



## **Yasmina Khadra's the Attack (2006): The Muslim-She-Terrorist, Fiction in Response to Feminist Orientalist Discourse and Its Agenda**

**رواية "الاعتداء" (2006) ل Yasmina خدرا: "الإرهابية" المسلمة، السرد الخيالي في مواجهة خطاب الاستشراق النسوي وأجنده.**

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### **Abstract**

This article reads Yasmina Khadra's *The Attack* (2007) as a counter-narrative to the dominant feminist orientalist discourse in Western scholarship and media. This study focuses on the political and nationalist motivations of female terrorism in Palestine as represented in the novel. While feminism emphasizes women's equal capacity for violence, this stance is largely denied when the subject of violence is Muslim women, who, rather than seen as political actors with agency, are persistently represented as victims of patriarchy, religion, and manipulation. Drawing on Foucault's concept of power/knowledge and Said's theory of Orientalism, the study argues that feminist orientalist narratives depoliticize and dehistoricize the Palestinian Muslim women's violent resistance by reinterpreting it in terms of victimization, sexual exploitation, or cultural deficiency. In contrast, Khadra's novel provides a counter narrative through situating female terrorism within concrete political grievances, demonstrating that these self-sacrifice acts, while not explicitly feminist, challenge patriarchal and colonial structures. Applying Neo-historicist reading of literary texts—textual and contextual analysis of the novel—guided by criteria that identify representations of women agency, political context of violence, and social meaning, the article reads the novel within broader ideological struggles, seeking to demonstrate that Khadra challenges hegemonic constructions that justify neo-imperialist interventions, Israeli occupation and dispossession of the natives.

**Keywords:** Attack, terrorism, fiction, response, feminist, orientalism, discourse, agenda.

## 1. Introduction

The feminist orientalist assumptions have significantly influenced the representations of Muslim women in Western literature and media, depicting them as passive victims, brainwashed agents, or mere symbols reflecting cultural oppression. Feminist orientalism adds another layer, framing their acts—including political violence—through a lens that often depoliticizes or misinterprets their agency. Yasmina Khadra's *The Attack* provides an alternative perspective, portraying Palestinian female terrorists not as abstract figures of pathology or feminism but as politically motivated actors responding to systemic oppression.

Despite increasing scholarly attention to terrorism and gender, Western representations often obscure the concrete political motivations of Muslim female terrorists, reducing their acts to psychological or cultural explanations. These misrepresentations perpetuate orientalist and patriarchal assumptions, limiting both scholarly understanding and public discourse. While Khadra's novel provides a critical lens on these dynamics, existing analyses frequently neglect the interplay between literary representation and feminist orientalism, leaving a gap in understanding the ideological and political dimensions of Muslim women's violence.

The present study addresses this gap by examining how *The Attack* conveys the political, social, and ideological contexts of female terrorism, emphasizing the agency and contextualized grievances of Palestinian women. Specifically, the study aims to:

1. Examine the geopolitical as well as the nationalist motivations as the rationality of female terrorism in Khadra's *The Attack*.
2. Analyze, on a firmly grounded theory, how the novel challenges Muslim women's orientalist representations.
3. Pinpoint and explore feminist orientalism within the text, demonstrating its analytical utility in understanding ideological narratives and gendered representations of political violence.

This investigation is guide by the following research questions:

1. How does feminist orientalism shape Western representations of Muslim female terrorism?
2. In what ways does Yasmina Khadra's *The Attack* challenge or counter these representations?
3. How can New Historicist and postcolonial theoretical frameworks reveal the ideological functions of feminist orientalist discourse?
4. What are the implications of recognizing Muslim women's political violence as an expression of agency rather than victimization?

This integration of the objectives and questions of the research into the problem context underscores the several reasons outlining the significance of the study. First, the study contributes to the growing body of scholarship that interrogates the intersections of gender, terrorism, and Orientalism in post-9/11 discourse. Second, it highlights the potential of literature to challenge dominant ideological constructions and recover silenced voices by examining the novel as a counter-narrative. Third, it situates feminist orientalism as an enduring mode of power/knowledge that shapes both policy and cultural production, thereby linking literary analysis with broader geopolitical concerns. Finally, the study re-centers the agency of Muslim women in discussions of political violence, countering reductive stereotypes that sustain neo-imperialist and Israeli occupation agendas.

## 2. Theoretical and Methodological Approach

On the basis of Foucault's works on the interchangeable role between knowledge and power, Edward Said (Said) illustrates this relationship through distinct and divers western texts under the title of

Orientalism. According to Said's theory, the western power had used knowledge to create the East through the academic area of "Oriental Studies" to intensify the misinterpretations and presuppositions surrounding the Orient for the sake of dominance. Those western oriental studies represented the oriental as exotic, barbaric, inferior and conquerable.

A fundamental example of this political use of knowledge is the Orientalist texts that represented the oriental women as victims of the suppressive oriental male to advance colonial interests and justify occupation. To free these victims, colonization and occupation became a moral imperative task. Spivak explained how the power used the feminist rhetoric "white men are saving brown women from brown men" was used to justify the British campaign against satie (Spivak). In the same way, the colonizers' power used Western Feminism to (re)produce and circulates knowledge representing the Muslim women as oppressed and victims of the alleged Islamic rule to provide the moral justification for the economic, cultural and political domination and provides the moral justification. The colonizer also used the feminist propaganda to justify colonization in Egypt. The negative representation of the "Islamic East" portrays Muslim women as in need of help from the "civilized" West for emancipation from patriarchy.

However, the Orientalism's power shift from Europe to the United States has not changed this feminist orientalism despite all the historical changes. The feminist orientalist conception of Muslim women as only victims of the Muslim male chauvinistic society, and they have no agency to voice themselves and transform their social and political role, remains. According to Parvin Paidar's characterization of Feminist Orientalism, this approach tends to marginalize the so called Oriental women and therefore, Muslim women need saviors, i.e., the Westerns, to emancipate them from Muslim men (Paidar). Regarding the power shift and the changed contexts of conflicts, the ideology of Feminist Orientalism must be perceived in a wider scope of Orientalism and in relation to the contemporary context of political struggle. Muslim women are now expressing their strong political role in a form of bombs, and their voices are so loud heard in a sound of explosion. Regardless, Muslim women's political violence, and their voices in the form of terrorist suicidal bombing is surpassed by the western feminist orientalist's new power that represents them as only victims in need of help from the "civilized" West for emancipation from patriarchy.

The feminist orientalist texts represent Muslim women to be stripped of responsibility of their violent acts but being compelled to them by a combination of emotional instinct and victimization. To advance the noe-imperialist war and justify occupation, the context in which a Muslim women commit a suicidal terrorist goes unaddressed altogether with the specific realities that really explain their political motive. Their political motives are obscured through providing personal insights, cultural biased debates that attribute their acts to lack of agency in many ways: failure to have children, rape, sexual exploitation, emotionally disturbed seek for vengeance of killed husband, brainwashed and tricked by Muslim males; all of which deny them political grievances at the hand of the contemporary colonizer and justify occupation.

### 3. Methodological Approach

Integrating the theoretical frameworks outlined above, this study adopts a qualitative textual analysis method to examine Yasmina Khadra's *The Attack*. This is informed by the study's aim to explore the ideological, political, and social dimensions of female terrorism as depicted in the novel, and to challenge orientalist misrepresentations of Muslim women. The primary data source consists of the novel itself, with particular attention to passages representing female characters' motivations to violent actions, and reflections in the context of political violence.

Data collection involved a close reading of the text, guided by the theoretical concepts of feminist Orientalism and New Historicist frameworks. Relevant passages were identified and organized in

accordance to the recurring themes related to political agency, social constraints, occupation, and gendered power dynamics. The selection criteria focused on textual instances that explicitly or implicitly reveal the political and social motivations of female characters, and the narrative strategies employed in order to present these motivations to the reader.

Data was thematically and interpretively analyzed. The study starts with categorizing the textual evidence into thematic clusters, all reflecting the key aspects of female terrorism: political grievance, nationalist motivation and challenges to patriarchy. Each theme was then analyzed in relation to the theoretical frameworks, considering how the novel negotiates or subverts Western feminist-orientalist representations.

The criteria of analysis included (1) the presence of political motivation or nationalist grievance in character actions, (2) narrative treatment of gender and social norms, (3) the interplay between personal agency and structural oppression, and (4) textual strategies that foreground or obscure ideological critique. These criteria guided the topics of analysis which included the depiction of occupation and collective punishment, the social and familial constraints on women, the representation of moral and political agency, and the ways in which Western orientalist assumptions are challenged or reinforced.

Through this integrated methodology, the study ensures that its findings are both theoretically grounded and empirically substantiated. It provides a strongly based framework for understanding Muslim women's political violence not as an abstract or decontextualized phenomenon, but as a complex, socially situated act of agency shaped by occupation, and grievances like oppression, dispossession, collective punishment and humiliation.

#### 4. Literature Review

Muslim women and their rights in Islam, granted or denied, have always been the center of the western contempt and disgust right form the 7<sup>th</sup> century. Fernea highlights that the Christian Medieval Europe criticized the Islamic economic empowerment of women as to wonder with contempt: "what kind of religion would allow women to inherit?" (as cited in Hasan, 2015, p. 62). The absence of women's rights in the Medieval Europe society led to the denigration of Islam (Berkey, 2003). But because of the impressive success of western women revolution for gender equality and women rights form the beginning of the industrial revolution Europe, western feminism gets to be projected as the role model to emulate, a discourse politically exploited to justify colonialism, imperialist war and occupation. Compared to the western role model of women emancipation, Islam gets to be represented as gender egalitarian doctrine, and Muslim women as defenseless victims, in need of the white man to liberate them.

In the context of the conflicts in 1980s, feminist theorists opposed the image of women as mother of peace all the way, they so persistently argued that any attempt of dissociation women from violence was influenced by the inherent stereotype of women, and, according to Melser, they presented terrorism by women as "natural" in the 1980s (Yesevi, 2014). It was seen an assault against the general held construction of women as peaceful, soft and fragile. But when terrorism by Muslim-female comes to question in the contemporary conflicts, this kind of feminist theorizations disappear in favor of all that defines Feminist Orientalism especially in the context of posts 1980s conflicts, and, with more enthusiastic appreciations in the post 9/11/2001 context. The western scholars and media still represent the Muslim women as "living in oppressive patriarchal societies and shackled by a long list of cultural and religious codes of conduct oppressing them obliged to give birth, raise their children, and be calm and peaceful" (Omayma & Ottaway, 2007, p. 6).

In reviewing the vast western literature on the motivations of terrorism in the name of Islam, some scholars relate it to Religion itself. For example, Zedalis directly states that the Islamic holy Quran and Hadith motivate both male and female to act as suicide bombers, and writes:

*Religious terrorism is a particularly potent form of violence ... Devout Muslims believe, that in death, every martyr, male or female, is welcomed by a minimum of 70 apparitions (houri-el-ein) of unnatural beauty who wipe away the martyrs' sins, open the gates of heaven, and provide them with all the pleasures that God has given to mankind (2004).*

Observing that such conclusions indicate the equal role of man and woman assigned by Islam, and shows Islam to be an advanced feminist ideology, taking woman as an individual equal to man, able to be peaceful and violent, equally assigned and equally rewarded, comes a different kind of explanation discrediting Islam. It holds that Islam is a misogynist faith; and contrary to arguments like that of Zedalis's, it offers the holy Quran and Hadith as explicit in assigning women no role other than a strictly domestic one: wives, mothers, and their value lies in the domestic role (Rinehart, 2019). Academic David Cook argues that the Prophet warned against and strongly condemned woman's imitation of man's actions or ways of dressing or the way opposite. And, for Cook, the number of women who fought in the Prophet Muhammad's wars combined with the number of those who fought in the afterward Muslim war of conquests remains so minute to be considered (2005). Cook's argument and its alike, present in some other western researchers' studies and analysis, attributes the credit of Muslim women violent activism to the modern religious movements of reformism or revivalism referred to as Islamic fundamentalism or Islamism, which reinterpreted Islam so as to cope with modern challenges.

On the basis of this clear cut distinction between Islam and Islamism, it is theorized that Muslim women, realizing their miserable social role assigned by their traditional religion, join these movements which provide them a room to be social activists and a chance to participate in the general political violent struggle. In their investigation, Speckhard and Akhmedova find Wahhabism in Chechen as the perfect answer to women's need. It was sought out and it helped the women who were searching for meaning in life, accommodating all women individualistic motives; Wahhabism was found in every case of the one hundred ten female suicide bombers in noble fight against the Russian forces of occupation. They observe,

*Exposure to and in nearly every case active seeking out of Wahhabi terror groups; 4) Whose message resonated with a deep personal search for a) meaning, life purpose, and certainty - amidst chaos; b) brotherhood and lost family ties and c) for the means of enacting revenge, which was given to them from the terror organizations that they themselves sought out (2007, p. 110).*

Speckhard and Akhmedova, distinguish the role of the Wahhabi ideology in Chechen from the case of the Wahhabism in Taliban Afghanistan as well as in the Middle East where women are oppressed and only used. They argue that this different role is due to the different cultures.

However, this kind of theorization is challenged as the context of conflict changes either in term of time or in term of place (the post-cold war conflict, and the Palestinian -Israeli conflict: who are being in conflict). This presentation of Islamist movements in all its forms (sunnism or shai'ism) to have been inspired by modernity and contemporary challenges, emerged as a result of reformist or revivalist movements, recognizing women political role, etc. is totally rejected, simply through a discourse that does not admit any distinction between Islam, Islamism and fundamentalism, and does not explain women activism in feminist terms but through different debates of victimization.

The discourse foregrounds that Islam as something which warrants reformation; therefore, fundamentalism in its Islamic guise is a revival but not to some historical selected period, or a result from extreme literal interpretation of religion to reject modernity, but a revival that is lodged within Islamic historical tradition. Islamic fundamentalist movement must be differentiated from other contemporary religious fundamentalist movements. They insist that Islam is originally a fundamentalist religion. It shows some ideological historical elements, conductive to fundamentalism. These elements are the Islamic scripture which holds to be perfect and God's final revelation; the seal of prophecy; the absence of clergy. For this, Islamism or fundamentalism are only Islam, and must not be compared to Hinduism, Buddhism, Zionism and Protestantism impossible. They reject works like the Appleby's volumes Fundamentalism Project (1990-5) which provide explanations of contributors from different area of interests (anthropology, political science, history, religious studies, sociology, psychology) emphasizing that Islamic and other religious fundamentalisms possess certain set of characteristics as part of a family resemblance. They also reject any comparison made between the Christian and Islamic fundamentalists' discourses as that by David Zeidan in 2003.

Consequently, Fundamentalism is defined first inclusively then exclusively indicating Islam in Oxford Dictionary of Current English, which defines the word fundamentalism as: strict maintenance of ancient or fundamental doctrines of any religion, especially Islam. Similarly, the word Islamism in Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* is used not to refer to political modern ideology but to the movements of revival to tradition, Islam itself, a faith in violent conflict with western modern codes of life including women's rights.

Tracing all these explanations chronologically, one will observe clearly how in every context of conflict there is a western kind of twisting and foregrounding kind of theorization available to fit in with the time-conditioned for best interests of the western politics. This can best be seen, for the sake of summarization, in examining the American official gradual inclusion of women in the Islamic world in the declarations of President Bush and his administration in the context of war on terror and the afterward. Soon as the war on terrorism started in Afghanistan, it was declared that war on terror "is also a fight for the rights and dignity of women" (as cited in Hudson and & Leidl, 2015, p. 38), and the U.S. media mainstreamed Taliban's oppressive treatment of women. Mrs. Bush confirmed in her speech that women's rights were preserved in the Islamic world, observing that Muslim women were significantly contributing in their society not like in Afghanistan Taliban is Wahhabi oriented party, but Wahhabism here stopped to be the same ideology that was presented as what women sought out for meaning in life in the context of the Chechen-Russian conflict. Wahhabism, this time, is taken to be the anti-feminist Islam itself in the afterward war, the invasion of Iraq 2003, in which Bush's administration put women at the centre again, and the American media presented the Iraqi women to be as much oppressed as Afghani women. In addition, During the presidential election 2004, George W. Bush declared, "with the American power, young women across the middle East will hear the message that their day of equality and justice is coming" (as cited in Wilson, 2007, p. 140). As such, rhetoric of U.S government and media coverage started with Islamism (Afghanistan), then mixed it with Islam (Iraq, then, entire Middle East), delivering a clear message that subjugation of women is inherent in Islamic countries, having secular regime like that of Saddam or fundamentalist like Taliban; and it is the burden of the American power to liberate them.

Because of this still hold colonial discourse of liberating women in the Islamic world, terrorism by Muslim female is not seen as a challenging act or as a phenomenon to study objectively, but in a way that make it sounds as if Mr. President George. W. Bush were again speaking out his war propaganda. Most of the studies on Muslim female terrorism blur the differences between Islam and Islamism, and Muslim women political violent act or otherwise all as a result of Islamic patriarchy. A Muslim she-

suicide-bomber is represented in western academic researches as well as in the media, as a zombie being drugged and tricked into it, brainwashed, raped, sexually exploited; hence, a victim of man dominance.

In her work on Palestinian women terrorist, Terri Toles Patkin argues that women join terrorist organizations because it is part of their culture to do so. She writes,

*The decision to become a suicide bomber reflects a lifetime of immersion in a culture that regards terrorism as an acceptable behavioral choice, and is voluntary as any culturally-influenced choice may be (Patkin2004, p. 86).*

Similarly, Yoram Schweitzer, a senior researcher at Israel's National Security Institute, director of the Institute's research program, states that:

*Female suicide bombers appear almost exclusively in societies that are heavily traditionalist and conservative, where women lack equal rights and their status in society is much lower than that of their male counterparts (Schweitzer2006, p. 10).*

Patriarchal structure of society continues to be reflected in Palestinian terrorist organizations (Margolin, 2016, pp. 912-34). In her work, *Army of Roses*, Journalist Barbara provides personal insights into the lives of the Palestinian female suicide bombers, presenting them as victims. In providing such personal insights, the motive of these women is expressed in the light of cultural or psychological lens in an improvised way. Woman's Loss of virginity is taken, for example, as a motive to terrorism, as it will provide an escape from honor killings, or because of rape a woman turn to terrorism, to get herself spared from the rape consequence like the traditional humiliation in Muslim communities where shame and the honor family's is so significant. These culturally subjugated women commit suicidal acts and send a message that, to quote Mai Bloom's statement, "they are more valuable to their societies dead than they ever could have been alive" (Mia Bloom2007, p. 96). Sometimes, the story is different, it is not about adultery or rape, but because of just being "failed woman" as is the case of Wafa Idris, the first Palestinian woman-bomber. In looking in Idris's personal life, it is provided that she was divorced because she was not able to carry a baby, and this made her a "failed woman" and this, in turns, motivated her to carry out a suicidal bomb against Israelis. Dorit Naaman addresses the tendency to attribute Muslim women's violence to mental state,

*Relying on the stereotypical gap between traditional feminine qualities (i.e., engaged to be married, good student) and political, violent, and supposedly masculine actions, journalists and analysts alike could not explain the phenomenon. The solution was to search for a personal explanation (Naaman2007, p. 937).*

Sixta Rinehart even warns against approaching the motivations of western women terrorists in comparison to motivation of Muslim female terrorists. For her, the female Jihadists must be studied separately not to be "labeled in with female terrorist as though they were the same women in the Red Army Fraction or women in the Italian Red Brigades. Female Jihadists have different culture and religions that differ from Western women in addition to many other differences"(2019, p. 94). Contrary to the debates and representation of Muslim women terrorists, studies on and media depictions of western female-terrorists provide rational explanations, as no personal insight of a female terrorist is pinpointed so as to provide for some kind of improvised possible motive to the western-female terrorist's act. Unlike Muslim female terrorist, a western woman does not act because of being previously raped, being failed woman, culturally captured in honor-shame conflict, redeem the family name, scape a life of sheltered

monotony, or some similar personal motif but because of a rational struggle for a noble goal. The Western-she- terrorist acts to assert her equality to man and to advance her quest for liberation.

The academic investigators on Islamic/Islamist Organizations insist on the misogynistic nature of these Organizations. For them, the Muslim militant organization recruit and brainwash Muslim women to deploy them, not for any feminist issue but merely for the tactical advantages they pose, like being less likely to be detected (Naaman, 2007). On contrary, Academics like Weinberg and Eubank (1987) present western religious church to be flexible, understanding and touching to women rights. They advocate waning family and Catholic religious authority allowed feminist militant ideology to take root in Italian terrorist groups in the late1960s for feminist issues. Similarly, Journalist Eileen MacDonald finds that women in the Irish Republican Army joined the IRR organization to advocate for women's rights.

Muslim women terrorist is continuously represented as merely pawns in a male domain, just as ideal weapon to be used, victim of radicalization whose choice on the matter is not investigated. Her identification of herself as a feminist is irrelevant, according to Rinhart, who insists that Feminism is inherently a western term. So, as nobody's agent, western female joins terrorist organizations freely for her own gains. She, unlike her Muslim-terrorist-sister, joins because she is "reaching for political equality by breaking the barriers of societal ideas of proper female political participation" (Rinehart, 2008, p. 4). Kathleen Blee (1992) argues that American white women joined the KKK in the 1920s for protecting women and children, asserting the rights of women relative to men, and incorporating women's political savvy into the political arena. This time frame coincided with the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment and women were asserting their political rights.

Compared to this great accomplishment of western women terrorists, Muslim women's similar evil acts have served no good: entirely useless, at their best, if not adding more to its already preconceived evil status. Claudia Brunner states that,

*Palestinian female suicide bombers had not challenged the unequal gender relations within Palestinian society, or the masculinist nature of the suicide bombings, or the asymmetric nature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Brunner2016, p. 22).*

These discussions all obscure the possibility for women to make an autonomous, political decision to engage in terrorist violence. Muslim women violent acts are obscured or misinterpreted precisely because media and scholarly work fail to address their political nature. They fail to explore the specific realities of these women that have led to their actions. When explanations for women's violent actions are continuously sought in men, on the domestic role of the women traditionally proscribed to support men and nurture children, it is almost impossible to make sense of women's engagement in terrorism. It does not explain women risking their lives in political and technical roles during conflicts, but it denies their real political grievance which is not contextualized.

Seen as a victim, regardless of politically voicing herself through violent actions like suicidal terrorism or domestically complying with her assumed role as a wife and mother, it is the duty of the white man hero to, Mr. Bush President, with his nation power, to emancipate the poor Muslim woman. A Muslim woman is negatively peaceful assigned to domestic role because of the anti-feminist religion and culture of patriarchy, and she is politically violent actor because is she exploited, brainwashed, and deployed to act for male's power. Either way, she is a victim, and occupation or colonization is a holly task in the name of liberating her.

*Khadra's Novel The Attack : A Counter-Narrative*

The novel opens with a terrorist bomb explosion in a fast-food restaurant in Tel Aviv. The attack kills nineteen Israeli people, twelve of them are schoolchildren who happened to be there celebrating a birthday. Ichilov hospital is put on high alert with all hands on deck, including the hand of a dedicated and incredibly successful Arab-Israeli citizen, Dr. Amin Jaafari, an awarded numerous honors surgeon who has gained his colleagues' respect and the community admiration. Dr. Jaafari works at the night of devastation tirelessly at the operating room for much longer hours, helping all those shattered injured people brought to the hospital, and attending, with all effort he could gather, almost all the wounds the victims suffered. Exhausted, he gets home late and goes to bed with the illusion that Siham, his wife, is at her grandmother's farm on a visit. But soon he receives a call by a senior police officer asking him to come back to the hospital. As he get back to the hospital, he finds that he has not been called to operate a patient but to identify his wife's head in the morgue. While still unable to comprehend his lose, he is shocked and put into state of fury as a police captain clarifies his mistaking of his wife as a victim, plainly explaining: "Your wife didn't go into that restaurant to have a snack, she went there to have a blast..." (Khadra, 2006, p. 40). Dr. Jaafari is released after three days of interrogation, but he is still in a total denial of his wife's suicidal terrorist act. So sure and confident of Siham's innocence, he feels bitterly betrayed the time he finds a note from her confessing her crime to him. Feeling as if being a deceived husband, Dr. Jaafari takes it so personal. The question now is *Why* she betrayed him. To find out, he sets out a journey. Herewith, the reader is taken along with an angry husband on a journey of discovery.

Before embarking into Dr. Jafaari's journey, the reader is provided with important details that explains why it is really difficult for Amen and even to Israelis to consider the possibility that Siham is the terrorist. Comfortable with his Arab-Israeli citizenship and his strong detachment of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, he recalls how happily he and his wife, Siham, have lived for fifteen years, with no single day of unhappiness. Among many happy memories, he remembers Siham's joy when he showed her their new house in Tel Aviv seven years ago: "She jumped so high off her seat in the car that her head cracked the cover of the interior light. She was as happy as a little girl whose dearest birthday wish comes true" (2006, p. 67Khadra). He recalls how much she has been so worried of any small thing that may shatter her happiness: "After more than a decade of married life, despite the love I lavish on her, she still fears for her happiness, convinced that the smallest thing would be enough to shatter it forever. Nevertheless, luck continues to smile on us" (Khadra2006, p. 22). Because of this seemingly idyllic life, it is just difficult for Dr. Jafaari to imagine his wife to be herself the object that will shatter their happiness and become life-destroyer.

In addition, Amen Jafaari and Siham's live in Israel ostensibly represents integration at its most successful. They are not practicing Muslims, and most of their friends are Jews with whom they have enjoyed dinner parties. As a result, what turns Siham into a terrorist gets to be the question even for Israelis themselves. While interrogating Dr. Jafaari, one of the Israeli police officer explains his wonder:

*I absolutely have to know how a beautiful, intelligent, modern woman, esteemed by the people around her, thoroughly assimilated, pampered by her husband, and worshipped by her friends--the majority of whom are Jews--how such a woman could get up one day and load herself with explosives and go to a public place and do something that calls into question all the trust the state of Israel has placed in the Arabs it has welcomed as citizens (Khadra2006, p. 48).*

This officer is, of course, searching for some kind of explanation other than the usually claimed orientalist presentation that assumes a binary of conflict between western code of modernity symbolized by Israel and the Arab barbarian Islamic signified by the Muslim terrorist, which has been taken to explain why Arabs hate Israel. The terrorist is a modern woman, living in the anonymously believed to a

democratic secular state; the suicidal-bomber is thoroughly assimilated to the western ideal exemplary culture representative in the Middle East. The alternative explanation is marginalized narrative of the terrorists. Siham, the terrorist, explains her motive in her short five lines letter to her husband. She plainly and simply writes,

What use is happiness when it's not shared, Amin, my love? My joys faded away every time yours didn't follow. You wanted children. I wanted to deserve them. No child is completely safe if it has no country. Don't hate me. Sihem (Khadra2006, p. 67).

Her nationalist stance, according to the letter, is only her motive for which she sacrifices her life and drives her to carries such deadly act of terrorism. For her, she does not see herself a mother deserving of sons and daughters yet born into occupied land, denied the right of self-determination recognized in the international law. Reading these statements of Siham carefully, we will find them alluding to, in counter position, many explanations that just obscure reading Muslim female motive to suicidal sacrifice. For example, the narratives that provides the concept of failed woman to explain Muslim female's terrorist motive like the case is in studying Wafa Idris. Unlike the scapegoat Idris, Siham cannot be misunderstood and be represented as a failed woman: Siham is able to carry a baby, but she just refuses to give birth to a child to live motionlessly. She prioritizes securing nation to the second generation rather than selfishly giving birth to it (just to satisfy the paternal instinct). Similarly, through extending the analogy, feminist issues—opposing their patriarchal society that oppresses them—is not expected to be a priority to women, like Siham, for whom homeland comes first. The case is not what studies like that of Berko and Erez (2007) who emphasize that Palestinian women are involved in terrorist activities for resisting patriarchal structure and they use the Palestinian national struggle as a “respectable” means to express their opposition.

Siham's motive reminds the reader of the marginalized voice of Leila Khaled, a member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, who played part in hijacking and diverting a plane going from Rome to Athens and took it in 1969. Fifty years ago, Leila stressed in her statements that nationalism is the first cause of female terrorism rather than feminism. She also pointed out that a real manifestation of egalitarian gender-role is given in struggles not outside of it (Ness, 2008, p. 4). Furthermore, Siham's statement "*My joys faded away every time yours didn't follow*" can be interpreted in the light of orientalist point of view that in patriarchal society where the code of honor is highly observed, women commit suicidal terrorism to shame men into participating (Mai Bloom, 2005, pp. 55-62). So it can be said that Siham's intention by these words is to mobilize her husband to do the same; therewith, Siham here adds more as she provides the answer to the question “to what end?” which is ignored in such western arguments. The end for Siham is obvious: securing a nation of our own and of our children.

Siham seems so careful not to have revealed her mind to her husband or even an inkling suggesting her nationalist position for fifteen years. As a result, Dr. Jafaari, after reading her letter, shows great anguish to know a side of his beloved Siham he did not know before. So he says to his Israeli colleague Kim,

*There must have been a moment, there must have been a sign, and I want to remember it, don't you understand? I have to remember it. I have no other choice. Since I got that letter I've been constantly rooting around in my memories, trying to find the right one. Whether I'm asleep or awake, it's all I think about. I've passed everything in review, from the most unforgettable moments to the least fathomable words and the vaguest gestures; nothing.*

*And this blank spot is driving me crazy. You can't imagine how much it tortures me, Kim. I can't go on like this, pursuing it and suffering it at the same time (Khadra, 2006, p. 106).*

Unable to find even a clue, still thinking that his beloved wife cannot be so ignorant as not to communicate anything with him, Dr. Amin Jaafari seems to believe the western narrative on female terrorists that his wife was just manipulated in some way, so he decides to embark on a quest to know who indoctrinated his wife, "strapped explosives on her and sent her to her target" (Khadra2006, p. 102). Kim goes with him after she tries to convince him not. But driven by a deep need to uncover the truth, he insists. He promises her to be careful, and he reassures her,

*I have no intention of taking revenge or dismantling the network. I just want to understand why the love of my life excluded me from hers, why the woman I was crazy about was more receptive to other men's sermons than she was to my poems (Khadra2006, p. 107).*

He travels with Kim to Bethlehem from where Siham's letter was mailed. He pays a visit to his foster sister and meets Yasser, his brother in law, who tells him that Siham visited Sheikh Marwan in the local mosque one day before the terrorist attack to have his blessings. Amin decides to visit the Sheikh, no entrance is allowed into the mosque private quarters. He repeatedly tries hard to enter, but he is, in increasingly violent ways, denied. Eventually, he is taken to a meeting but only to be accused of being an Israeli spy, his presence threatens people there, and that they have no knowledge of what motivated his wife. He is ordered to leave and return to Tel Aviv. But he does not comply, even after he gets beaten by two men in an alley. One evening, eventually, he receives a call for arranging a meeting. Kim warns him that it a trap, but he insists on going any way. In the morning, he is blindfolded and taken to a secret place where he meets a tall man with a Lebanese accent. Dr. Jafaari is impatient to speak of his wife's strong love of life, the kind of person she was but he cannot understand what kind of discourse that can change one's inner conscientiousness, wash one's human intelligence to a monster,

*What tales did you tell her? How did you make a monster, a terrorist, a suicidal fundamentalist out of a woman who couldn't bear to hear a puppy whine? (Khadra2006, p. 56).*

In reply to this question, the man tells him of their appreciation of his wife did though she not acting under their banner. And because of the man's disappointment he says to Dr. Jafaari that his wife did her sacrifice for her husband's redemption for betraying Palestinians. Dr. Jafaari retaliates that they are the ones who need redemption but not his as a doctor who saves lives while they take them away. The two of them exchange their dispute for a while, but before the man leave he takes it as his duty to explain to Dr. Jafaari the most important differences between Islamism, fundamentalism and their organization. According to his distinction, they are neither Islamists nor fundamentalists, but "are only the children of a ravaged, despised people, fighting with whatever means" they "can to recover our homeland and our dignity. Nothing more, nothing less" (2006, p. 158Khadra).

Dr. Jafaari, though unsatisfied with the explanation that his wife would sacrifice her life and kill innocents for the Palestinian's struggle, travels back to Tel Aviv. At home, while looking through the photo album, he finds a recent photo of his wife and his nephew Adel. Suspicion and fury dominates him this time. Earlier the question of Siham's infidelity insinuated by a police officer during interrogation was strongly rejected by Amen, who immediately tells the officer: "My wife had no reason to deceive me" and insists she is a victim as the other ones and the officer has to honor her

memory (Khadra2006, p. 40). This time, however, he gets suspicious. In fury, he decides to go to Siham's grandmother seeking to know if Siham was really unchaste wife. In Nazarallh, he does not find a clear answer, and this adds to his suspicion. He checks himself into a hotel and drinks heavily for a week. He becomes more and more aggressive to the extent that he ends up arrested. Once he is released, he goes to Palestine despite that would mean risking his life; he makes it clear he cannot live without making sure of Siham's innocence or the otherwise.

In Jenin, a resident, in reply to Dr. Jafaari's question about the motivation of his wife despite the happy life he provided her, unfriendly answers,

*Your wife chose her side. The happiness you offered her smelled of decay. It repulsed her, you get it? She didn't want your happiness. She couldn't work on her suntan while her people were bent under the Zionist yoke (Khadra2006, p. 113).*

Here, Jaafari is being told that the life he offered his wife did not actually make her happy because that life did not recognize her political motive. She needed a chance to enovlve herself politically in the national struggle. It is also revealed in the novle that Siham did not speak to her husband of her political inclination because "she had no intention of letting anyone get in her way" (Khadra2006, pp. 226-7).

Soon, Dr. Jafaari is again trapped. He gets imprisoned, beaten and denied food and water for many days. Eventually, a commander comes to Dr. Jafaari explains to him that they treat him this way because they want to demonstrate to him what it is like to be truly humiliated and oppressed. The commander, in an aggressive manner explains,

*I wanted you to understand why we've taken up arms, Dr . Jaafari, why our teenagers throw themselves on tanks as though they were candy boxes, why our cemeteries are filled to overflowing, why I want to die with my weapons in my hand, and why your wife went and blew herself up in a restaurant. There's no worse cataclysm than humiliation. It's an evil beyond measure, Doctor. It takes away your taste for life. And until you die, you have only one idea in your head: How can I come to a worthy end after having lived miserable, and blind, and naked? (Khadra2006, p. 219).*

In addition, the commander explains to him what really motivates Siham and many other individuals to violent resistance, as people living under occupation. No one, he tells, joins the ranks out of pleasure, but because of being denied the right to live like other people living in free nations. They dream to be respectable, wants to become surgeons, pop singers, film actors, have fine cars, but,

*other people deny them those dreams. Other people are trying to confine them to ghettos until they're trapped in them for good. And that's the reason why they prefer to die. When dreams are turned away, death becomes the ultimate salvation. Sihem understood this, Doctor. You must respect her choice and let her rest in peace (Khadra2006, p. 220).*

Humiliation here is represented as a motive capable to stripe a man of senses, the taste of life, and drives him/her to seek death for salvation. The commander tells Dr. Jafaari how he every day every evening experienced Humiliation. Dr. Jafaari seems to have taken this narrative, deeply thinking of it in silence and has a problem to follow the man. He himself notices on his Arrival in Jenin,

*I'd had no idea that the state of decay was so advanced here, and all hope so effectively dashed... I know all about the obstinacy of the warring parties, their refusal to reach an*

*agreement, their devotion to their own murderous hatred ...but seeing the unbearable with my own eyes traumatizes me. When I was in Tel Aviv, I was on another planet" (Khadra2006, p. 201).*

Earlier, he notices the kind of life is there in the refugee camps in the places he goes to before. Jassica Sterns visited Palestine for conducting a research; she devoted an entire chapter on Hamas leaders exploit feelings of alienation and humiliation to create holy warriors. On Gaza, she reports on the nonfunctioning of sewage system, the lack of infrastructure. The city looks like no other in the world, and she gets the impression that "There is an inescapable feeling of depression here, of utter humiliation and despair...It's as though the smog was made of despair...The settlers live in a different world"(Stern2003, pp. 36-7). Dr. Abdel Aziz Rantissi, one of the founders of Hamas, in an interview, told her:

*We don't like war. If it were possible to solve our problem without it, that would be better. But clearly war is our only option. You can't forget that there are generations of Palestinians that have been dispossessed for fifty years. A large part of our people are still under occupation—the worst form of slavery (Stern, 2003, p. 57).*

Based on her interviews with common people as well as leaders, she reports that most of Hamas leaders came from the refugee camps, and they were imprisoned and humiliated. In addition to interviews, she also she examines the life over there herself and concludes that Palestinian people are kept in camps with no rights as though they were not citizens, underpaid with few resources, humiliated, alienated, collectively punished; she states,

*It is not just the violence; it is the pernicious effect of repeated, small humiliations that add up to a feeling of nearly unbearable despair and frustration, and a willingness on the part of some to do anything—even commit atrocities—in the belief that attacking the oppressor will restore their sense of dignity (Stern2003, p. 62).*

Dr. Jafaari is given the chance to meet his nephew, Adel. He confronts Adel and aggressively while Adel politely answers, showing respect to his uncle and addressing him as Ammu. In their meeting, many things are revealed. Adel tells his uncle of Siham's participation, support and belief in their struggle. He informs him for how long Siham had been supporting them, how they arranged their meeting in Tel Aviv and Nezerah, and other details of Siham's active and role; most importantly her determination to donate the terrorist bomb herself. He defends himself and explains,

*It's not my fault. It's not anybody's fault. I didn't want her to blow herself up, but she was determined. Even Imam Marwan was unable to dissuade her. She said she was a full blooded Palestinian, and she didn't see why she should let others do what she ought to do herself. I swear to you, she wouldn't listen to anybody. We told her she was much more useful to us alive than dead (Khadra,2006, p. 221).*

Siham's decision clearly challenges the perception that women are used as tactic; act as a pawn in men's power. Siham not only acts outside the domain of her husband in comply with the assumed role of wife, but also acts outside the organization, refuses to listen to the Muslim Shaikh Marwan. Shaikh Ahmed Yaseen, the founder of Hamas organization, explained in his answer to Barbara Victor's question about his feeling when he heard that a young woman has blown herself up in a market and

killing many Israelis, that he feels glad that women who fair to see blood now are willing to die for the cause, beginning to take up the fight alongside men. Good or Evil, Sheikh Yaseen's statement denotes women's willingness, free choice to join men the fight for the cause (Victor, 2003, p. 11). Shiakh Marwan, the one in authority, cannot deter Siham in spite of the need of her valuable aid in Tel Avey. She does not see herself working for the organization, she aids them for the cause, and she translates her position by opposing the Sheikh and carries her terrorist act.

In fact, Khadra's representation of Siham, her motive and decision, exposes how flawed the orientalist influenced scholarly works and media representation of Muslim women terrorist, be that intentionally to sever the power or influenced by the orientalist discursive discourse of Muslim women. Siham does not lack the agency, the term which is measured, in western scholarly works, by actions towards gender equality and is used to exclude women individuals from being regarded as agents (Mahmood, 2006, pp. 32-72). Through denying Muslim women terrorists' agency, researchers predominantly convey the idea that men use them as weapons. These portrayals fail to acknowledge women's individual choice in the matter. Sandra Ponzanesi critiques the portraying of women as weapons and victims of male power, because it obscures the possibility that women can act out of political motives and conviction (Ponzanesi 2014, pp. 84-9). Jessica Auchter also registers this denial of female agency in media representations and she argues that the concept must be critically reexamined,

*Agency remains the attribute which marks entrance into the legitimate political community... However, we act as if agency is a matter of common sense rather than questioning how it has come to frame our perception of certain issues (Auchter, 2012, p. 121).*

Further, Auchter goes deeper to examine the way scholars address this issue. She observes the same problem, she highlights that scholars too are often driven by the desire to inscribe women with agency. According to her, scholars build their studies on the misleading assumption that 'woman-as agent' is their natural state. Therefore, they predominantly study women and their political acts in relation to a strict agent/victim dichotomy. Women are either studied in their roles as victims of patriarchy or as agents that oppose a patriarchal system:

*The idea that terrorism can be naturally linked with men, that it is just another example of the patriarchal structure of violence which victimizes women, leaves out part of the story, or perhaps gets the story altogether wrong (Auchter, 2012, p. 125).*

Gendered representations decontextualize and depoliticize Muslim's women terrorism. As a consequence, they deny the political, rational and conscious decisions that women involved in terrorism might make, suppressing women's individual voices. Auchter argues that the narrow representations that equate violence with masculinity make it impossible to fully understand the involvement of women in terrorism. By viewing women predominantly as pawns in male domain scholars pervasively neglect to interrogate any specific context that might give their actions social and political meaning.

Siham self-agency is still in question unless her fidelity is verified. Her husband raises his suspicion of his wife being in illicit affair. Adel turns into intolerant and unrespectable to his uncle, showing even readiness to fight in deference of Siham's chastity: He dares to defy Dr. Jafaari: "Yes, I forbid you! He shouts, decompressing like a spring". And he continues,

*I will not permit you to soil her memory. Sihem was a pious woman. And you can't cheat on your husband without offending the Lord. It would make no sense. Once you've*

*chosen to give your life to God that means you've renounced the things of this life, all earthly things, without exception. Sihem was a saint. An angel. I would have been damned just for looking at her too long (Khadra, 2006, pp. 223-4).*

Dr. Jafaari believes Adel, and feels eventually saved from doubt, misery, from even himself. He sheds tears as he listens to Adel, drinks “the “words ‘in to the dregs; I fill myself with them. The black clouds above my head go whirling away dizzily, leaving a clear sky. A gust of air blows through me, chasing away the fumes that were poisoning me inside and brightening my blood” (Khadra2006, p. 224).

As this is supposed to be the end of the story, the novelist takes the reader into another journey through which he provide a chance to reexamine one more orientalist feminist narrative of Muslim women terrorists, reassuring that Siham is not to be misunderstood. It is quite possible to represents Siham's self-decisive, determination and political act, to be inspired by the influence of the fifteen years life exposure to western modernity in Israel, a different feminist culture.

Being reassured of his wife's innocence, the rejuvenated Dr. Jafaari thinks his journey ends, but he thinks it is better pay a visit to his extended family before returning to Tel Aviv, a journey through which the reader is taken to another story, again for further revelation. This time the journey concerns Faten, a female member of this extended family, who has been called “the Virgin Widow” by people with wicked tongues. She is given this label because of her chronicle record of misfortune. In her wedding procession, her first husband was killed as the automobile, the couple was riding, suddenly blowout and an immediate collision followed. She survived, to be engaged to a second man. But “her second fiancé was killed in a clash with an Israeli patrol two days before the wedding night” (Khadra2006, p. 237). She soon was given the label. Contrary to the expectation, Fatan does not embrace terrorism to avenge her two time killed males. She still lives the simple life of a village woman, taking care of the family members and showing generosity to her relative Dr. Amin Jafaari.

During Jafaari's short stay with the family, Wissam Jafaari involves himself in suicide bombing; in retaliation, the Israeli army bulldozes the family home despite Dr. Jafaari's appealing attempt to stop the destruction. Fatan tells him that his attempts are useless. “These people have no more heart than their machines do”, urging him to hurry and help her salvage what she can. He insists to stop them, but she pulls him and shouts, “What's a house when you've lost a country?” (Khadra2006, p. 248). The family is split up, and Dr. Jafaari is told that Fatan has gone to Shiekh Marwan to get his blessing; that is, she turns decisively to terrorist. Dr. Jafaari who still struggles to comprehend the reasoning, asks “why?” He soon gets the answer, “These are things people like you don't understand” (Khadra2006, p. 250). On hearing this, he finally comprehends the reason—realizes that Israeli's brutal collective punishment drives people like Faten to become suicidal-bombers. For Faten, it is not the house, not killed lovers; these are just consequence of a lost country, homeland. Nevertheless, Dr. Jafaari chases after Faten, trying to save her. As he arrives at the mosque, he and the crowd are hit by drone strike.

Before, examining the novelist's term “virgin widow” in comparison to the other orientalist similar terms, it is important here to notice Faten's going to Jinan for the blessing of the Shiekh and before her Siham's similar doing. Their search for the Shiekh's blessing reveals the role of religion on these women's acts. Shiekh's blessing is sought after a decision is made not before. Siham and Faten go to the Sheikh only after they have made their minds up. Religion here, regardless the authentic doctrine or the fundamentalist manipulative misinterpreted version, is represented to play a secondary role. It is sought after an observed tragedy not before, the blessings as something sought after only reinforce or to strengthen an already decided will, and possibly also for the necessary provisions (the explosive belt). However, this organization may not be respected when it goes the individualistic already taken decision, considering Siham's case. The novelist here suggests a different way to the

western approach of studying Religious Fundamentalism. That is, instead of studying Shiek Marwan and his Organization, Hamas, in a descriptive manner in which the aim is to define what Hamas fundamentalist organization is, it is better to ask why people seek it.

This is also suggested by Gabriele Marranci who critiques the last twenty years studies that have focused on trying to explore what fundamentalism is without trying to answer the question why. For her, “this attempt to answer mainly the ‘what’ question, while leaving the “why” aside, has produced a rather taxonomic understanding of fundamentalism” (Marranci, 2009, p. 26). The novelist sees a proper understanding of the phenomenon is gained through searching for the motives that lead individuals to join extremist groups; similarly, but in a wider scope, attempts to investigate “why people develop certain patterns of ideas and practices that have been often labelled as ‘fundamentalism’” (Marranci, 2009, p. 26).

Khadra coins term “Virgin Widow” to stand in comparison to the concepts of “Widow” and “Black Widow”, already presents in western literature on Female Terrorism that are used to explain women turning to militancy and terrorism out of their impulsive emotional seek of vengeance for their lost males. However, Khadra’s term in relation to Faten’s story shows how the scholars’ use and analysis of “widows” or “back widow” result in misrepresentation. Khadra defends women to be generally acting impulsively following their emotion not as men whose actions follows rationality. In fact, scholars with serious commitment to the academic principles have refuted the claims of rape, illegal sexual affairs, and widows’ revenge provided to explains Muslim women terrorists’ motivations. *Algemeen Dagblad* (2015) use of the Chechens women as Black Widows, conducting suicide attacks to revenge their husbands’ death, is critiqued by Alisa Stack (2011) with the observation that such scholars choose and pick up one example, of the many other examples, that connects women’s motivations to their relation with men. Debates similar to Mai Bloom’s claim that that most women who become suicide bombers are widows and victims of rape (96-102), are also challenged by Carone E Gentry (2011) and Sandra Ponzanesi (2014) and Dorit Naaman (2007) all observing the tendency to attribute women’s violence to her mental state, emotional motivation, or connect them to psychological problems so as to deny them political motives and present them as victims.

The novelist not only defies such biased explanations, he also takes a step further so as to explore the specific realities of terrorist women that the Western Media and academia failed to represent. Khadra’s representation makes clear that the failure is due to unfolding of complete stories or debate with certainty on yet unverified allegations. The claimed allegation against Siham’s fidelity can be, intentionally or due to lazy investigation or merely the influence of the preconceived stereotype views, taken blindly or enthusiastically picked up to explain her terrorist act in terms of sexual exploitation. In a similar way, Faten’s twice loss (a husband then a fiancé), a quite expected scenario in areas of violent resistance to occupation, her condition as “virgin widow”, will be translated as the sole motive enough to drive a woman to carry out deadly acts like that of suicidal terrorism. Yet, by the grace of tracing Siham’s story and Faten’s life further, the reader is enabled to see the whole picture, introduced to a kind of an all-inclusive reasonable explanation of the real motive. Her last statement in the form of question: What’s a house when you’ve lost a country?” and Siham’s “No child is completely safe if it has no country” equally wrap up inclusively the main idea with its details; that is, a free nation, once secured, guarantees no humiliation, no forced spilt of family, no shattered happily married life, but an over-lasting constructed house with an alive dear husband or wife, and safe environment that makes the idea of giving birth to babies and raising them up sound a suitable real life-joy, attractive to, say, Siham.

With this in mind, the novelist’s narrative technique of positioning the narrator is also an inspiring critique and a message in itself. It sends a message to the scholars showing what it is to be committed to reality and what reality searchers must endure. Dr. Jafaari is a surgeon, committed to the principles of his noble career. He never submits to the power exercised on him both in Israel and in Palestine. He is never

provoked by the injured Israelis' racist statements which he received in the hospital even before they know the terrorist is his wife. While trying to save their lives, he heard more than one of the injured expressing their preference to die to be saved by a surgeon of Arabic background. Never is he provoked to pick a side when his Israeli colleagues turn against, by those he used to live amongst at a time he is in a condition of mental torture as a guilty by association. Similarly, he resists submitting to the grievances he sees in Palestine or to the provocative insults and humiliation he experiences there and attempts of recruitment. He tells the sheikh that "you have chosen to kill; I have chosen to save. Where you see an enemy, I see a patient" (Khadra, 2006, p. 160). Amin fights for equality by saving others, no matter their religion or race, but confirming his position "I don't think I ever, not ever once, broke the rules I set for myself". And as much as he is committed to his humanist career as a surgeon, he is committed to truth. In his journey of discovery, he really shows unwavering commitment to seeking the truth. In the face of personal and societal turmoil caused by his wife's actions, Amin sees the pursuit of truth as his most potent tool. His moral resolve and determination to understand the motivations behind the suicide bombing, even when it leads to uncomfortable revelations, sends a noble message defining what commitment of a research really means. The humanist commitment to save lives is compared to the commitment to seek the truth by scholars despite the power exercised on him: loyalty, cost, and provoked self-subjectivity. The narrator sees himself as a healer whose role in the conflict is to fix what each side continues to break; he is in neutral position in his quest to find the truth.

### Conclusion

Contrary to the orientalist's presentations and explanations that decontextualize and depoliticizes women's self-sacrifice terrorism, the novelist's representation makes sense of the political drive of Muslim women terrorism; voices their denied political concrete grievance. The novelist explores what obscured the real motivations of Palestinian women terrorists, and provides the readers with the context of their acts. They are not sexually ashamed, not failed psychopathic or brainwashed individuals tricked to sacrifice their lives for someone nor are they feminist agents to oppose patriarchy. They are self-agent and victims first and for most of occupation, the brutal colonizer who, insists on humiliating and alienating them, who deprives them the smallest human rights, and who cruelly exercises collective punishment. Their acts, not necessarily in the name of feminism, are very feminist in practice with a strong social meaning that, unconsciously, deconstructs the social patriarchy, the culturally inherited male-centered domains.

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