

5-2015

Female Integration in Terrorist Groups

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Female Integration in Secular Terrorist Groups

An Honors Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
Honors Studies in Political Science

Lillian Ayana Gray

2015

POLITICAL SCIENCE
J. WILLIAM FULBRIGHT COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
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Acknowledgements

Dedicated to my Grandfather, Mr. Aston Linford Beckford

I would be greatly remiss not to acknowledge and wholeheartedly thank the great many people to whom I owe credit not only for the completion of this senior thesis project, but for the successful completion of my undergraduate studies at the University of Arkansas in May 2015.

To George Russel and Rhonda Gray, parents who have been on the “Ayana Team” since 1993: I love, appreciate, respect, and admire the two of you more than I could ever adequately write or express.

To Corey and Ashley Gray, better siblings than I could ever dream up: I hope you achieve everything you put your mind to, and that this particular accomplishment of mine inspires you to do even better than your best.

To the numerous family members that have throughout my life offered me praise and encouragement: *thank you*. Especial thanks to my grandmothers: Elezora Hinkle, Doris Radford, and Geraldine Beckford; someday, I hope to be as sage as you three.

I have certainly gotten by with (a lot of) help from my friends in college, and words do not sufficiently relay my gratitude for them, but cheers to Robyn Barrow, Adrie Henry, Kaitlin Ray, Matt Brumett, Erik Bricker, and Taylor Bates. Thanks for growing up with me.

To Drs. Janine Parry and Jim Gigantino II, my willing and supportive thesis committee members, thank you for being spectacular professors, always willing to go the extra mile for your students. Educators like you make it all the worthwhile. It has truly been an honor to have been your student and learned under your guidance.

For his insight and encouragement during my *second* go-round in writing a thesis, much thanks to Mr. William “Bill” Topich of Pulaski Academy in Little Rock, Arkansas.

The scholars whose work aided me in the creation of this thesis will never know their impact outside the acknowledgement of my *Works Consulted* pages; nonetheless, I appreciate them vastly for pioneering in an area of academia not commonly tread upon, thus making my research easier than I am sure it was for them.

Finally to my, ever-kind, ever-caring, ever-*patient* Thesis Supervisor, Dr. Jeff Ryan, alias “*Jefe*,” thank you, thank you, *thank you* for inspiring me from the moment I stepped foot in your classroom eighteen and wide-eyed. I appreciate you so much for being you, and in doing so, impacting me personally and academically in a way that has been indelible. You were the first person to tell me never to apologize for not knowing, only for not *caring* to. I will carry that with me for the rest of my life.

Introduction

The academic literature on terrorism was almost non-existent until the 1970s, when the rise of violent secular leftist groups prompted a wave of new research on the topic. Though the literature on terrorism and counterterrorism has developed dramatically since then, certain areas remain largely unexplored. For example, despite estimates that females comprise 30% of the world's terrorists, scholarship on them remains extremely limited.

My research attempts to address this gap in our understanding by focusing specifically on one dynamic of female terrorism: integration. I hypothesize that certain key "dimensions" act as unifiers that increase the likelihood that females will be integrated into secular terrorist groups. I maintain that the more unified a terrorist organization's membership is, the more likely it is to incorporate females into its ranks.

Dimension One is a "Unifying Objective." I argue that when a terrorist group's objective is "gender-transcendent" and can be applied to both males and females, it unifies the group. Dimension Two is a "Shared Enemy." Here I suggest that when a group's enemy is readily identifiable and generally agreed upon, it fosters group unity. Dimension Three is a "Homogeneous Identity," the assumption being that the more core identities group members share (e.g., nationality, culture, language, ethnicity), the more unified they will be.

My first hypothesis is that levels of unity will vary across three different types of secular terrorist groups: Ethno-Nationalist, National Liberation and Revolutionary.¹ My

¹ I only focus on secular terrorist groups based on the assumption that they differ in important ways (especially regarding views of women) from religiously motivated groups.

second hypothesis is that these different levels of unity will in turn result in different levels of female integration, with more unified groups integrating females at a higher rate than less unified ones.

I expect Ethno-Nationalist terrorist groups to show the highest level of unity and thus to integrate females the most. Their common objective to establish an ethnic ‘homeland,’ shared enemy (those who are not of their ethnicity), and collective identity (of culture, ethnicity, language and often religion), should make them the most “unified” of the secular terrorist groups.

I expect National Liberation terrorist groups will integrate females at fairly high levels, but not as high as Ethno-Nationalist terrorist groups. National Liberation movements share a gender-transcendent objective of independence, and can identify a clear enemy (the colonial metropole), but its identity may not be as homogeneous as the Ethno-Nationalists since the country being ‘liberated’ may encompass varying cultures and peoples.

Finally, I expect that Revolutionary groups will integrate females at the lowest rate because of their relative lack of unity. While such groups identify “revolution” as their objective, individual definitions of what that entails will probably vary based on sex, economic status, and political standing, and thus may not necessarily be gender-transcendent. For revolutionary groups, “the enemy” can mean different things for different parts of its membership based on a plethora of things, and may create division. Further, I believe that because the identity of revolutionary groups is inherently less homogenous, it will be the least unified group.

Reliable, comprehensive data on terrorism is simply not readily available, as Forsburg points out: "...looking solely at state- and group-level factors [of terrorism], purely quantitative work is scarce."² This lack of available data considered, I use a blend of qualitative and available quantitative data to determine levels of female integration within each type of terrorist group.

I begin my research with a review of the literature that addresses the importance of female terrorism scholarship and identifies the main areas of focus on the topic. Following that, I provide an expanded explanation of my 'unifying dimensions' and present three case studies from each of the three types of terrorist groups, identifying their makeup and reviewing the literature about each type's proneness to female integration. Data analysis is then conducted to test my hypotheses. Finally, I discuss my research findings and highlight areas of terrorism scholarship that require more research.

Literature Review

Why Study Female Terrorists?

Harmon estimates that 30% of today's international terrorists are female.³ Yet despite the significant presence of women in politically violent groups, Witlox notes a "systematic underestimation of the new danger of the female terrorist."⁴ Though recent years have seen an upsurge in research on the topic, Jacques and Taylor note that "the range of foci and disparate events covered within literature suggests an absence of both strong theory and tests of that theory."⁵ In addition to this lack of theory building, a

² Ole J. Forsburg, *Ethnonational Terrorism: An Empirical Theory of Indicators at State Level, 1985 – 2000*, WISC Conference (Turkey), August 2005, 1.

³ Christopher C. Harmon, *Terrorism Today* (London: Frank Cash, 2000), p. 212.

⁴ Maartje Witlox, *What Motivates Female Suicide Terrorists*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 2012, *Social Cosmos*, 40.

⁵ Karen Jacques & Paul J. Taylor, *Female Terrorism: A Review*, *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 21:3 (2009), 499.

reliance on outdated or engendered conceptualizations threatens to undermine the analysis of female terrorism.⁶ Jacques and Taylor also point out that: “despite the value of description, most existing studies of female-perpetrated terrorism comprises discursive reviews or case studies that do not test prevailing explanations for female involvement.”⁷

Nonetheless, scholarship on female terrorists shows signs of improvement, with potential for both academic and practical benefits. In terms of research, enhancing our understanding of female terrorists will contribute significantly to the broader literature on terrorism and political violence. At a practical or policy level, Nacos notes that “gender reality [informs] the measures designed to prevent and respond to terrorism and perhaps more importantly, the implementation of anti- and counterterrorism policies.”⁸

The topic seems likely to attract even greater attention from both researchers and policy makers because as Katharina Van Knop points out, “female terrorism is increasing because women are motivated to engage in political violence and organizations are facing stronger incentives to recruit female operatives.”⁹ Farhana Ali suggests that this upward trend in female terrorist involvement began in 2000 and will in all likelihood continue going forward.¹⁰ Given this trend, scholarship focused on how, why, and to what degree females come to be integrated into terrorist organizations becomes critical.

Research on Female Terrorists

⁶ Jacques & Taylor, 511.

⁷ Karen Jacques and Paul J. Taylor, “Myths and Realities of Female-Perpetuated Terrorism,” *Law and Human Behavior* 2013, Vol. 37, No. 1, 35.

⁸⁸ Brigitte L. Nacos (2005) *The Portrayal of Female Terrorists in the Media: Similar Framing Patterns in the News Coverage in Politics and in Terrorisms*. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 28.5, 448.

⁹ Katharina Von Knop (2007) *The Female Jihad: al-Qaeda’s Women*, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 399.

¹⁰ Farhana Ali, *Rocking the Cradle to Rocking the World: The Role of Muslim Female Fighters*, *Journal of International Women’s Studies*, Issue 1, Vol. 8, Nov. 2006, 23.

In a 2009 overview of female terrorism, Karen Jacques and Paul J. Taylor identified seven research foci that dominate the literature on the subject: 1) Historical Overviews, 2) Perception, 3) Feminism/Gender Studies, 4) Motivation, 5) Recruitment, 6) Roles, and 7) Environmental Enablers. Because the emphasis of my thesis is on the integration of female terrorists into groups as operatives and leaders, I highlight the four foci most relevant to my research.

Perception

Literature on female terrorists is effected in part by what Naaman calls “academic feminist discourse in the West” that impacts how they are perceived.¹¹ Two factors in particular that have significantly shaped perceptions of female terrorists: Gendered Stereotypes and Media Portrayal.

Gendered Stereotypes

Stereotypes shaped by societal assumptions about females have directly affected scholarship on their role as combatants in politically violent groups. Davis argues that this is because females, in general, “are perceived as victims of violence rather than perpetrators.”¹² Nacos suggests that when scholars create conceptual profiles of a ‘typical’ terrorist, more often than not “females just don’t fit.”¹³ Naaman asserts that females have been systematically dismissed as terrorist perpetrators because such a viewpoint “directly challenges the dichotomy of females as victims and males as

¹¹ Dorit Naaman, *Brides of Palestine/Angels of Death: Media, Gender, and Performance in the Case of the Palestinian Female Suicide Bombers*, *Signs*, Vol. 32, No. 4, *War & Terror I: Race-Gendered Logics & Effects in the Conflict Zones*, 90.

¹² Davis, 2.

¹³ Nacos, 436.

defenders.”¹⁴ As a result, females have been prescribed to fit one of two depictions in the media that make them digestible to society. The first depiction, as described by Dan Berkowitz, is that of a “warrior” who is “beautiful, sexy, smart, and deadly.”¹⁵ Here, the focus shifts from the female’s action(s) to her physicality. The second representation of the female terrorist is one who is “masculinized,” affirming the stereotype that males are more violence-prone. Nacos notes that the idea that females “are not ‘real women’ tends to be expressed especially in the context of the mother who chooses political violence over her own children.”¹⁶

Media Portrayal

The news and popular media has also significantly shaped perceptions of female terrorists by presenting sexualized imagery of them. Physically, the media casts female terrorists as the “sexy warriors” described by Berkowitz. In her examination of female terrorist portrayal, Nacos remarks that “if one takes the news at face value, female terrorists are always good looking, trim, and pleasant.”¹⁷

Perceptions of female terrorists are also affected by the personal narratives created by the media about them. Whereas the personal lives of male terrorists are rarely a focal point in reports of political violence, accounts of female terrorists often include riveting, romanticized narratives designed to invoke sympathy. Media outlets provide information about the age, socioeconomic status, education level, and family of the

¹⁴ Naaman, 935.

¹⁵ Dan Berkowitz, “Suicide Bombers as Women Warriors: Making News through Mythical Archetypes,” *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly* 82, No. 3 (2005): 607–622.

¹⁶ Nacos, 445.

¹⁷ Nacos, 439.

female terrorist to create audience empathy, something rarely if ever done in the case of male terrorists.

In both literature and the news media, the female terrorist is regularly presented as hapless, lovelorn individuals driven to violence more by emotion than practicality. This “framing” is so strong that when females who have voluntarily chosen to be terrorists are identified, they are frequently dismissed as “defective” or anomalous. The implicit assumption is that no “normal” female would ever deliberately engage in herself in the “masculine” world of terrorism unless she was incited by some emotional trigger or male influence.¹⁸

Motivation & Recruitment

A significant amount of scholarship on female terrorism focuses on the motivation of women who engage in political violence. Though there is ample literature addressing the varying tactics terrorist groups have used to recruit females, Jacques and Taylor note that little is understood about the interaction between individual motivation to join on the one hand and group recruitment on the other.¹⁹ In terms of the former, the literature has identified five frequently observed motivational factors.

Motive One: Gender Equality

According to Nacos, “contemporary news still explains the motives of female terrorists as the expression of gender equality or the struggle to achieve gender equality quite frequently.”²⁰ While not all female may find gender equality upon joining a terrorist group, Von Knop lays out the premises of this argument at length:

¹⁸ Von Knop, 410.

¹⁹ Jacques & Taylor, 507.

²⁰ Nacos, 442.

Terrorist attacks occur in the public realm from which women are otherwise excluded. Female terrorists are thus able to pursue opportunities other than the limited ones available in traditional societies. This suggests that female subordination is linked to female participation in terrorism. As agents of violence, women are no longer defined according to their gendered roles. In this case participation in terrorism is a means through which women can pursue a misinterpreted understanding of female liberation or emancipation. As a result of the absence of other role models the radical women do believe gender equality means being as violent as their male counterparts are.²¹

Motive Two: Reclamation of Honor/Purpose

Another motivation for females to join terrorist organizations considers cultural concepts of womanhood within particular societies. First, Von Knop suggests that many females “are driven to terrorism by a desire to regain their personal or family honor.”²² In incidents where females have lost their virtue through rape or infertility, their society may no longer consider them a female. Second, Van Knop suggests that “as a result of marginalization, women may seek refuge in a terrorist organization. These groups offer a double benefit to these women by accepting them when they no longer have options in mainstream society, and allowing them to regain their honor by committing a terrorist act.”²³

Motive Three: Alignment with Group Objectives

Females also join terrorist organizations simply because, like males, their beliefs align with the group’s ideology and/or doctrines. According to Christine Sixta, “terrorist [females] want social reform to preserve their own cultures and religions from the invading and increasingly intrusive Western culture...they want to keep their culture

²¹ Van Knop, 400.

²² Von Knop, 400.

²³ Von Knop, 400.

intact.”²⁴ Martin points out that for terrorists, regardless of sex, “a major cultural determinant of terrorism is the perception of “outsiders” and anticipation of their threat to a group or culture’s survival.”²⁵ This identified motivation for females to join terrorist groups proves that all motivation is specific to sex.

Motive Four: Personal Influence

Personal experiences can motivate both males and females to join terrorist groups. These experiences can be identified as a specific **key event** or an individual who inspires or influences a terrorist to become involved in the group’s cause. There is literature that suggests that some personal influences can be sex-specific, while other influences are unisexual.

Cunningham, for example, notes that females’ recruitment and engagement in terrorist organizations is directly tied to a male influence who inspired them to do so.²⁶ Fink, et al., argue that “like some of their male counterparts, women can be influenced or coerced to participate in terrorism by male family members.”²⁷ Fersch notes that “female terrorists are frequently motivated by personal reasons, such as revenge or key life events that affected the woman personally.”²⁸ Sage also makes the case that “for a *woman* to become a terrorist, something truly extraordinary must have occurred... [and] this

²⁴ Christine Sixta (2008), *The Illusive Third Wave: Are Female Terrorists the New “New Women” in Developing Societies?*, *Journal of Women, Politics and Policy* 29.2, 262.

²⁵ Gus Martin, *Essentials of Terrorism: Concepts and Controversies*, 2nd Ed., Ch 3. “Causes of Terrorist Violence,” (Sage Publications: 2011), 51.

²⁶ Karla J. Cunningham, *Countering Female Terrorism*, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 2007, 115.

²⁷ Naureen Chowdhury Fink, Rafia Bakarar, Liat Shetret, “The Role of Women in Terrorism, Conflict, and Violent Extremism: Lessons for the United Nations and International Actors, *Global Center on Cooperative Security Policy Brief* April 2013, 3.

²⁸ Ellsworth Lapham Fersch, *Thinking about Insanity, Religion, and Terrorism: Answers to Frequently Asked Questions with Case Examples*, (iUniverse: 2010), E-Book.

occurrence is best understood as a ‘personal’ experience.”²⁹ Matthew Dearing suggests, for example, that “[p]sychological responses to traumatic events, such as rape or death in the family, can have a powerful impact on a *woman*’s choice to end her life by [joining] a suicide mission.”³⁰

Scholars points out however, that the personal motivation for some to join terrorist groups is *not* always sex-specific. Fink, et al., for example, point out that:

“Some of the same factors that prompt men to become terrorists drive women in the same way: grievance about socio-political conditions; grief about the death of a loved one; real or perceived humiliation on a personal, physical, psychological or political level; a fanatical commitment to a religious or ideological belief or beliefs; an intention to derive economic benefits; [or] a desire to effect radical changes.”³¹

Jacques and Taylor note that key events terrorists’ lives “may provide possible motivation for suicide terrorism [that arise] out of an individual’s psychological response to events and circumstances that were beyond their control.”³² They also note that the death of a loved one, humiliation, and/or exploitation” can motivate individuals, regardless of sex.³³ Victor notes degradation or humiliation at the hands of the ‘enemy’” as catalyzing “traumas that underpin the motivation to act.”³⁴ When “compounded [by]

²⁹ Liz Sage, *The Impossible Terrorist: Women, Violence, and the Disavowal of Female Agency in Terrorism Discourses*, Women, Violence, and Disavowal of Female Agency in Terrorism Discourses, Liz Sage JPCS Vol. 4, No. 1, 2013, 60

³⁰ Dearing, Matthew P. “Like Red Tulips at Springtime: Understanding the Absence of Female Martyrs in Afghanistan.” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* Vol. 33, No. 12, (2010), 1082.

³¹ Naureen Chowdhury Fink, Rafia Bakar, Liat Shetret, “The Role of Women in Terrorism, Conflict, and Violent Extremism: Lessons for the United Nations and International Actors, Global Center on Cooperative Security Policy Brief April 2013, 3.

³² Karen Jacques and Paul J. Taylor, “Male and Female Suicide Bombers: *Different Sexes, Different Reasons?*” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 31 (4), 2008, 7.

³³ Jacques and Taylor, *Different Sexes, Different Reasons?*, 7.

³⁴ Barbara Victor, *Army of Roses*. (London: Constable & Robinson) 2006.

difficult living conditions,” Jacques and Taylor suggest that key events for females can act as “turning point[s]” that incite them to participate in political violence.³⁵

Roles

The emphasis of this thesis focuses on the integration of females into terrorists groups within specific roles. Jacques and Taylor note that there are five basic “roles” scholars use to classify female terrorists: 1) *Sympathizers*, 2) *Spies*, 3) *Warriors*, 4) *Leaders*, and 5) *Suicide Bombers*.³⁶ For the purpose of my research, my focus is on **two** of these roles: *Warriors* and *Leaders*.

Cunningham notes that “in the past, [female terrorists] seldom went beyond such activities as gun-running, harboring fugitives, fund-raising and intelligence — activities that oiled the terrorist machine and enabled it to operate smoothly, but kept women at a remove from violence. Now many are no longer content to sit on the sidelines.”³⁷ Moving from the sidelines in this context means assuming positions as either combatants (‘Warriors’) or leaders.

Not only are females becoming more integrated into terrorist groups, but my thesis argues that they are attaining more leadership roles. I now examine the literature on the two types of female terrorist roles.

Warriors/Operatives

Literature focusing on the varying roles of female terrorists considers a female operative (or perpetrator) to be one who participates directly in acts of political violence.

³⁵ Jacques and Taylor, *Different Sexes, Different Reasons?*, 7.

³⁶ Jacques & Taylor, 507.

³⁷ Karla Cunningham, *Invisible Women*, Los Angeles Times, April 4, 2012, <http://articles.latimes.com/2012/apr/04/opinion/la-oe-cunningham-women-jihadists-20120404>.

Hearne notes that they are particularly used to replenish membership in times of need by joining the ranks themselves or by providing ‘jihad wombs’.³⁸

Literature may highlight the various methods through which females may perpetrate violence, but a substantial focus is placed on suicide bombers as a common exemplar. Raghavan and Balasubramaniam note that many terrorist groups began using females for “frontline duties” and suicide bombings beginning in the late 1990s and early 2000s.³⁹ They note that many groups have particularly utilized females in suicide bombing and frontline fighting with direct impact,⁴⁰ but point out that “nationalist groups were the main benefactor[s] of them.”⁴¹

Hearne points out that “the role of female terrorists has evolved into something more active, perhaps ‘tougher, more fanatical, more loyal’, than previously seen...[and that] female members of violent extremist groups now engage directly in attacks, including suicide bombings, attracting widespread disbelief and heightened media interest.”⁴²

Leaders

Fink, et al., note that “women can be powerful preventers and participants in innovative efforts to inform, shape, and implement policies and programs to mitigate the efforts of conflict and violent radicalization.”⁴³ Further, Jacques and Taylor’s literature review provides data noting the frequency in which terrorist groups employ women as

³⁸ Hearne, 5.

³⁹ S.V. Raghavan and V. Balasubramaniam, *Evolving Role of Women in Terror Groups: Progression or Regression?*, July 2014, *Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 2, July 2014, 200.

⁴⁰ Raghavan and Balasubramaniam, 198.

⁴¹ Raghavan and Balasubramaniam, 200.

⁴² Ellie B. Hearne, *Participants, Enablers, and Preventers: The Roles of Women in Terrorism*, Research Paper British International Studies Association Annual Conference, (December 2009), 1.

⁴³ Fink, Bakarat, Shetret, 4.

both “warriors,” and “leaders.” Their findings suggest that leftist organizations tend to utilize females as “warriors” and “warrior leaders” more than religious groups.⁴⁴ They also find that females “are not active as *warrior leaders* without also being active as *warriors*” as well.⁴⁵

Tom O’Connor notes the ratio of male to female-led terrorist operations in the late 20th century (80% and 20%, respectively).⁴⁶ Cragin and Daly suggest that female leadership in terrorist groups is on the upsurge because females are[becoming essential to modern terrorist movements as they “galvanize” them.⁴⁷

Scholars offer several possible avenues through which female terrorist ascend to positions of leadership. O’Connor proposes the following:⁴⁸

1. **“The Outsider-Savior:”** a female leader that comes to power at first as a healer after major catastrophe or group set back and “represents a platform of healing and renewal.”
2. **“The Warrior-Defender:”** a female leader with military experience and expertise in security or international affairs that make her more comfortable for the membership to accept.
3. **“The Legacy:”** a female leader that O’Connor suggests is the most common. These are the widows, daughters, and wives of a revered male leader within the group who often assume leadership by default.
4. **“The Party Leader:”** a female leader who has brought political success to the group through fundraising, lobbying, and/or public relations that further its objectives.

Literature related to female terrorist leaders frequently focuses on popularized figures, such as Ulrike Meinhof of Germany’s Red Army Faction, Leila Khaled of the

⁴⁴ Jacques and Taylor, 508.

⁴⁵ Jacques and Taylor, 508.

⁴⁶ Tom O’Connor, Women as Terrorists, <http://www.drtoconnor.com/3400/3400lect03a.htm>.

⁴⁷ Kim Cragin and Sara A. Daly, “Women as Terrorists: *Mothers, Recruiters, and Martyrs*,” (ABC-CLIO: 2009).

⁴⁸ O’Connor, *Women as Terrorists*, <http://www.drtoconnor.com/3400/3400lect03a.htm>.

PLO, and Fusako Shigenobu of the Japanese Red Army. While narrative is important in understanding female terrorists, my research does not focus on specific individuals, but rather the degree to which females generally achieve leadership roles in terrorist groups.

Methodology

The central focus of my research questions if there is a linkage between a group's unity and likeliness of integrating females. As noted above, measuring levels of integration quantitatively—by simply counting the membership of different terrorist groups—is not possible as the information necessary is not available. Instead, I estimate female membership (and integration) in terrorist groups using descriptive and qualitative research.

The term “terrorism” is a highly contested term as scholars have not yet agreed on one definition or even how to differentiate ‘terrorism’ from ‘political violence.’ As Forsburg rather crudely notes, “creating a universally-accepted definition for terrorism... is not simple. In fact, it may merely be an exercise in intellectual onanism.”⁴⁹ I use the term ‘terrorism’ instead of ‘political violence’ in my research simply because it is the more commonly used terminology in the literature. Specifically, I adopt the United States Department of State’s definition (Title 22 of the U.S. Code, Section 2656f (d)) of terrorism: “[terrorism is] premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience.”⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Forsburg, 3.

⁵⁰ U.S. Department of State, Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, [Country Reports on Terrorism](http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/) <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/>, April 30, 2007.

I identify three “dimensions” with which I determine a terrorist group’s unity; here, I present the literature that informed my choice of these dimensions in particular.

Unifying Objective

I argue that in order for a terrorist group to be unified (and thus, integrate females), it must have an objective or set of objectives that are equally distinct and unifying. This objective is the foundation of the group’s structure. The literature about terrorist groups’ makeup suggests that a central shared objective is critical to ensuring success and longevity.

To be clear, I subscribe to Enders and Su’s definition of a “shared objective,” which notes that an objective can center around several things including but limited to “the elimination of a grievance stemming from income inequality, ideological differences, historical inequities, or a lack of political, economic, or religious freedom.”⁵¹ My belief that this is an important predictor in determining a group’s unity is substantiated. As I determine groups’ level of unity in my research, I will first identify their objectives and examine how cohesive they are.

Scholars note the importance of a unifying objective for terrorist groups, and also note the dangers of *not* having one. Fallon and Henkes note that a “lack of clear direction can cause [group] members to interpret network goals differently. In some instances it can provide disproportionate power to less mainstream members.”⁵² Using Al-Qaeda as a model, Dishman notes that as groups have decentralized and lost their unifying

⁵¹ Walter Enders and Xuejuan Su, “Rational Terrorists and Optimal Network Structure, *Journal of Conflict Resolution* February 2007, Volume 51, No. 1, 36.

⁵² Rob Fallon & Matthew Henkes, “Understanding Terrorist Networks: *Asymmetric Responses to Weaknesses in the Network Structure*,” *Journal of Scholarship and Ideas*, Spring 2007, 26.

figurehead, they have subsequently lost their shared goals and overall unity.⁵³ Other scholars also maintain that when a terrorist group does not have a shared objective, opportunists will create their own that compete and fragment the group, leading to independent factions.⁵⁴

Shared Enemy

The second dimension I use to determine how unified a terrorist group is concerns the presence of a shared enemy that is as easy to rally against. I believe that “**ingroup-outgroup**”⁵⁵ biases increase group unity. Caruso points out that a group’s objectives and enemies are directly linked as “the goal of the organization naturally determines who they perceive as the enemy and the group they want to maintain loyalty to.”⁵⁶ Evrigenis argues that in most groups—terrorist or not—it is undeniable that a common enemy is critical for sustainment.⁵⁷

Increasingly, literature on terrorism acknowledges that groups are uniting with others because of a common enemy. Fraser notes evidence that affirms an increase in alliances, saying “many of these groups have a common enemy, and there is increasing evidence that they are beginning to form larger-organized, better-financed organizations in an effort to conduct terrorism against a common enemy.”⁵⁸ Klein and Pritchard affirm that “an external enemy presenting a perceived threat...within a group presents an

⁵³ Chris Dishman, “The Leaderless Nexus: When Crime and Terror Converge.” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* Vol. 28, No. 3, (2005), 28.

⁵⁴ Shaul Mishal and Maoz Rosenthal, “Al-Qaeda as a Dune Organization: Toward a Typology of Islamic Terrorist Organizations.” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* Vol. 28, No. 4, (2005), 278.

⁵⁵ “Ingroup-Outgroup” is used as defined by Donelson Forsyth in *Group Dynamics* (Cengage Learning: 2009, 435) to explain a mentality in which individuals divide themselves as within or without of a group.

⁵⁶ Raul Caruso, *Understanding Terrorism: A Socio-Economic Perspective*, (Emerald Group Publishing: 2014), 198.

⁵⁷ Ioannis D. Evrigenis, *Fear of Enemies and Collective Action*, (Cambridge University Press: 2007).

⁵⁸ John R. Fraser, *Terrorist Groups Are Aligning to Conduct Global Terrorism*, (Universal Publishers: 2003), 32.

excellent rallying point for uniting a group.”⁵⁹ My belief in the importance of a shared enemy to maintain group unity is directly substantiated by Ferrante, who states that “an external enemy gives a group singular direction, thereby increasing its internal cohesiveness.”⁶⁰

Homogeneous Identity

The most difficult dimension in my measurement of group unity is in a measure of its group Homogeneity. According to Crenshaw, “Acts of terrorism are committed by groups who reach collective decisions based on commonly held beliefs.”⁶¹ Uschan speaks specifically about the foundation of separatists groups, noting that “a nation is usually based on shared characteristics, bringing together a population that speaks the same language or belong to the same ethnic group.”⁶² Stout specifically points out the importance of a cultural Homogeneity within a terrorist group to foment support, saying:

Suicide missions by some terrorist groups in the Middle East provide a vivid case in point... The overwhelming cultural message is that immolating oneself to destroy other lives is not only acceptable but highly desirable. An entire cultural structure consisting of family, friends, schools, teachers, religious institutions, press, and political establishment shares and propagates a strong belief system concerning martyrdom for the cause.⁶³

⁵⁹ Edward B. Klein and Ian L. Pritchard, *Relatedness in a Global Economy*, (Karnac Books: 2006), 137.

⁶⁰ Joan Ferrante, *Sociology: A Group Perspective*, (Cengage Learning: 2012), 92.

⁶¹ Martha Crenshaw, “Theories of Terrorism: Instrumental and Organizational Approaches,” *Inside Terrorist Organizations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 250.

⁶² Michael V. Uschan, *The Belsan School Siege and Separatist Terrorism*, (Gareth Stevens Publishing: 2005), 24.

⁶³ Chris E. Stout, *The Psychology of Terrorism: Theoretical Understandings and Perspectives*, (Greenwood Publishing Group: 2002), 63.

Ethno-Nationalist Terrorism

Background

In 2005, Ackham and Asal noted that “despite the fact that much of recent terror is ethno-nationally based, little attention has been paid to systematically explaining ethnic violence.”⁶⁴ Currently the literature addressing ethno-nationalist terrorism does so in a way that makes any inclusive supposition about them difficult. Rudolph defines ethno-nationalist groups as those who “perceive to share a common (national) identity, different from that of other nationalities in the countries.”⁶⁵ In defining ethno-nationalists, Forsburg argues that they are “regionally concentrated peoples, with a history of organized political autonomy with their own state, traditional ruler, or regional government, who have supported political movements for autonomy...”⁶⁶ Vamik Volkan maintains that they “link their ethnic identity with the necessity to form a nation, that is, to gain access to political autonomy within established borders.”⁶⁷ In discussing their construction, objective, and ideology, Lefebvre states:

Ethno-nationalist/separatist terrorist groups believe, however, that terrorism is a very effective means to get rid of the dominant ethnic group and/or achieve the specific form of political autonomy they so desire. To achieve repeated success, however, they depend on the logistical assistance of governments, organizations or individuals supporting their cause, as well as on the sympathy of their brethren.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ Bahadir K. Ackam and Victor Asal, "The Dynamics of Ethnic Terrorism." *23rd International Conference of the System Dynamics Society, Boston*. 2005.

⁶⁵Rudolph, Joseph R, Jr. 1977. “Ethnic Sub-States and the Emergent Politics of Tri-Level Interaction in Western Europe.” *Western Political Quarterly* 30, (December 1977), 537.

⁶⁶ Forsburg, 6.

⁶⁷ Vamik Volkan, *Blood Lines: From Ethnic Pride to Ethnic Terrorism* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997), 21-146.

⁶⁸ Stephane LeFebvre, *Perspectives on Ethnonationalist/Separatist Terrorism*, Conflict Studies Research Centre, May 2003, 4.

Further contestation over definitions of concepts like a ‘nation,’ and are complicated by observations like Nielsen’s, who maintains that “all nationalisms are cultural, but not all cultural nationalisms are ethnic.”⁶⁹ Despite the broad array of ways to define ethno-national terrorism, literature agrees on several points in characterizing these types of terrorist groups. Though Ted Gurr describes the true origin of ethno-nationalist conflict as a “chicken-and-egg”⁷⁰ issue because of their diversity,⁷¹ most scholarship places the rise of ethno-national terrorism in the 1960s and 1970s, during eras of colonialism and neo-colonialism.⁷² Further, Hoffman notes that beginning from 1968 to 1978, the number of active ethno-nationalist groups increased notably, from three to thirty.⁷³

The factors that motivate and sustain ethno-nationalist groups also vary, but have some commonalities. Forsburg points out that the elements that most affect ethno-nationalist movements are 1) cohesiveness of a national identity, 2) financial differentiation within the state, 3) “openness” of the state.”⁷⁴ In his research, he brings up two theories explaining their motive. Competition Theory sees ethnic conflict arising from competition over scarce resources. Segregation Theory, in contrast, argues that conflict occurs when ethnic groups segregate from one another.⁷⁵ Counterintuitively, a

⁶⁹ Kai Nielsen, “Cultural Nationalism, Neither Ethnic Nor Civic” in *Theorizing Nationalism*, edited by Ronald Beiner (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), 125.

⁷⁰ “Chicken-and-Egg:” suggests that the factors that there is no true way to identify Ethno-nationalist conflict’s exact origin.

⁷¹ Gurr, Ted Robert, *Peoples Versus States: Minorities at Risk in the New Century*, (Washington D.C: United States Institute of Peace),

⁷² Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (London: Victor Gallancz, 1998), 26

⁷³ Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 65-75.

⁷⁴ Forsburg, 6.

⁷⁵ Forsburg, 8.

number of scholars maintain that a minority ethno-nationalist group does not have to be societally “disadvantaged” to necessarily motivate a desire for separation.⁷⁶

To relate this to my research question, I note that the literature suggests ethno-nationalist terrorists’ success is partially tied to clear objective unity. Hoffman states that “Ethno-nationalist groups have clear goals... [they] can rely on their brethren for support [and] appeal to a collective tradition to sustain and replenish.”⁷⁷ Jalata affirms that ethno-nationalist movements legitimize themselves by relying “on the grievances of a *collective* memory to regain economic, political and cultural rights [and] by rejecting subordination and cultural assimilation.”⁷⁸ Volkan describes such groups as rallying against a dominant ethnic group, which is seen “as an occupying, opposing, colonizing or foreign force.”⁷⁹

While scholars agree that Ethno-Nationalist terrorist groups were most active in the 1960s and 1970s, most agree with Lefebvre’s assertion that “we are far from seeing the disappearance of ethno-nationalist/separatist terrorist groups.”⁸⁰ Inequalities and past wrongs that are simply too resilient in the minds of most minorities and states who fail to devise effective grievance management and settlement strategies are cited as two essential reasons ethno-nationalists groups will persist.⁸¹

Case Studies

⁷⁶ Forsburg, 8.

⁷⁷ Hoffman, 171.

⁷⁸ Asafa Jalata, “Ethno-nationalism and the Global ‘Modernising’ Project”, *Nations and Nationalism* 17:3 (2001), 389.

⁷⁹ Volkan, 157.

⁸⁰ Lefebvre, 6.

⁸¹ Lefebvre, 2

The next section of my research examines three terrorist groups categorized as Ethno-Nationalist. I first provide a brief overview of their history and formation, followed by a discussion of their tactics, and then a review of their history of female integration.

Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)

The first ethno-nationalist group that I examine is the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) of Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka became independent in 1948. As is the norm in recently-decolonized countries, the departure of the colonizer left a power vacuum that several forces immediately vied for; almost immediately after independence, conflict arose between the Sinhalese Buddhists and Tamil Hindus. DeVotta states that within the first decade of Sri Lankan dependence, Sinhalese Buddhist politicians belonging to the United National Party (UNP) and Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) worked to guarantee that their community would receive preferential treatment in all institutions comprising the Sri Lankan state—(Parliament, judiciary, security forces, public education, and the bureaucracy). This produced significant displacement and marginalized the Tamil Buddhist minority.⁸²

The LTTE was established in 1976 in response to this perceived marginalization of the Tamil Hindu minority. Here I note that the group's stated and shared objective was to create a separate and independent Tamil Hindu state in the Northern and Northeastern part of Sri Lanka that would allow them equality and fair representation of themselves. The shared enemies of the LTTE were the Sinhalese-dominated UNP and SLFP, and

⁸² Neil DeVotta, *The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and the Lost Quest for Separatism in Sri Lanka*, *Asian Survey*, Vol. 49, No. 6 (November/December 2009), 1,022.

include any leaders within either group. Further, I would argue that because the LTTE's objective and operations concerned the country of Sri Lanka, its participants' identity was extremely homogeneous. Tamils were tied together by bonds of language, ethnicity and nationalism as well as by their Hindu religious identity.

Though the LTTE was ultimately defeated in 2010, its temporary success in achieving a separate Tamil state is noteworthy. DeVotta notes that at its height (mid-1990s to 2006), the LTTE controlled approximately one quarter of Sri Lanka.⁸³ It achieved this using a variety of terrorist tactics including hijackings, bombings, etc. Notably, the LTTE remains the *only* terrorist organization to have assassinated two world leaders: former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi (May 1991) and Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa (May 1993).⁸⁴ Data from the Global Terrorism Database suggests that from 1976 to 2010, the LTTE carried out 1,665 attacks.⁸⁵

It took the LTTE approximately twelve years to integrate female participants into its operations.⁸⁶ This integration was at first likely a response to the Sri Lankan government's crackdown on males suspected of LTTE involvement during the 1980s.⁸⁷ As the pool of available Tamil males dried up, females were brought in to replace them. Female participation in the LTTE became so substantial that in 1986, the group created an all-female unit known as the Freedom Birds.⁸⁸ Research conducted by Stack O'Connor credits these Free Birds with close to 200 suicide bombings, and suggests that

⁸³ DeVotta, 1,023.

⁸⁴ DeVotta, 1,022.

⁸⁵ The Global Terrorism Database:

http://apps.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?charttype=pie&chart=attack&casualties_type=&casualties_max=&perpetrator=457 (Accessed 13 April 2015).

⁸⁶ Alisa Stack-O'Connor, *Picked Last: Women and Terrorism*, National Defense University, Institute for National Strategic Studies, Washington Studies (2007), 98.

⁸⁷ Stack-O'Connor, 99.

⁸⁸ Stack-O'Connor, 99.

they accounted for 30-40% of the LTTE's total suicide attacks.⁸⁹ The group became so reliant on its female participants that it eventually allowed them to hold press conferences, publish literature and films, and hold public commemorative events on the group's behalf.⁹⁰ The LTTE's evident integration of females into every dynamic of their operation coupled with its clear unity affirms my hypothesis.

Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê (PKK)

Van Knop claims that females are responsible for one third of the LTTE's suicide bombings; but the numbers are even more impressive in the *Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê* (PKK), with females being responsible for two thirds of all attacks.⁹¹ The PKK is an ethno-nationalist group whose key objective has been to create an independent Kurdish homeland from territory inside Turkey.⁹²

The Kurds have had a place in what is today Turkey since the sixteenth century, when political negotiations with both the Ottoman and Safavid Empires allowed them to settle in the area in exchange for guarding its borders.⁹³

But during the early twentieth century rule of Atatürk and his drive to modernize Turkey, McDowall says the Kurds lost their place, and "could not be [Turkish] citizens in the fullest sense."⁹⁴ By the late 1970s, The Turkish government had begun to implement patently anti-Kurdish legislation. Laws that made speaking Kurdish punishable by up to twenty years of in prison along with similarly draconian laws ultimately led to the

⁸⁹ Stack O'Connor, 99.

⁹⁰ Stack-O'Connor, 97.

⁹¹ Von Knop, 398.

⁹² Joel S. Migdal, *Boundaries and Belonging: States and Societies in the Struggle to Shape Identities and Local Practices*, (Cambridge University Press: 2004), 127.

⁹³ David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, (I.B. Tauris), 2004, 11.

⁹⁴ McDowall, 14.

founding of the Kurdistan Workers Party, or PKK, in 1978.⁹⁵ Over time, the group has become especially distinctive for its clan-based hierarchy that includes tribes, sub-tribes, and tribal confederations, which leads some observers to describe the group heterogeneous.⁹⁶

The PKK has utilized a number of tactics in its armed struggle for an independent state. Between 1996 and 1999, the PKK officially claimed responsibility for six “belt bomb” attacks resulting in 15 casualties.⁹⁷ Attacks typically targeted landowners and their families.⁹⁸

The PKK’s utilization of females in its operations is notable. Data from the Chicago Project in Security suggests that between 1996 and 1999, females participated in eight attacks that killed 18 people and injured 109.⁹⁹

Discussion of the unity of the PKK is complicated by questions of unity within the Kurds as a whole. Some scholars suggest that key events have divided the PKK, including the ideological shift of the group’s leader, Abdullah Öcalan, from Marxism-Leninism to “democratic federalism” in 1999.¹⁰⁰ Further, the creation of the *Koma Civakên Kurdistan* (KCK)—an umbrella organization encompassing Kurds from multiple states—was also perceived as potentially divisive for Kurdish separatist efforts.

McDowall points out that “[a] natural assumption about the Kurds, since they speak a

⁹⁵ Philip G. Kreyenbroek, *The Kurds: A Contemporary View*, (Routledge: 2005), 58 and Berch Berberoglu, *The National Question: Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict, and Self-determination in the 20th Century*, (Temple University Press: 2009).

⁹⁶ McDowall, 9.

⁹⁷ Chicago Project on Security and Terrorism (CPOST). 2015. Suicide Attack Database (March 23, 2015 Release). [Data File]. Retrieved from <http://cpostdata.uchicago.edu/> (Accessed 13 April 2015).

⁹⁸ McDowall, 16.

⁹⁹ Chicago Project on Security and Terrorism (CPOST). 2015. Suicide Attack Database (March 23, 2015 Release). [Data File]. Retrieved from <http://cpostdata.uchicago.edu/> (Accessed 13 April 2015).

¹⁰⁰ Öcalan is arrested in 1999 Prison Writings

separate language, is that they are ethnically different from their [neighbors]. The reality is more complicated.”¹⁰¹

The PKK’s scope may extend outside a single state, but scholarship on the Kurds suggests that the language, ethnicity, and shared Muslim religion of the Turks override those geographical differences. I would argue that this unity is the reason for the group’s especially high level of female integration.

The Chechen Separatist Movement

In my final ethno-nationalist case study, I examine the Chechen separatist movement in Russia. Following the USSR’s dissolution in 1991, efforts were made by the divided Chechen Ingush ASSR to create an independent Chechen Republic of Ichkeria. Two Chechen Wars ensued (The First Chechen War from 1994 to 1996 and The Second Chechen War from 1999 to 2009) with substantial Chechen separatist casualties.

Since 2000, Chechen terrorists have been responsible for 61 attacks resulting in 645 casualties.¹⁰² Chechens have relied heavily on belt bombs, but also utilized car bombs.

The role of females in the Chechen separatist movement was initially limited as societal and cultural restrictions prevented female participation or mobility.¹⁰³ But Cunningham maintains that since 2002, Chechens have increasingly utilized female in operation especially as suicide bombers.¹⁰⁴ Davis argues that growing numbers of women

¹⁰¹ McDowall, 9.

¹⁰² Chicago Project on Security and Terrorism (CPOST). 2015. Suicide Attack Database (March 23, 2015 Release). [Data File]. Retrieved from <http://cpostdata.uchicago.edu/>.

¹⁰³ Cunningham, 119.

¹⁰⁴ Cunningham, 118.

are participating in radical Islam through a nationalist frame, citing Chechnya as an example.¹⁰⁵

Like the LTTE, the females of the Chechen separatist movement have become so distinct that they have earned a separate name, and are sometimes known as “Black Widows.” The label is not an official one, as with the LTTE Freedom Birds, nor is their linkage to the broader movement. Some Chechen separatist leaders have disaffiliated themselves from the Black Widows while others openly claim them.¹⁰⁶ Nonetheless, the number of Chechen separatist attacks attributed to females is considerable. Data from the Chicago Project on Security and Terrorism records a total of 24 Chechen separatist attacks that involved female operatives in the last 15 years, resulting in 343 casualties.¹⁰⁷

Chechen separatists and the Black Widows within the movement are considered highly unified. They share a Chechen nationality and language, consider themselves ethnically Chechen, and unite under the religion of Islam. The notable and increasing presence of the Black Widows within the movement appears to support my argument that there is a link between unity and female integration.

National Liberation Terrorist Groups

Background

The second type of group I examine, National Liberation groups, differ from Ethno-Nationalist ones essentially because of their objectives. While an Ethno-Nationalist group very clearly seeks to separate from a state, a National Liberation group

¹⁰⁵ Davis, 10.

¹⁰⁶ National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, Terrorist Profile: Black Widows, http://www.start.umd.edu/tops/terrorist_organization_profile.asp?id=3971.

¹⁰⁷ Chicago Project on Security and Terrorism (CPOST). 2015. Suicide Attack Database (March 23, 2015 Release). [Data File]. Retrieved from <http://cpostdata.uchicago.edu/>

seeks liberation from its colonial metropole. Muir argues that these groups see liberation as the most legitimate vehicle to achieve political self-rule.¹⁰⁸ Sanchez-Cueca states:

Nationalist terrorism aspires to independence or greater autonomy for some territory. The combination of territorial claims and armed struggle gives rise to a very definite strategy, violence intended to coerce the State. Nationalist terrorist organizations kill repeatedly with the aim of breaking the will of the State.¹⁰⁹

Crenshaw cites the 1970s and early 1980s the heyday of national liberation terrorism and points out that it was usually employed by leftist groups.¹¹⁰ While these groups have not totally disappeared, their prominence in terrorism has been eclipsed by radical religious organizations of the later twentieth and early twenty-first century.

The tactics utilized by national liberation terrorists are not necessarily distinct from other terrorist groups, but their success in achieving their objectives is notable. A significant number of countries, particularly in Africa, owe their independence to the campaigns of national liberation organizations.

My hypothesis predicts that nationalist liberation terrorist groups will be highly united, and as a result integrate females more than more divided groups. In keeping with my three listed dimensions, I note that nationalist liberation groups have a shared objective directly impacted by a shared enemy (namely, independence from a metropole). On the question of a shared identity, however, I argue that national liberation terrorist groups are less homogeneous than ethno-nationalist groups. Identities such as religion, ethnicity, and language may not be shared by all in the group, and because of this

¹⁰⁸ Richard Muir, *Political Geography: A New Introduction*. (London: Macmillan Press., 1997), 38.

¹⁰⁹ Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca, The Dynamics Of Nationalist Terrorism: ETA and the IRA, *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 19, Issue 3, (2007), 289.

¹¹⁰ Martha Crenshaw, The Psychology of Terrorism: An Agenda for the 21st Century, *Political Psychology*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 2000, 410.

diversity, I expect national liberation terrorist groups to be less unified and therefore less likely to integrate females than ethno-nationalist groups.

Case Studies

The following section examines terrorist groups categorized as Nationalist Liberation organizations. Incidentally, the three groups I examine are groups from the continent of Africa, whose nationalist movements were all prompted by the post-colonial wave that followed World War I: 1) The Eritrean People's Liberation Front, 2) The Mau Mau Movement, and 3) The Mozambique Liberation Front.

The Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF)

The Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) emerged in the context of anti-imperialist sentiment towards Ethiopia. Prior to Ethiopian rule, Eritrea had been colonized by Italy in 1890, and subsequently been passed around to other European powers during the 20th Century.¹¹¹ Zondi and Rejouis argue that this pattern of shifting foreign control for the better part of sixty years catalyzed the nationalist sentiments that eventually ignited Eritrean desires to break from Ethiopia.¹¹² These sentiments came to a head in 1952, when Great Britain gave Eritrea back to Ethiopia under the condition that it be considered part of a "federation" with its own partial autonomy.¹¹³ Ethiopia's then-emperor Haile Selasse ignored the Britain's instructions and immediately declared Eritrea a "province" of Ethiopia without any autonomy, provoking outrage in the Eritrean

¹¹¹ Siphamadla Zondi and Emmanuel Réjouis, "The Ethiopia-Eritrea Border Conflict and the Role of the International Community," *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 6, No. 2, 2006, 72.

¹¹² Zondi and Rejouis, 71.

¹¹³ Victoria Bernal, "From Warriors to Wives: *Contradictions of Liberation and Development in Eritrea*," *Northeast African Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (New Series) 2001, 132.

population.¹¹⁴ In 1960, the first anti-colonial armed group, the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) was established, from which the EPLF emerged later as a breakaway faction.¹¹⁵

In evaluating their objectives, Zewde notes that throughout their efforts, “the EPLF saw self-determination as a colonial question leading to independence rather than a national question resolvable with a democratic united and poly-ethnic Ethiopia.”¹¹⁶ The EPLF ultimately prevailed in May 1991, when Eritrea successfully seceded from Ethiopia.¹¹⁷ In 1993, Eritrea was officially declared an independent state.¹¹⁸

Literature on the EPLF highlights both the role of females in its operations and the impact of gender equalizing objectives. Zerai notes that females were first able to join EPLF operations in 1973.¹¹⁹ Says Sorenson: “accounts of the Eritrean struggle for independence agree that women played a major role at all levels within the movement ...[which] considered the improvement of the women’s situation an indispensable part of its democratic goal.”¹²⁰ Bernal suggests that the EPLF represented a model of a new kind of nationalism built from the bottom up by women and men *together*.¹²¹ She maintains that while other social movements integrated females in supporting roles, the EPLF specifically and deliberately integrated females into its ranks as fighters alongside the group’s men. “EPLF fighters appeared to transcend gender, men and women performed

¹¹⁴ “Eritrean People’s Liberation Front (EPLF),” Encyclopedia Britannica 2015, Encyclopedia Britannica, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/191624/Eritrean-Peoples-Liberation-Front-EPLF>.

¹¹⁵ Bernal, 132.

¹¹⁶ Bahru Zewde, “What Did We Dream? What Did We Achieve? And Where Are We Heading?,” *Africa Insight*, Vol. 34, No. 1, 10-11.

¹¹⁷ “Eritrean People’s Liberation Front (EPLF),” Encyclopedia Britannica 2015, Encyclopedia Britannica, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/191624/Eritrean-Peoples-Liberation-Front-EPLF>.

¹¹⁸ Bernal, 132.

¹¹⁹ Worku Zerai, “Participation of Women in the Eritrean National Liberation Struggle,” (Master’s Thesis, The Hague, 1994).

¹²⁰ Birgitte Refslund Sorensen, “Women and Post-conflict Reconstruction: Issues and Sources,” (Diane Publishing: 1998), 7.

¹²¹ Bernal, 129.

the same tasks and lived communally as comrades in mixed units.”¹²² Scholars note that female’s integration into the EPLF was so thorough that once its main objective—liberation—was achieved—many female combatants felt displaced and unsure of how to reintegrate back into civilian life.¹²³

Iyob states that by 1988, the EPLF had developed into “a conventional army utilizing tanks and other weaponry captured from Ethiopian garrisons.”¹²⁴ Connell notes that EPLF tactics were specifically designed to force the [Ethiopian] government to commit larger forces to defensive positions across Eritrea and thus raise doubts about the effectiveness of the state as a whole.¹²⁵ Marcus describes the EPLF’s tactics as “low-level warfare” designed to “sap” the morale of the government garrisons through hit-and-run operations that wore Ethiopia into submission.¹²⁶

Members of the EPLF shared a common objective: liberation from Ethiopia and the creation of a politically autonomous state. The group identified a shared enemy in Ethiopia. Yet, like many national liberation movements, Eritrea was not united by a common identity that could further bind them. Eritreans speak several languages including English, Tigrinya, Amharic, and Arabic.¹²⁷ Contrary to the predictions of my hypothesis, though, this lack of unity did not reduce the level of female integration by the EPLF. Their special attention to gender equality as a core part of the group’s objective indicates that females were extremely integrated. In other words, this national liberation

¹²² Bernal, 129.

¹²³ Bernal, 137.

¹²⁴ Ruth Iyob, *The Eritrean Struggle for Independence: Domination, Resistance, Nationalism, 1941-1993*, (Cambridge University Press: 1997), 133.

¹²⁵ Dan Connell, *Taking on the Superpowers: Collected Articles on the Eritrean Revolution 1976-1982*, (The Red Sea Press: 2003), 246.

¹²⁶ Harold G. Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia*, (University of California Press: 1994), 209.

¹²⁷ Mussie Tesfagiorgis, *Eritrea*, (ABC-CLIO, 2010), 220.

group features the same level of unity and female integration as an ethno-nationalist group.

The Mau Mau Movement of Kenya

National liberation movements against the European powers in Africa during the mid-twentieth century erupted across the continent in a domino effect. One of the most prominent of the movements manifested in Kenya, the place of my second nationalist liberation case study, through the Mau Mau Movement.¹²⁸

Britain's colonial rule in Kenya had, like Italian control in Eritrea, begun in the 1890s and steadily intensified.¹²⁹ Principally among the Kikuyu, Kenya's largest single ethnic group (though only accounting for about 20% of the country's population¹³⁰), anti-British sentiment came to a head with the creation of the Mau Mau militant movement in the 1950s. According to Curtis, among many Kikuyu grievances, "land ownership was the clearest example of inequity and exploitation," and likely what finally sparked the movement to action.¹³¹ By October 1952, Britain had declared a state of emergency in what most scholars agree was a thinly-veiled declaration of war against Kenya's rebels.¹³²

Branch states that the Mau Mau Movement promised to deliver "freedom, land and every good thing [Kenyans] wished to have" and as a result quickly gained popular

¹²⁸ Mark Curtis, *Web of Deceit: Britain's Real Role in the World*, "The Mau Mau War in Kenya, 1952-60," (Visalia: Vintage), 2003, <https://markcurtis.wordpress.com/2007/02/12/the-mau-mau-war-in-kenya-1952-60/>.

¹²⁹ Joshua Peacock, *Talking With Terrorists: A Conversation with the Mau Mau*, 31 July 2012, Peace and Collaborative Development Network, <http://www.internationalpeaceandconflict.org/profiles/blogs/talking-with-terrorists-conversations-with-the-mau-mau>.

¹³⁰ Peacock.

¹³¹ Curtis, <https://markcurtis.wordpress.com/2007/02/12/the-mau-mau-war-in-kenya-1952-60/>.

¹³² Curtis.

support.¹³³ The shared ‘enemy’ of the movement was very pointedly the British at first, but later expanded to include Kenyans who sympathized with the British, known as “Loyalists.” This shared objective and enemy in the Mau Mau movement are not unique to Kenya, but were common among other decolonization efforts throughout Africa.

Females certainly played a central role in the Mau Mau effort, though initial perceptions of them were highly shaped by British media of the era. J.T. Kamunchulah specifically suggests in his research a connection between Kenyan women’s activism and prostitution, arguing that the Mau Mau Movement’s success is largely attributable to a complicated “network of communication facilitated by prostitutes who laid ‘tender traps’ to seduce and subsequently assassinate British soldiers and Kenyan loyalists.”¹³⁴

Early literature on Kenyan females of the Mau Mau Movement marginalizes their participation. According to Presley, this preconception comes from scholars’ failure to acknowledge the colonialist laws that negatively impacted—and thus, galvanized—Kenyan females just as much as Kenyan males.¹³⁵ Clough asserts that female participation in the movement steadily increased throughout its duration.¹³⁶

Once females were integrated into the Mau Mau organization, their roles do not appear to have been limited. Corsfield states that females of the Mau Mau movement held every type of responsibility, including the organization and maintenance of the supply lines directing food, supplies, medicine, guns, and information to the forest forces,

¹³³ Daniel Branch, *The Enemy Within: Loyalist and the War Against Mau Mau in Kenya*, *Journal of African History* 48, 292.

¹³⁴ Branch, 193.

¹³⁵ Cora Ann Presley, *The Mau Mau Rebellion, Kikuyu Women, and Social Change*, *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 3, (1988), 507.

¹³⁶ Marshall S. Clough, *Mau Mau Memoirs: History, Memory, and Politics*, (Lynne Rienner Publishers: 1998), 142.

recruitment, and officiating at initiation ceremonies.¹³⁷ Presley adds that their service extended into battle as well, as females regularly joined the forest forces and served as combat troops.¹³⁸

Female integration in the Mau Mau movement is one of the easiest to evaluate thanks to extensive records kept by the British during the rebellion. A report cited by Presley from the Kenya Colony Protectorate indicates that a total of 52, 685 females were imprisoned for Mau Mau movement-related crimes 1952 to 1958.¹³⁹

Much like other contemporaneous national liberation movements across the continent, the Mau Mau's tactics were what Peacock calls "textbook guerilla," he describes the problems British forces had in combatting them, saying:

The Mau Mau would use children or women to spy on British garrisons and destroyed infrastructure in order create distractions to draw out the military and police. Once sympathizers had informed fighters about the departure of the military, the Mau Mau would attack the garrison headquarters and steal weapons or intelligence left in the building. The guerrillas gave the British and Kenyan loyalists just enough to follow them back into the forests, where they had set up a series of rudimentary traps such as spike pits or falling logs to cripple armored elements and corral infantry into a disadvantageous terrain where they could be attacked without risking much. These tactics bled out the British military in the region and infuriated the Colonial government, who were convinced that the Mau Mau would be beaten within a few months.¹⁴⁰

Kenya's Mau Mau Movement represents a national liberation attempt that ultimately failed, but has interesting implications in regards to my research questions.

The Mau Mau Movement's "foremost" goal was to propagate Kenyan unity against the British, but internal division affected its objectives constantly.¹⁴¹ Literature notes

¹³⁷ Corfield 1960, 84

¹³⁸ Presley, 508.

¹³⁹ Presley, 511.

¹⁴⁰ Peacock.

¹⁴¹ Quoted in B. A. Ogot, 'Politics, culture and music in Central Kenya: A Study of Mau Mau Hymns, 1951–1956', in T. Falola and E. S. Atieno Odhiambo (eds.), *The Challenges of History and Leadership in Africa*:

significant division between Kenyans who supported the Mau Mau Movement and those who sympathized with the British. These Loyalists, predominantly wealthy and usually Christian, condemned the movement's supporters, according to Branch, "for their apparent refusal to labor virtuously and their failure to obtain land, freedom or self-mastery."¹⁴² I suggest that this disunity—which worsened in the years following Kenya's independence and eventually led to civil war—directly impacted the Mau Mau Movement's level of female integration.

Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (FRELIMO)

The last national-liberation group I examine is the *Frente de Libertação de Moçambique* (FRELIMO) of Mozambique. The roots of its establishment began in 1932, when António de Oliveira Salazar took power in Portugal and introduced *O Estado Novo* (The New State), an ideological agenda that encouraged the tightening of bonds between Portugal and its colonies, including Mozambique.¹⁴³ One method used to foster this bonding was the encouragement of increased white migration to Mozambique. The best amenities, jobs and land were, of course, reserved exclusively for whites and prohibited to Africans, who had already been placed in a second class status among the Europeans. Sumich and Honwana assert that "Africans were systematically starved of resources to build amenities for whites and ensure a relatively high standard of living for Portuguese migrants."¹⁴⁴ In 1962, FRELIMO was established and began to send its members to

The Essays of Bethwell Allan Ogot (Trenton NJ, 2002), 118. Originally published in *Kenya Historical Review*, 5 (1977), 275–86.

¹⁴² Branch, 293.

¹⁴³ Malyn Newitt, *Portugal in Africa: The Last Hundred Years*. (London: C. Hurst & Co. 1981).

¹⁴⁴ Jason Sumich and Joao Honwana, "Strong Party, Weak State? FRELIMO and State Survival Through the Mozambican Civil War: An Analytical Narrative on State-Making," Working Paper, (December 2007), 5.

Algeria for training in preparation for the launch of its *luta armada* (armed campaign) in September 1964.¹⁴⁵

The overarching objective of FRELIMO was to liberate from Portugal. However, like the Mau Mau Movement, FRELIMO members' motivations to liberate varied depending on socioeconomic status. The urban proletariat class, for example, faced a direct danger from the onslaught of Portuguese settlers who threatened their jobs and livelihood. Meanwhile, the class identified by Sumich and Honwana as "colonially elite" Africans (known as the *assimilados* or "the assimilated") had become alienated during Salazar's New State transition and now found themselves without power and motivated to remove the Europeans who had usurped it.¹⁴⁶

One way in which FRELIMO stood apart from most other national liberation movements was its willingness to deploy particularly young female in combat. West notes that girls as young as ten directly participated in guerrilla operations.¹⁴⁷ It was similar to other such movements, though, in that female integration was limited at first, with females usually acting supportive roles. By 1966, though, Munslow notes that the recruitment and arming of females in FRELIMO was so substantial that male elders and other authority figures began complaining that "girls with guns slung over their shoulders presented an unacceptable challenge to 'traditional' social relations."¹⁴⁸ Despite such protests, leaders of FRELIMO continued utilizing females in all operational areas. West

¹⁴⁵ Harry G. West, "Girls With Guns: *Narrating the Experience of FRELIMO's Female Detachment*," *Anthropological Quarterly*, Vol. 73, No. 4, (Oct. 2000), 182.

¹⁴⁶ Sumich and Honwana, 6.

¹⁴⁷ West, 183.

¹⁴⁸ Barry Munslow, *Mozambique: Revolution and Its Origins*, (London: Longman: 1983), 106.

notes that by 1970, female participation in FRELIMO's armed campaigns had become "institutionalized".¹⁴⁹

Scholars note that FRELIMO made significant efforts to create and maintain a membership that was thoroughly unified. According to Sumich and Honwana, the group tried to unify itself by creating within it an egalitarian society that promoted cohesion.¹⁵⁰ West points out that the leadership of FRELIMO also worked to include gender equality as a subset of its overarching campaign against "oppression and exploitation" to address the concerns of its female members.¹⁵¹

Despite its attempts at unity, however, FRELIMO's divisions are evident. Because the personal motivation of its membership was so impacted by socio-economic status, it is difficult to claim that FRELIMO was "unified" by a common objective. Scholarship acknowledges the group's efforts to promote a homogeneous identity through egalitarianism, but socio-economic differences were never entirely dismantled, even within the niche. It appears the only true commonality members had was in their shared enemy: Portugal. My hypothesis predicts that this disunity would result in less female integration in FRELIMO's operations.

Revolutionary Terrorist Groups

Background

Revolution is defined as "the usually violent attempt by many people to end the rule of one government and start a new one."¹⁵² Though in simple terms, revolutionary

¹⁴⁹ Harry G. West, "This Neighbor is Not My Uncle!": Changing Relations of Power and Authority on the Mueda Plateau, *Journal of Southern African Studies* 24(1).

¹⁵⁰ Sumich and Honwana, 9.

¹⁵¹ West, 184.

¹⁵² "Revolution," Merriam-Webster.com, Merriam-Webster 2015, 15 April 2015.

groups could be described as ones that seek to overthrow an incumbent regime and replace it with a new one, there is still much debate over specific definitions. When it comes to tactics, Post defines revolutionary terrorism as “acts perpetrated by groups seeking to overthrow the capitalist economic and social order.”¹⁵³ Celmer argues that revolutionary groups use violence as a means of initiating a cycle of terror that both alienates support for the state and catalyzes political revolution or change.¹⁵⁴

The cliché that “one man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter” is especially prevalent in discussion of revolutionary terrorism and is indicative of the “muddiness” surrounding the concept. Such confusion notwithstanding, scholars tend to agree that revolutionary terrorism has decreased over the last 40 years. Jerrold Post notes that revolutionary groups have declined in direct parallel to the collapse of European communism the end of the Cold War.¹⁵⁵ Pumphrey points out that revolutionary terrorists have been in short demand since the late 70s.”¹⁵⁶ For the purposes of my research, I define a revolutionary terrorist group as one that uses violence in an effort to attain political control of the state.

Scholarship on revolutionary terrorist groups distinguishes them from other types of violence movements by noting that their goal is not to *separate* from a state, but to *usurp* it, George Pumphrey points out that “this form of terrorism should not to be

¹⁵³ Jerrold M. Post, “The Mind Of The Terrorist: *Individual And Group Psychology Of Terrorist Behavior*, (Report 15 November 2001, Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities, Senate Armed Services Committee), <http://crab.rutgers.edu/~goertzel/PostTerrorism.htm>.

¹⁵⁴ Marc A. Celmer, *Terrorism, U.S. Strategy, and Reagan Policies*, (Greenwood Publishing Group: 1987), 5.

¹⁵⁵ Post, (2001), <http://crab.rutgers.edu/~goertzel/PostTerrorism.htm>.

¹⁵⁶ George Pumphrey, Types of Terrorism and 9/11, <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/PUM306A.html>.

confused with the national liberation struggles,¹⁵⁷ while Price argues that “revolutionary terror must be set apart from other insurgent violence.”¹⁵⁸

Scholars maintain that the objectives of revolutionary terrorist groups rely heavily on unity. Thackrah states that revolutionary terrorism has the limited goal of forcing a state to change its policy on some issue, warning or punishing public officials, or retaliating against government actions seen as reprehensible by the terrorists.¹⁵⁹ Martin suggests that many revolutionary campaigns entail a process; for example, the overthrow of an inadequate government followed by the establishment of a new government.¹⁶⁰ Regardless of how many objectives a revolutionary terrorist group may have, public support—or at least neutrality—is critical to success.

Like ethno-nationalist and national liberation group terrorist groups, revolutionary terrorists are bound by a shared enemy: the state they are trying to overthrow. Horgan and Taylor argue that revolutionary terrorist groups form most commonly because of either shared ideology or shared enemies.¹⁶¹ Scholars use varying examples in history to point out the importance of a shared enemy in revolutionary terror. In discussing the French Revolution, for example, Arendt points out that the common unifying interest was a common enemy (the Aristocracy).¹⁶²

Levels of homogeneity within revolutionary terrorist groups have varied widely. In the aforementioned French Revolution for example, the group was extremely

¹⁵⁷ George Pumphrey, *Types of Terrorism and 9/11*.

¹⁵⁸ H. Edward Price, “The Strategy and Tactics of Revolutionary Terrorism,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (January 1977), 53.

¹⁵⁹ John Richard Thackrah, *Dictionary of Terrorism*, (London: Routledge), 2013, 202.

¹⁶⁰ Gus A. Martin, *Understanding Terrorism: Challenges, Perspectives, and Issues*, (New York: SAGE Publications: 2015), 268.

¹⁶¹ John Horgan and Max Taylor, *The Future of Terrorism*, (London: Routledge), 2013, 216.

¹⁶² Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution*, (New York: Penguin), 1990, 79.

homogeneous. In more recent cases, language, ethnicity, religion, and even nationality have not necessarily acted to bind revolutionary groups. In fact one could argue that a group identity is not even always necessary for such groups to achieve their objective(s).

Of the three types of terrorist groups I examine, my hypothesis suggests that revolutionary groups are least unified and therefore least prone to integrate females. The revolutionary group may share an enemy in that they are trying to overthrow a state or government and replace it with one of their own, unifying it in that regard. Yet even as group objectives may be shared, I argue that group identity may not be sufficiently homogeneous to produce unity.

Case Studies

The next section of my research examine three terrorist groups categorized as Revolutionary. Like the former case studies, I provide a brief history of their formation and subsequently discuss their history of female integration.

Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)

The tumultuous period in Colombia known as “*La Violencia*”¹⁶³ served as the backdrop for the creation of several small guerilla groups with communist-based ideologies seeking to carry out a revolution on behalf of the Colombian people, particularly, the poor. One of these guerilla groups, *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarios de Colombia* (FARC) is the first revolutionary terrorist group I examine.

There is some debate about when FARC was officially established, but most researchers place the group’s origin in 1964. In that year, the Colombian government sent

¹⁶³ Norman A. Bailey, *La Violencia in Colombia*, *Journal of Inter-American Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 4, (October, 1967), 561 – 565.

troops to quell “communist republics” that had been forming amidst the political chaos of the latter years of *La Violencia*.¹⁶⁴ Aided by the United States, the Colombian government attacked these ‘republics’ in the remote mountainous region of Tolima where they operated and dismantled most of them, though not before a number of militants had escaped. By 1966, one group of escapees had created the entity now known as the FARC.¹⁶⁵

FARC’s membership and scope of operations expanded substantially for the next twenty years. Rabassa and Chalk’s estimate that by the 1980s, the group encompassed approximately 3,600 members in more than 32 fronts across Colombia.¹⁶⁶ The group’s revolutionary dynamic heightened especially, however, in 1982 when its leadership met for their 7th Conference and outlined plans that would grant them the kind of political recognition typically reserved for governments. Within the conference, leaders outlined an eight-year plan culminating in the overthrow of the Colombian government, a plan they believed would be supported by the Colombian people.¹⁶⁷

The early 1990s was marked by expanding membership (reaching up to 10,000 mid-decade)¹⁶⁸ and a surplus of revenue derived from various criminal activities, including kidnapping and drug-trafficking. Even while enjoying such success, however, the group suffered a number of serious setbacks. First, some argue that the death of FARC leader Jacobo Arenas in 1990 led to a certain moral decay, with the group

¹⁶⁴ Steven Dudley, *Walking Ghosts: Murder and Guerrilla Politics in Colombia*, (United Kingdom; Taylor & Francis), 2004, 10

¹⁶⁵ Angel Rabassa and Peter Chalk, *Colombian Labyrinth: The Synergy of Drugs and Insurgency and Its Implications for Regional Stability* (Santa Monica: RAND), 2001, 24

¹⁶⁶ Rabassa and Chalk, 26.

¹⁶⁷ Jon-Paul N. Maddaloni, *An Analysis of the FARC in Colombia: Breaking the Frame of the FM 3-24*, Monograph, 13.

¹⁶⁸ James F. Rochlin, *Vanguard Revolutionaries in Latin America: Peru, Colombia, Mexico*, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 137.

becoming significantly more involved in the drug trade, which was perceived as less of a “People’s” cause.¹⁶⁹ Then in 1991, a sweeping reform of the Colombian constitution was adopted following a broad-based and inclusive constituent assembly, seriously undermining FARC’s argument that the presiding government did not care about its people.¹⁷⁰

By the 2000s, increased military aid from the United States combined with the formation of paramilitary groups like the *Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia* (AUC), or “United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia,” quelled FARC’s efforts significantly.¹⁷¹ By the mid-2000s, countless attacks on government officials and civilians had changed the Colombian public’s perception of FARC from that of revolutionaries to terrorists and eroded popular support. Though greatly weakened, the FARC persists, with attacks on Colombian soldiers being carried as recently as April 2015.¹⁷² Research suggests that as the Colombian government received higher levels of foreign aid and international support, its tolerance of the FARC dropped sharply. Currently, the FARC is in the midst of negotiations with the Colombian government to disband as an armed force, indicating that it is unlikely to ever achieve its original revolutionary objective.

The National Counterterrorism Center lists a variety of FARC tactics including “bombings, murder, mortar attacks, kidnapping, extortion, and hijacking, as well as guerrilla and conventional military action against Colombian political, military, and

¹⁶⁹ Maddaloni, 17.

¹⁷⁰ Maddaloni, 18.

¹⁷¹ Maddalini, 15.

¹⁷² William Neuman, “Killing of 10 Soldiers Deals a Setback to Colombian Peace Talks with FARC Rebels,” (April 15, 2015), http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/16/world/americas/colombia-attack-attributed-to-farc-threatens-peace-talks.html?_r=0.

economic targets.”¹⁷³ Though FARC’s power may have decreased within the last decade,¹⁷⁴ its violent impact is still evident. One database of FARC attacks indicates that the group has carried out 578 attacks between 2006 and 2011 with 817 recorded casualties.¹⁷⁵

There has been notable female participation in FARC since its founding, but it has not been without problems. While Stanski credits FARC’s more flexible and gender considerate ideology for an increase in its female participation,¹⁷⁶ there have also been accusations of abuse against women in the ranks, especially concerning reproductive rights. Says Stanski:

In many ways, the inclusion of women in FARC is predicated on intervening in women’s biological capacity for re-production, either through forced contraceptives and abortions. Control-ling pregnancies within the movement allows FARC leaders to maintain some control over the actions and decisions of their fighters.¹⁷⁷

According to Drost, females still comprised approximately 30-35% of FARC membership in 2011,¹⁷⁸ so recruitment efforts and utilization does not show signs of decreasing despite the controversies.

Members of FARC shares one easily identifiable objective. According to Stanski:

The FARC’s leaders explain their early struggle as a revolutionary effort on behalf of all marginalized Colombians....the group’s goal of self-preservation and

¹⁷³ “Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia,” National Counterterrorism Center <http://www.nctc.gov/site/groups/farc.html>. (Accessed 15 April 2015).

¹⁷⁴ Jon-Paul N. Maddaloni, *An Analysis of the FARC in Colombia: Breaking the Frame of the FM 3-24*, Monograph, 1.

¹⁷⁵ The Global Intelligence Files, “FARC Attacks Database 2006 – 2011,” 15 November 2013 [DATA FILE].

¹⁷⁶ Keith Stanski, *Terrorism, Gender, and Ideology*, “Terrorism, Gender, Ideology: A Case Study of Women Who Join Armed Forces,” 139.

¹⁷⁷ Stanski, 148.

¹⁷⁸ Nadja Dorst, “To Win the War, Colombia Needs Female Fighters to Lay Down Their Arms,” *Global Post*, 1 June 2011, <http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/regions/americas/colombia/110525/farc-female-guerrillas>.

land reform, as embodied by the independent republics, [has] evolved into a broader political strategy to capture state power.¹⁷⁹

FARC's key enemy has been the Colombian government it has been trying to overthrow for 50 years, but disputes with other guerilla movements have at times diverted focus. As drug trafficking business increased in the 1990s, political objectives have in some cases been subordinated to criminal profit motives. The FARC is a hierarchical organization, but it is made up of sometimes competing regional subcommands, which lends itself to potential division and disunity. Coupled with the group's likelihood to disband in the near future, I would argue that high female integration will remain highly unlikely for the FARC.

The Brigette Rosse (Red Brigade) of Italy

Europe's turbulent political climate in the wake of de-Stalinization in the Soviet Union, student radicalization, and social discontent was the backdrop for the formation of a plethora of ultra-leftist groups throughout the 1960s. One of these groups, the *Brigate Rosse* or Red Brigade (commonly referred to as BR), remains one of Italy's "most dominant and violent extremist organizations the country...since World War II,"¹⁸⁰ and serves as my second revolutionary case study.

Unlike some revolutionary terrorist organizations whose origins are murky, the birth of the Red Brigade is well-established. The group was formed on October 20, 1970 by three radical University students (Renato Curcio, Margherita Cagol and Alberto

¹⁷⁹ Stanski, 138.

¹⁸⁰ Victor H. Sundquist, "Political Terrorism: *An Historical Case Study of the Italian Red Brigades*," (Journal of Strategic Security, Vol. 3 No. 3, 2010), 54.

Franceschini).¹⁸¹ It is notable that in contrast to the previously discussed groups, one of the group's founders (Cagol) was female.

The BR's stated objective called for "the creation of a revolutionary state through the use of armed struggle in order to create a split between the Italian Government and other Western Alliances."¹⁸² The group spent a significant part of its early years affirming an ideology and tactical plan utilized societal frustrations towards a clear target: the Italian government. Della Porta points out that the Red Brigade's Marxist-Leninist ideology became more prevalent as documents surfaced indicating that, "the working class [was] the revolutionary subject, and the capitalist system [was] the enemy."¹⁸³

One of the Red Brigade's most critical moments occurred in 1975, when its official manifesto, *Resolution of Strategic Defense (RSD)* not only outlined newer and clearer group objectives and goals, but also its tactics and enemies. The document stated that the group's key goal was to "...strike against the heart of the State because the [S]tate [was] an imperialist collection of multinational corporations."¹⁸⁴ Non-state groups like the Italian Democratic Christian Party were also identified as enemies and subjected to a skyrocketing number of attacks.¹⁸⁵ It became apparent that the RSD worked as a unifying document "solidifying the group's reasoning for targeting local police and legal authorities in an effort to enhance their terror operations in the urban areas."¹⁸⁶

¹⁸¹ Rosso Soccorso, "Brigate Rosse, che cosa hanno fatto, che cosa hanno detto e che cosa se ne è ditto," (Milano, Italy: Cairo Publishing, 1976): 12.

¹⁸² Sundquist, 55.

¹⁸³ Donatella della Porta, *Terrorism in Context: Left-Wing Terrorism in Italy*, ed. Martha Crenshaw (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press), 1995.

¹⁸⁴ Sundquist, 57.

¹⁸⁵ Sundquist, 57.

¹⁸⁶ Sundquist, 58.

While publication of the RSD spelled out clear goals for both BR members and potential recruits, adoption of the new tactics did not always produce positive results. Sundquist suggests that as its attacks became more violent, the Red Brigade increasingly alienated those who had previously sympathized their “people’s cause” and thus began losing substantial public support.¹⁸⁷

Of the groups examined thus far, the Red Brigades appears the least unified. Despite the RSD’s efforts to establish a clear, unifying objective, the group’s membership became steadily more divided. Divisions became so notable by 1977, that the organization broke apart into two factions: the First Position (*Prima Posizione*) and the Second Position (*Seconda Posizione*); with the former proving to be much more violent.¹⁸⁸

The Red Brigades remained a threatening presence in Italy from the 1980s through the 2000s. Its dissolution ultimately resulted from decreased support for its cause as its tactics became even more violent and it began targeting figures that most Italians viewed with respect. In particular, the BR’s 1978 kidnapping and murder of the popular former Prime Minister, Aldo Moro, produced a severe public backlash against the group.¹⁸⁹ By 2003, intensified counterterrorism efforts by Italian security forces had resulted in the capture and extrajudicial killing of several key leaders of the group’s New Brigade, effectively ending its terrorist run.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁷ Sundquist, 58.

¹⁸⁸ Ely Karmon, “The Red Brigades: Cooperation with the Palestinian Terrorist Organization (1970–1990),” International Institute for Counter-Terrorism (Israel), 2001.

¹⁸⁹ “1978: Aldo Moro snatched at gunpoint,” BBC, March, 16, 1978, available at: http://www.leozagami.com/confessions/newarticles_121_130.htm.

¹⁹⁰ Sundquist, 62.

Many scholars argue that the level of female involvement in ultra-leftist movements of the 1960s was in part a product of the overlapping feminist movement that left a number of females open to more extremist tactics to achieve the equality they desired. According to Jamieson:

Although women had fought alongside men as partisans in the Second World War and assumed an increasingly important role in the workplace, trade unions, and political formations, the law discriminated heavily against them and in favor of men. Women were essentially defined by their roles as daughters, wives, and mothers.¹⁹¹

Eager points out that many women in the Red Brigade had been previously active in the in the Italian feminist movements of the 1960s, but had moved to political violence because they felt such movements were “too constricting.”¹⁹² Research indicates that from 1970 to 1984, females comprised one fourth of all left-wing terrorists in Italy (there were other such groups besides the BR).¹⁹³ Elsewhere, Jamieson estimates that between 1969 and 1989, 945 females were investigated for left-wing terrorist crimes in Italy out of a total of 4,087 individuals (23.1%).¹⁹⁴ Not only were females integrated into the Red Brigades organization, according to former members, they were treated as equals.¹⁹⁵ This gender equality likely owes much to the fact that females held leadership positions within the group from its earliest days.

The Red Brigades of Italy stood out among its ultra-leftist peers in Europe in terms of its spectacular violence and longevity. In its first 10 years, the group is noted to

¹⁹¹ Alison Jamieson, “Mafiosi and Terrorists: *Italian Women in Violent Organization*,” SAIS Review, Volume 20, Number 2, Summer-Fall 2000, 52.

¹⁹² Paige Wharley Eager, *From Freedom Fighters to Terrorists: Women and Political Violence*, (Ashgate Publishing: 2013), 29.

¹⁹³ Eager, 27.

¹⁹⁴ Jamieson, 56.

¹⁹⁵ Jamieson, 56.

have carried out approximately 14,000 attacks.¹⁹⁶ It was also notable for the high level of overall integration and leadership roles that females maintained in the group. In spite of varying attempts to unify under objectives outlined in the RSD without success, the presence of a common language, nationality, ethnicity, and religion created a partial unity that I would argue facilitated female integration.

The Red Army Faction

Like the Red Brigades, the last group I examine gained notoriety for its violence, its female integration, and most notably its informal female leadership: the *Rote Armee Fraktion* or Red Army Faction. Under the banner of “[dismantling] the international systems of imperialism and capitalism... in order for a Marxist-Leninist revolution to take place,”¹⁹⁷ the RAF wreaked havoc on Germany for nearly 30 years beginning in the 1970s. Arguably, it owes a substantial amount of its success to its female participants.

The sentiments that inspired the RAF and similar extremist groups emerged in the Leftist movements of the 1960s. Young German students, radicalized by the wave of leftist activism during the era, became increasingly alienated from the post-war system. According to Murphy, “the younger generation challenged the older generation to ‘face up to the past’...pointing to many ex-Nazis that were in government and business.”¹⁹⁸ As Germany’s political climate became more confrontational, members of this “young generation” asserted their allegiance to the socialist cause and claimed to represent the people against the old ‘imperialist’ establishment. Student protests increased in size and

¹⁹⁶ Martin, 217.

¹⁹⁷ Christina L. Stefanik, *West German Terror: The Lasting Legacy of the Red Army Faction*, (Master’s Thesis, August 2009), 1.

¹⁹⁸ Andre Moncourt, *The Urban Guerilla Concept*, (AK Press Distribution: 2014), 2.

frequency during the 1960s. One such protest in 1967 culminated in the death Benno Ohnesorg, a 27-year old student participating in his first demonstration who was shot by a plainclothes policeman. Ohnesorg's killing sparked a massive public outcry and marked a turning point within the student movement.¹⁹⁹ Stefanik describes the event as “a psychological turning point for many future RAF members.”²⁰⁰ By 1970, Andreas Baader, Gudrun Ensslin, Horst Mahler, and Ulrike Meinhof had founded the RAF.

According to Stefanik, the group “fervently believed that the world’s problems stemmed from a shared power structure that privileged the political and business elite, and neglected the working masses,” and could be defeated by a Marxist-Leninist revolution that they would lead.²⁰¹ Beckler states that the RAF were “self-appointed champions and leaders of the German ‘people’ in an armed revolution which they hoped to have launched with acts of terrorism.”²⁰² The group sought an armed revolution against a shared enemy, the German government, and pursued this objective for almost thirty years until it disbanded in 1998. Though it staged fewer attacks than the aforementioned revolutionary groups, the RAF enjoyed extensive media exposure because those attacks, featuring arson, armed robbery, kidnapping and murder, were ‘high profile.’²⁰³

Similar to the Red Brigades, female integration was present from the point of inception. Ulrike Meinhof, in particular, was critical to the group’s efforts in its early years. Indeed the RAF was actually called the “Baader-Meinhof Gang” by German media

¹⁹⁹ Stefanik, 10.

²⁰⁰ Stefanik, 11.

²⁰¹ Stefanik, 1.

²⁰² Jillian Beckler, “The Red Army Faction: Another Final Battle on the Stage of History,” *Terrorism: An International Journal*, Vol. 5, No. 1/2, 1981, 2.

²⁰³ Stefanik, 2.

in homage to her and the group's co-founder Andreas Baader.²⁰⁴ In evaluating possible reasons the media emphasized Meinhof, Stefanik notes:

The press selected Ulrike Meinhof [because she] was well-known in West Germany as both the editor-in-chief and contributor of *Konkret*,²⁰⁵ [and] the token female on talk shows. Though some may have perceived [her] presence on political commentary shows as fulfilling an unwritten gender quota, she was articulate, well-educated and even provocative at times. Her academic achievements were laudable and she was also a mother and wife. At least to outsider admirers, she balanced career and family and represented a new kind of German woman.²⁰⁶

Despite having her name prominently attached to the group, most researchers maintain that Meinhof was never actually a leader of the RAF, but instead more of an ideologue and propagandist. As Stefanik and others note, she capitalized on her journalistic reputation from working on *Konkret* to propagate the RAF's message and attract recruits. Early on, she formed a budding friendship with RAF co-founder Gudrun Ensslin, the female militant who had firebombed a German department store alongside Andreas Baader in April 1968.²⁰⁷ Female participation in the RAF is seen throughout its operations, most notably in a 1975 attack extensively covered by media in which five RAF members led by female operative Hanna Krabbe stormed the German embassy in Sweden, took eight hostages, detonated explosives and ultimately killed two diplomats in April 1975.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁴ Stefanik, 2.

²⁰⁵ Stefanik notes that the *Konkret* was “a left-wing newspaper with respectable circulation, and as a radio and television presence,” (19).

²⁰⁶ Stefanik, 19.

²⁰⁷ Leith Passmore, *Ulrike Meinhof and the Red Army Faction: Performing Terrorism*, (Palgrave MacMillan: 2011), 2.

²⁰⁸ Gary Borg, “Last Red Army Faction Woman Still Jailed Will Go Free,” *The Chicago Tribune*, 9 May 1996, available at: http://articles.chicagotribune.com/1996-05-08/news/9605080301_1_red-army-faction-german-embassy-two-diplomats.

The RAF was notable among other violent European left-wing groups for the number and prominence of female members. The group maintained a shared objective, enemy, and homogeneous identity that facilitated significant female representation at every level of its operations. According to Gonzalez-Perez, there is a general consensus among scholars that 33% of RAF's membership were female.²⁰⁹ There is contention, however, on what roles females actually filled within the group. Russell and Miller, for example, assert that 60% of the RAF's leadership was female.²¹⁰ Merkl dismisses this estimate, but maintains that females “were at least as likely as men to have attained leading positions” in the RAF.²¹¹ Still, Weinberg and Eubank state that “women who carried out attacks or served as leaders [in RAF] were exceedingly rare.”²¹²

Data Analysis

My data analysis examines each of the aforementioned groups and uses a mixture of quantitative and qualitative data—obtained from several terrorist group databases—to determine how “unified” a group is based on the criteria described above. Subsequently, I use those results to examine if there is a correlation between terrorist group unity and female integration.

How Unified is Each Type of Terrorist Group?

²⁰⁹ Maria Gonzalez-Perez, *Women and Terrorism: Female Activity in Domestic and International Terror Groups*, (Routledge: 2008), 117.

²¹⁰ Charles A. Russell and Bowman H. Miller, *Transnational Terrorism: Terrorist Tactics and Techniques*, (International Association of Chiefs of Police: 1978).

²¹¹ Peter H. Merkl, *The Federal Republic of Germany at Forty-Five* (ed.), (London: Macmillan and New York: New York University Press, 1995), 203.

²¹² Leonard Weinberg and William Lee Eubank, *The Rise and Fall of Italian Terrorism*, (Westview Press: 1987), 243.

As noted earlier, I use three dimensions to determine whether or not a terrorist group is considered “unified:” 1) Shared Objective, 2) Shared Enemy, 3) Homogeneous Identity. I recognize the ambiguity of my third dimension, and therefore limit its scope to four dynamics: Language (L), Ethnicity (E), Religion (R), and Nationality (N). Based on the qualitative data collected, I assign each group a score ranging from 1 (Lowest) to 3 (Highest) that indicates its level of unity. Once calculated, I provide a mean score that indicates how unified each *type* of terrorist group is.

ETHNO-NATIONALIST GROUPS		
LTTE		SCORE
Shared Objective	x	3
Shared Enemy	x	
Homogeneous Identity (L,E,R,N)	x	
PKK		SCORE
Shared Objective	x	2
Shared Enemy	x	
Homogeneous Identity (E, R)		
Black Widows/Chechen Separatists		SCORE
Shared Objective	x	3
Shared Enemy	x	
Homogeneous Identity (L,E,R,N)	x	
MEAN SCORE: 2.6		

Research on the LTTE indicates that it shared a highly unifying objective, enemy, and identity, resulting in their score of 3. While the PKK shared an objective and enemy, as the group expanded its geographic scope beyond Turkey, it sacrificed a part of homogeneous identity, resulting in its score of 2. Like the LTTE, the Chechen separatists (Black Widows) shared an objective, enemy, and identity. As a whole, Ethno-Nationalist terrorist groups had a mean unity score of 2.6, indicating that they are a highly unified type of group.

NATIONAL LIBERATION GROUPS		
EPLF		SCORE
Shared Objective	x	2
Shared Enemy	x	
Homogeneous Identity (L,E,R,N)		
Mau Mau		SCORE
Shared Objective		2
Shared Enemy	x	
Homogeneous Identity (E,N)	x	
FRELIMO		SCORE
Shared Objective		2
Shared Enemy	x	
Homogeneous Identity (L,E,R,N)	x	
MEAN SCORE : 2		

Research on the ELPF suggested that the group shared an objective and enemy, but was comprised of a membership too ethnically diverse to share a strong identity; thus, the group received a score of 2. In the Mau Mau Movement of Kenya, group members shared an objective and enemy, but its identity was fractured by the presence of Loyalists who sympathized with the British; thus, the group received a score of 2. Lastly, FRELIMO group members shared an objective and enemy, but internal socio-economic divisions prevented the group from establishing a truly homogeneous identity; thus it received a score of 2 as well. As a whole, National Liberation groups had a mean score of 2, indicating that they are moderately unified.

Though some of the FARC's objectives have changed over time, its overarching goal of revolution against the shared enemy of the Colombian government has remained consistent throughout. Despite a bureaucratic group structure comprised of subcommands and blocs, the group has maintained an identity that remains relatively unified. FARC

earned a score of 3. The Red Brigades attempted to establish a common group objective, but were unsuccessful. Nonetheless, the group shared a common enemy and identity, therefore, they received a score 2. Finally, the RAF shared a strong common identity, identified a shared enemy, and was able to persist for almost 30 years because they shared an objective; they received a score of 3. On average, Revolutionary groups received a score of 2.6, indicating that they are highly unified.

REVOLUTIONARY GROUPS		
Group Name: FARC		SCORE
Shared Objective	x	3
Shared Enemy	x	
Homogeneous Identity	x	
Group Name: Red Brigades		SCORE
Shared Objective		2
Shared Enemy	x	
Homogeneous Identity	x	
Group Name: RAF		SCORE
Shared Objective	x	3
Shared Enemy	x	
Homogeneous Identity	x	
MEAN SCORE: 2.6		

My hypothesis posited that Ethno-Nationalist terrorist groups would be the most unified, National-Liberation groups would be slightly less unified, and the Revolutionary groups would be least unified. In fact, both Ethno-Nationalist and Revolutionary terrorist groups demonstrated relatively high levels of unity based on the measurements I used; both scored an average of 2.6 on my scale. National-Liberation groups, meanwhile, scored lowest with an average of 2. It's important point out, though, that this score still placed them in the 'moderately' unified category.

Female Integration

Examining levels of female integration within each type of terrorist group I selected is substantially more difficult to measure than group unity due to an absence of comprehensive quantitative data on female membership. In Table One and Chart One below I use qualitative data collected from the literature on each group to assess how integrated females are in each one. I preface this data with the caveat that the figures included are estimates and at times vary significantly across sources. As noted earlier, there is no comprehensive database to draw quantitative data from, leaving no alternative to using such estimates.

Table One: Estimates of Female Integration by Group

SOURCES: See Footnotes.

Group Name	Estimated Female Integration
LTTE	Cook suggests that approximately 30% of the LTTE's membership have been female and maintains that Tamil women have carried out approximately one-third of its suicide bombings. ²¹³
Chechen Separatists	Pape, O'Rourke, and McDermit state that while the majority of Chechen suicide bombers are male, a substantial fraction (over 40%) are female. ²¹⁴
PKK	Cragin and Daly assert that the PKK utilizes 1,100 female operatives out of 5,000 total (22%), ²¹⁵ while Lowe estimates that 40% of PKK fighters are female. ²¹⁶
EPLF	Connel states that by 1991, approximately one third of EPLF's membership (and 13% of its frontline fighters) were female. ²¹⁷
Mau Mau	Lewis points out that women only made up 5% of the guerilla army. ²¹⁸
FRELIMO	Gonzalez-Perez argues that females in FRELIMO only served in supportive roles, not operative ones. ²¹⁹
FARC	Levels of female integration in FARC vary widely, with Dorst putting female membership at 30-35% , ²²⁰ while Stanski estimates it at 40% . ²²¹
Red Brigades	Cook maintains that at least 30% of the Red Brigades' membership was female, with the percentage of female leaders possibly higher. ²²²
RAF	Gonzalez-Perez states that approximately 33-50% of the RAF's membership was female. ²²³

²¹³ Cook, Bernard A. *Women and War: A Historical Encyclopedia from Antiquity to The Present*. Vol. 1. ABC-CLIO, 2006, 581.

²¹⁴ Robert Pape, Lindsey O'Rourke, and Jenna McDermit. "What Makes Chechen Women So Dangerous?" <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/31/opinion/31pape.html>.

²¹⁵ Kim Cragin and Sara A. Daly, 66.

²¹⁶ Marisa Lowe, "A Fight for Women by Women: A Picture of Parity Among Genders in the PKK." 2015. <http://tyglobalist.org/in-the-magazine/glimpses/a-fight-for-women-by-women-a-picture-of-parity-among-genders-in-the-pkk/>.

²¹⁷ Connell, Dan. "Women, Gender And Public Office: Eritrea" in *The Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Cultures*, Suad Joseph, ed., Brill Academic Publishers, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 2004. <http://www.danconnell.net/sites/default/files/women.pdf>.

²¹⁸ Amanda Elizabeth Lewis, "A Kenyan Revolution: Mau Mau, Land, Women, and Nation." (2007). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. Paper 2134. <http://dc.etsu.edu/etd/2134>.

²¹⁹ Maria Gonzalez-Perez, *Women and Terrorism: Female Activity in Domestic and International Terror Groups*, (Routledge: 2008), 94.

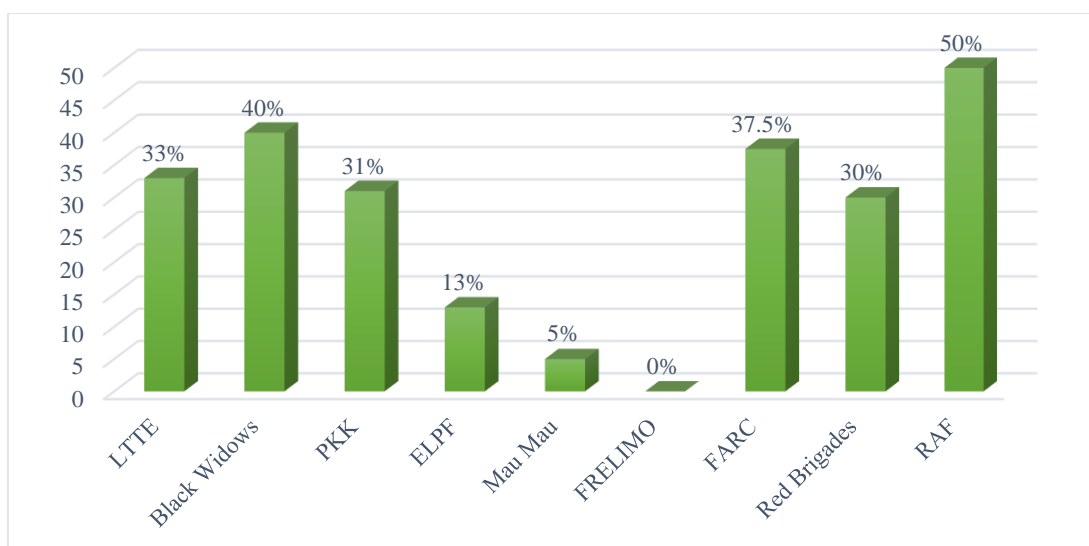
²²⁰ Dorst, "To Win the War, Colombia Needs Female Fighters to Lay Down Their Arms."

²²¹ Stanski, 140.

²²² Bernard A. Cook, "Women and War: A Historical Encyclopedia from Antiquity To The Present," Vol. 1. (ABC-CLIO, 2006).

²²³ Gonzalez-Perez, 117.

Chart One: Estimated Female Membership in Terrorist Groups (%)



SOURCES: See footnotes.

Findings

Broadly speaking, my research question asked why some terrorist groups have significant female membership while others do not. I hypothesized that the nature of the group in question would be linked to its degree of unity and that this in turn would be a major determinant of female integration.

As a result of my analysis, I found support for parts of my hypothesis, but not for others. For example, my prediction that Ethno-Nationalist groups would be the most unified type of terrorist group was borne out by the evidence. Such groups often share an objective, enemy, and identity that I argued would unify them more than other terrorist organizations. My analysis indicated, though, that Revolutionary Groups were just as unified as Ethno-Nationalist ones, and that National Liberation groups were only slightly less unified.

What this finding suggests to me is that there are far more than three dimensions that should be evaluated when measuring a group's level of unity. Though scholarship

maintains a relationship between group ideology and female integration, for example, I believe there is a need for more research that specifies how significant that relationship is. Variables such as group size, location, and environment were all factors that this research project did not address, and I would be curious to examine if any of them influence levels of female integration in a terrorist group.

Finally, as I reflect on my own research, I consider the possibility that, in fact, my hypothesis should actually be inversed; the more diverse a group is, the more likely they will be to integrate females and other underrepresented groups of people.

On the question of unity and female integration, I found that, in fact, there seems to be little or no definitive correlation between the two; unified groups integrated females and so did those that were less unified. In realizing this, I am left to suggest other independent variables that may prove more influencing in determining female integration than group unity. The available scholarship on female terrorism already suggests that there has been an ideological inclination for leftist organizations to integrate females more quickly than conservative ones, but this is a trend that has changed within the last decade as specifically Islamic terrorist groups have risen to prominence within the last 15 years.²²⁴ I believe evaluation of changing terrorist group ideologies must be at the forefront in the analysis of females' integration into these groups, as scholarship has implied a clear relationship between the two.

In evaluating the my case study selection, I note that the nine terrorist groups I examined varied in size, lifespan, and environment. Though a research project analyzing more similar terrorist groups would have merit, I acknowledge the difficulty in

²²⁴ Ness, 357.

identifying a large number of terrorist groups with highly comparable backgrounds. What I would suggest is a more in-depth analysis of each type of group that drew from a larger pool of groups. For example, widening the scope and examining nine Ethno-Nationalist groups more comprehensively may produce better results than the comparative examination I selected to undertake in my research.

One thing that makes any sort of research on the topic extremely challenging is the lack of any reliable, comprehensive quantitative data on female membership in violent groups. This leaves researchers in the difficult position of relying on qualitative, descriptive accounts that often provide wildly different estimates of female integration.

Conclusion

My research question grew out of a general consensus among scholars of female terrorism that it is an underdeveloped field with a critical need for growth. My research contributes to that growth, though substantial work remains. The cultivation of interdisciplinary research to examine female terrorism is essential to ensuring progress. Additionally, a concerted effort to either create or expand current databases on female terrorists would significantly increase our ability to carry out comprehensive and comparative analyses of them.

The recent increase in literature on female terrorists could not be timelier as their direct impact on the wider phenomenon of terrorism becomes more prevalent. According to Suttan, the presence female terrorists in both leadership and operational roles has increased globally and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.²²⁵

²²⁵ Marne L. Suttan, "The Rising Importance of Women in Terrorism and the Need to Reform Counterterrorism Strategy," (April 2009), 7.

There are clear advantages to furthered research of female terrorists in both academic and policy terms. As to the former, we can assume that any investigation into an under-studied area such as female participation in violent movements will contribute directly to our broader understanding of terrorism as whole. As to the latter, scholars have increasingly suggested that a fuller understanding of female terrorists is crucial to the development of effective counterterrorism policies. Says, Nacos: “Gender reality must inform the measures designed to prevent and respond to terrorism and perhaps more importantly, the implementation of anti- and counterterrorism policies.”²²⁶

²²⁶ Nacos, 448.

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*In addition, Data from the Chicago Project on Terrorism and Global Intelligence Databases provided some quantitative data in my research.