

The Violent Brutality of Growing Up in A Shame Honor Culture – Predicated on the Destruction of the Mother and her Maternal Bond

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Violent bonding is a sign of a major maternal attachment problem or traumatic bonding.¹ The jihadi bonds violently to us. The jihadi becomes the terror and projects it into us. Unconscious projection is not a concept well known to military, police or counter terrorist experts (henceforth m/p/ct). Yet it is precisely this psychoanalytic knowledge that helps explain and facilitates processing the toxicity of jihadi behavior—and it is this which the m/p/ct’s experience on a daily basis. I have been told that such new knowledge has helped them understand the disorganizing and terrorizing effect that terrorists elicit, thus helping them fend off their own burn out, an occupational hazard. The first significant bonding experience for the infant is the maternal attachment. In this way, one could see in the horrific and graphic imagery of the Islamic suicide attack the mental projection where the suicide bomber bonds or fuses concretely with his or her victim. The maternal disturbance in Islamic terrorism demonstrates an “attachment effect”.² Political violence reflects cultural practices normalizing the use of violence as punishment in the home. When the Hezbollah suicide truck bombs went off in Lebanon, I knew that Hezbollah and the Shia jihadi culture were psychologically bankrupt. All the more so when, during the Iran Iraq War, the Ayatollah sent children as mine sweepers. He would hang a plastic key made in Taiwan around their necks telling them that it would unlock the gates to paradise.³

In such a protracted conflict, it remains hard to see the forest from the trees. The practitioners value the importance of maternal attachment but cannot see it mapped out visually with specific regard to Islamic terrorism. Here is the connection between the imposition of fantasy on a child by hanging a key around his neck for suicide terrorism. This is a concrete fusion or attachment to a symbolic object that is supposed to sustain a child who is hardly aware of the meaning of death yet is sent out to purge the group of its toxic needs through scapegoating. It remains difficult and challenging to delve below the behavior into the fantasy the realm where the

¹ Donald G. Dutton and Katherine R. White, “Attachment insecurity and intimate partner violence,” *Journal of Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 17 (2012) 475-481 and Donald G. Dutton and S Painter, “Emotional attachments in abusive relationships: A test of traumatic bonding theory,” *Violence and Victims*, 8 (1993) 105–120.

² Peter Lovenheim, *The Attachment Effect: Exploring the Powerful Ways Our Earliest Bond Shapes Our Relationships and Lives* (New York, NY: TarcherPerigee 2018).

³ Jack Anderson and Dale Van Atta, Children Khomeini’s Cannon Fodder, 18 January 1988, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/1988/01/18/children-khomeinis-cannon-fodder/8b7673b3-c701-484c-955c-0bd4c3ea1d70/?utm_term=.2e960bb9b368, (accessed 2 November 2018).

Mentalities/Mentalités Volume 33, Number 1, 2019

ISSN- 0111-8854

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mother's body is mutilated and the mental image cloaked by the violent ideologies of the jihadi group. Political ideologies gain power by tapping into the violent sadistic fantasies of a shame honor group. But the plastic key around the child's neck like an umbilicus is only one cultural practice inflicted on a Shia child. Another is called *tatbir*. *The Jihadi Dictionary* states: "During their passion plays and the Ashura (day of mourning for the martyrdom of Husayn ibn Ali, the grandson of Muhammad at the Battle of Karbala on 10 Muharram in the year 61 AH/297), the Shia engage in cutting of the forehead called *Tatbir*."⁴ Flagellation is defined as "a masochistic or sadistic act in which the participants receive erotic stimulation from whipping or being whipped," it is also another form of cutting the skin on the ritualist's back. The practice of female genital mutilation is still another form of cutting, as well as *khitana*, male circumcision. While it may be argued that *brit milah* could qualify as a form of body cutting, the major difference is that the Jewish practice is performed within the first eight days after birth. While undoubtedly the *brit* is remembered somatically, for the Muslim child the ritual circumcision carried out between the ages of three to the early teens, is remembered much more vividly. It is more traumatic because of family dynamics, the son being emotionally tied to the mother. The cultural practice of female genital mutilation—which has been grafted onto Islamic religious practices, especially among the ultraconservative and extremist jihadis—falls well within the category of terrorism. These practices of somatic cutting normalize psychopathological behavior seen in borderline personality disorder where the sufferer engages in self-cutting. This symptom is a concretization of a primitive mental state seeking to "purify" the contamination felt in shame–honor cultures in which emotional needs are regarded as dirty.

Breiner a psychoanalyst who wrote *Slaughter of the Innocent: Child Abuse Through the Ages and Today*⁵ and a classic essay on Arab Muslim child rearing practices showing the importance of child rearing practices and how they differ from western practices.⁶ What goes on behind closed doors in immigrant homes is rarely considered, yet that is where child rearing practices involving corporal punishment are to be found. The justification is Sura 4 of the Quran which permits wife beating, signalling the religion's institutionalization and use of shaming. Even if the beating is alleged to be gentle, psychologists know that the child witnessing it experiences it as an attack on the self because he/she is still attached to and in need of the mother. In many instances the practice is also accompanied by child corporal punishment as well.

While continuing to study Islam and Arabic, its diverse political movements and terrorist organizations I was also trained in psychoanalysis. This gave me an opportunity to revisit historical and political events in light of the cultural practices so that I could see the violence

⁴ Nancy Kobrin, *The Jihadi Dictionary: The Essential Tool for Military, Law Enforcement, Government Policy Makers and Concerned Citizens* (New York: MultiEducator Press 2016).

⁵ Sander Breiner, *Slaughter of the Innocents: Child Abuse through the Ages and Today* (New York, NY: Plenum Press 1990).

⁶ Sander Breiner, "Some Interesting Child Rearing Practices in the Arab Moslem World" in *Historical and Psychological Inquiry*, ed. by Paul Elovitz, (New York: International Psychohistorical Association 1990) 121-139.

of *Shia Ashura*, the commemoration of the martyr's death. By coincidence, beginning in the 1990s, a large influx of Somali Muslims began to be resettled as refugees in the Twin Cities where I was living. In fact, Minneapolis-St. Paul had become home to the largest diaspora outside of Somalia. After 9/11, the local police woke up to the fact that a minority of Somalis were deeply involved in Al Shabaab and Al Qaeda. They realized that the Twin Cities had become the United States center for recruitment to Al Qaeda and the Islamic State (ISIS).

In all my doctoral years (1978-1984) studying Islam, what had never been discussed was violent jihad, the holy war. It is as if violence and aggression were totally disavowed. The main focus of the program was *convivencia*, the supposed co-existence of the three Abrahamic faiths on the Iberian Peninsula during the Middle Ages.⁷ I felt duty bound to undertake the study of Arabic and *aljamía* i.e., Old Spanish in Arabic script, after having studied Hebrew, Aramaic, Latin and Ladino (Old Spanish in Hebrew script) as well as the other pertinent romance languages. Why was I drawn to this notion of *convivencia*, this period of allegedly harmonious living? If it had really existed the way it was claimed in academic circles, then I wanted to find out what it really was. I began to feel that a similar question might be posed in the clinical setting where couples and siblings found themselves unable to live and work together. How could a family composed of incompatible individuals live peacefully under one roof? Would this be an example of domestic *convivencia*? Something was very rotten in this state of affairs.

In order to prepare for the Human Rights Seminar on Islamic Suicide Bombing, I sent an email to the Interdisciplinary Center for Counter Terrorism in Israel, with some questions on suicide bombing. Yoram Schweitzer replied. Schweitzer is credited with being the first in the West to identify Osama bin Laden when OBL was in the Sudan in the mid 1990s.⁸ Like other specialists in the field, he had limited knowledge of psychoanalysis. When Schweitzer called my theory of maternal attachment "The Mother's Sour Milk Theory" it was obvious maternal attachment would be a hard concept for counter-terrorist experts to accept. The concept arouses deep feelings of vulnerability and an unmanly lack or need.

Inevitability of suicide terrorism being born from a shame culture: In January 2002 I began investigating the underlying psychodynamics of the Islamic suicide attack. Suddenly something flashed into my mind. I remembered Shakespeare's *Othello*. The title character invented by a Renaissance playwright was a North African Muslim military commander who marries Desdemona, daughter of an Italian senator. Clearly Shakespeare's tragedy was about the dangers of intermarriage. In a jealous rage Othello the Moor murders her. Was this because of the hero's madness or due to the violent cultural practice of honor killing that Iago provoked? In shame honor cultures if it is only intimated or assumed that the female has been unfaithful, the husband or father must act. How could Iago or Shakespeare know that from the moment

⁷ Anwar Chejne, *Muslim Spain: History and Culture* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press 1974).

⁸ Yoram Schweitzer and Shaul Shay, *The Globalization of Terror: The Challenge of Al-Qaida and the Response of the International Community* (Edison, NJ: Transaction Press 2003). I am acknowledged in his book.

the little female is born, she grows up under a threat, and she is controlled by the males of the clan. The same was true in sixteenth-century Venice, a city much influenced by the Byzantine and Ottoman traditions; and by extension, the memory of such honor-shame motives were still alive in England.

The underlying template of the Islamic suicide attack is a death fusion.⁹ In psychoanalytic parlance this is an extension of the maternal symbiosis or maternal fusion, a term Orgel used when writing about the American poet Sylvia Plath's suicide in reaction to her husband Ted Hughes's cruelty.¹⁰ The death fusion is a concrete representation of the unconscious maternal symbiosis. The person who suicides in such a situation re-enacts a rebirth fantasy of reuniting (re-fusing) with the mother in death. For a child this could be the sudden loss of the mother. Its violent brutality in Muslim culture is conceived as punishment for being related to her as toxic. The suicide bomber literally bonds violently to the victim and in so doing fuses in death with his or her victims, even to the point of mixing blood and body parts.

It is not within the scope of this essay to deal with the subject of empathy. However, empathy develops within the early years of maternal attachment. In shame honor cultures people are objects to each other not people with needs. Within the culture they may show inklings of empathy but this is narcissistic empathy at best.

The concrete maternal attachment of murder-suicide in Islamic Suicide Terrorism: D.G. Dutton's work on domestic violence conceptualizes such violence an expression of traumatic bonding and links it back to maternal attachment. These psychological ideas were new to the m/p/ct and rarely is the maternal attachment discussed within shame honor cultures because the abuse of the female girds the psychodynamics of scapegoating. It's the elephant in the room. Yet it was the domestic violence unit of the Hennepin County Sheriff's deputies that invited me to go into the community with them because they were overwhelmed by the domestic violence calls they were receiving from Somali women and children. Indeed this was corroborated by what I heard when I conducted prison interviews, the Somali prisoners told me why they hated America because when they raised their hand to hit their kids, a child or mother would run to pick up the phone and call the police.¹¹ Moreover the practice of Female

⁹ Nancy Kobrin, *The Banality of Suicide Terrorism: The Naked Truth about the Islamic Suicide Attack* (Dulles, VA: Potomac. 2010) and Hebrew edition - *הבנליות של טרור המתאבדים* (New York: MultiEducator Inc.) may be download at,

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/311303315_hbmlwt_sl_trwr_hmtbdym_Hebrew_edition_of_The_Banality_of_Suicide_Terrorism

¹⁰ Shelly Orgel, "Fusion with the victim and suicide," *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 55, (1974a) 531-541 and Shelly Orgel, "Sylvia Plath: Fusion with the victim and suicide," *Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 43, (1974b) 272-273.

¹¹ Nancy Kobrin, "Ku So Dhawow Bulshayada [Somali for Welcome to our community], "Mogadishu," Minnesota aka Minneapolis" 3rd Annual Conference: Terrorism and Global Security: Evolving Muslim Communities in the U.S. and Europe, Rand, Santa Monica, CA, 7-8 May.

Genital Mutilation occurs which has intergenerational effect of the physical violence inflicted upon the little girl affecting her attachment when she becomes a mother.

Body parts of Islamic suicide bombing signal traumatic bonding: While it may seem that the discussion concerning physical punishment of the child wanders into the area of the psychological meaning of body parts, it is important to understand the mentality of a shame honor group; there the group self is more important than the individual child. Always in the news body parts are the core of the event. Using British Object Relations Theory, Biven observed that body parts constitute the concrete representation of the mother's body in serial killing.¹² They are part objects of the maternal body. When I raised the issue of the link between serial killing and suicide bombing, the police and forensics admitted they had never thought to make such a connection. However, while they were aware that serial killers often had bizarre relationships with their mothers, they hadn't made the connection I showed them.

The unconscious attack on the mother's body: Out of this difficult imagery of exploded anatomical parts, I reconstructed the unconscious image of what was really being attacked—the mother's body. At about the same time, I stumbled upon the image of a cameo and coined the term *maternal cameo*, a concretization of the psychological maternal symbiosis as a seductive picture. From Classical through Renaissance times, the cameo was a small medallion with a sculpted image set off in relief. In more recent theatrical usage, the cameo is a small and brief appearance by a particularly well-known actor in a play, putting into focus themes and often deepening the emotional effect and bond with the audience while clarifying the significance of the action. The cameo condenses the unconscious ambiguities in the jihadi's mind. Imagine the images of the Madonna and Infant Jesus adored in Catholic churches and homes. Aren't these variations on the unconscious power of the prenatal and postpartum mother for the contemporary terrorist? Though this is a Christian imagery, it is embraced by Islam. There is the Virgin Mary Mosque in the United Arab Emirates and also one in Australia. While it might seem odd for Islam to borrow a Christian holy image, the appropriation of the icon is no more strange than the borrowing of stories and characters from the New Testament.

The “unseverable” maternal bond: This unseverable bond taboo is the unspoken dynamic in a shame honor culture. But how can attacking this maternal cameo be the aim of suicide bombers? How can an image otherwise evoking love, devotion and adoration become something that cries out in their imagination to be blown apart violently? In tribal Arab and non-Arab Muslim cultures, there is a psychological taboo forbidding separation from the mother. The bond between them is “unseverable” according to Timimi.¹³ But a Muslim boy cannot become a man, until he is able to break this dangerous union. Rather than sever the relationship by drawing apart from the mother through the western concept of individuation

¹² Barrie Biven, “Dehumanization as an enactment of serial killers: A sadomasochistic case study” *Journal of Analytic Social Work*, 4(2) (1997): 46.

¹³ Sami Timimi, *Pathological Child Psychiatry and the Medicalization of Childhood* (New York: Routledge 2002) 22.

separation stage, the jihadi projects himself into the image by attacking its manifestation in the victims of terrorism. He becomes one with these others in an explosion of flesh and blood. He harbors a deep seated terror of abandonment and cannot die alone.

Honor killing of the female links to the primary bond with the mother. Under normal circumstances, rage against the mother cannot be concretized. The life of the boy-become-man in relation to the mother whose attachment to him is shameful and virtually untenable—fraught with contradictions. Unconsciously, the s/mothering bonding is reacted against as an attempt to free the rest of the domestic unit from the unbearable maternal grip. She becomes what deMause calls the poison container for everyone's rage and shame.¹⁴ Bouhdiba wrote extensively about the effacement of the mother in *Sexuality in Islam*.¹⁵ "Shame" is the name of these horrible feelings which the male experiences when he cannot bear to separate from his mother, while "honor" is the sense of relief felt after she is killed. However, when shame and honor no longer can be contained by or recognized by the community that provides justification for such violence the shame (that is, the love-bond that cannot be otherwise broken) achieves its momentary sense of honor when all those contradictory forces are projected outwards towards a simulacrum of the mother-child cameo whose existence becomes intensely real in the very moment of the explosive violence that destroys it: in a shower of blood and bone fragments and flesh, terrorist and victim become one on an instant of ecstatic merging. It is as though the suicide bomber enjoys a paradisiacal orgasm—brief and blind—with seventy-two virgins.

Shame culture and the group self: In Arab Muslim and non-Arab Muslim shame/honor cultures, this psychological need to separate, on the one hand, and not to separate, on the other, means that children tend not to go through an individuation-separation stage as child psychologists in the West take as the *sine qua non* of each individual's achievement of maturity and independence. Yet in contemporary secular societies like our own, we also have pockets of shame honor families. According to the Palestinian authors of extensive research on child development and physical abuse in their culture Haj-Yahiya and Tamish depict the brutality of the Palestinian shame honor culture which involves many forms of physical abuse (*lege* physical punishment):

The patriarchal perspective not only advocates male dominance and subordination of women in the public as well as the private spheres of life, but also views females as a source of evil, anarchy (fitna), and trickery and deception (kaid). To what extent are sexually abused, exploited, and molested girls and women in Arab society blamed for their situation? Specifically, to what extent are they accused of "bringing their situation on themselves" since they are depicted as the "source of evil," "deceptive," "tricksters" (Mukayedah), "anarchists" (Fattanah), and so on? Moreover, to what extent are these accusations the source

¹⁴ Lloyd deMause, *The Origins of War in Child Abuse* (New York, NY: The Institute for Psychohistory 2010).

¹⁵ Abdelwahhab Bouhdiba, *Sexuality in Islam* (London, UK: Saqi1997).

of severe psychological effects beyond the immediate consequences of sexual abuse? To what extent do Arab girls and women avoid reporting to formal and informal agents because they are afraid of facing such accusations or even fear for their lives? There is a tendency to blame victims of sexual abuse, especially when they are very young girls who have no way of defending themselves. There is and a tendency to stigmatize women who cannot prove beyond any doubt that they tried to defend themselves, that they were dressed in modest, traditional attire, or that they behaved humbly without doing anything that could have “invited” the perpetrator to exploit them.

The patriarchal perspective expects boys, and men to be dominant, authoritative, aggressive, physically and mentally strong and, above all, “not to be effeminate.”¹⁶

In *The Jihadi Dictionary*-I dissected different aspects of the culture of shame honor in light of maternal attachment and other child rearing practices. Here is a partial entry: **shame**: *a feeling of guilt, regret, or sadness that comes from doing something wrong; ability to feel guilt, regret, or embarrassment; dishonor or disgrace. It is interesting that the Webster’s Dictionary definition is not in sync with psychoanalytic thinking concerning shame vs. guilt. Generally, a shame-ridden personality does not experience guilt, which involves the capacity to make reparations. The capacity to experience guilt demonstrates a developmentally more advanced level. Shaming remains at the level of envy and attacking, often for revenge-seeking purposes, with the inability to acknowledge wrong-doing and accept responsibility.*

Honor comes to mean respect given to someone who is admired; has good reputation. In other words, a good quality or character can only be judged by others; and high moral standards of behavior are strictly limited by the gender taboos of the insecure patriarchy. Thus, Ψ A culture of shame–honor involves “a cultural standard in an area, country, or ethnic people wherein brutality is recommended as the favored response to an affront or other menace to one’s dignity or reputation.”¹⁷

Lack of separation-individuation in shame culture: If the bond is unseverable there is no individuation-separation. It is well known in psychoanalytic thinking that western fairy tales teach children that they will go out into the world leaving their mothers behind and encounter obstacles along the way but they will overcome these obstacles and return home competent and safe.¹⁸ However, in Hezbollah, Hamas and other terrorist organizations’ children’s tales (as recounted in mosques, schools and television shows), the narrative the children learn is that

¹⁶ Muhammad Haj-Yahiya and Safa Tamish, “The rates of child sexual abuse and its psychological consequences as revealed by a study among Palestinian university students” *Child Abuse & Neglect* 25 (2001) 1303–1327.

¹⁷ Nancy Kobrin, *The Jihadi Dictionary: The Essential Tool for Military, Law Enforcement, Government Policy Makers and Concerned Citizens* (New York: MultiEducator Press 1988.)

¹⁸ Sheldon Cashdan, *The Witch Must Die: The Hidden Meaning of Fairy Tales* (New York, NY: Basic Books 2014).

you go out into the world and you blow yourself up. You become a martyr. This is how you psychologically separate from your mother under political guise of the ideologies of martyrdom.

The group self dominates a weak self: Volkan understands clans. He coined the term the “tent” group which is actually a large fused group where identity is submerged.¹⁹ The *Ummah* as Muslims refer to their group is extremely important in jihadi ideology of its punishing behavior. The word *Ummah* comes from the same Arabic root for mother, *Umm*, stressing the maternal. The tent metaphor is striking to the mentality since because Arab culture of the nomad is venerated.²⁰ Group identity is the expression of a united body of people into a fused group. It involves the clan, the tribe, the terrorist organization, etc., all of which are shame–honor entities. In the culture, the group-self is more important than the individual self.²¹ In sociology such a culture is described as collectivist versus individualist. In psychoanalytic parlance the term group-self resonates psychologically with the concept of fusion. The shame group is an enmeshed hyper self. It repeats the early psychological prohibition against separating from the mother. Its herd mentality is Orwellian group-think. The bond with the mother is ambiguous; she is necessary but degraded with the male being emasculated. The terrorist groups function as the tip of the spear for the *umamah* i.e., they become outlets for the larger terrified Arab Muslim and non-Arab Muslim world’s aggression. That is why there is such reluctance to reign in the jihadis. They are the most rigid and violent of all the would-be rebellious children. The fused raging masses in protest have been described as a kind of *wargasm*, a substitute for sexual relations because in these cultures, sexuality is highly repressed. Such a community and its constituent individuals have poor personal boundaries. The ethics of a shame honor group is 180 degrees opposite of Western individuated culture. It is predicated on splitting. The center does not hold and all things fissure, splinter, and explode. The dysfunctional children of the mother-centered family embraces the opposite of what is considered good, such as honor killing, female genital mutilation, verbal and physical abuse of the child, etc. or what is known as a reverse superego.²² In the shame honor world, what is deemed good in western society is deemed bad and what is bad in our world is deemed good.

Shaming environments in early childhood: In Arab and non-Arab Muslim cultures honor killing has been the safety valve for purging the toxic rage of the fused group while projecting and concretizing the effacement of the mother through the murder of the female. In 2008 the Centre for Social Cohesion in Britain mapped areas in Britain where jihadis resided.²³ They discovered that these immigrant areas had high-rates of domestic violence. The coincidence

¹⁹ Vamik Volkan, *Blind Trust: Large Groups, Their Leaders in Times of Crisis and Terror* (Charlottesville, Pa: Pitchstone Publishing 2004).

²⁰ Kobrin *The Jihadi Dictionary*, 100.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Op. cit, 211.

²³ James Brandon and Salam Hafez, *Crimes of the Community: Honour-based Violence in the UK*. (London: Centre for Social Cohesion 2008).

was illuminating. It showed that traumatic bonding learned early in the home experience recapitulates the pattern in bonding violently through jihadi activities. First frustration and rage are simultaneously turned inwards on the self and the family and then projected outwards into the infidel world where the *other* becomes the distorted image of self-centered martyrdom. The *other* moreover is always the feminized hated object needed to receive the despised parts of the self. Hence there is an intense hatred of the homosexual to the point of murder. This is their first experience in a group. The first community in life forms out of the maternal-infant dyadic experience. Coming from research on converts, such as Christian Ganczarski, the Al Qaeda operative who radicalized, there emerges a similar experience of western converts as having grown up in an intensely shaming environment.²⁴

The terrorist organization is the jihadis' surrogate family. The early terrors in life experienced on account of physical punishment and emotional neglect due are re-experienced. Researchers found that even the loners (so-called lone wolves) had mothers and therefore came from families, and their radicalization tells us in symbolic terms that they lacked a sustaining and meaningful connection with their own parents and siblings. Even though these families disingenuously claim to the media that their sons and daughters who became terrorists are really sweet, kind, and normal people, this assertion should be doubted and treated skeptically since their culture of shame has so infused the group's sensitivity to criticism. They must always present a good face to the public because they feel so excruciatingly shamed. Volkan has noted that in Arab culture there is a socialized need to hate and have an enemy who is external to oneself by age three.²⁵ The relationship to the mother is also described as a satellite-like moth drawn to the heat of light.²⁶ As Barakat noted the situation is further complicated by the fact that in Arab culture the love-hate relationship is predicated on scaring tactics (*at-tarhib*) and enticement (*at-tarhib*).²⁷ These two dynamics, when entwined, add fuel to the fire of sadomasochism that pervades jihadi society and its culture of violence.

In April 2006 when invited to lecture at the United States Army School, Criminal Antiterrorism and Police Intelligence Management Course Class, Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, two military police related how they had been trying to find someone to explain the link between the physically abused female in Arab Muslim culture and the Islamic suicide attack.²⁸ The standard

²⁴ Nancy Kobrin, "Political Serial Killing by Proxy: Christian Ganczarski the chief perpetrator, Nizar Nawar his proxy and the Djerba Synagogue Bombing" *Anil Aggrawal's Internet Journal of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology* [serial online] Vol. 8, No. 2, July - December 2007, http://www.anilaggrawal.com/ij/vol_008_no_002/papers/paper001.html.

²⁵ Vamik Volkan, *The Need for Enemies and Allies: From Clinical Practice to International Relations* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson 1988).

²⁶ Vamik Volkan and R.T. Corney, "Some Considerations of Satellite States and Satellite Dreams," *British Journal of Medical Psychology* 41 (1968) 282–90.

²⁷ Halim Barakat, *The Arab World: Society, Culture, and State* (Berkeley: University of California Press 1993).

²⁸ Nancy Kobrin, "Pregnant with Terror: Understanding the Image of the Female Suicide Bomber and Its Meaning for the Terrorists and for Us" NATO Research Council. Cambridge, England. 11-12 December 2006; see also Nancy Kobrin, "Putting the *Umm* Back in the *Umma* – Suicide Attack: Understanding the Terrorists'

explanations proved superficial. But they couldn't figure out why? They related how they had been sent on a special ops mission to Lebanon in the early 1990s. They had had a British commander who lectured them about the Islamic suicide attack. The British commander stated that it was a form of domestic violence's conjoint murder-suicide which is routinely seen in the West even though the Arabs call it "*shuhada*," (Ar. martyrdom). It made sense in that the British commander must have been schooled on British Object Relations Theory.

Physical violence hooks into our maternal communicative circuit of terrors: The terror of violence is experienced early. Everyone has an "internal terrorist" into which the real jihadi hooks.²⁹ Terror is also theater as it sends a message. Contrary to common understanding, the message isn't in the first instance political or ideological. It is psychological. Unconscious early childhood terrors of the viewing public and the victims who are assaulted has been overlooked. Just as physical punishment is a way of attaching or bonding for the perpetrator to its prey, all too often the child victim, its psychological terror becomes projected. The majority of the physical, chronic daily abuse of shame honor cultures occurs behind closed doors. Statistics are not kept because those outside the group are not welcomed. It is a hermetically sealed cult-like group which Pryce-Jones describes as "the closed circle."³⁰

Shame -- the key factor: In *The Upside of Shame* Kelly and Lamia underscore how its utility as a therapeutic tool can be used to unlock painful trauma.³¹ The concept can be transported to the discussion of shame honor cultures where it is the perpetrator's shame that causes the physical punishment of the child. "Shaming" is THE main social tool (in contradistinction to the therapeutic tool above) to terrify and terrorize its inhabitants as a means of control within the group. Shame honor cultures are brutal and violent, especially with regard to the little female. This point has been minimized. Shame in shame honor cultures has been whitewashed and overshadowed by its colluding coverup – honor. The Green Prince, the son of Hamas, Musab Hassan Yousef states explicitly that the greatest enemy is shame in Palestinian culture.³²

What happens when shame is felt—it can't be heard or smelled or tasted? Generally, the eldest brother is tasked by the authoritative figure in the family with redeeming family honor through the honor killing. This is a vague set of words, but what it means is hidden because it involves things that are not real: they are felt in the blood and guts and sexual organs. Female honor, i.e., the vagina or *'ird* (Ar.) once contaminated, i.e., sexually touched or imagined to have been polluted by even the most subtle of innuendos in rumor-- it can never be redeemed or washed away, only destroyed. The female must be killed off. Family honor, known as *sharaf*, can only

Deepest Terrors," in Mary Sharpe, ed., *Suicide Bombers: The Psychological, Religious and Other Imperatives*, (Amsterdam: IOS Press 2008).

²⁹ Kobrin, *The Jihadi Dictionary*, 119.

³⁰ David Pryce- Jones, *The Closed Circle: An Interpretation of the Arabs* (New York: Ivan R. Dee 2009).

³¹ Vernon Kelly and Mary C. Lamia, *The Upside of Shame: Therapeutic Interventions Using the Positive Aspects of a "Negative" Emotion* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton 2018).

³² Mosab Hassan Yousef and Ron Brackin, *Son of Hamas: A Gripping Account of Terror, Betrayal, Political Intrigue, and Unthinkable Choices* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale Momentum 2011).

be cleansed by *willfully* spilling blood. If not, the whole family is ruined: no one will marry into such a family or go into business with it. It is a crushing burden, too much to bear. The whole world seems to be collapsing. In shame honor cultures one is always under surveillance. In the Middle East, this is culturally concretized by the *hamsa*, the symbol for the “evil eye”. The eye is focused on the female and her sexuality. The little female is under constant surveillance from the moment of birth. It is the accusatory eye of the mother.³³ What must never be seen or touched is the cynosure, the center of all fascinated attention. She is constantly manipulated. If her reputation is ruined, she is worthless. There is no freedom of movement for her. These restraints are underestimated in the psychological impact it causes on her emotional development. She essentially lives her life under a death threat, a psychological. The principal impact is on the first-born son who is used as a narcissistic object *in extremis* because the bond between mother and son is unseverable³⁴ even more so than that of mother and daughter, since the son brings the mother her first taste of honor, translating into power and status. They need one another intensely but they cannot bond properly. The situation is impossible. The impasse is unbridgeable. The only way out, an explosion of violence.

Anality and shame: Violence perpetrated against a child is a crime. All of crime has a psychopathology.³⁵ Anality plays an important role since anal rape is routine ex. Afghanistan’s bachi bazi boys – underage dancing boys used as sex toys for the men. In *Sex and the Citadel* El Feki relates how Egyptian men prefer to have anal intercourse.³⁶ El Feki relates that during a rare sex education course in the West Bank [Palestinian Authority] . . . *some participants were simply unaware that there are indeed Arabic words for female genitalia, having been taught to consider such subjects shameful beyond discussion*” El Feki reports that in Egypt one-third of all women are victims of domestic violence, and goes on to say that “Intimate partner violence is a common problem across the Arab world and what statistics do exist undoubtedly underestimate the scale of the problem.”³⁷

Minneapolis prison interviews: The importance of exposure to early childhood violence was corroborated by prison interviews. The majority of interviewees were Somali. Prison is a very boring place; many inmates craved any opportunity to be given attention. However, one caveat is in order; as in all prison interviews, it remains difficult to ascertain the “truth”. They want to talk, yes, but they don’t necessarily want to speak the truth, or even know what truth is. They have to get something off their minds and it is the interviewer’s job to help them say what they think the “something” is, and then try to figure it out the unconscious meaning. Using what Reik called the third ear, turning the psychoanalyst’s body into a psychological tuning fork

³³ Nancy Kobrin, *The Maternal Drama of the Chechen Jihadi* (New York: MultiEducator, Inc. 2014) and may be downloaded at Jason Aronson’s psychology book project, www.freepsychotherapybooks.org.

³⁴ Timimi, 22.

³⁵ Adrian Raine, *The Psychopathology of Crime: Criminal Behavior as a Clinical Disorder* (Waltham, MA: Academic Press 1997).

³⁶ Shereen El Feki, *Sex and the Citadel*, (Knopf Doubleday: NY 2013).

³⁷ *Ibid*, 20.

to their cacophonous and chaotic internal lives I strove to listen to the rhythms and tones of their speech and enter into their world, if only briefly.³⁸ Klein's work, especially on the criminality of children resonated with the prison interviews. She wrote: "Many criminals need to live in permanent relationship with an external punishing authority. They continue criminal activities to sustain actual condemnation from outside [themselves]."³⁹

On account of the interviews I received a series of invitations to lecture. One came from R. Paz to present at a closed workshop for NATO concerning Islamic suicide terrorism. Paz was Israel's leading authority on the use of social media platforms by the jihadis. Fluent in Arabic and former head of research for the Shin Bet, Israel's internal security apparatus, he told me that I had been the first to explain to him the unconscious issues regarding the mother.⁴⁰ He knew like all others that the mother played a significant role but not in terms of maternal attachment. A simple notion such as the chronically abused female internalizing male rage of the female as self-hatred and projecting her rage through the suicide attack as a female suicide bomber had been missed. I also gave a lecture at Rand Santa Monica. A surprising outcome of this lecture was a phone call from the L.A.P.D. There has been a sudden upsurge of Somalis moving to the L.A. area. They had virtually no information on the unconscious aspect of Somali clan dynamics. I referred them to Jeanine Brudenell, the first liaison between the Minneapolis Police Department and the Somali community told me that she was of Native American heritage and thus she understood tribal shame honor.

Former jihadis reaching out: A significant corroboration of how physical violence is rampant in these shame honor cultures came from another source – former jihadis. They told me that my writings had helped them understand the violence they experienced growing up and why the lure of violent jihad. They were as willing as their opponents to call the process "radicalization". But this term is inadequate for a much deeper, more dynamic mental event. One such fellow is Jamshed Iqbal of Islamabad, Pakistan. He founded a life-skills academy for troubled youth because he came to understand that in his culture young men like himself were not learning the nuts and bolts of everyday living, like balancing a check book, achieving literacy, avoiding street fights, talking about their experiences, naming their emotions and reflecting on them. Jamshed invited me to present a two-minute segment to radio listeners I was delighted. He asked me to speak on the importance of childhood development as a means of steering children away from aggressive and bloody behaviors. This was for Women's Day on Radio 99 Pakistan 2016. My comments were introduced to a panel of Pakistani psychologists discussing violence against women. The panel was conducted in Urdu with my comments translated in voice over. Iqbal said all of the experts on the show agreed with my observations. Another former jihadi, Dean born and raised in Saudi Arabia, said his mother

³⁸ Theodor Reik, *Listening with the Third Ear: The Inner Experience of a Psychoanalyst* (New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux 1983).

³⁹ Robert Hinselwood, Susan Robinson and Oscar Zarate, *Introducing Melanie Klein* (London: Icon Books, Ltd. 2013).

⁴⁰ Personal communication to N. Kobrin, March 2007.

caused him to abandon Al Qaeda.⁴¹ He became Britain's MI6 top spy. The utility of the mother is a well-known strategy used to pressure the jihadi to abandon violence. But it is no panacea. The Saudis sent Osama bin Laden's mother to see him repeatedly to no avail.

From a psychoanalytic perspective on early childhood development we may pick out the clues early enough to make a difference. This is true particularly if we can recognize what deMause calls historically identifiable child-rearing practices and see the consequences they have.⁴² Our stress should be on such attitudes and behaviours characteristic of shame honor cultures. To understand shaming as soul murder⁴³ to be cognizant of the interlocking links of violence from the home out into the public square of jihad, it is necessary to see the social, religious and spiritual context, not just the political ideologies. It is important to hear and see their frustrated modes of communication in an historical context, where the resonances mirror that deeper voice of pain and rage—before it all literally explodes in our faces.

Conclusion: Psychoanalysis can work in this sphere by helping to educate with regard to the roots of the problem. Terror works because its violence seems an unmotivated crime that comes out of the blue. Like Shakespeare's Iago in *Othello the Moor* who acts out of a motiveless malice but who was driven by envy, jealousy and racial hatred and was clever enough to manipulate the great Moorish general's insecurities about who and what he was. Rather than putting a temporary band-aid on the problem, a psychoanalytic perspective remains a meaningful endeavour. Having such information and methods help many overcome jihad's psychotic terrorizing projections of lethality. Psychoanalytic thinking and its educating potential concerning physical punishment encountered in shaming entities - be that the western family or an Arab Muslim or Non-Arab Muslim clan could quite possibly help nip the punishing behavior in the bud. All behavior is potentially meaningful. The beauty of psychoanalysis is its ability to make meaning out of the seemingly psychotic chaos by understanding it as a psychic adaptation to detrimental shaming childrearing practices impacting on maternal attachment. All of this wanton political violence finds its roots in early childhood development where children have been abused and neglected which has inevitably involved physical punishment and in many instances sexual abuse. Stein was right; the prologue to violence is found in early childhood.⁴⁴

Acknowledgement: I wish to thank my colleague Dr. Norman Simms for his extensive editorial help and comments.

⁴¹ Aimen Dean, *Nine Lives: My Time as MI6's Top Spy Inside Al Qaeda* (London: Oneworld Publications 2018).

⁴² deMause, *The Origins of War in Child Abuse*.

⁴³ Shengold, *Soul Murder: The Effects of Childhood Abuse and Deprivation* (New York, NY: Fawcett Columbine Books 1989).

⁴⁴ Abby Stein, *Prologue to Violence: Child Abuse, Dissociation, and Crime* (New York: The Analytic Press 2006).

Mentalities/Mentalités Volume 33, Number 1, 2019

ISSN- 0111-8854

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