. Virtual networks, where access to a computer and an online connection is sufficient to replace more costly leaflets, pamphlets, and audiocassettes, are especially useful.

Second, when mobilization involves high-risk activism, including participation in violence, social ties become a prerequisite for trust and commitment. Trust and solidarity are embedded in social networks. Recruiters for risky activism first dip into the pool of family, friends, and

like-minded activists because trust is already established and the risk of talking to the “wrong people” is minimal. Potential recruits are more willing to entertain radical ideas when they have shared experiences and bonds of friendship with their interlocutors. In her study of high-risk collective action for human rights in Chile, Uruguay, and Argentina, Loveman found that “face-to-face networks permit a high degree of trust that helps to counteract the selective disincentives to participate posed by threats of state persecution.” She added, “Dense interpersonal networks tend to insulate activists, which contributes to their intensified commitment and willingness to act despite risks of horrific repercussions.”<sup>43</sup>

In her study of left-wing terrorism in Italy, della Porta found that 843 of 1,214 members of a clandestine organization joined while they had at least one friend already involved in that organization. In 74 percent of these cases, the participant had more than one friend involved.<sup>44</sup> In a study of the civil rights movement in the United States, Morris showed how the networks of black churches served as the institutional center of the movement by providing activists with a preexisting mass base, leadership, an institutionalized financial base, meeting places, and cultural solidarity.<sup>45</sup>

Third, and related to the second point, network ties create social incentives and reputational concerns that discourage individuals from “free-riding.” Free-riders are individuals who choose to forgo participation in a collective action that, if successful, could bring them and others a benefit such as higher pay for striking workers, an end to racial inequality for an oppressed minority, the right to vote for disenfranchised citizens, or freedom from foreign domination for an occupied people. If others act and succeed, the free-riders still benefit because the public good produced by the collective action is not limited to those who participated.<sup>46</sup> Staying on the sidelines is a common behavior when social struggles are raging, but being part of a tight-knit activist network could discourage people from free-riding. As Chong illustrated with regard to the U.S. civil rights movement, personal ties within the black churches made it difficult for individuals or groups to stay behind as others were mobilizing for the collective good. Those who did risked sullyng their reputations and losing valued friendships.<sup>47</sup> Expectations of valued peers were also noted by Gibson, who maintained that participants in the mass protests against the 1991 coup in the former Soviet Union mobilized out of a need to satisfy “expectations of friends to do something.”<sup>48</sup> In her interviews with left-wing militants in Italy, della Porta pointed out that many terrorists did

not want to leave the movement because of a sense of commitment to their jailed comrades.<sup>49</sup>

Fourth, networks facilitate the act of collective attribution, whereby an activist can define a problem, attribute blame to culprits, and suggest solutions. Social movement theorists recognize that individual mobilization depends partly on new ways of seeing the world or aspects of it. Therefore, mobilizing agents must produce “injustice frames,” “cognitive liberation,” or “insurgent consciousness” to induce ordinary people to break their daily routines and engage in high-risk activism.<sup>50</sup> But individuals often do not make complex decisions or label events as “risks” and “opportunities” in isolation from valued others. Passy noted, “Once individuals have been integrated into formal and informal networks, they find themselves in an interactive structure that enables them to define and redefine their interpretive frames, facilitates the process of identity-building and identity-strengthening, and creates or solidifies political consciousness towards a given protest issue.”<sup>51</sup>

Finally, networks present mobilizing agents with a pool of potential militants who can be activated through “bloc recruitment,” which involves group commitments that are self-reinforcing.<sup>52</sup> Once a few individuals make a commitment to a cause, it is difficult for those around them to stay behind. Bloc recruitment may be facilitated by a number of psychological mechanisms, including peer pressure, concern for reputation, or “power in numbers.”

In the case of Iraq, I show that preexisting transnational networks played an important role in mobilizing volunteers, including suicide bombers. Both experienced activists and new jihadists were linked by activist networks in a number of countries. Those activists, in turn, constituted a transnational network of second-generation jihadists with ties to the Afghan-Pakistani training camps during the 1990s or to jihads in Bosnia, Chechnya, or their home countries. Without these preexisting networks, jihadists could not have mobilized so many volunteers.

## REPERTOIRES OF ACTION, MODULARITY, AND DIFFUSION

Social movement activism usually involves familiar and tried repertoires of action. Organizers of collective action do not choose tactics randomly but draw on past experiences, history, and societal norms and habits.

“Protest makers do not have to reinvent the wheel at each place and in each conflict.... They often find inspiration elsewhere in the ideas and tactics espoused by other activists.”<sup>53</sup> The values and goals of the movement, as well as the political context in which it operates, also shape repertoires of contention.<sup>54</sup> They are not static, however. Social movement theorists recognize that organizers of collective action are strategic and learning actors who can adopt new tactics and mobilization forms, especially if these appear successful. Tactics produced in some contexts can become “modular” and be “diffused” to other contexts.<sup>55</sup>

Strategic and tactical diffusion may occur through relational and nonrelational ties.<sup>56</sup> Relational diffusion involves the transfer of innovative tactics through established lines of interpersonal interactions within networks of activists with high levels of trust. In the case of terrorism, this type of diffusion involves secret meetings, selective training camps, or password-protected Web sites.

Innovation is not shared widely with the public. Left-wing terrorist groups in Western Europe during the 1970s adopted airline hijacking and other tactics they had learned through close ties to operatives in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and their training camps in Lebanon and South Yemen.<sup>57</sup> Chechen rebels learned about suicide attacks in the second Chechen war in 2000 from Arab fighters led by the Saudi Samir al-Suwail, better known as Ibn al-Khattab.<sup>58</sup> The Indonesian group Jemaah Islamiah learned to use suicide attacks in al Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan and from operatives who used Southeast Asia as an enabling region (or “administrative back office”) for its global operations.<sup>59</sup>

Nonrelational diffusion involves the transfer of innovative tactics through the media, writings, and the Internet. In those instances, activists who see cultural or structural similarities between their movement and another diffuse tactics from one context to another, even when concrete ties between the two movements are lacking. In other words, “perceptions of common circumstances” enable activists to adopt strategies and tactics from different countries or regions because they see a “functional equivalence” between the transmitters and adopters of innovation.<sup>60</sup> A common example is the diffusion of nonviolent protest from India during the time of Mahatma Gandhi to the American civil rights movement led by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. These were two movements separated by time and space, yet the civil rights leadership emulated the strategy of the anticolonial struggle in India, partly because of its per-

ceived successes, but also because admirers of Gandhi in the United States publicized it.<sup>61</sup>

We cannot understand the rapid spread of suicide attacks in Iraq without referring to the concepts of repertoires of action, modularity, and diffusion. Much of the Muslim world saw suicide attacks in Lebanon and Israel as part of a legitimate and desirable repertoire of resistance. The tactic became modular, but its uses in Iraq differed radically from its uses in Lebanon and Israel. In these two countries, Hezbollah and Hamas used this tactic mainly against foreign occupations; in Iraq insurgents use it against fellow Iraqis labeled “apostates” and “collaborators.” The diffusion of the tactic took place through relational ties; individuals with links to jihadi training camps were the ones to deploy this tactic the most.

Diffusion also takes place through nonrelational ties. Insurgent literature and online productions framed the occupation in Iraq as functionally equivalent to the occupation of Palestine and Lebanon. Some insurgent groups venerated martyrdom in their media to encourage the use of the tactic in Iraq and around the world.

## ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK

This book is divided into three parts: Part I deals with the insurgents in Iraq and their objectives, strategies, and ideological orientations. It argues that there are two insurgencies in Iraq, not one. The first is led by Islamic nationalists who deploy Islam as the vocabulary of resistance to oust the coalition forces and reintegrate Sunnis in a new political process that is not dominated by hostile sectarian interests. The second is led by ideological Baathists and Sunni extremists known as jihadi Salafis. Both factions are also interested in ending foreign presence in Iraq, but they are pursuing the additional goal of system collapse. They seek to create a failed state in Iraq because only then will they be able to survive and possibly ascend to power.

Chapter 1 addresses the Islamic nationalists and ideological Baathists; chapter 2 describes jihadi Salafi insurgents, the most extreme faction in the insurgency and the one that deploys most suicide attacks. Chapter 3 presents the data on suicide bombings in Iraq and tries to make sense of the trends related to the timing, targeting, and geography of violence.

Part II deals with the ideology, theology, and mythology of suicide bombers in Iraq. Chapter 4 addresses the ideological and theological

justifications jihadi Salafis make to legitimize their extreme tactics against fellow Iraqis and especially the Shia. Chapter 5 examines how organizers of suicide attacks deploy media productions to construct narratives that mythologize martyrs and frame terrorism as heroic martyrdom.

Part III addresses the jihadi networks that have been instrumental in sending militants and suicide bombers to fight and die in Iraq. Chapters 6 and 7 discuss the networks in Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Syria, Lebanon, and Europe. These networks linked the second-generation jihadists who trained in Afghanistan during the 1990s with the emerging third-generation jihadists who have been driven to action by the new security environment in the war on terrorism and by images of Muslim suffering in Iraq.

Finally, the conclusion revisits the theoretical claims laid out in the introduction and assesses the applicability of these claims to Iraq. It concludes with a discussion of the limitations of counterinsurgency in dealing with suicide attacks in Iraq.

## NOTES

1. Since January 2005 insurgents in Iraq have carried out an average of forty-five to 100 attacks per day, only a few of which are suicide attacks—usually one or two, but in rare instances as many as eleven. For the rate of suicide attacks by all the other groups outside Iraq, see data in the appendices in Robert Pape, *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism* (New York: Random House, 2005), and Ami Pedahzur, *Suicide Terrorism* (Cambridge, U.K.: Polity, 2005).

2. These figures reflect reporting on the Iraqi Coalition Casualty Count Web site (<http://icasualties.org/oif/>) as of March 5, 2007. The Brookings Institution Iraq Index ([www.brookings.edu/iraqindex](http://www.brookings.edu/iraqindex)) reported similar numbers as of March 4, 2007.

3. As of October 31, 2006, [www.brookings.edu/iraqindex](http://www.brookings.edu/iraqindex) estimated up to 70,100 Iraqis had been killed following the period of major combat operations; Iraq Body Count Web site ([www.iraqbodycount.net/database/](http://www.iraqbodycount.net/database/)) put the figure at between 57,805 and 63,573 as of February 7, 2007; the high estimate of more than 650,000 deaths comes from Gilbert Burnham, Riyadh Lafta, Shannon Doocy, and Les Roberts, "Mortality after the 2003 Invasion of Iraq: A Cross-Sectional Cluster Sample Survey," *Lancet* 368 (October 2006): 1421–28.

4. Christoph Reuter, *My Life Is a Weapon: A Modern History of Suicide Bombing* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2004); Diego Gambetta, ed., *Making Sense of Suicide Missions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006);

Ami Pedahzur, ed., *Root Causes of Suicide Terrorism: The Globalization of Martyrdom* (London: Routledge, 2006).

5. For a discussion on definitional controversies, see Assaf Moghadam, "Defining Suicide Terrorism," in Pedahzur, ed., *Root Causes*, 13–24.

6. Rikihei Inoguchi and Tadashi Nakajima, *The Divine Wind: Japan's Kamikaze Force in World War II* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1958); Albert Axell and Hideaki Kase, *Kamikaze: Japan's Suicide Gods* (New York: Longman, 2002); Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze Diaries: Reflections of Japanese Student Soldiers* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

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8. Mohammed M. Hafez, *Manufacturing Human Bombs: The Making of Palestinian Suicide Bombers* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2006).

9. Rohan Gunaratna, "Suicide Terrorism: A Global Threat," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, April 12, 2000: 52–55.

10. Pedahzur, *Suicide Terrorism*; Yoram Schweitzer, ed., *Female Suicide Bombers: Dying for Equality?* (Tel Aviv: Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, 2006).

11. Eyad El-Sarraj, "Suicide Bombers: Dignity, Despair, and the Need of Hope," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 4 (2002): 71–76; Anne Speckhard, Nadejda Tarabrina, Valery Krasnov, and Khapta Akhmedova, "Research Note: Observations of Suicidal Terrorist in Action," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 16, no. 2 (Summer 2004): 305–27; Anne Speckhard and Khapta Akhmedova, "The Making of a Martyr: Chechen Suicide Terrorism," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 29, no. 5 (July–August 2006): 429–92.

12. Pape, *Dying to Win*.

13. Mia Bloom, "Palestinian Suicide Bombing: Public Support, Market Share and Outbidding," *Political Science Quarterly* 119 (Spring 2004): 61–88; Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).

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no. 2 (March–April 2003): 65–92; Mohammed M. Hafez, “Rationality, Culture, and Structure in the Making of Suicide Bombers: A Preliminary Theoretical Synthesis and Illustrative Case Study,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 29, no. 2 (March 2006): 165–85.

16. Robert Pape, “The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism,” *American Political Science Review* 97 (2003): 343–61.

17. George Michael and Joseph Scolnick, “The Strategic Limits of Suicide Terrorism in Iraq,” *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 17, no. 2 (June 2006): 113–25.

18. Hafez, *Manufacturing Human Bombs*.

19. Ami Pedahzur and Arie Perliger, “The Changing Nature of Suicide Attacks: A Social Network Perspective,” *Social Forces* 84, no. 4 (2006): 1987–2008.

20. Andrew Kydd and Barbara F. Walter, “Sabotaging the Peace: The Politics of Extremist Violence,” *International Organization* 56, no. 2 (Spring 2002): 263–96.

21. Bruce Hoffman and Gordon McCormick, “Terrorism, Signaling, and Suicide Attack,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 27, no. 4 (July–August 2004): 243–81.

22. Although the children in the Beslan hostage crisis did not die in a suicide attack, the hostage takers wore explosive belts and made declarations concerning their willingness to die as martyrs.

23. It is not clear if the July–August 2006 war between Hezbollah and Israel has dampened support for the Shia organization. It is certain, however, that Hezbollah’s core constituency in southern Lebanon still venerates the radical organization despite bearing the brunt of Israeli shelling and air strikes during the war. Moreover, support for Hezbollah among the Arab public has increased substantially, despite condemnations of the group by the governments of Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Egypt.

24. Donatella della Porta and Mario Diani, *Social Movements: An Introduction* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2006), 20.

25. Donatella della Porta, *Social Movements, Political Violence, and the State: A Comparative Analysis of Italy and Germany* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Doug McAdam, John McCarthy, and Mayer Zald, eds., *Comparative Perspective on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilization Structures, and Cultural Framing* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action and Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

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29. Jackie Smith, Charles Chatfield, and Ron Pagnucco, *Transnational Social Movements and Global Politics: Solidarity beyond the State* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1997); Jackie Smith, “Globalization and Transnational Social Movement Organizations,” in *Social Movements and Organization Theory*, Gerald F. Davis, Doug McAdam, W. Richard Scott, and Mayer N. Zald, eds. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Donatella della Porta, Massimiliano Andretta, Lorenza Mosca, and Herbert Reiter, *Globalization from Below: Transnational Activists and Protest Networks* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006).

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33. McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald, *Comparative Perspective on Social Movements*, 6. The concept of frames made its way into social movement studies through the works of Snow and his colleagues: David Snow, Burke Rochford, Steven Worden, and Robert Benford, "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation," *American Sociological Review* 51 (1986): 464–81; David Snow and Robert Benford, "Ideology, Frame Resonance, and Participant Mobilization," *International Social Movement Research* 1 (1988): 197–217; Robert Benford and David Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements," *Annual Review of Sociology* 26 (2000): 611–39.

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61. Tarrow, *The New Transnational Activism*, 108.