

GLOBALIZATION

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"Globalization" has become the buzzword of our time. But what does it mean? Rather than forcing a complicated social phenomenon into a single analytical framework, this series seeks to present globalization as a multidimensional process constituted by complex, often contradictory interactions of global, regional, and local aspects of social life. Since conventional disciplinary borders and lines of demarcation are losing their old rationales in a globalizing world, authors in this series apply an interdisciplinary framework to the study of globalization. In short, the main purpose and objective of this series is to support subject-specific inquiries into the dynamics and effects of contemporary globalization and its varying impacts across, between, and within societies.

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GLOBALISMS

THE GREAT IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE
OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

THIRD EDITION

MANFRED B. STEGER

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Experiencing considerable anxiety over the dissolution of secure boundaries and familiar borders, groups such as industrial workers and small farmers are losing their former privileged status in traditional social hierarchies. As people's old identities are subjected to a growing sense of fragmentation and alienation, one possible response to the new challenges of our shrinking world lies in assigning blame to internal and external Others for the desecration of the familiar.

In their appeal to "globalization losers," Buchanan, Dobbs, and other successful national populists are calling for a halt to the mighty dynamic of globalization. Capitalizing on these people's sense of powerlessness in the face of massive structural change, they give voice to the authoritarian longing for a bygone world of cultural uniformity, moral certainty, and national superiority. Mark Worrell notes that although national-populist leaders wear an egalitarian label and valorize the power of grassroots democracy, they actually contribute to the decline of participatory democracy: "Buchananism does not promise collective and democratic participation, but redemption by the hero."³⁰

Championing the simplistic idea of social change through the deeds of great men, Buchanan and Dobbs attack market globalism as the doctrine of hedonistic economic determinists who lack not only the motive but also the will and the courage to resist the forces of globalization. Promising to lead America's struggle against neoliberal internationalism, Buchanan told the Daughters of the American Revolution, "It is time Americans took their country back. Before we lose her forever, let us take America back from the global parasites of the World Bank and the IMF who siphon off America's wealth for Third World socialists and incompetents. And, let us take her back from the agents of influence who occupy this city [Washington, D.C.] and do the bidding of foreign powers."³¹

Indeed, the national-populist critique of market globalism is both "reactionary" and "conservative" in that it seeks to retain the familiar national framework at any cost. Stuck in the old paradigm, its proponents fail to provide their audiences with an alternative globalist vision. Still, their projection of community as the traditional nation should not lead us to conclude that all styles of populism have to remain inevitably nationalist. While all forms of populism remain inescapably tied to some conceptualization of "the people," there is no compelling reason why the conceptualization of "the people" and *necessarily* refer to a national community. As we noted in the previous chapter, the more encompassing imagining of "the people" offered by justice globalists clearly transcends the national framework. The same is true for jihadist globalists like Osama bin Laden who incorporate

AL QAEDA'S JIHADIST GLOBALISM

into their militant version of political Islam a populist style of rhetoric that deconstructs "the people" as the *umma of tawhid*—the *global* Islamic community of believers in the oneness of the one and only God. Unlike national populism, however, this religiously inspired style of populist rhetoric has been merged with political Islam to create a comprehensive ideology capable of translating the rising global imaginary into concrete political terms and programs. Today, jihadist globalism represents market globalism's most formidable ideological challenger from the political Right.

After the al Qaeda attacks of 9/11, scores of commentators around the world pointed to radical Islamism as one of the most potent ideological challengers to market globalism. Nevertheless, except for al Qaeda's worldwide network, most of these voices saw nothing "global" in bin Laden's worldview. Rather, they castigated his brand of Islamism as "backward" and "parochial," typical of a religious fanatic who represented one of the reactionary forces undermining globalization. As we will argue here, however, al Qaeda's potent political belief system powered by religious symbols and metaphors not only represents the second and more powerful camp of market globalism's challengers from the political Right but also reflects the complex dynamics of globalization. For this reason, this ideology can best be described as "jihadist globalism." The famous post-9/11 "bin Laden videotapes" broadcast worldwide between 2001 and 2008 testifies to al Qaeda's immediate access to sophisticated information and telecommunication networks that kept the leadership informed, in real time, of relevant international developments. Bin Laden and his top lieutenants may have denounced the forces of modernity with great conviction, but the smooth operation of his entire organization was entirely dependent on advanced forms of technology developed in the last two decades of the twentieth century.

To further illustrate the global dynamics reflected in al Qaeda's jihadism, consider bin Laden's personal appearance. The October 7, 2001, videotape shows him wearing contemporary military fatigues over traditional Arab garments. In other words, his dress reflects contemporary projections of fragmentation and cross-fertilization that globalization scholars call "hybridization"—the mixing of different cultural forms and styles facilitated by global economic and cultural exchanges. In fact, the pale colors of bin Laden's mouled combat dress betrayed its Russian origins, suggesting that he wore the jacket as a symbolic reminder of the fierce guerrilla

as bin Laden's romantic ideology of a "pure Islam" is itself an articulation of the global imaginary, so has our global age, with its insatiable appetite for technology, mass-market commodities, and celebrities, indelibly shaped the ideological structure of jihadist globalism. But let us start our investigation with an exploration of the political context.

The origins of al Qaeda can be traced back to the *Maktab al-Khidamat* (MAK; "Office of Services"), a Pakistan-based support organization for Arab mujahideen fighting invading Soviet troops in Afghanistan. Set up in 1980 by bin Laden and his Palestinian teacher and mentor Abdullah Azzam, MAK received sizable contributions from the government of Saudi Arabia as well as private donors from other Islamic countries. It also enjoyed the protection of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence Agency intent on replacing, with support from the Central Intelligence Agency, the communist puppet regime in Kabul with an Islamist government friendly to Pakistan. Thus, al Qaeda and other radical Islamist groups operating at the time in this region should be seen as creatures of the Cold War which eventually outlived the purpose assigned to them by their benefactors. Left without much support after the withdrawal of the Soviet troops in 1989, the multinational coalition of Arab-Afghani fighters found itself put out of business by its own success. Stranded in a country devastated by decades of continual warfare, the victorious mujahideen lacked a clear sense of purpose or mission.

As can be gleaned from the burgeoning literature on the subject, the term "Islamism" has been used in many different ways by both Muslim and non-Muslim scholars to refer to various "movements" and "ideologies" dedicated to the revival of Islam and its full political realization. Related terms currently in circulation include "political Islam," "Islamic fundamentalism," "Islamist purism," and "Islamofascism."²² Our focus on al Qaeda's jihadist globalism is meant neither to downplay the diversity of ideological currents within Islamism nor to present a single brand as its most representative or authentic manifestation. Rather, our interest in bin Laden's doctrine attests to the tremendous political and ideological influence of jihadist globalism around the world. Second, it highlights the rise of new political ideologies resulting from the ongoing deterritorialization of Islam. Third, it recognizes the religious Right's most successful ideological attempt yet to articulate the rising global imaginary around the core religious concepts of umma (Muslim community), jihad (armed or unarmed "struggle" against unbelief purely for the sake of God and his umma), and *tawhid* (the absolute unity of God). Indeed, the label "jihadist globalism" applies also to those Christian fundamentalist ideologies that seek to establish a

war waged by him and other Islamic militants against the Soviet occupation forces in Afghanistan during the 1980s.

His ever-present AK-47 Kalashnikov, too, was probably made in Russia, although dozens of gun factories around the world have been building this popular assault rifle for over forty years. By the mid-1990s, more than 70 million Kalashnikovs had been manufactured in Russia and abroad. At least fifty national armies include such rifles in their arsenals, making Kalashnikovs truly weapons of global choice. Thus, bin Laden's AK-47 could have come from anywhere in the world. However, given the astonishing globalization of organized crime during the past two decades, it is quite conceivable that bin Laden's rifle was part of an illegal arms deal hatched and executed by such powerful international criminal organizations as al Qaeda and the Russian Mafia. It is also possible that the rifle arrived in Afghanistan by means of an underground arms trade similar to the one that surfaced in May 1996, when police in San Francisco seized 2,000 illegally imported AK-47s manufactured in China.

A close look at bin Laden's right wrist reveals yet another clue to the powerful dynamics of globalization. As he directs his words of contempt for the United States and its allies at his handheld microphone, his retreating sleeve exposes a stylish sports watch. Journalists who noticed this expensive accessory have speculated about the origins of the timepiece in question. The emerging consensus points to a Timex product. However, given that Timex watches are as American as apple pie, it seems rather ironic that the al Qaeda leader should have chosen this particular brand. After all, Timex Corporation, originally the Waterbury Clock Company, was founded in the 1850s in Connecticut's Naugatuck Valley, known throughout the nineteenth century as the "Switzerland of America." Today, the company has gone multinational, maintaining close relations to affiliated businesses and sales offices in sixty-five countries. The corporation employs 7,500 employees located on four continents. Thousands of workers—mostly from low-wage countries in the global South—constitute the driving force behind Timex's global production process.²³

Our brief deconstruction of some of the central images on the videotape makes it easier to detect the global within the apparently anachronistic expressions of a supposedly "antiglobalist" terrorist. In his subsequent taped appearances, bin Laden presented himself more as a learned Muslim cleric than a holy warrior. In a September 2007 tape, he even went so far as to show off his neatly trimmed and dyed beard. But even this softened image of one of the world's most famous mujahideen ("holy warriors") does not change the overarching reality of intensifying global interdependence. Just

training camps for militants. Stripped of his Saudi citizenship in 1994, bin Laden forged a lasting alliance with Ayman al-Zawahiri, the charismatic leader of the radical Egyptian group Islamic Jihad. This partnership would eventually lead to the formation of the World Islamic Front, with main branches in Pakistan and Bangladesh and an unknown number of affiliated cells around the world.

Forced to leave Sudan in 1996 as a result of mounting U.S. pressure on the Turabi regime, bin Laden and his entourage returned to Afghanistan, where they entered into an uneasy relationship with the Taliban, whose forces, led by Mullah Omar, managed to capture Kabul in the same year. Imposing a strict version of shari'a (God-given, Islamic law) on the Afghan population, the Taliban based its rule on the "true tenets of Islam" alleged to have been realized in the world only once before by the seventh-century *salaf* (pious predecessors) who led the umma for three generations following the death of the Prophet. By the end of the 1990s, bin Laden had openly pledged his allegiance to the Taliban, most likely in exchange for the regime's willingness to shelter his organization from U.S. retaliation following the devastating 1998 al Qaeda bombings of the American embas-

sies in Kenya and Tanzania. To show his gratitude to his hosts, bin Laden referred to the Taliban leader Mullah Omar as the "Commander of the Faithful"—one of the honorific titles of the caliph, the Islamic ruler of both the religious and the civil spheres. Since this designation was deprived of its last bearer in 1924 when the modernist Turkish leader Kemal Atatürk replaced the Ottoman caliphate with a secular nation-state, bin Laden's fondness for it signifies nothing less than his rejection of eight decades of Islamic modernism—in both its nationalist and its socialist garbs—as well as his affirmation of Taliban-ruled Afghanistan as the nucleus of a global caliphate destined to halt the long decline of the Islamic world and the corresponding ascendancy of the West. His anti-Western convictions notwithstanding, bin Laden never hesitated to use modern technology to com-

municate his message. As Bruce Lawrence notes, the bulk of bin Laden's writings and public addresses emerged in the context of a "virtual world" moving from print to the Internet and from wired to wireless communication. Largely scriptural in mode, the sheikh's "messages to the world" are deliberately designed for the new global media. As we have seen, they appear on video and audio tapes, websites, and handwritten letters scanned onto computer disks and delivered to Arabic-language news outlets of global reach. Bin Laden conveys his ideological claims in carefully crafted language that draws on the five traditional types of Muslim public discourse: the declaration, the jurid-

global Christian community by means of a violent "struggle" against the forces of secularism and "false belief."

Osama bin Laden was born in 1957 the seventeenth son of Muhammad bin Laden, a migrant laborer from Yemen who created a multibillion-dollar construction empire in his adopted Saudi Arabia. Bin Laden's early experiments with libertarian Western lifestyles ended abruptly when he encountered political Islam in classes taught by Abdallah Azzam and Muhammad Qutb at King Abd al-Aziz University in Jiddah. After earning a graduate degree in business administration, the ambitious young man proved his managerial talent during a short stint in his father's corporation. But his professional successes were soon trumped by his fervent religious vocation, expressed in his support of the Arab mujahideen in their struggle against the Soviet-backed Afghan regime. Acquiring extensive skill in setting up guerrilla training camps and planning military operations, bin Laden saw battle on several occasions and quickly acquired a stellar reputation for his martial valor. Euphoric at the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan but bitterly disappointed by the waning support of the United States and Arab countries, bin Laden returned to Riyadh in 1990 as a popu-

lar hero, his close ties to the Saudi regime still intact. At the time, Saddam Hussein's occupation of Kuwait was threatening the balance of power in the Middle East. To counter the threat, the House of Saud invited half a million "infidels"—American and other foreign troops—into their country, ostensibly for a short period of time and solely for protective purposes. To ensure religious legitimacy for its decision, the government then pressured the Saudi *ulama* (learned interpreters of the sacred texts) to approve of the open-ended presence of foreign troops in the Land of the Holy Two Sanctuaries (Mecca and Medina). The scholars complied, ultimately even granting permission for Muslims to join the U.S.-led "Operation Desert Storm" against Iraq in 1991.

Stung by the royal family's rejection of his proposal to organize thousands of Arab-Afghan veterans and outraged by their enlistment of foreign militants in defense of the kingdom against a possible Iraqi attack, bin Laden severed all ties with the Saudi regime. Like tens of thousands of angry religious dissenters, bin Laden, too, denounced these acts of "religious heresy" and "moral corruption" and openly accused the rulers of selling out to the West. The Saudi government immediately responded to these accusations with political repression, arresting several opposition leaders and shutting down their organizations. Bin Laden and his closest associates fled to Sudan, where the sympathetic Islamist government of Hassan al-Turabi offered them political exile and the opportunity to create dozens of new

corrupters of religion and the world" even more dangerous than the medieval Christian crusaders or the thirteenth-century Mongol conquerors of the mighty Abbasid Empire is their all-out "campaign against the Muslim world in its entirety, aiming to get rid of Islam itself."⁴⁷ Rather than supporting the umma at this critical point in history when the Judeo-Crusader alliance has "violated her honor, shed her blood, and occupied her sanctuaries," Saudi Arabia and other Islamic countries have colluded with the infidel enemy. Abandoning the umma in her hour of need, these "apostate rulers" have desecrated the true religion of God's messenger and thereby lost their political legitimacy. Likewise, Islamic scholars and clerics who lent their learned voices to the defense of these "defiant Arab tyrannies" deserve to be treated as "cowardly heretics" and "traitors to the faith."

In true populist fashion, bin Laden directs his first public letter intended for a wider audience against the appointed head of Saudi Arabia's collaborationist *ulema*. In addition to accusing the mufti of spiritual corruption, he also objects to his alleged willingness to turn a blind eye to the moral decay of modern Islamic societies, most visibly reflected in their toleration of practices of usury expressly prohibited in the Qur'an. The letter also laments the *ulema's* unwillingness to resort to more drastic measures to prevent the further intrusion of Western values at the expense of Muslim principles. In several poignant passages, bin Laden identifies as the worst feature of the present age of *jahiliyya* (ignorance; pagan idolatry) "the degree of degradation and corruption to which our Islamic umma has sunk."⁴⁸

But what, precisely, does bin Laden mean by "umma"? After all, this core concept, together with *jihad* and *tawhid*, serves as the ideological anchor of his political belief system. In the sheikh's major writings, one finds ample textual evidence for his populist understanding of umma.⁴⁹ As Mohammed Bamyeh notes, the concept of the "Islamic community" has functioned historically as an equivalent of the Western idea of "the people," empowered to set limits to the tyrannical tendencies of governing elites.⁵⁰ Drawing on this traditional understanding of the umma, bin Laden emphasizes that political authority can never rest on "popular sovereignty," for political rule is not the exclusive property of the people. Rather, the righteous umma exercises political power in the name of God only, thus building its political institutions on the foundation of Islamic sovereignty.⁵¹ Since God's authority transcends all political borders and any humanly designated lines of demarcation, the umma supersedes not only ancient tribal solidarities and traditional kinship structures but, most importantly, modern Western conceptions of community rooted in the national imaginary.

ical degree, the lecture, the written reminder, and the episode. Disdainful of ghostwritten tracts of the kind supplied by professional speechwriters to many politicians, he produces eloquent pieces of Arabic prose that speak in the "authentic, compelling voice of a visionary, with what can only be called a powerful lyricism."⁴³ Bin Laden's writings over the past fifteen years amount to a coherent doctrine appealing to millions of Muslims. His post-9/11 messages, in particular, contain specific instructions to the faithful on how to resist the advances of the American Empire, the "New Rome."

The ideological edifice of jihadist globalism rests on the populist evocation of an exceptional crisis: the umma has been subjected to an unprecedented wave of attacks on its territories, values, and economic resources. Although he blames the global "Judeo-Crusader alliance," bin Laden considers its assault on Islam to be the expression of an evil much larger than that represented by particular nation-states or imperialist alliances.⁴⁴ At the same time, however, he and his lieutenants insist that the forces of "global unbelief" are led by specific individuals like President George W. Bush or by concrete "hegemonic organizations of universal infidelity" such as the United States and the United Nations.⁴⁵ In their view, the collapse of the Soviet Empire—attributed directly to the efforts of the Arab-Alqhan mujahideen—has made America even more haughty and imperialistic:

[I]t has started to see itself as the Master of this world and established what it calls the new world order. . . . The U.S. today, as a result of this arrogance, has set a double standard, calling whoever goes against its injustice a terrorist. It wants to occupy our countries, steal our resources, install collaborators to rule us with man-made laws, and wants us to agree on all these issues. If we refuse to do so, it will say we are terrorists.⁴⁶

Bin Laden cites as evidence for such "Satanic acts of aggression" the open-ended presence of American troops on the Arabian peninsula, the ongoing Israeli oppression of the Palestinian people, the 1993 American operations against Muslim warlords in Somalia, the Western indifference to the slaughter of thousands of Bosnian Muslims during the 1991–1995 Yugoslav civil war, and the economic sanctions imposed by the West on Iraq after the first Gulf War that contributed to the death of countless innocent civilians. Indebted to the discursive legacy of Third World liberationism, the sheikh considers these immoral and imperialist acts inflicted by Western powers on the umma but the latest crimes in a series of humiliations that can be traced back to the Great Powers' division of the Ottoman Empire after World War I and the post-World War II establishment of the Jewish state in Palestine. But what makes today's "attacking enemies and

one *umma*, and our Book is one."⁵⁵ Expressing a populist yearning for strong leaders who set things right by fighting corrupt elites and returning power back to the "Muslim masses," al-Zawahiri shares his leader's vision of how to restore the *umma* to its earlier glory.⁵⁶ In their view, the process of regeneration must start with a small but dedicated vanguard willing to sacrifice their lives as martyrs to the holy cause of awakening the people to their religious duties—not just in traditionally Islamic countries but also wherever members of the world's Muslims living today as minorities in non-Islamic societies, bin Laden regards the restoration of the *umma* as no longer a local, national, or even regional event. Rather, it requires a concerted *global* effort spearheaded by a jihadist vanguard operating in various localities around the world. Al Qaeda's desired Islamization of modernity takes place in global space emancipated from the confining territoriality of "Egypt" or the "Middle East" that used to constitute the political framework of religious nationalists fighting modern secular regimes in the twentieth century. As Olivier Roy observes, "The Muslim *umma* (or community) no longer has anything to do with a territorial entity. It has to be thought of in abstract and imaginary terms."⁵⁷

Although al Qaeda embraces the Manichaean dualism of a "clash of civilizations" between its imagined global *umma* and global *kufr* (unbelief), its globalism transcends clear-cut civilizational fault lines. Its desire for the restoration of a transnational *umma* attests to the globalization and westernization of the Muslim world just as much as it reflects the Islamization of the West. Constructed in the ideational interregnum between the national and the global, jihadist-globalist claims still retain potent metaphorical and resonant with people's national or even tribal solidarities.⁵⁸ And yet, al Qaeda's focus is firmly on the global as its leaders successfully redirected militant Islamism's struggle from the traditional "Near Enemy" (secular-nationalist Middle Eastern regimes) to the "Far Enemy" (the globalizing West). This remarkable discursive and strategic shift reflects the destabilization of the national imaginary. By the early 1990s, nationally based Islamist groups were losing steam, partly as a result of their inability to mobilize their respective communities around national concerns and partly because they were subjected to more effective counterstrategies devised by secular-nationalist regimes.

Hence, bin Laden and al-Zawahiri urged their followers to take the war against Islam's enemies global. Al Qaeda's simple ideological imperative—rebuild a unified global *umma* through global jihad against global *kufri*—resonated with the dynamics of a globalizing world. It held a special appeal

To be sure, contemporary Muslims carry national passports, but their primary solidarity must lie with the *umma*, a community that encompasses the entire globe: "You know, we are linked to all of the Islamic world, whether that be Yemen, Pakistan, or wherever. We are part of one unified *umma*."⁵²

This central idea of "the people of the Qur'an" having been commanded by God to safeguard His sovereignty and to resist the sinful influences of despots, heretics, and infidels usurping God's ultimate sovereignty received its most radical modern interpretation in the writings of the Egyptian political Islamist Sayyid Qutb, the older brother of bin Laden's influential teacher at al-Aziz University. Taking as his point of departure the Islamic doctrine of *lawhidiyya*, Qutb argued that all worldly power belongs to the one and only Lord of the Worlds whose single, unchanging will is revealed in the Qur'an. Unconditional submission to His will entails the responsibility of every member of the *umma* to prevent the domination of humans over humans, which violates the absolute authority of Allah. According to Qutb, the highest purpose of human existence is "to establish the Sovereignty and Authority of God on earth; to establish the true system revealed by God for addressing the human life; to exterminate all the Satanic forces and their ways of life; to abolish the lordship of man over other human beings."⁵³

Having failed to repel the corrupting influences of Islam's internal and external enemies, today's *umma* has fallen into the equivalent of the pre-Islamic pagan age of *jahiliyya* characterized by rampant materialism and the rebellion of unbelief against the sovereignty of God on earth. Qutb even suggests that with the disappearance of proper political governance according to shari'a, the *umma* itself had ceased to exist in its "true" form. If only ordinary Muslims somehow could be shown the seriousness of their predicament, they might renew their faith and cleanse Islamic culture of its debasing accretions. The final goal of such an Islamic revival would be the restoration of the *umma* to its original moral purity under a new *salaf* (righteous leadership). As Mary Habeck notes, Qutb's seemingly premoderern inclinations actually contain strong modernist influences that turn political Islam into "a sort of liberation ideology, designed to end oppression by human institutions and man-made laws and to return God to his rightful place as unconditional ruler of the world."⁵⁴

Qutb's version of political Islam greatly influenced al Qaeda's understanding of the *umma* as a single global community of believers united in their belief in the one and only God. As bin Laden emphasizes, "We are the children of an Islamic Nation, with the Prophet Muhammad as its leader; our Lord is one, our prophet is one, our direction of prayer is one, we are

For bin Laden, jihad and umma are important manifestations of the revealed truth of *tawhid*, the oneness of God and His creation. As we have seen, it demands that Islamic sovereignty be established on earth in the form of a caliphate without national borders or internal divisions. This totalitarianistic vision of a divinely ordained world system of governance whose timeless legal code covers all aspects of social life has prompted many commentators to condemn "jihadist Islamism" as a particularly aggressive form of "totalitarianism" that poses a serious challenge to cultural pluralism and secular democracy.⁶⁴ Responding to this charge, the al Qaeda leadership has turned the tables on its critics. Pointing to the long legacy of Western aggression against the umma, bin Laden tends to portray his organization's attacks as retaliatory measures designed to respond in kind to the oppression and murder of thousands of Muslims by the "Judeo-Crusader Alliance." The leaders of al Qaeda never hesitate to include as legitimate targets of their strikes those Muslims deemed to be "apostates" and "hand-maidens" of the infidel enemy. In their view, such actions of treachery have put Muslim "hypocrites" outside of the umma.⁶⁵ In the end, jihadist globalists fall back on a Manichaean dualism that divides the world into two antagonistic camps: "One side is the global Crusader alliance with the Zionist Jews, led by America, Britain, and Israel, and the other side is the Islamic world." For bin Laden and al-Zawahiri, reconciliation violates the Islamic imperatives of unconditional loyalty to the umma and absolute enmity to the non-Muslim world: "The Lord Almighty has commanded us to hate the infidels and reject their love. For they hate us and beguiled us our religion, wishing that we abandon it." Consequently, al Qaeda's message to Muslims all over the world is to nurture "this doctrine in their hearts" and release their hatred on Americans, Jews, and Christians: "[This hatred] is a part of our belief and our religion."⁶⁶ In an impassioned post-9/11 letter, bin Laden offers a detailed refutation of the notion that Islam should be a religion of "moderation" or "balance." In his view, "[I]t is, in fact, part of our religion to impose our particular beliefs on others. . . . And the West's notions that Islam is a religion of *jihad* and enmity toward the religions of the infidels and the infidels themselves is an accurate and true depiction." He also considers the UN-sponsored call for a "dialogue among civilizations" nothing but an "infidel notion" rooted in the "loathsome principles" of a secular West advocating an "un-Islamic" separation of religion and the state.⁶⁷

His fierce rhetoric notwithstanding, bin Laden never loses sight of the fact that jihadist globalists are fighting a steep uphill battle against the forces of imperial globalism. For example, he discusses in much detail the ability of "American media imperialism" to "seduce the Muslim world"

for Muslim youths between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five who lived for sustained periods of time in the individualized and deculturated environments of westernized Islam (or an Islamized West).⁶⁸ As Roy reminds us, this "second wave" of al Qaeda recruits, responsible for the most spectacular terrorist operations between 9/11 and the London bombings of July 7, 2005, were products of a westernized Islam. Most of them resided in Europe or North America and had few or no links to traditional Middle Eastern political parties. Their affinity for al Qaeda's transnational umma and its rigid religious code divorced from traditional cultural contexts made them prime candidates for recruitment. These young men followed in the footsteps of al Qaeda's first-wavers in Afghanistan who developed their ideological outlook among a multinational band of idealistic mujahideen.⁶⁹

If the restored, purified umma—imagined to exist in a global space that transcended particular national or tribal identities—was the final goal of populist-jihadist globalism, then jihad surely served as its principal means. For our purposes, it is not necessary to engage in long scholastic debates about the many meanings and "correct" applications of jihad. Nor do we need to excavate its long history in the Islamic world. It suffices to note that jihadist globalists like bin Laden and al-Zawahiri endorse both "offensive" and "defensive" versions of jihad.⁷⁰ Their decontestation of this core concept draws heavily on interpretations offered by Azzam and Quthb, for whom jihad represents a divinely imposed *fard 'ayn* (individual obligation) on a par with the nonnegotiable duties of prayer and fasting. Likewise, bin Laden celebrates jihad as the "peak" or "pinnacle" of Islam, emphasizing time and again that armed struggle against global *kufri* is "obligatory today on our entire umma, for our umma will stand in sin until her sons, her money, and her energies provide what it takes to establish a *jihad* that repels the evil of the infidels from harming all the Muslims in Palestine and elsewhere."⁷² For al Qaeda, jihad represents the sole path toward the noble goal of returning the umma to "her religion and correct beliefs"—not just because the venerable way of *da'wa* (preaching, admonishing) has failed to reform the treacherous Muslim elites or convert the hostile crusaders but, most importantly, because Islam is "the religion of *jihad* in the way of God so that God's word and religion reign supreme." Moreover, jihadist globalists are not choosy about the means of struggle: anything that might weaken the infidels—especially imperial globalists—suffices. Such tactics include large-scale terrorist attacks, suicide bombings, and the public killing of hostages: "To kill the Americans and their allies—civilians and military—is an individual duty incumbent upon every Muslim in all coun-

with its consumerist messages. He also makes frequent references to a "continuing and biased campaign" waged against jihadist globalism by the corporate media—"especially Hollywood"—for the purpose of misrepresenting Islam and hiding the "failures of the Western democratic system."⁶⁶ The al Qaeda leader leaves little doubt that what he considers to be the "worst civilization witnessed in the history of mankind" must be fought for its "debased materialism" and "immoral culture" as much as for its blatant "imperialism." He repeatedly accuses the United States of trying to "change the region's ideology" through the imposition of Western-style democracy and the "Americanization of our culture."⁶⁹ And yet, even against seemingly overwhelming odds, bin Laden and al-Zawahiri express their confidence in the ultimate triumph of jihad over "American Empire." The destruction of New York's "immense materialistic towers by nineteen young men" serves as an especially powerful symbol for the alleged "waning global appeal" of "Western civilization backed by America."⁷⁰ It assumes great significance in al Qaeda's jihad insofar as the successful terror attack offers the faithful clear proof that "this desiructive, usurious global economy that America uses, together with its military force, to impose unbelief and humiliation on poor people, can easily collapse. Those blessed strikes in New York and other places forced it [America] to acknowledge the loss of more than a trillion dollars, by the grace of God Almighty."⁷¹ Gloating over the staggering financial toll of the terrorist attacks on the global economy, bin Laden offers a chilling cost-benefit analysis of jihadist strategy:

[Al-Qaeda spent \$500,000 on the September 11 attacks, while America lost more than \$500 billion, at the lowest estimate, in the event and its aftermath. That makes a million American dollars for every al-Qaeda dollar, by the grace of God Almighty. This is in addition to the fact that it lost an enormous number of jobs—and as for the federal deficit, it made record losses, estimated over a trillion dollars. Still more serious for America was the fact that the mujahideen forced Bush to resort to an emergency budget in order to continue fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq. This shows the success of our plan to bleed America to the point of bankruptcy, with God's will.⁷²

This passage is part of a videotaped address aired around the world only a few days before American voters went to the polls on November 3, 2004. Bin Laden ends his speech with a warning to the American people that their security is their own responsibility, not that of corrupt Democrat or Republican political elites. Thus, the sheikh managed to inject himself into a national electoral contest as the self-appointed leader of the global

umma. Articulating the rising global imaginary as a set of political claims, jihadist globalism appeared on the TV screens of a global audience as the world's chief critic of American democracy. As Faisal Devji notes, bin Laden's brand of jihadism projected no national ambitions, for it was as global as the West itself, both being intertwined and even internal to each other: "This is why Bin Laden's calls for the United States to leave the Muslim world do not entail the return to a cold-war geopolitics of detente, but are conceived rather in terms of a global reciprocity on equal terms."⁷³

Another videotaped message delivered by the al Qaeda leader in September 2007 unleashed further verbal broadsides against imperial globalism and the "corrupt American political system." He linked the Bush administration's involvement in Iraq to transnational corporate interests that held "the American people" hostage to their all-out scramble for war-related profits. Bin Laden's critique shows a remarkable resemblance to Faisal Buchanan's populist tirades against corporate elites. Indeed, the sheikh charges "the capitalist system" with seeking "to turn the entire world into a fiefdom of the major corporations under the label of 'globalization.'"⁷⁴ However, unlike Buchanan's and Dobb's defensive attempts to hold on to the weakening national imaginary, jihadist globalists project an ideological alternative that, despite its chilling content, imagines community in unanimously global terms. Like justice globalists, they are not "anti-globalization" but "alter-globalization."

Thus, evaluating our rapidly changing ideological landscape, it appears that the stage is, indeed, set for what President Bush calls "the decisive ideological struggle of the twenty-first century." It involves the three major political belief systems of our age: market globalism (currently in its imperial garb), justice globalism, and jihadist globalism. What are the likely trajectories and outcomes of this "battle of ideas" over the meaning and direction of globalization?

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION: FUTURE PROSPECTS



As we have discussed in this book, the unfolding struggle between market globalism in its imperial garb and its two main ideological challengers constantly employs ideas, claims, slogans, metaphors, and symbols to win over the hearts and minds of a global audience. Will this epic contest lead to more extensive forms of international cooperation and interdependence, or will it stop the powerful momentum of globalization? In addressing this question, this conclusion offers a brief speculation on the future of globalization.

In the first edition of this book (published just a few weeks before 9/11), I introduced what I considered to be the three most likely future trajectories of the ideological confrontation over the direction and meaning of globalization. I called the first future scenario "market globalism with a human face." Having been confronted by their ideological challengers on the political Left with an effective strategy of resistance, market-globalist

end up working for none. He asserted that "people do not wish to reverse globalization" but that they do aspire to a different and better kind than we have today. "The unequal distribution of benefits, and the imbalances in global rule-making," Annan emphasized, "inevitably will produce backlash and protectionism. And that, in turn, threatens to undermine and ultimately to unravel the open world economy that has been so painstakingly constructed over the course of the past half-century."⁷² Throughout his long tenure, Annan sought to strengthen the Global Compact, an ongoing UN program designed to persuade transnational corporations to endorse a binding set of human rights, environmental, and labor principles and to allow private groups to monitor their compliance.

Unsurprisingly, market globalists arguing for moderate reform have embraced Annan's mild economic reformism to emphasize their unwavering commitment to "corporate responsibility." In a highly publicized 2007 speech, World Bank President Robert Zoellick eagerly seized on the UN Development Program's buzzword of "inclusive globalization" by asserting, "It is the vision of the World Bank Group to contribute to an inclusive and sustainable globalization—to overcome poverty, enhance growth with care for the environment, and create individual opportunity and hope." Pledging his support of the UN Millennium Development Goals—ambitious targets to halve poverty, fight hunger and disease, and deliver basic services to the world's poor by 2015—Zoellick made sure to emphasize that "sound social development" needed to be "combined with the requirements for sustainable growth, driven by the private sector, within a supportive framework of public policies."⁷³

No question, these moderate reformists have learned to add some justice-globalist concepts to their neoliberal vision to make the resulting ideological stew more palatable to their global audiences. "Sustainability" is one such core concept torn from the ideological flanks of the political Left in order to be endowed with market-globalist meanings. Influential market-globalist codifiers like Klaus Schwab have gone to great lengths to link "sustainability" to new pet phrases such as "global corporate citizenship." In his much-cited 2008 *Foreign Affairs* article on the subject, the executive chair of the WEF suggests that companies have already taken a leading role in addressing sustainability issues "such as climate change, water shortage, infectious diseases, and terrorism. Other challenges include providing access to food, education, and information technology; extreme poverty; transnational crime; corruption; failed states; and disaster response and relief."⁷⁴ "[F]or global corporate citizenship to be meaningful, effective, and sustainable," Schwab concludes, "it must align with a com-

forces might make some moderate adjustments and pursue a less transparent road to their ultimate objective, the creation of a single global free market. Assuming people of their ability to "manage globalization better," market globalists would rely on their public-relations efforts to sell their milder version of corporate-driven globalization to the public. However, if implemented at all, their proposals would remain very modest, leaving the existing global economic architecture largely intact. Thus, without the implementation of serious reforms on a global level, national and international disparities in wealth and well-being would continue to widen even if top earners around the world continued to benefit from neoliberal measures.

In the past few years, this "moderate reformist scenario" has materialized to some extent. As we noted in previous chapters, former architects of market globalism like Joseph Stiglitz, Jeffrey Sachs, and George Soros admitted to the validity of "some concerns" raised by justice globalists. Conceding that globalization had been "mismanaged" in the 1990s, they nonetheless insisted that their original idea of liberalizing and globally integrating markets was still valid. Drawing together select experts from around the world, their mission was to explore neoliberal policy alternatives for developing and transition countries and to improve official declines making on economic issues. Criticizing the International-Monetary Fund (IMF) for its hypocrisy and dogmatic adherence to market globalism, these reformists endorsed the idea of changing the international economic institutions but rejected the "radical view" expressed by some justice globalists that the IMF and World Trade Organization ought to be abolished and replaced by more egalitarian organizations. The problem with such mild reformism is that it focuses only on certain institutions like the IMF and makes but vague assurances that it has become necessary to direct the process of globalization in a way that benefits all people. As James Mitleman has pointed out, Stiglitz and Co. reduced structural problems in the world's economic architecture to mere "management" issues: "Having criticized the market fundamentalists, Stiglitz then expresses his unshaken faith in the redeeming value of competition. At the end of the day, the agenda is to stabilize globalizing capitalism. It is to modify neoliberal globalization without tugging at the roots of its underlying structures."⁷⁵

While insisting that "globalization is a fact of life," former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan nonetheless warned global business leaders and politicians at several conferences at the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos that globalization had to be made to work for all, or else it would

reciprocity, and redistribution. As large segments of the population found themselves without an adequate system of social security and communal support, they resorted to radical measures to protect themselves against market globalization.

Extending his analysis to the workings of modern capitalism in general, Polanyi extrapolated that all modern capitalist societies contained two or- ganizing principles that were fundamentally opposed to each other: one was the principle of economic liberalism, aiming at the establishment of a self-regulating market, relying on the support of the trading classes, and using largely laissez-faire and free trade as its method; the other was the principle of social protection aiming at the conservation of humans and nature as well as productive organizations, relying on the varying support of those most immediately affected by the deleterious actions of the mar- ket—primarily but not exclusively the working and the landed classes— and using protective legislation, restrictive associations, and instruments of intervention as its method.⁷ Referring to these tendencies as a “double movement,” Polanyi suggested that the stronger the liberal movement be- came, the more it would be able to dominate society by means of a market logic that effectively “disembodied” people’s economic activity from their social relations. Hence, in their polished ideological formulation, the prin- ciples of economic liberalism provided a powerful justification for leaving large segments of the population to “tend for themselves.” In a capitalist world organized around the notion of individual liberty—understood pri- marily as unrestrained economic entrepreneurship—the market ideal of competition trumped old social conceptions of cooperation and solidarity.⁸ It is important to remember the other half of Polanyi’s theory of “double movement”: the rapid advance of free-market principles also strengthened the resolve of working people to resist the liberal paradigm and struggle against its social effects. Polanyi noted that European workers’ movements eventually gave birth to political parties that forced the passage of protec- tive social legislation on the national level. After a prolonged period of se- vere economic dislocations following the end of World War I, the national- populist impulse experienced its most extreme manifestations in Italian fascism and German Nazism. In the end, the grand liberal dream of subor- dinating the nation to the requirements of the free market had generated an equally extreme countermovement that turned markets into mere ap- pendices of totalitarian nation-states.⁹

Back in 2001, I did not envision that the backlash scenario would mate- rialize so quickly, nor did I foresee the exact form it took. However, the applicability of Polanyi’s analysis to our own global age seems obvious.

pany’s specific capabilities and with its business model and profit motive.”¹⁰ In short, one of the core concepts of justice globalism, once firmly associ- ated with environmental and economic alternatives to the dominant para- digm, is now in danger of becoming subsumed in the discursive logic of market globalism.

Unfortunately, however, there is little empirical evidence that such the- oretical maneuvers have made much of a difference in how transnational corporations or the IMF are conducting business worldwide. The UN Mil- lennium Development Goals appear to be receding into a future much fur- ther a way than 2015. Hence, the prospects for my second future scenario—a “global new deal”—are rather dim, to say the least. In the first edition of this book, I saw a slim possibility for the rise of political forces that would subject the global marketplace to greater democratic account- ability by means of more effective global regulatory institutions. This would mean that most existing international political and economic insti- tutions would undergo serious renovation and philosophical redirection or perhaps be dismantled altogether. Justice globalists who advocated this trajectory in the 1990s hoped that the countereconomic pressures generated by deteriorating social conditions would force market globalists to the bar- gaining table long before the world descended into a social or environmen- tal catastrophe beyond repair. In their view, the implementation of their justice-globalist agenda represented the only chance for reversing the steady rise of global inequality and environmental degradation without surrendering to the parochial agenda of the national-populist camp. In- deed, serious attempts to build new global networks of solidarity lay at the very heart of the “global new deal” scenario.

Short of these profound changes, I argued, there was the very real possi- bility of a severe social backlash caused by the unbridled economic and cultural dynamics of neoliberal globalization. This backlash could unleash reactionary forces that dwarfed even those responsible for the suffering of millions during the 1930s and 1940s. The theoretical arguments underpin- ning such a “backlash scenario” are often associated with the work of the late political economist Karl Polanyi, who located the origins of the social crises that gripped the world during the first half of the twentieth century in ill-conceived efforts to liberalize markets. In his celebrated 1944 study *The Great Transformation*, he chronicled how commercial interests came to dominate society by means of a ruthless market logic that effectively disconnected people’s economic activities from their social relations. The principles of the free market destroyed complex social relations of mutual obligation and undermined communal values such as civic engagement,

On first thought, it seems highly implausible that even a Global War on Terror expanding into Iran or other parts of the world could stop or slow down such a powerful set of social processes as globalization. Yet there are already some early warning signs. Intense border controls and security measures at the world's major airports and seaports have made travel and international trade more cumbersome. Laws have been passed in the democracies of the global North that curtail immigration, compromise civil liberties, and allow torture to be used on suspects during certain military interrogations. Belligerent patriotic sentiments are on display in many parts of the world, attesting to the severity of existing political and cultural divisions. A close look at modern history reveals that large-scale violent confrontations were capable of stopping and even reversing previous globalization trends. As we noted in chapter 2, the period from 1860 to 1914 constituted a phase of internationalization characterized by the unprecedented development of transportation and communication networks, the rapid growth of international trade, and a huge flow of capital. But such "globalization" was capitalistic and imperialistic in character, involving the transfer of resources from the colonized global South in exchange for European manufactures. Great Britain, then the world's premier power, had spread its political system and cultural values across the globe. Its sustained efforts to engineer a global market under the auspices of the British Empire resulted in a severe backlash that culminated in the outbreak of World War I. The opponents of market globalism in the twenty-first century—especially jihadist globalists—have attracted thousands of followers and millions of sympathizers. Hence, as some commentators have recently suggested, it is quite conceivable that the backlash scenario reflected in a lasting global war on terror might put the brakes on market globalism and, in the long run, weaken the United States both economically and militarily while strengthening its chief competitors: China, India, and Russia. We could enter a period where "great powers" are once again competing for honor and influence. As Robert Kagan argued recently, such a world would remain unipolar, but America's international competitors would begin to catch up, thus raising new threats of regional or even global conflicts.¹⁰

On the other hand, as Fareed Zakaria suggests, it is also possible that the "rise of the Rest"—especially China and India—might actually increase international cooperation and encourage the forging of new global alliances and networks.¹⁰ The prospects for such a "rosy scenario" would be enhanced with the possible electoral success of Barack Obama, an outspoken opponent of imperial globalism. A U.S. government led by President Obama would almost certainly pay more attention to combating both the

Like its nineteenth-century predecessor, the market globalism of the 1980s and 1990s represented an experiment in unleashing the utopia of the self-regulating market on society. This time, however, the acolytes of neoliberalism were prepared to turn the entire world into their laboratory. From the political left, justice globalists challenged this project vigorously in the streets of the world's major cities, whereas from the political right, the jihadist-globalist forces of radical Islamism launched a massive attack against what they considered to be a morally corrupt ideology of secular materialism that had engulfed the entire world. In response to the devastating al Qaeda strikes, the Bush administration switched from the soft-power strategy that prevailed in the 1990s to the hard-power model of imperial globalism that would reign supreme throughout the 2000s. As Jan Nederveen Pieterse has pointed out, "Neoliberal empire twins practices of empire with those of neoliberalism. The core of empire is the national security state and the military-industrial complex; neoliberalism is about business, financial operations, and marketing (including the marketing of neoliberalism itself)."¹¹

Yet the militarization of market globalism highlights an embarrassing secret at the heart of the neoliberal project: from its earliest inception in the Thatcher and Reagan years, it required frequent and extensive use of state power in order to dismantle the old welfare structures and create new laissez-faire policies. As Polanyi noted, "free markets" did not appear on the historical stage ex nihilo. Rather, they were the deliberate products of concerted political action coordinated by modern states that found themselves captured by liberal interests. Similarly, the creation, expansion, and protection of global free markets demands massive infusions of central state power, hence the resulting ideological contradiction: market-globalist elites pushing for an ever-expanding mobility of capital must contend with the state's security logic that calls for inspection, surveillance, and other limitations on the free movement of people, goods, and information across national borders. With the emergence of imperial globalism, the embarrassing secret of neoliberalism is more easily exposed since the allegedly "invisible hand" of the market (claiming to operate best without interference from state power) must openly call on the iron fist of the state to save itself. In short, the coercive power of the state apparatus has been bought at the cost of bowing to empire. Thus, market-globalism's reliance on the forces of the old nation-state to battle its challengers has resulted in the dramatic disclosure of what during most of the 1990s remained hidden behind the ideological veil of the "self-regulating market": American Empire.

ing a critical mind and a sense of universal responsibility to the young is especially important. Ideals constitute the engine of progress; hence, it is imperative to introduce new generations to an ethical vision for a global society.¹⁴

For academics and educators, the most obvious step in this effort consists of developing a critical theory of globalization that contests both the script of market globalism and jihadist globalism while subjecting the claims of justice globalism to sustained scrutiny. Indeed, education and the media are key dimensions in any progressive strategy built around the idea that "another world is possible." Once harmful articulations of the global imaginary and their corresponding power bases in society begin to lose their grip on the construction of meaning, alternative interpretations of globalization can circulate more freely in public discourse. As a result, more and more people will realize that they have a stake in shaping the world they want to live in.

Thus, the three future scenarios laid out in this conclusion remain inextricably intertwined with matters of ideology: the kinds of ideas, values, and beliefs about globalization that shape our communities. It would be imprudent to expect that the great ideological struggle of the twenty-first century will end anytime soon, but it would be equally foolish to bank on humanity's inability to arrive at general principles that govern the world in a more peaceful, sustainable, and just manner.

social and the cultural causes of terrorism than the Bush administration. Moreover, Obama's family roots and his personal experiences of growing up in different parts of the world made him far more attuned to the grievances of the global South than any previous American or European political leader. However, it is highly unlikely that an Obama administration would go so far as to seriously consider replacing the dominant version of corporate-driven globalization with a substantive reform agenda. At best, moderate neoliberals like Stiglitz, Soros, or Warren Buffett would have the sympathetic ear of the new president. Thus, this more realistic version of our rosy scenario shows, regrettably, few signs of serious international cooperation toward a global new deal.

And yet, in the face of lowering global problems like terrorism, nuclear weapons, climate change, poverty, and inequality, it seems that the world desperately needs fundamental change expressed in a fundamentally different vision of what our planet could look like. We have reached perhaps the most critical juncture in the history of our species. Lest we are willing to jeopardize our collective future, we must link the future course of globalization to a global new deal agenda. As we have emphasized throughout this book, there is nothing wrong with greater manifestations of social interdependence that emerge as a result of globalization as long as these transformative social processes address our global problems before it is too late. And we may have less time to act than we think.

The United States of America and rising powers like China, India, and Brazil carry a special responsibility to put their collective weight behind a form of globalization that is not defined by economic self-interest alone but, rather, is deeply infused with ethical concerns for humanity and our natural environment. In order to tackle our global problems, the people of the world need to pressure their political leaders for a global new deal that, in the cosmopolitan vision of British economist George Monbiot, would be sustained by novel global political and economic institutions such as a World Parliament, a Fair Trade Organization, and an International Clearing Union.¹¹ Monbiot's plea for the reconsideration of the role of ethics in global politics and economics has been echoed by many prominent spiritual and religious leaders, some of whom have explicitly called for a "global ethic" that would serve as the normative framework for a democratic global society.¹² For the Swiss theologian Hans Küng, for example, a global ethic contains four commitments: to a culture of nonviolence and respect of life, to a culture of solidarity and a just economic order, to a culture of tolerance and a life of truthfulness, and to a culture of equal rights, particularly racial and gender equality.¹³ The Dalai Lama concurs, adding that impart-