

## Women Fighting in *Jihad*?

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*The subject of women fighting in jihad has been a controversial and under-researched topic in classical and contemporary Muslim religious literature. In general, classical authorities did not see women fighting except in the most extraordinary circumstances yet did not expressly forbid it. Today radical Muslims seeking to widen their appeal have modified these conclusions and made it possible for women to participate together with men on the battlefield and in martyrdom operations. This article looks at the classical religious and legal literature to contextualize the arguments being made for females participating in jihad in contemporary times.*

### Introduction

In the chapter on the subject of *jihad* in al-Bukhari's authoritative collection of the Prophet Muhammad's traditions is read the following account:

The Messenger of God would enter into the house of Umm Haram daughter of Milhan, and she would feed him (Umm Haram was married to 'Ubada b. al-Samit.). So the Messenger of God went into her, and she fed him and began to pick the lice off his head. The Messenger of God fell asleep and then woke up, laughing. She said: Why are you laughing? He said: People from my community [Muslims] were shown to me fighting in the path of God, sailing in the midst of the sea like kings on thrones. She said: O Messenger of God, pray to God that I might be one of them! And so the Messenger of God prayed for her . . . and she sailed the seas during the time of Mu'awiya b. Abi Sufyan [661–80], and fell from her mount when she disembarked and perished.<sup>1</sup>

This tradition is an odd one. The Prophet Muhammad is shown participating in regular intimate encounters with the wife of another man, who was not present during these encounters, who would then pick the lice off his head, implying that he was in close physical contact with her. To put it mildly, this description is unusual and in direct contravention to Muslim law concerning the relations between men and women who are not married or related to one another.

Received August 2004; accepted February 2005.

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However, this tradition also raises the issue of women fighting in *jihad* and becoming martyrs. According to the usual interpretation, women are not permitted to fight in *jihad*, but were told that their *jihad* was a righteous pilgrimage to Mecca (*hajj*).<sup>2</sup> It is not surprising that what was in classical times (and even today) a very dangerous trip to the holy city would constitute the equivalent to fighting. However, in light of the continually growing numbers of Muslim women participating in radical Islamic, and especially nationalist radical Islamic (such as Palestinian and Chechen), groups there is need to examine the Muslim sources and legal literature concerning this subject, and compare them to the realities of modern warfare.

### Classical Background

In order for an issue to gain legitimacy for religious Muslims it must have historical depth. This means that some traditions from the Prophet Muhammad or historical examples from his close companions must be pressed into service. With regard to women fighters this can mean that either statements of the Prophet enjoining or allowing women to fight must be found, or examples of women close to the Prophet must be adduced.

Examples of women companions of the Prophet Muhammad fighting in the *jihad* are also available from both classical and contemporary accounts. For example, the moralist figure ‘Abd al-Ghani b. ‘Abd al-Wahid al-Maqdisi (d. 1203) in his small treatise *Manaqib al-sahabiyyat* (*The Merits of the Women Companions [of the Prophet Muhammad]*) describes two women from the time of the Prophet Muhammad who fought in his wars.<sup>3</sup> One of them, Nusayba daughter of Ka‘b (also known as Um ‘Umara), is said to have gone out to help the wounded during the Battle of Uhud (626), which was the Prophet’s major defeat, but then took up a sword and received 12 wounds. She is quoted saying that there were four women with her—she took up a sword, whereas another, who was pregnant at the time, had a knife, and they fought alongside the men.<sup>4</sup> Another of the women cited by al-Maqdisi was Safiya, the aunt of the Prophet Muhammad, who during the Battle of the Khandaq (627) took refuge in one of the strongholds of Medina together with other Muslim women and children. At a particular time some Jews attacked their stronghold, and one of the Jews climbed the wall and came into the fort. Safiya took up a sword and cut off his head, and threw it back at the Jews outside, who hastily dispersed.

Clearly women did take part in the fighting. Modern Muslim feminists have managed to gather more names of women who fought during the time of the Prophet. ‘Aliyya Mustafa Mubarak in her collection *Sahabiyyat mujahidat* has assembled a list of 67 women who, according to her, fought in the wars of the Prophet Muhammad or immediately afterward in the great Islamic conquests.<sup>5</sup> However, when the list is examined it becomes apparent that many of the women participated in battles in a supporting role, usually by accompanying the fighters,<sup>6</sup> encouraging the men, or by providing medical care and assistance after the fact.<sup>7</sup> Comparatively few of the women she cites actually went out on the battlefield.

From the citation at the beginning of this article it is known that different women did participate in the great conquests. Again, the information concerning the nature of their participation is limited. Umm Haram does not appear to have done anything more substantial than sail on a boat; whether she actually participated in any campaigns is doubtful. From later times (approximately ninth through eleventh centuries) we know of a category of women known as the *mutarajjulāt*, women who act or dress like men. These women were cursed by the Prophet Muhammad, who grouped them together with

men who acted or dressed like women (probably effeminates or passive homosexuals).<sup>8</sup> However, the grouping of these two categories together does not necessarily mean that the *mutarajjulat* were lesbians (because condemnations of lesbians used a different word), but more probably that these were women who participated in the world of men and dressed like men. Although there are few historical anecdotes about such women, there are a number of accounts in literary folk tales that indicate they fought in battles.<sup>9</sup>

### Women and the Classical *Jihad* Material

There is a very large heritage of treatises on the subject of *jihad* from classical Islam. Despite the periodic attempts of Muslim apologists to claim the contrary, this is entirely militant and warlike material. Women do not play a major role in these treatises, with one important exception, which will be noted later. However, it is clear from stray traditions that they were aware of the high spiritual merit accorded to the (male) *jihad* fighter, and wanted to participate in the fighting. For example, in one of the minor collections of tradition emanating from the border regions close to the Byzantine Empire from the ninth century is found this very interesting tradition:

A woman came to one of his [Muhammad's] sessions and said: I am a delegate of women to you. By God, there is not a single woman who has heard of my going out or did not hear who does not support what I say. God is the Lord of men and women, Adam was the father of men and women and you are the Messenger of God to men and women. God has ordained *jihad* for men—if they are wounded they gain a reward, if they die their reward is granted by God and if they are martyred then they “they are living with their Lord, well-provided for” [Qur'an 3:169], while we stay at home, taking care of their mounts and do not get to participate in any of this.<sup>10</sup>

Unfortunately, her protest was met by the Prophet Muhammad telling her that the reward given to men in *jihad* would be given to women if they obeyed their husbands and kept to their houses. Thus this attempt by women (if it was such) to join in the fighting process during the classical period was still-born.

Likewise the Shi'ite tradition is very reluctant to accord women a role in *jihad*. The tenth century jurist Ibn Babawayhi reports that both men and women have a *jihad*, but that “the man's *jihad* is to sacrifice his wealth and his blood until he is killed in the path of Allah, but the *jihad* of the woman is to endure suffering at the hands of her husband and his jealousy [of her].”<sup>11</sup> Just as with the Sunni tradition, the word *jihad* is completely reinterpreted for the woman; they might gain similar spiritual benefit for performing it, but the action performed is without topical connection to fighting.

It is clear after reading the *jihad* literature that there was a very good reason why men would want to keep women from the battlefield. For the male fighter, the women of paradise were a major attractant, as seen from the earliest books on *jihad*. Earthly women represented a tie that bound them to this world, whereas the whole focus of the fighter was supposed to be on the next. *Jihad* fighters should not be distracted by having a wife or a family; they should be part of the living dead. The *jihad* book of Ibn Abi al-'Asim (d. 900) says:

The Messenger of God said: One of the prophets prior to me used to raid, and said: No man who has built a house and has not dwelt in it, or who has

married a woman and not entered into her should accompany me, nor any man who has any need to return.<sup>12</sup>

All of the primary elements of civilization—building a home, marrying, and living with a woman—should be decisively rejected by the fighter. Thus odd customs are found such as “marriage ceremonies” on the battlefield between the Muslim soldiers and the women of paradise (the houris), or visions of them just prior to battles.<sup>13</sup> Traditions like these make it doubtful that women would have been particularly welcome in the Muslim ranks (although no doubt there were women camp-followers, etc).

From the fifteenth century comes the great *jihad* composition of Ibn al-Nahhas al-Dumyati (d. 1414) in which he takes an extreme misogynist view, seeing earthly women as the primary temptation preventing men from setting out for *jihad*:

If you say [wanting to avoid *jihad*]: My heart is not comfortable parting from my wife and her beauty, the companionship I have close to her and my happiness in touching her—even if your wife is the most beautiful of women and the loveliest of the people of the time, her beginning is a small drop [of sperm] and her end is a filthy corpse. Between those two times, she carries excrement, her menstruation denies her to you for part of her life, and her disobedience to you is usually more than her obedience. If she does not apply kohl to her eyes, they become bleary, if she does not adorn herself she becomes ugly, if she does not comb her hair it is disheveled, if she does not anoint herself her light will be extinguished, if she does not put on perfume she will smell bad and if she does not clean her pubes she will stink. Her defects will multiply, she will become weary, when she grows old she will become depressed, when she is old she will be incapacitated—even if you treat her well, she will be contemptuous towards you.<sup>14</sup>

This classical book has been consistently popular throughout the Muslim world since the time of its composition—since it was regularly cited in the later *jihad* literature—and has been translated into Urdu and Uzbek during the recent past by radical Muslims.

### Contemporary Legal Literature

It is hardly surprising that classical Muslim legal literature contains very little material concerning the issue of women participating in *jihad*. However, changing attitudes toward women in the Muslim world and the emergence of “Islamic feminism” has made the issue far more immediate. From the beginning of the 1990s, Muslim writers discussing *jihad* have regularly included a section on the issue of women fighting. Probably the most impressive of these has been Muhammad Khayr Haykal, whose three volume *al-Jihad wa-l-qital fi al-siyasa al-shara'iyya (Jihad and Fighting according to the Shar'i Policy)* written in 1993 covers in an exhaustive manner all of the major and many of the minor issues of *jihad*. In volume two he covers the question of who is eligible for fighting, the definition of which traditionally has been reduced to six categories (Muslim, adult, sane, free, male, and able bodied). While listing these categories off he stops at “male” and asks the pointed question of whether the tradition stating that women’s *jihad* was the pilgrimage to Mecca (discussed earlier) *actually* forbade women from participating in the fighting process or whether it was merely a statement that gave them a peaceful opportunity to gain the same merit as men did in *jihad*? Haykal distinguishes

between the two types of *jihad*: *jihad* as *fard kifaya* (where the obligation of *jihad* is upon part of the Muslim community) and *jihad* as *fard 'ayn* (where the obligation of *jihad* is upon each and every one of the members of the Muslim community), and states that in the instance of *jihad* being *fard kifaya* there is no necessity for women to fight, but they should have that option if they wish to volunteer. Under the condition of *fard 'ayn* women would have to fight.<sup>15</sup>

After examining the classical sources, Haykal comes to the following conclusions: the number of women who joined male fighters was small, their purpose was not to fulfill any obligation of *jihad* on their part, and they served an auxiliary function. The number of times that women actually bore arms and fought together with the men was extremely limited. According to the legal sources, if the necessity for *jihad* is incumbent upon the entire Muslim community, then women do have the option of fighting.<sup>16</sup> But most still say that even in extreme circumstances women fighting remains an option, not an obligation.<sup>17</sup>

But then Haykal asks the question of whether there is a place for women in the regular army of an Islamic state, and, surprisingly, he says yes in a most direct manner.

From this we believe that it is incumbent upon the Islamic state to prepare training centers for women so that they can learn the use of arms and methods of fighting in them. This is because as long as it is possible that *jihad* could become *fard 'ayn* upon the woman, it is incumbent to train her for this eventuality so that she will be prepared to fulfill this obligation.<sup>18</sup>

This is quite a revolutionary conclusion and departs significantly from what the medieval (and modern) commentators have said on the subject. It seems that Haykal's sole reason for making this statement was that it *might* be possible for women to have to fight some day (hypothetically), so it is necessary that they be made ready for that eventuality. However, it is interesting to realize to what extent a writer such as Haykal—whose command of the legal and historical literature is near total—is willing to disregard it and make the exception the rule.

Radical Muslims associated with Chechnya (especially from the onset of the Russian re-occupation in 1999) also explored the possibility of women fighting. As noted later the Chechen conflict has been the one in which women have been most closely associated with actual fighting. Interestingly, they came to much less revolutionary conclusions than did Haykal. Their article, "Sisters' Role in Jihad" (written by Sister AI), after the manner of the classical material emphasizes that women have a supporting role and should not go and actually fight unless called for: "the situation in the Ummah [Muslim community] is not that desperate yet that sisters are called to fight. Those sisters who voluntarily want to join the fighting for reward from Allah are advised to not go unless the leader of Jihad in that place calls sisters to fight."<sup>19</sup> All of the activities mentioned in this article (raising *mujahid* children, medical assistance to fighters, encouragement, prayer) are traditional in nature and do not go even as far as Haykal did.

The Syrian writer, Nawaf al-Takruri, who in his repeated editions of *al-'Amaliyyat al-istishhadiyya fi al-mizan al-fiqhi* (*Martyrdom Operations in the Legal Balance*) has dealt with most of the legal questions associated with suicide attacks, covered the question of women suicide attackers in the 4th edition. The fact that the earlier editions did not cover this question demonstrates the relative newness of the practice. Al-Takruri accepts Haykal's ideas concerning women fighting in the *jihad*, and despite their revolutionary nature, takes them as his starting point. However, as he reviews the literature

concerning women fighting during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (summarized earlier) he does not mention the secondary role of women at all, but emphasizes only their personal and violent participation in the fighting process.

But even al-Takruri recognizes that fighting is different than participating in a martyrdom operation. He quickly brings out the source of his difficulty: the probability that a woman in order to effectively carry out a martyrdom operation would have to dress in an immodest fashion. He notes that, whereas a woman has the advantage of being less suspect than a man, for a woman to carry the amount of explosives necessary to carry out an effective operation she would have to either wear so many clothes that she would stand out (hence nullifying her initial advantage) or else carry a minimal amount of explosives and dress in an immodest fashion. This is no small matter for him because he explains to his readers that he agonized over this section of the book more than any other, and in the end was not able to come to a conclusion. Although he states that the necessity of fighting *jihad* often nullifies parts of the *shari'a* (giving examples), in good conscience he cannot mandate immodest dress for a woman (which for him means exposing her lower legs and arms).<sup>20</sup>

Al-Takruri cites six *fatwas* allowing women to participate in martyrdom operations: by Yusuf al-Qaradawi (the famous TV and radio personality), three faculty at al-Azhar University in Egypt, Faysal al-Mawlawi of the European Council for Research and Legal Opinion (based in Dublin),<sup>21</sup> and Nizar 'Abd al-Qadir Riyyan of the Islamic University of Gaza (Palestine).<sup>22</sup> It is significant that the more conservative Jordanian, Syrian, and Saudi religious leaders are completely absent from this list. One can see that the question of women participating in suicide attacks has become associated with the Egyptian—Palestinian and consequently more progressive side of the Muslim world. If the Syrian al-Takruri agonized over the participation of women for the conservatives the idea was anathema.

### ***Fatwas in Action: Chechnya and Palestine***

Although al-Takruri wrote his book with the intention of supporting suicide attacks against Israel, *Amaliyat* still has a decidedly academic and detached quality to it. This quality persists to some extent with regard to the Chechens. There is some irony in the fact that although the separatists in Chechnya—whether nationalists or radical Muslims—have produced more women suicide attackers than any other conflict (with the possible exception of the Kurdish PKK) in any Muslim countries, the *fatwa* designed to legitimize their behavior is decidedly ambiguous. On 10 June 2000 Hawa Barayev, a close relative of several prominent Chechen commanders, drove a truck filled with explosives into a building housing Russian Special Forces and killed 27 of them (according to the accounts of the Chechen separatists). This event occasioned the “Islamic Ruling on the Permissibility of Martyrdom Operations: Did Hawa Barayev Commit Suicide or Achieve Martyrdom?,” which has since become one of the chief documents used by radical Muslims to prove that “martyrdom operations” are in accord with Muslim law.<sup>23</sup> The irony of the matter was that women’s participation in *jihad* is not mentioned even once in the *fatwa*, most probably because it was written by “a council of scholars from the Arabian Peninsula” (i.e., Wahhabis from Saudi Arabia) who did not want to think about the implications of women participating in martyrdom operations.<sup>24</sup> However, some radical websites have ascribed “The Islamic Ruling” to Yusuf al-Ayyiri (killed 2003), in which case it can be related to his later discussion of women and *jihad* (see later).



There is also some ambiguity with regard to the Palestinian *fatwa* literature enjoining women's right to participate in suicide attacks. Comparatively speaking the Palestinians have come late to the issue of women's martyrdom operations, and despite the *fatwa* of Nizar al-Riyyan (cited earlier), probably only began to choose women attackers out of desperation. This desperation was not the lack of qualified male suicide attackers, but most probably the desire to skew the profile of the typical suicide attacker that the Israeli intelligence and security forces had developed. In addition to al-Rayyan, other Palestinian religious leaders are known to have dealt with the question of women's martyrdom, such as Dr. Salam Salamah, again of the Islamic University of Gaza, who cited Umm 'Umara (see earlier) who lived during the time of the Prophet Muhammad as an example of someone who asked for martyrdom but was not granted it.<sup>25</sup> There is no evidence in the historical sources for this, however, as she is merely said to have fought together with men at Uhud.

However, as with al-Takruri, there are some discordant voices. The reward aspect of the female martyr has confused Hamas. Male martyrs traditionally received extravagant sexual rewards in heaven, but in the classical sources no such rewards are specified for women. On 18 January 2002 the Hamas website was asked the pointed question:

I wanted to ask: what is the reward of a female martyr who performs a martyrdom operation; does she marry 72 of the houris?

[*answer*] . . . the female martyr gains the same reward as does the male, with the exception of this one aspect [the houris], so that the female martyr will be with the same husband with whom she dies. "And those who have believed and their progeny, followed them in belief, We shall join their progeny to them. We shall not deprive them of any of their work; every man shall be bound by what he has earned" [52:21]. The one who is martyred and has no husband will be married to one of the people of Paradise.<sup>26</sup>

Because this reward is significantly less attractive than that of a male martyr it is clear that the question has not been fully answered and the subject remains to be developed. In retrospect it seems that the ideological preparations for women's suicide attacks among Palestinian radical Muslims has yet to be fully fleshed out. At the time, Ahmad Yasin (founder and ideological leader of Hamas) voiced the same reservations as Nawaf al-Takruri was to do in his *al-'Amaliyyat al-istishhadiyya* (cited earlier), and stated that no woman should be allowed to go out for *jihad* without a male chaperon, for which he was criticized by some in the Palestinian media.<sup>27</sup> Popular pressure eventually forced Yasin to retract his critique, and since that time Hamas has embraced the idea of female suicide attackers. Other conservatives have also demonstrated some flexibility in this manner.

### Yusuf al-'Ayyiri and the Saudi Arabian Al-Qaeda

One of the most unusual and unexpected changes in Saudi Arabian radical Islam is the willingness of certain revolutionary writers to embrace the idea of women fighting in *jihad*. Yusuf al-'Ayyiri, who was one of the ideological leaders of the Saudi Arabian branch of al-Qaeda prior to his death at the hands of security forces in June 2003, penned a document entitled *Dawr al-nisa' fi jihad al-'ada'* (*The Role of Women in the Jihad against Enemies*).<sup>28</sup> Like his intellectual predecessors, al-'Ayyiri begins his pam-

phlet (18 pages long) with a discussion of the low state of the Muslim world and the general necessity for *jihad* in order to redeem the honor of Islam and to “raise the Word of God to the highest.” He states that women are frequently one of the main reasons why men find it difficult to fight *jihad*. Just as Ibn al-Nahhas and others cited in this article, he notes that women tie men to this world, create familial responsibilities and make them hesitate to go out and fight. However, he does not take the misogynist turn that Ibn al-Nahhas did or emphasize the sexual rewards awaiting men in paradise. Instead, he appears to want to bring women into the *jihad* process rather than allowing them to remain on the sidelines.

In order to accomplish this, like all of those cited earlier, he brings examples of women fighters from Islamic history. Al-‘Ayyiri offers the examples of eight women, all except one of them fighters (like Um ‘Umara), but he does not only draw from those who lived during the time of the Prophet Muhammad, but selects several who lived during medieval times. Seven of these are actual fighters. Thus, al-‘Ayyiri in his selection deliberately focuses on women as fighters, rather than in a supportive role. He continues to the present day and gives examples of four contemporary women fighters, among them Hawa Barayev and three others from the Afghan war against the U.S.S.R. Again, all of them participated in actual violence.

However, al-‘Ayyiri at the end of his pamphlet avoids making the revolutionary call of women to the battlefield that seems to be the tone of his pamphlet until then. Instead, he merely states that women should take the earlier examples to heart when they know that their husbands or sons are going to fight *jihad*, and not be obstacles. This comparatively muted conclusion is much more startling because in his final paragraphs al-‘Ayyiri very casually destroys two of the principal blocks against women actually fighting in *jihad*: that they would need the permission of their parents and that according to al-Bukhari women’s *jihad* is the performance of the *hajj* ritual. He states unequivocally that because *jihad* at this present time is a *fard ‘ayn* it is incumbent on women as well as men, without regard to parental permission. And as for the idea that the *hajj* supercedes *jihad* he cites a tradition that enumerates the importance of various activities, and lists them in the following order: prayer, *jihad*, and respect toward parents. With these two comments he has laid the intellectual ground for the full participation of women in *jihad* among radical Muslims.

It is difficult to say why al-‘Ayyiri did not take the final step and actually call for women to participate in *jihad*. Perhaps within the conservative context of the Saudi Arabian society he felt that he could not make such a call. Comparing his earlier work, if indeed he wrote it, “The Islamic Ruling” cited earlier, to this pamphlet one perhaps could note a pattern of indirect suggestion. Nominally “The Islamic Ruling” was supposed to answer the question of whether Hawa Barayev committed suicide or not. Although the document exhaustively covers the question of martyrdom operations and their legality, the author does not even once deal with the question of women participating in such actions. But perhaps the choice of Barayev, given the fact that she was hardly the only Muslim (Chechen, Palestinian, or other) available about whom one could ask the question of whether the martyrdom operation they initiated was Islamically legitimate, indicates a desire to open women up to consideration. If this was indeed the case, then perhaps al-‘Ayyiri in this document desired to indirectly destroy the religious and intellectual impediments to women participating in *jihad* without being too direct. Although this is speculative, and to date radical Saudi Muslims have not demonstrated a desire to follow up on his work,<sup>29</sup> it is possible that in the future a further weakening of the taboo against women fighting in *jihad* will be seen among radicals.



## Conclusions

Classical Islamic sources are fairly negative about the role of women in *jihad*. Although some historical anecdotal evidence is available, it is clear that for the most part women did not fight in pre-modern times. This is reflected in the conservative genre of Muslim law. However, it is equally clear that radical Muslims—among whom al-Takruri must be numbered—have been attempting to legitimize women’s participation in *jihad*. These attempts are qualified by a number of problems: questions of reward for martyrdom as well as issues of gender division and sexual purity noted earlier. The legal issues raised here are too recent for the outsider to know whether this revolutionary change in *jihad* will be accepted by the larger Muslim community.

It is significant to note that the locations where women participate in martyrdom operations on a large scale (Chechnya and Palestine) are two of the more secularized and well-educated areas in the Muslim world. Chechnya, especially after living for decades under the secular Soviet regime, has a severe lack of Islamic knowledge. To date, women fighting in *jihad* have only been a factor in these nationalist—Islamic resistance movements (Palestinian and Chechen), but not in other globalist radical Muslim warfare. With the exception of al-‘Ayyiri, al-Qaeda does not appear to have promoted the use of women in *jihad*, let alone in suicide attacks, although, as a result of the legal discussions conducted by these other radical Muslim groups, there do not seem to be any serious ideological impediments remaining for them to attack. One suspects that the reasons for the non-appearance of women among al-Qaeda attackers is simply the social conservatism that prevails in Muslim societies. If al-Qaeda and other globalist radical Muslim groups do allow women to fight in *jihad* one suspects that the initial trial attempts will be drawn from expatriate Muslim communities, Palestinians or Chechens.

A woman’s right to join men on the battlefield (or other locations in which *jihad* is waged), to fight using their methods, in sharp contradistinction to the classical sources, can only be seen as a radical change in Islam and as such has been treated with suspicion by Muslim conservatives. However, it is also clear that the radicals have been able to establish a fairly strong intellectual and religious case for women fighting.

## Notes

1. ‘Abdallah b. Isma‘il al-Bukhari (d. 869), *Sahih* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1991), III, p. 265 (no. 2788).
2. For example, al-Bukhari, *Sahih*, III, p. 264 (no. 2784).
3. Al-Maqdisi (d. 1226), *Hadith al-iftk wa-yalihi min Manaqib al-nisa’ al-sahabiyyat* (Damascus: Dar al-Basha’ir, 1994), p. 59.
4. *Ibid*, pp. 53–54.
5. ‘Aliyya Mustafa Mubarak, *Sahabiyyat mujahidat* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, n.d.).
6. Al-Bukhari, *Sahih*, III, pp. 292 (no. 2879).
7. *Ibid*, pp. 292–293 (nos. 2880–3).
8. Al-Bukhari, VII, p. 72 (no. 5886); for discussion, see Everett Rowson, “The effeminate of early Medina,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 111 (1991), pp. 671–693.
9. See Carole Hillenbrand, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), pp. 348–349; *Alf Layla wa-layla* (Trans. Richard Burton, London, 1885–1886), II pp. 114–119 (story of ‘Umar al-Nu‘man which can be dated to the time of the Crusades), V, 277–283; and the Kirghiz epic of Manas, Walter May (trans.), *Manas* (Moscow and Bishkek, 1995), I, p. 297 f. as well as popular Persian tales such as *Samak-i Ayyar*.
10. Muhammad b. Sulayman al-Masisi (d. 859), *Juz’ fihi min hadith Lawin* (Riyad: Maktabat al-Rushd, 1998), p. 125 (no. 113); compare the fuller versions in Ibn Abi al-Dunya (d. 894),

*Mudarat al-nas* (Beirut: Dar Ibn Hazm, 1998), p. 144 (no. 173); Ibn Bishran (d. 1039), *Amali* (Riyad: Dar al-Watan, 1997), pp. 28–29 (no. 11); Ibn ‘Asakir (d. 1173), *Ta’rikh Madinat Dimashq* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1995–2000), VII, pp. 363–364.

11. Ibn Babawayhi (d. 991), *Man la yahduruhu al-faqih* (Beirut: Dar al-Adwa’, 1992), III, p. 316.

12. Ibn Abi al-‘Asim (d. 900), *Kitab al-jihad* (Medina: Maktabat al-‘Ulum wa-l-Hikam, 1989), I, p. 141 (no. 11).

13. Ibn al-Mubarak (d. 797), *Kitab al-jihad*, pp. 38 (no. 22), 117–118 (no. 142), 124–125 (no. 150); and see also Ibn Abi Zaminayn (d. 1009), *Qudwat al-ghazi* (Beirut: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 1989), p. 242.

14. Ibn al-Nahhas al-Dumyati (d. 1414), *Mashari‘ al-ashwaq ila masari‘ al-‘ushshaq* (Beirut: Dar al-Basha’ir al-Islamiyya, 2002), I, p. 129 (no. 60), see also I, pp. 215–217.

15. Muhammad Khayr Haykal, *al-Jihad wa-l-qital fi al-siyasa al-shara’iyya* (Beirut: Dar al-Barayiq, 1993), II, pp. 995–997.

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 1013–1018. Unfortunately my copy of Haykal suffers from a blank page where he gives the details that would support this conclusion, but it is one that accords with my own.

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 1019–1022.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 1024.

19. “Sisters’ Role in Jihad,” available at (<http://www.qoqaz.co.za/html/articlessistersinjihad.htm>).

20. Nawaf al-Takruri, *al-‘Amaliyyat al-istishhadiyya fi al-mizan al-fiqhi* (Damascus: al-Takruri, 2003), pp. 208–213.

21. One should note that this organization was founded by al-Qaradawi and is intellectually dominated by him.

22. *Ibid.*, pp. 212–23.

23. For example, see ([http://www.animal-cruelty.com/sister\\_hawaa.htm](http://www.animal-cruelty.com/sister_hawaa.htm)), “Sister Hawaa’ Barayev Martyrdom Attack on a Russian Military” [sic!].

24. See my “Suicide Attacks or ‘Martyrdom Operations’ in Contemporary *Jihad* Literature,” *Nova Religio*, 6 (2002), pp. 7–20 for a full discussion of this text.

25. Taken from memri.org (28 October 2003), cited from the Palestinian newspaper *al-Hayat al-Jadida* (28 October 2003).

26. Kataeb-ezzeldeen.com/fatwa (no. 3) (10 November 2002); for the legality of women conducting “martyrdom operations,” see al-Takruri, *‘Amaliyyat al-istishhadiyya*, pp. 208–223.

27. See memri.org, “Inquiry and Analysis” nos. 83–85 (12–14 February 2002): “Wafa Idris: The Celebration of the First Female Palestinian Suicide Bomber.”

28. It is available at e-prism.com.

29. For example, the appearance of the Saudi Arabian radical Muslim journal *al-Khansa’* (aimed at women) does not encourage them to actually take part in fighting.

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