

**THE ROAD TO 9/11: AL-QAEDA, AMERICA,
AND THE GLOBALIZATION OF JIHAD**

By

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Abstract

The 9/11 attacks were a tragic landmark event which forced the 'international community' to acknowledge the world's vulnerability to 'terrorism'. Intellectuals sought to identify the causes of the event and one of the prominent explanations (which came to be known as culture talk) was that terrorism was rooted in religion and culture. In light of the September 11 terrorist attacks, advocates of this line of thinking claim that Al-Qaeda is a predominantly religious-inspired group of fundamentalists from a pre-modern culture which aims to issue a challenge to the modern Western way of life. This research project, which will use Al-Qaeda as a case study and investigate the factors which led up to 9/11, offers a counter-argument to 'culture talk'. A comprehensive analysis of the theories which invoke culture talk and the clash of civilizations (i.e. Samuel Huntington, Bernard Lewis, and Benjamin Barber) will demonstrate that these theories are limited because they overlook historical factors and fail to put forth the view of terrorism as a modern project which is historically shaped and politically motivated. It will argue that 9/11 was the manifestation of a political contest between Western and non-Western actors seeking political power, albeit with divergent (but equally potent and dangerous) ideologies. The research will conclude that the 9/11 attack and Al-Qaeda more broadly are both products of and responses to globalization.

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to my wonderful uncle, Bahador Pourmokhtari,
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Introduction

The 9/11 attacks were a tragic landmark event which forced the 'international community' to acknowledge the world's vulnerability to 'terrorism'. Intellectuals sought to identify the causes of the event and one of the prominent explanations (which came to be known as culture talk) was that terrorism was rooted in religion and culture. In light of the September 11 terrorist attacks, advocates of this line of thinking claim that Al-Qaeda is a predominantly religious-inspired group of fundamentalists from a pre-modern culture which aims to issue a challenge to the modern Western way of life. This research project, which will use Al-Qaeda as a case study and investigate the factors which led up to 9/11, offers a counter-argument to 'culture talk'. A comprehensive analysis of the theories which invoke culture talk and the clash of civilizations (i.e. Samuel Huntington, Bernard Lewis, and Benjamin Barber) will demonstrate that these theories are limited because they overlook historical factors and fail to put forth the view of terrorism as a modern project which is historically shaped and politically motivated. It will argue that 9/11 was the manifestation of a political contest between Western and non-Western actors seeking political power, albeit with divergent (but equally potent and dangerous) ideologies. In so doing, it traces the September 11 terrorist attacks directly back to the Cold War events of the late 1980s, when the Carter and Reagan administrations funded, trained, and recruited radical Islamist militia (Mujahedeen) to serve in the Afghan War against the Soviet Union. Towards the end of the Cold War, the 'unholy' alliance between America and the Mujahedeen was broken and the newly

established network of Al-Qaeda, consisting predominately of radical Mujahedeens, scattered throughout the globe in order to fulfil Bin Laden's vision of global Jihad.

The research project employs the blowback thesis put forth by Chalmers Johnson as its chief theoretical framework. As a term which was borrowed from the United States' Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) rhetoric, blowback refers to the unintended consequences of American foreign policies in various corners of the world and highlights the view that a "nation reaps what it sows" (Johnson, 2004, p. 17). The project regards the events of 9/11 to be a classic example of blowback in that they reflect uncalculated and unwise policies implemented by the United States at the dawn of the Cold War. The project also considers that the post-Cold War era has been characterized by a paradox because the end of the war coincided with the geographical expansion of 'globalization', bringing about a world which has simultaneously become smaller (and more interconnected) and larger (and more divided).

In addressing the connection between Al-Qaeda and globalization the project will acknowledge that globalization is a contested term (It is salient to note that some globalization theorists such as Petras & Veltmeyer (2001) consider globalization to be a new form of American imperialism with transnational corporations (TNCs) functioning as its chief architect and beneficiaries). For the purpose of this project the term will be referenced only insofar as it provides readers with a helpful frame for understanding Al-Qaeda and the project's analysis of its connection to globalization will specifically focus on three of its aspects: its uneven consequences, its drastic side, and its borderless characteristics. The analyses will support the notion that terrorism is a politically-motivated modern project which is rooted in recent history (the end of the Cold War). Further, it will delineate how blowback and the extensive trans-border interconnections made possible by globalization have shaped the post-Cold War world era, which is unprecedented and threatening in terms of its scope and capacity. The research will

conclude that the 9/11 attack and Al-Qaeda more broadly are both products of and responses to globalization.

The research project will proceed as follows: Chapter 1, *9/11, Culture Talk, and Politicization of Culture* will identify the two fundamental limitations of theories based on culture talk, which embed politics within religion: 1) they overlook historical issues, and 2) they view traditional cultures as static and unresponsive to change. Chapter 2, *Theorizing 9/11*, theoretically investigates 9/11. Various accounts of the culture talk and 'clash of civilizations' thesis are examined in light of Johnson's blowback thesis. The chapter illustrates the ways in which blowback provides an appropriate and powerful context for analyzing and even predicting events such as 9/11. Chapter 3, *Jihadi Islam: Religious or Political?*, introduces the reader to the world of Jihadi Islam. The chapter acknowledges that a number of Islamic intellectuals preach the contemporary doctrine of Jihad (e.g. Abu A'la Mawdudi, Jamal Al-Din Al-Afghani, and Saeid Qutb), but primarily focuses on Saied Qutb, whom the literature regards as the ideological mastermind of Al-Qaeda. Pointing out Qutb's ideological incorporation of Marxist and Leninist elements will support the project's claim that Jihad is a modern political development spearheaded by Muslim intellectuals whose concerns are primarily worldly.

In order to delineate how Qutb's Jihadi doctrine was applied to the organization of Al-Qaeda, chapter 4, *The uneven ends of the Cold War and Afghan War*, offers a historical account of the emergence of Islamic Militia (Mujahedeen) in Afghanistan which includes the assistance that the Carter and Reagan administrations gave to the Mujahedeen. The chapter contends that the new world order which emerged from the Cold War was defined by a reconfiguration of power that accentuated particular inequities and as such, created complexities which extended beyond the bipolar rivalry between superpowers that had framed the Cold War. Part of the complexity was the result of significant developments that had taken place in the global South during the Cold War. Chapter 5, *The Mujahedeen: the CIA, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia* will

detail these developments by critically investigating the motives which led to the triangular alliance between the CIA, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia and its empowerment of the Mujahedeen. The chapter will describe how Saudi financial assistance, CIA weaponry supplies, and Pakistani training centres converged to produce a formidable anti-Communist force which ensured the Mujahedeen's victory. The picture which is described will reveal that it was not at all surprising when Osama Bin Laden, a CIA employee of Saudi descent, founded Al-Qaeda at the end of the Afghan War in order to fulfill the global Jihadi ambitions of Saeid Qutb. Chapter 6, *The CIA's International Jihad: The end of the Afghan War and Bin Laden*, traces the development of Al-Qaeda in early 1990's and Osama Bin Laden's ascent to power as the leader of Al-Qaeda. The chapter specifically aims to demonstrate how Bin Laden's idea of Jihad was popularized among the Mujahedeen leaders and became a war to be waged on a global scale. Chapter 7, *Al-Qaeda and Globalization in the Post-Cold War Period*, discusses how the end of the Cold War made possible the geographical expansion of globalization. This process provided Bin Laden with fertile ground on which to cultivate a network of Jihadi vanguards and easily transform Al-Qaeda into a decentralized and adoptive organization as the turn of the century approached. From there, it was possible to deploy thousands of radical Al-Qaeda members in pursuit of Global jihad.

Lastly, chapter 8 *Al-Qaeda: The Emergence of Islamic Fundamentalism or a By-Product of a Blowback World?*, discusses Al-Qaeda's trajectory in the new millennium and revisits culture talk. Therein, it refutes the claim that fundamentalism is a countercultural Islamic movement and challenges the premise that fundamentalism is exclusively the province of Muslims. To the contrary, fundamentalism will be shown to be a dynamic ideology which has manifest in religions other than Islam at various times and in various historical setting – and always with equal power to wreak substantial violence and destruction. In closing, the chapter again references the concept of blowback which is the chief theoretical backbone of the project

in order to reiterate its merits and persuasive strength for problematizing and explaining terrorist events such as 9/11.

Chapter 1: 9/11, Culture Talk, and Politicization of Culture

In the wake of 9/11, American intellectuals who struggled to understand what had caused the tragic incident focused on the role of culture and religion. There was particular concern about the question of whether there were correlations between Islam and terrorism and culture and modernity. The underlying factor behind such ‘culture talk’, as Mahmood Mamdani labels it, is the notion that “we can read the politics of some people – those who are not modern – from their culture, for they do not make their culture; rather, it is their culture that makes them” (Mamdani, as cited in Khan, 2007, p. 115). This viewpoint has tended to construe politics to be the product of culture and religion. It is referenced in Samuel Huntington’s (1996) concept of ‘Clash of Civilizations’, which was borrowed from the closing section of an article written by Bernard Lewis, “The roots of Muslim Rage” in 1990 (as cited in Mamdani, 2004). Huntington’s central claim was based on two premises; first, in the aftermath of the Cold War “the iron curtain of ideology” has been substituted by a “velvet curtain of culture” and second, that so-called velvet curtain had been “drawn across the borders of Islam” (as cited in Mamdani, 2004, p. 21). It was therefore not surprising that Islam became known as the source of a demonized and hostile civilization. For Huntington the universe is divided into various civilizations that compete with one another in an uncompromising fashion with respect to their cultures and religions. Given that culture provides “unifying and integrating principles of order and cohesion”, distinct cultural civilizations (i.e. Islam, Russia, China, and the West) inevitably collide with one another

(Kellner, 2003, p. 28). Therein, religion becomes a driving force that inspires people and brings them together, so it is the cornerstone of civilization.

Huntington's core ideas about culture and religion were further elaborated by a new vision that emerged in the aftermath of the Cold War and gained momentum in light of the 9/11 incident. The basis of the new vision was a perception of Islamic culture as a "parochial curtain-raiser for a truly global conflict for which the West will need to marshal the entire range of its cultural resources" (Mamdani, 2004, p. 21). For example, William Lind asserted that the Cold War was the focal point of a number of "Western civil wars" (beginning as far back as seventeenth-century Europe) (as cited in Mamdani, 2004, p. 21). Lind argues that the end of the Cold War marked the beginning of an era in which "global conflicts become cast in cultural terms" (as cited in Mamdani, 2004, p. 21). Others such as Regis Debray contend that the early 1990s were marked by a 'Green Peril', a term denoting that Islam is a hostile and irrational force, which poses a far greater challenge to the West than its previous 'red' rival. Debray states that (1990) "green has replaced red as the rising force...The nuclear and rational North deters the nuclear and rational North, not the conventional and mystical South" (as cited in Euben, 1999, p. 6). Debray's argument was later applied to a more minimal line of thinking which maintained that terrorism is associated with a very narrow interpretation of Islam, namely the sect of Wahhabism (Schwartz, as cited in Mamdani, 2002). Febe Armanois (2003, p. 2) defines Wahhabism:

Wahhabism is a term with varied connotations, but it generally refers to a movement that seeks to purify the Islamic religion of any innovations or practices that deviate from the seventh-century teachings of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions. In the West, the term has been used mostly to denote the form of Islam practiced in Saudi Arabia and which has spread recently to various parts of the world.

Those who hold this view, which was first introduced by Stephen Schwartz in the British weekly *The Spectator*, have gone so far as to claim that all suicide attackers (i.e. hijackers and bombers) are Wahhabis and warned that this Islamic sect has been exported from Saudi Arabia

to various parts of the world, including Afghanistan and the United States, in its quest for terrorism and violence (as cited in Mamdani, 2002).

Among American intellectuals it is Bernard Lewis who offers one of the most enduring versions of culture talk. For Lewis, history consists of the movement and development of various cultural blocs known as 'civilizations'. However, in analyzing Islamic civilization he speaks of it as characterized by an unchanging dogma which has provided a safe haven for Muslims in periods of trouble. Lewis' work provided the intellectual inspiration for President Bush's assertion that there are bad versus good Muslims. In light of 9/11, Bush utilized Lewis' explanation that bad Muslims were to be blamed for terrorism, while good Muslims had the responsibility to show their good will in supporting Americans against bad Muslims and their supporters. In his article "The Roots of Muslim Rage", Lewis (1990) provides a detailed account of both good and bad Muslims. Fundamentalism, he argues, is one Islamic tradition among many others and before "this issue is decided there will be a hard struggle" among Muslims (as cited in Mamdani, 2004, p.23). As this internal struggle plays out, the West must not make the mistake of anticipating a new epoch of religious wars; instead, it must witness the way in which good and bad Muslims conduct themselves. In his book *What Went Wrong?*, Lewis (2003) elaborates on his earlier thoughts in claiming that the problem of Islam has been its inability to successfully move from theocracy to secularism, which reflects Muslim fundamentalists' opposition to secularism and modernity. This ultimately fuels one of Lewis' core assumptions: that Islamic disapproval of the West is ideologically akin to fascism, communism, and third worldism.

Explaining the horrific events of 9/11 through the lens of culture talk is problematic in two fundamental ways. First, the cultural elucidation of political events tends to avoid historical issues. As Mamdani (2002) remarks:

By equating political tendencies with entire communities defined in non-historical cultural terms, such explanations encourage collective discipline and punishment – a practice characteristic of colonial encounters (p. 767).

In *What Went Wrong?* Lewis (2003) puts forth an analysis of Islam since its emergence as a religion, commenting that the “first thousand years or so after the advent of Islam” were followed by the “long struggle for the reconquest”, which ultimately “opened the way to a Christian invasion of Africa and Asia” (as cited in Mamdani, 2004, p. 25). The Islamic conquest was followed by a Christian reconquest and Lewis states that as a result, the Crusades comprehensively and definitively elucidate the clash between Muslims and Christians. The Slovenian scholar, Tomaz Mastank, adds a refreshing insight to this debate in stating that Muslims *became* the enemy during the Crusades: “when Christian society became conscious of itself through mobilization for holy war...an essential moment in the articulation of self-awareness of the Christian commonwealth was the construction of the Muslim enemy” (as cited in Mamdani, 2004, p. 25). In making this point, Mastank asserts that when the Arabs invaded the European Peninsula in the seventh and eighth centuries, Muslims were not particularly targeted as a separate enemy group. Militant Christians originally directed their hostility equally against all non-Christians and their focus turned towards Muslims as chief enemies during the Crusades, which were a turning point for Christians in motivating them to initiate a war against a universal enemy representing the “very religion of Antichrist” (Mastank, as cited in Mamdani, 2004, p. 25). This ultimately explains why the Crusades aimed to eradicate Muslims as opposed to converting them.

Mastank’s explanation of the Crusades reveals a fundamental gap in Lewis’ work; that is, including the Crusades and the colonization of Europe as events representing a solo clash of

civilizations in a fourteen hundred years time span. In other words, each encounter between civilizations was triggered by certain political projects (i.e. the imperial expansion of modern Europe, the creation of a political entity known as Christendom, and so on), and not by a conflict "between fixed territorial units that represent discrete civilizations over the fourteen-hundred-year history" (Mamdani, 2004, p. 26). Lewis' culture talk therefore becomes problematic – given that while states are territorial, cultures are not, and so it is difficult to analyze culture in fixed and static terms.

The second and related problem with culture talk is that it defines people of traditional cultures in "authentic and original terms" (Mamdani, 2002, p. 767), so it treats them as individuals whose identities have been created by the immutable culture into which they were born. This distinction makes it possible to divide the world into modern and pre-modern segments; whereas the former is seen to engage in the art of creating culture, the latter is looked upon as no more than the conduit for culture. Accordingly, post- 9/11 culture talk has regarded Islam and its followers as incapable of creating culture. Mamdani (2004) highlights this point:

[In post 9/11 America], culture talk focuses on Islam and Muslims who presumably made culture only at the beginning of creation, as some extraordinary, prophetic act. After that, it seems Muslims just conformed to culture...Our culture seems to have no history, no politics, and no debates. It seems to have petrified into a lifeless custom (p. 18).

What is the reason to grant such monolithic status to culture? The answer lies in the notion that because pre-modern people are incapable of adapting or modifying their original culture, they have a strong need for self-preservation, which gives them a highly potent aptitude for annihilation. This line of thinking is reminiscent of the ideology of modern colonialism, which at its core preaches that people's public attitude (specifically their political attitude), reflects their religion (Mamdani, as cited in Khan, 2007). It follows that a Muslim who adopts a very literal understanding of his or her religious texts could possibly be called a potential terrorist and that this literal understanding is the distinct line dividing a 'moderate' Muslim from

his or her 'extremist' counterpart. Such a perception ultimately means that "unless proved to be good, every Muslim [is presumed] to be bad" (Mamdani, 2004, p. 15). This is a fundamental contradiction embedded in culture talk because it tends to "dehistoricize the construction of political identities" (Mamdani, 2002, p. 766).

Chapter 2: Theorizing 9/11

The previous discussion raises the question of the roles culture and politics play in explaining 9/11 and highlights the critical importance of correctly identifying such roles. Interrogating culture talk can lead one to recognize the significance of analyzing culture in a manner which is historical and non-territorial; otherwise, "one is harnessing cultural resources for very specific national and imperial political projects" (Mamdani, 2004, p. 27). As such, the limitations of culture talk must be addressed. Present-day Islam is a civilization of global dimensions and many Muslims live within the borders of non-Muslim societies. As a result, there are currently fewer Muslims residing in the Middle East than in Africa, South Asia and Southeast Asia. Like Islam, Christianity and Judaism are both considered global religions, but they are seen to have a "historical flow and a contemporary constellation that cannot be made sense of in terms of state boundaries" (Mamdani, 2002, p. 767). Islam should also be recognized and understood in the same global context. This requires one to avoid examining Islamic politics exclusively as the by-product of an ancient culture, which is a negative aspect of culture talk due to its dismissal of history and politics. To the contrary, cultural debates must be framed within the context of historical and political analysis and understanding the politicization of culture and religion requires a historical investigation of interactions between Western and non-Western actors.

Examining 9/11 through historical and political lenses allows one to distinguish cultural from political Islam and challenges the notion that the fervent religious Islamic commitments can necessarily be conflated with political terrorism. As will be demonstrated, terrorism is not the by-product of religious extremism or an effect of pre-modern culture in modern politics. Rather, terrorism emerges from competing political sensibilities. As Mamdani (2004, p. 62) contends, “when it harnesses one or another aspect of tradition and culture, terrorism needs to be understood as a modern political movement at the service of a modern power”. This affirms that the tragic events of 9/11 must be investigated as part of an ongoing historically-driven political process which emerged from the recent Cold War era (and can be traced back much further) and reconstituted the political paradigm and its roots extend even further back than the Cold War. The real clash is entrenched within the process, as opposed to between separate or competing civilizations. Such an understanding invokes the concept of other and in so doing, requires one not to “just speak of the ‘other’, but also of self” (Mamdani, 2002, p. 768). As such, it challenges Huntington’s ‘Clash of Civilizations’, revealing it to basically be “too essentialist of a model that covers over contradictions and conflicts both within the West and Within Islam” (Kellner, 2003, p. 28). For centuries both worlds have been sub-classified into competing states, ethnic divisions, religious sects, as well as conflicting alliances, and they continue to be segregated today (geographically, ideologically, politically, and culturally) (Ali, 2002). Thus, while Huntington’s model is analytically flawed because it overlooks this segregation and polarization, it also downgrades the crucial and challenging imperative for the West to engage in constructive and peaceful relations with the Islamic world.

Huntington is certainly not alone in foregrounding the deep-rooted divergence between the West and Islam and using it as an example of culturally-rooted political conflicts. As has been explained, such analytical approaches are criticized for treating civilizations as homogenous entities while failing to examine the confrontations, differences, and historical

developments that shape civilizations and the encounters between them. A well-known example of this approach is Benjamin Barber's (1995) *Jihad vs. McWorld*, which classifies the world according to the modernizing, homogenizing, Westernizing, and secular forces of globalization. Barber (1995) claims that these forces are directed by multinational corporations and counteract pre-modern, tribalizing forces that are hostile towards the West and modernity. While Barber's work offers a dialectical assessment which portrays both forces as oppositional to democracy, it oversimplifies contemporary world challenges and inconsistencies within the Islamic world. For example, Barber's account of Jihad seems to "grasp precisely the animus against the West in Islamic extremism" (Kellner, 2003, p. 29), and does not consider the complex historical connotation which the concept of Jihad has within the Islamic world. As Tariq Ali (2002) points out, such dualistic analyses of clashes between civilizations ultimately "occlude the historical forces that clashed in the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the subsequent Terror War" (p. 257).

Accurately analyzing the events of 9/11 not only demands an awareness of complex historical accounts of modern issues such as terrorism, but also calls for a careful examination of the issues which creates "novel historical configurations while articulating both changes and continuities in the present situations" (Kellner, 2003, p. 30). This is essentially the reason why this research project references Chalmers Johnson's (2000) concept of blowback as its chief theoretical foundation. Johnson (2000, p. 8) pinpoints the concept in stating that:

The term 'blowback', which officials of the Central Intelligence Agency first invented for their own internal use, is starting to circulate among students of international relations. It refers to the unintended consequences of policies that were kept secret from the American people. What the daily press reports as the malign acts of the 'terrorist'...often turn out to be blowback from earlier operations...In a broader sense, blowback is another way of saying that a nation reaps what it sows.

The term was popularized as the title of a book (*Blowback*) which was first published in 2000, about eighteen months before 9/11. Johnson warns his fellow compatriots about the character, conduct, and consequences of American foreign policy

during the second half of the twentieth century. In particular, he contends that the foreign policy exercised by more recent American governments has engendered reactionary attacks from nations and peoples on the receiving end. He claims that international politics in the new millennium "will in all likelihood be driven primarily by blowback from the second half of the twentieth century—that is, from the unintended consequences of the Cold War and the crucial American decision to maintain a Cold War posture in a post-Cold War world" (Johnson, 2004, p. x). Scholars such as Johnson (2004) and Kellner (2003) who have applied the concept of blowback to 9/11 point out that its orchestrators, Osama Bin Laden and his radical colleagues were supported, funded, trained, and armed by the CIA and a number of American governments since the 1970's. Certainly, the catastrophe cannot be attributed to this alone or any other singular cause. The causes of 9/11 were multidimensional and the historical factors involved are complex, which is precisely why blowback is a necessary and insightful perspective to consider in problematizing, contextualizing, and even seeking to predict events such as 9/11.

Chapter 3: Jihadi Islam: Religious or Political?

Is the Jihadi doctrine, which has become an indisputable aspect of Al-Qaeda's ideology, religious or political in nature? Examining this significant question from a historical perspective illuminates Jihad's theoretical dimensions and helps one to better understand Al-Qaeda as a modern political project. Jihad is one of the most contested concepts within Islam due to its variety of interpretations (Brachman, 2009; English, 2009; Roy, 2004). Despite these variations, scholars concur on two definite aspects of Jihad: first, Jihad is *not* among the five fundamental pillars of Islam (faith, prayer, fasting, alms-giving, and pilgrimage), and second, because of this it is considered to be a collective responsibility (*fard kifaya*) in certain conditions (Roy, 2004). Muslim theorists differentiate between two types of Jihad: the lesser (*al-Jahad al-Asghar*) and the greater (*al-Jihad al-Akbar*). Explaining the distinction between the two sheds light on what are collective duty in given circumstances refer to. The greater Jihad is considered to be a battle against one's internal limitations and embodies the correct path to achieve goodness in a metaphorically flawed world. In sharp contrast, the lesser Jihad is directed externally and embodies self-preservation and self-defence (Espozito, 1999). In other words, the lesser Jihad is the "source of Islamic notions of what Christians call 'just war'", rather than "holy war" (Mamdani, 2004, p. 50). As Mamdani (2004) notes, contemporary Western theologians who have been deeply affected by the Crusade-era idea of 'holy war' mistakenly interpret Jihad as an Islamic war against non-believers which started with the Arabs' conquest of Spain in the eighth century. However, Tomaz

Mastank explains that Jihad cannot be interpreted as a holy war. Rather, it is "a doctrine of spiritual effort of which military action is only one possible manifestation" (as cited in Mamdani, 2004, p. 50). Historically, the idea of lesser Jihad as a 'just war' has been put to action infrequently. There were only four separate occasions of lesser Jihad prior to the Afghan Jihad of the 1980's and the last one took place in the Sudan under El-Mahdi some nine decades prior to that (Mamdani, 2004).

Moreover, the ideology driving the Afghan Jihad was unlike its predecessors in one significant aspect: it had Sayyid Qutb as its chief theoretical mastermind. Qutb has also been credited with influencing Al-Qaeda and playing a key role in inspiring Al-Qaeda's Jihadi ambitions. Richard English (2009, p. 37) calls him the "primary ideologue for modern Jihadist groups", while Juan Cole (2009, p. 60) labels him "the ideological godfather of Al-Qaeda". The brief discussion of Qutb's interpretation of jihad is put forth to address a critical question: what does it tell us about the nature of contemporary jihad? Born and raised in an Egyptian family, Qutb became an employee of the Egyptian Ministry of Education and was deployed to the United States on an academic mission in 1948. Upon his return to Egypt in 1951, Qutb described American culture as both "repellent and degenerate" and became an acute critic of liberal democracy (English, 2009, p. 37). One of his most well-known works is *Milestones*, a collection of letters dedicated to depicting liberal democracy as a dead end. In this work, Qutb asserts that Islam must re-emerge as a practical organization in order to fulfill its quest to offer an effective alternative to liberal democracy (and communism subsequently) that would gain prominence in the contemporary world. This intention reminds the reader of Karl Marx's famous remark that "the philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point however is to change it" (as cited in Cole, 2009, p. 58).

Elements of Marxism-Leninism (Maoist and Leninist, to be exact) constitute the foundation for Qutb's explanation of Jihad. As a prevailing political force, Islam must be

reinstated on the global scene by "vanguards of armed men" that wage Jihad (Cole, 2009, p. 58). Further, Jihad is composed of a series of processes: it begins with the mobilization of the vanguard, which is followed by retreat and the careful examination of what has been accomplished, and this eventually allows the struggle for self-preservation and self-defence to be revisited. In envisioning Jihad as such, Qutb draws on a fundamental pillar of Leninism:

How to initiate the revival of Islam? A vanguard must set out with this determination and then keep going, marching through the vast ocean of *jahaliyyah* [ignorance] which encompasses the entire world...I have written Milestones for this vanguard, which I consider to be a waiting reality about to be materialized (as cited in Mamdani, 2004, p. 58).

In providing a Lenninist categorization for resolving inconsistencies between the masses and the enemy, Qutb asserted that Jihad contains both persuasion and force. The former quality is empowered among friends, while the latter is directed against enemies. It is, however, force (physical force) that will ultimately eradicate the political, social, and economic barriers to the creation of Islamic community. In Qutb's view, if Muslims use force to achieve freedom it does not embody a contradiction because Islam decrees that Muslims have a right and a responsibility to exercise force in order to terminate slavery and safeguard human freedom (Mamdani, 2004).

Perhaps the most striking and telling element of Qutb's vision is preoccupation with power and corresponding belief that the historical moment has arrived for Muslims to advance and enforce a global Islamic ideology of liberation. Qutb states that:

Mankind today is on the brink of a precipice, not because of the danger of complete annihilation which is hanging over its head...but because humanity is devoid of those vital values for its healthy development and real progress...At this crucial and bewildering juncture, the turn of Islam and the Muslim community has arrived because it has the needed values (as cited in Mamdani, 2004, p. 60).

The focus on power that underscores this statement of obligation and purpose reflects another significant aspect of modern Islamic discourse. That is, it is mainly

preoccupied with contemporary social and political concerns, rather than dwelling on spiritual matters and non-worldly issues (Schulze, as cited in Mamdani, 2004). Qutb's engagement with contemporary political ideologies (i.e. Marxism and Leninism) therefore embodies a quest that extends well beyond the traditions of Islam. The Marxist and Leninist elements which Qutb integrates in his articulation of jihad reveals that the "contemporary Jihadi Islamist embrace of political violence must be understood as a modernist project, not as a pre-modern leftover in modernity" (Mamdani, as cited in Khan, 2007, p. 120). Qutb's legacy is a reminder that political Islam has been crafted and advanced by political intellectuals with strictly worldly concerns, not by Muslims primarily dedicated to the pursuit of spiritual truth and development. This is why contemporary jihad, as a by-product of Qutb's worldview, is regarded as a modern political project which has been instigated and produced by a modern political network. The question that invariably follows is how were Qutb's ideas transformed from the word to the deed? How did they extend from an individual intellectual level to a global political arena? As has been demonstrated, culture talk falls short of addressing such a difficult question because it attributes global conflicts to the clash of civilizations. The next section will tackle this question by distinguishing cultural from political Islam and explaining the political roots of terrorism and rise of political Islam within the context of the Cold War.

Chapter 4: The Uneven Ends of the Cold War and Afghan War

The purpose of this chapter is to pinpoint the Cold War events that ultimately led to the 9/11. The last few years of the 1970s are a particular focus because they preceded a decade of American involvement in Afghanistan, which ended with the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991. It is extremely important to acknowledge that the end of the Cold War entailed more than the geopolitical transformation engendered by the collapse of the Soviet bloc in central and East Europe and the fall of the Soviet Union's military challenge in a bipolar world landscape. Analyzing the Cold War from such a narrow perspective downplays the roles played by the various non-Western actors. For example, in the global South, the end of the Cold War brought consequences contrary to those which had taken place in Europe. That is, the end of the Cold War terminated the East-West military confrontation and thus caused "a 'normalization' of relations within and between most of the former communist states"—but the same cannot be argued about the global South, especially with regard to a period of normalization or civil peace (Saul, as cited in Colas & Saul, 2006, p. 71). Afghanistan provides a compelling example of this scenario.

Furthermore, if the Cold War is seen primarily as a geopolitical conflict rooted in a contest of state powers, analyses which extend beyond the relationship between superpowers will be considered secondary. However, closely evaluating the ideological and socio-political capacities of the non-superpower states involved in the Cold War suggests that the Cold War was more than a military and strategic contest and that non-state actors played a crucial element

in its development. Consequently, while the events that preceded the demise of the Soviet Union between 1989 and 1991 are critical to understanding the end of the Cold War, it is equally important to clarify how non-superpowers and non-state actors throughout the world contributed to that event (i.e. various arms conflicts, political movements, ideological rivalry, and social movements). Contextualizing the Cold War as a global social struggle which marked the collision between social systems (i.e. capitalism and liberal democracy versus communism) distinguishes it from struggles characterized by contrary political viewpoints (Saul, as cited in Colas & Saul, 2006).

This context is congruent with claims that the patterns of development in the global South were influenced by the superpowers and that the superpowers and their subordinates used their political-military might in response to conflict within the global South. Further, it asserts that the social and political developments in the global South cannot be isolated within a strict bipolar structure. Rather, the consequences of the political and military struggles which took place in the global South constantly influenced the bipolar relationships of the Cold War (the two noteworthy examples being the Vietnam War in the 1960s and 1970s and the Afghanistan War in the 1980s'). Analyses of the Cold War therefore need to consider developments within the global South. This construes the Cold War to be a " 'war' or conflict 'in movement' [which extends] across time and space, rather than a singular, homogenous 'front' consisting of the superpowers and their subordinates" (Saul, as cited in Colas & Saul, 2006, p. 72).

Highlighting this context illuminates the importance of Afghan War, the American support for the militant Mujahedeen (Islamic Freedom Fighters), and the socio-political consequences of that war during and after the Cold War. America's first major involvement in Afghanistan as a supporter of the Islamic militants took place in 1978, during Jimmy Carter's presidency and shortly before two landmark political events occurred in the Middle East (the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the Iranian Revolution) (Kellner, 2003). By 1978 Carter's

National Security Advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski, had initiated a secret operation to provide arms support to the Islamists, which shared the United States goal of defeating the Afghanistan's Soviet-friendly government. Brzezinski explains the events in a 1998 interview with the French-based *Le Nouvel Observateur*:

According to the official version of history, CIA aid to the Mujahedeen began during the 1980's, that is to say, after the Soviet army invaded Afghanistan, 24 Dec. 1979. But the reality, secretly guarded until now, is completely otherwise: Indeed, it was 3 July 1979 that President Carter signed the first directive for secret aid to the opponents of the pro-Soviet regime in Kabul. And that very date, I wrote a note to the president in which I explained to him that in my opinion this aid was going to induce a Soviet military intervention (as cited in Mirra, 2005, p. 42).

Three years later, following the catastrophe of 9/11, Brzezinski's name re-appeared in the influential British intelligence review, *Jane's*, which contextualized the Al-Qaeda attack within a timeframe that began during Jimmy Carter's Presidency:

The origins of last Tuesday's attack on the United States arguably have their roots in the 1970's. At the same time, during the height of the Cold War, a Washington shamed by defeat in Vietnam embarked on deep, collaborative enterprise to contain the Soviet Union. The genesis of the policy came to a head following the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, when president Jimmy Carter set up a team headed by National Security Advisor Brzezinski to employ its 'death by a thousand cuts' policy on the tottering Soviet empire (as cited in Scott, 2007, p. 71).

It is apparent that Brzezinski's policies increased the probability of Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. The policies he pursued in Afghanistan were part of a larger program which was overseen and approved by Jimmy Carter. This program's grand strategy was to undermine the Soviet Union by targeting it from within. For example, the CIA was assigned the major task of dispersing written documents in various ethnic sectors of the Soviet territory. At the same time, and with the help of Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence Agency (ISI) and Saudi Arabia, the CIA began to circulate thousands of Wahhabi-glossed Korans in the Soviet Union as part of their strategy to weaken their rival. A January 1979 article in *Time* magazine reveals the

importance of such policies at the height of the Cold War: "from Islamic democracies on Russia's southern tier, a zealous Koranic evangelism might sweep across the border into these politically repressed Soviet states, creating problems for the Kremlin" (as cited Scott, 2007, p. 72).

The Soviet Union's military invasion of Afghanistan was part of its response to these events. On October 31, 1979, Soviet troops marched towards the Pakistan border in order to reinforce the Soviet Union's "foreign policy and socialist ideas" in the region (Perry, 2008,p. 5). David Isby states, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan is undoubtedly one of the central events leading to the end of the Cold War:

We will never know if Leonid Brezhnev and Politburo had not made the decision to intervene in Afghanistan--a decision that Soviet military officers contend after the fact was unwise--whether the Soviet Union would still be in existence today (as cited in Cogan, 1993, p. 73)

The Soviet leaders' first objective was to quickly seize geostrategic Afghanistan sites. To achieve this end, the Soviet troops took control of airports, government centres, and important transportation venues. The initial objective of the war was quickly satisfied, but (as will be demonstrated) the end result was ultimately tragic for the Soviet troops. In the words of a Pakistani military officer, "It took the Red Army tanks only two days to reach Kabul and eight years to begin to leave it" (as cited in Scott, 2007, p. 119).

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan coincided with the 1979 Iranian Revolution. As Richard Clarke (2004) notes, the Iranian Revolution had a significant impact on American policies in general and the Afghan war in particular. The revolution enabled an extremist Islamist movement orchestrated by Ayatollah Khomeini to oust the Shah of Iran. The Shah, an enduring ally of America, had never hesitated to blindly protect America's interest in the region

in exchange for the United States economic and military aid, which had shattered the Soviet dream of controlling the region all the way to the waters of the Persian Gulf. The United States was alarmed by the fall of the Shah, which coincided with the Soviet troops' march on Afghanistan in the direction of Persian Gulf, implying that the Soviets were considering cutting off the supply of the oil to the industrial world (Clarke, 2004). Further, the Iranian Revolution uniquely altered the relationship between the United States and political Islam. Prior to the events of 1979, Americans saw the world's articulation of political power to be divided between the Soviet Union and militant third world nationalism and political Islam. Militant third world nationalism was seen as a Soviet instrument, while political Islam was perceived as an "unqualified ally in the struggle against the Soviet Union" (Mamdani, 2004, p. 120). This was the basis for America's support of politically- inspired Muslim groups throughout the world, the most well-known being the Jamaati-Iskami against Zulfikar Bhutto in Pakistan and the Society of Muslim Brothers against Nasser in Egypt.

However, the Iranian hostage crisis, which began with Islamic militants taking over the American embassy in Tehran on November 4, 1979 and lasted for more than a year, signalled the beginning of a new era for American policy makers (Scott, 2007). The revolution alerted Americans that a new political sensibility was emerging in the world which was simultaneously Islamist, anti-communist, and nationalist in nature. As a result, the Shah was no longer America's number one ally and American embarked upon a search for new allies in the Middle East. This new strategy was evident in America's support for Iraq during its eight- year war against Iran. In addition, the revolution taught Americans that there were two versions of political Islam (Saull, as cited in Colas & Saull, 2006). The first was revolutionary political Islam, which emphasized the significance of social movements and popular uprisings as mechanisms for creating independent Islamic countries. In contrast, the second was the so-called elitist version of political Islam, which did not aspire to be a movement driven by mass

participation because its "notion of an Islamist state was one that would *contain* popular participation, not encourage it" (Mamdani, 2004, p. 122). The United States was quick to seek the aid of countries which advanced the elitist version of political Islam (especially Pakistan and Saudi Arabia) in the Afghan war and the creation of a unified front against the spread of Iranian influence in the region.

It is also salient to note that the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan happened when Ronald Reagan was about to succeed Carter as the American President. The new American administration viewed the occupation of Afghanistan as "an opportunity to hand the Soviet Union its own Vietnam" (Mamdani, 2004, p. 120). This viewpoint became the cornerstone of Reagan's strategic policy objectives, reflecting his belief that the Afghan war was a global rather than a regional development. Concurrently, Reagan's succession signified that the focus of America's foreign policy had changed from containment to rollback. The policies of Carter's administration in Afghanistan had involved a mixture of the carrot and the stick in that it approved of moderate covert operations carried out by its anti-Communist allies (governments, groups, and non-state actors). In contrast, the main aspiration of Reagan's policies during the Afghan war was payback in the sense that it wanted Afghanistan to become the Soviet's Vietnam. This ambitious objective was to be achieved in a fashion that would "bleed the Soviet Union white" (Mamdani, 2004, p. 124). To this end, the Afghan war engaged the most highly anticipated CIA paramilitary operation since Vietnam and became the bloodiest conflict of its decade as well as the largest military battle in the history of the Soviet Union.

Chapter 5: The Mujahedeen: CIA, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia

Similar to its predecessor, the Reagan administration turned to the Mujahedeen as a significant force of support in its struggle against the Soviets. The world may have openly witnessed the close relationship between Mujahedeen and the United States for the first time in 1985, when images of Reagan hosting a group of Mujahedeen leaders in the White House were televised. On this occasion Reagan also endorsed the Afghan Mujahedeen leaders as freedom fighters, going so far as to state that their mission was comparable to that of America's founding fathers (Mamdani, 2004). The 1985 television broadcast revealed the American administration's keenness to support one of the most extreme versions of political Islam in order to gain an ally and an advantage in its struggle against the Soviet Union. To effectively analyze the objectives, missions, and recruitment of the Mujahedeen and the part it played in the Afghan war, it is necessary to examine the triangular interrelationship between the CIA, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia in the 1980's. More specifically, the United States turned to Pakistan and Saudi Arabia as chief allies against the Soviets precisely because they preached the elitist version of Islam, and as such, had interests aligned with those of the United States.

During the latter years of his presidency, Carter had stopped providing aid to Pakistan primarily because of its fragile human rights records and the Pakistan army's judicial execution of elected Prime Minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. However, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan pushed Carter to offer General Zia, the new Pakistani Prime Minister, military and economic assistance in return for Pakistan helping the Mujahedeen. Nonetheless, the relationship between

the two leaders remained fragile because Carter's offer was not satisfactory to Zia. When Reagan highlighted Pakistan's position as the ideal candidate for assisting the Mujahedeen in the Afghan war at the start of his presidency, it marked the beginning of a new relationship between the two countries. As a result, the United States provided a "huge, six-year economic and military aid package which elevated Pakistan to the third largest recipient of U.S. foreign aid--after Israel and Egypt" (Mamdani, 2004, p. 126). Gary Schroen (2005) offers new insight into this scenario in arguing that Pakistan's cooperation with the United States was part of its struggle to achieve enduring political objectives within Afghanistan – that is, Pakistan envisioned that Afghanistan would become a country controlled by an extreme Islamist party which would allow Pakistan to interfere in its territory. These objectives explain why Pakistan gave keen support to Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, one of the most extremist leaders on Afghan battlefields, over other senior Mujahedeen leaders. Essentially, Pakistan believed that the Soviets' invasion of Afghanistan would be followed by assaults in the Pakistani provinces of Baluchistan and Gawader, allowing the Soviets to fulfill their dream of privileged access to the waters of Persian Gulf. It was therefore a logical policy for the military leaders of Pakistan to contain Soviet troops inside the borders of Afghanistan, and Pakistan quickly found itself on the battleground alongside its ally, the United States (Clarke, 2004).

This period marked the beginning of an unprecedented collaboration between the intelligence services of both states. The CIA and ISI began a series of initiatives which would profoundly affect the outcome of the Afghan war. They were united by two shared objectives: "militarily, to provide maximum firepower to the Mujahedeen and, politically, to recruit the most radically anti-Communist Islamists to counter Soviet forces" (Mamdani, 2004, p. 126). 1985 became a turning point in the pursuit of these objectives when Reagan issued the National Security Decision Directive 166, which called for an intensification of covert action against Soviets and for the provision of a higher level of military aid to the Mujahedeen. The goal of

this directive was ultimately to force the Soviet Union's withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan.

As a result, the new initiatives brought about the following changes to the Afghan battlefield:

Beginning in 1985, the CIA supplied Mujahedeen rebels with extensive satellite reconnaissance data of Soviet targets on the Afghan battlefield, plans for military operations based on the satellite intelligence, intercepts of Soviet communications, secret communications networks for the rebels, delayed timing devices for tons of C-4 plastic explosives for urban sabotage, and sophisticated guerrilla attacks, long-range sniper rifles, a targeting device for mortars that was linked to a U.S. Navy satellite, wire-guided anti-tank missiles, and other equipments (Coll, as cited in Mirra, 2005, p. 44).

The largest supply the U.S. weaponry was provided in 1987, when it reached a total of 65,000 tons and numerous CIA and Pentagon officials visited various ISI headquarters in order to coordinate Mujahedeen operations:

At any one time during the Afghan fighting season, as many as 11 ISI teams trained and supplied by the CIA accompanied Mujahedeen across the border to supervise attacks, according Yousaf, [who was the Afghan Bureau of ISI], and Western sources. The teams attacked airports, railroads, fuel depots, electricity pylons, bridges and roads...CIA operations officers helped Pakistani trainers establish schools for the Mujahedeen in secure communications, guerrilla warfare, urban sabotage, and heavy weapons (Coll, as cited in Mirra, 2002, p. 45).

The change in policy from 'turning Afghanistan into a new Vietnam' to 'forcing the Soviets to get out' was coupled with another initiative. By 1986 America had begun supplying the Mujahedeen with Stinger, an American hand-held anti-aircraft missile which came to be known as "the first significant non-Soviet weapon" on the Afghan battlefield (Cogan, 1993, p. 76). This was significant in that it "removed the fig leaf of deniability covering the U.S. involvement – that all weapons used by the Mujahedeen were Soviet weapons retrieved from the battlefield" (Cogan, 1993, p. 76). The anti-aircraft weapons became rapidly popular among the Mujahedeen, particularly because they were so effective at bringing down Soviet helicopters (for example, estimates

indicate that Stingers brought down about 270 Soviet Helicopters in 1987 (Clarke, 2004).

These developments also signalled an increase in the United States spending in Afghanistan, which reached an unprecedented estimate of \$400 million in the fiscal years of 1987 and 1988. According to *The Washington Post*, the numbers declined to \$350 million in 1989 and \$300 million in 1990. Nonetheless, by September of 1989 (some ten years into the United States' covert operation in Afghanistan), the United States had spent nearly \$2 billion on its actions and policy initiatives associated with its Afghanistan operations (as cited in Cogan, 1993).

The decisions to provide the Mujahedeen with the assistance of American advisors and equip them with American Stinger were directed and supervised by CIA director William Casey. One of Casey's decisions stands out as a zealous plan to transform the ideological nature of the Afghan war into a global Jihad against the Soviets. This decision was to pursue the global recruitment of radical Islamists who would join the Mujahedeen in an international Jihad (Mamdani, 2004). To this end, the ISI, the CIA, and Saudi intelligence (in conjunction with Saudi security service leader Prince Turki bin Faisal), embarked on the ambitious project of recruiting and training Islamist radicals from all over the world (not only from Pakistan and other countries with Islamic roots). The most well-known training camps were the traditional Koranic schools or Madrassahs in Pakistan. These traditional schools were mainly funded by Saudi Arabia, which was then considered a close ally of the United States in the region (Heller, 2006). The Madrassahs were able to further support the global Jihad's cause by providing new recruits, as one of its main objectives was to recruit poor children of Pakistan and Afghan descent to join and train with the Mujahedeen in Afghanistan.

As has been mentioned, the Saudi-American relationship was strengthened by Iranian Revolution; as a result, Saudi Arabia became increasingly involved in the geopolitical affairs

within Afghanistan and its neighbour, Pakistan. The Saudi monarchy had been threatened by the spread of communism in the region – and specifically threatened by the Arab social revolution of late 1960s, which had toppled monarchies in Iraq, Egypt, and North Yemen. As a result, the Saudi monarchy made the struggle against communism a cornerstone of its foreign policy and in so doing, assumed the role of an Islamic state which "championed a pro-Islamic politics, based on its role as custodian of Islam's two holiest sites, Mecca and Medina" (Saul, as cited in Colas & Saul, 2006, p. 76). These developments coincided with the ascendance of General Zia's government to power as a "military dictatorship legitimised by its appeal to Islam and the cultivation of reactionary Islamist tendencies within Pakistan" (Saul, as cited in Colas & Saul, 2006, p. 76). The Islamization of Pakistani politics was implemented in most areas of Pakistan's socio-political landscape, including the penal, educational, and financial sectors (Esposito, 1992). In the Saudis' view, the process of Islamization laid an ideal foundation for the recruitment and financing of the Madrassahs in Pakistan. Saudi financial backing led the tuition-free Madrassahs to rapidly spread throughout Pakistan, with the provision of free food, shelter, and military training functioning "as the chief institutions of recruitment and indoctrination for the Islamic resistance in Afghanistan" (Saul, as cited in Colas & Saul, 2006, p. 78). The schools were further fortified by the CIA's weaponry and by the ISI, which provided space for the Mujahedeen training camps and took on the responsibility of coordinating Mujahedeen combat plans (which included conveying them to various parties within Afghanistan as potential advisors). The scale of ISI-CIA support was such that between 1983 and 1987, an estimated number of 80,000 Mujahedeen were recruited and trained within Pakistan's territory (Perry, 2008). This indicated that the so-called triangular interrelationship between the CIA, the ISI, and Saudi Intelligence had thus gained momentum and that their conjoined efforts had created a pivotal military and political force which positioned to win the Afghan war.

Chapter 6: The CIA's International Jihad: the End of the Afghan War and Bin Laden

The recruitment of Islamist militants took on a well-coordinated international dimension when Casey of the CIA, Prince Turki bin Faisal of Saudi, and Mohammad Yousef, the director of ISI, established a foreign branch of Jihadi Muslims known as Arab Afghans (these individuals were not Afghans and were not always Arabs by descent) (Scott, 2007). In the Arab countries a network of recruitment sites had been established which connected strategic locations in Egypt and Saudi Arabia to Pakistan. This network eventually spread as far as Sudan in the South, Indonesia in the East, Chechnya in the North, and Kosovo in the West. The so-called Arab Afghans were then sent to Pakistan to undergo an intensive training program in the Madrassahs, which skilfully blended guerrilla training with Islamic teachings. The Indian journalist Dilip Hiro comments on this education:

Predominant themes were that Islam was a complete socio-political ideology, that holy Islam was being violated by atheistic Soviet troops, and that the Islamic people of Afghanistan should reassert their independence by overthrowing the leftist Afghan regime propped up by Moscow (as cited in Mamdani, 2004, p. 136).

As such, Madrassahs became an instructive haven for tens of thousands of Islamic radicals from all over the world and prepared these radicals for Mujahedeen military training in army camps. Mohammad Yousef, the head of the Afghan Bureau of ISI from 1983 to 1987, commented that during his period in office approximately 80,000 Mujahedeen were trained in camps and estimated that about 35,000 Muslim extremists

from other militant groups in 43 Islamic counties fought alongside the Mujahedeen between 1982 and 1992 (as cited in Mamdani, 2004). This demonstrated that "more than a hundred thousand Muslim radicals from around the world had direct contact with Pakistan and Afghanistan" (Rashid, as cited in Mamdani, 2004, p. 138).

The process of recruiting Islamist militia from outside of the Arab world differed from the recruitment within the Arab world. The CIA was again at the forefront of international Jihadi recruitment. The most eminent of the CIA international recruiters was Sheikh Azzam, a former professor at King Abdul Aziz University in Saudi Arabia. Azzam is known as the co-founder of Al Qaeda and was regarded as "a CIA asset who toured the length and breadth of the U.S. in the early and mid-1980's recruiting for holy war in Afghanistan" (Mamdani, 2004, p. 127). One of Azzam's responsibilities was to travel throughout the United States in order to create a network of offices for recruiting freedom fighters and raising funds to support the Mujahedeen. Azzam created branch offices at mosques in the United States., the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Norway, and throughout the Middle East. This global network was recognized as the Services Office for the Mujahedeen and otherwise known as Makhtab al-Khidimat (MAK) (Scott, 2007). Recruiting militants in countries with Islamic roots could be challenging because of the restrictions he faced on freedom of speech, so Azzam turned to his Western recruitment sites as the major sources of activity. The Al-Kifah recruitment centre in Brooklyn, New York, was arguably one of the most influential recruiting centres. The journalist Steven Emerson reports:

The first Conference of Jihad was held by Azzam not in Peshawar or Riyadh or Damascus, but in Brooklyn, at the Al-Farook Mosque on Atlantic Avenue. There, in 1988, Azzam exhorted the nearly two hundred Islamic militants who attended the conference with the following words: "You must fight in any place you can get...Whenever Jihad is mentioned in the Holy Book, it means the obligation to fight"(as cited in Scott, 2007, p. 140).

The MAK network was therefore a key locus for the United States-Saudi-Pakistani alliance's recruitment of foreign Islamist fighters. With the backing of the CIA and Saudi Intelligence, Azzam transferred the responsibility of training these so-called Arab Afghans to one of his former students, Osama Bin Laden (Scott, 2007). As a businessman from a wealthy Saudi family, Osama Bin Laden first set foot on Afghanistan soil in 1980 and soon established close ties with Mujahedeen leaders in 1986. The CIA chose Bin Laden as the chief contractor to build a massive tunnel structure known as the Khost and funded its undertaking. The tunnel, which was built deep underground near the Pakistani border, became a significant location for the storage of arms resource, as well as a training site and a medical facility centre for Islamist fighters (Mamdani, 2001).

The relationship between Azzam and Bin Laden had deteriorated by 1988, when the Afghan war approached its end. Some claimed that differing visions with regard to the future of Jihad had caused a dispute between the two men (Scott, 2007; Mamdani, 2004). While Bin Laden "envisioned an all -Arab legion, which eventually could be used to wage Jihad in Saudi Arabia and Egypt", Azzam looked upon the liberation of Afghanistan as the main objective of the war, as he strongly opposed the idea of waging war against fellow-Muslims (Mamdani, 2004, 133). Azzam and Bin Laden did not have an opportunity to rectify their differences because Azzam was murdered in a 1989 car bombing in Peshawar, Pakistan (the motivation for the bombing is still shrouded in haze and mystery). Shortly after Azzam's death, the city of Khost hosted 10 of the top Mujahedeen leaders to engage in talks which would decide the future of Jihad. One of the leaders was Jamal al-Fadl, a Sudanese national who a decade later stated that: "[a] new organization was created in that meeting to wage Jihad beyond the borders of Afghanistan". The organization, which came to be known as Al-Qaeda (the base), had Bin Laden as its undisputed leader, who emerged as "the most prominent privatized arm of the American Jihad" (Mamdani, 2004, p. 133).

By 1988, it was clear that continuing to pit Soviet troops against the organized and well-funded Mujahedeen was not a wise policy choice for Kremlin leaders. In February of 1988 the Soviet Union announced that it would fully withdraw its troops within a year, and that promise was fulfilled on February 15, 1989 (Cogan, 1993). The CIA's international Jihad had defeated the Red Army, and America was about to celebrate a triumphant victory that marked the end of the Cold War. However, for the Mujahedeen, the end of the Cold War merely signalled the beginning of a new struggle. The schism regarding the future direction of Jihad that had been delineated by Bin Laden and Azzam's viewpoints was resolved at the 1989 meeting when Bin Laden and his concept of Jihad – as a doctrine that needed to be exported beyond the borders of Afghanistan – emerged victorious. To fulfill his goal of a worldwide Jihad, Bin Laden and his newly established organization, Al-Qaeda, enlisted the aid of the Arab Afghans who had been deployed from all over the world to participate in the Afghan war. The Arab Afghans were considered a privileged force in that with the supervision of Bin Laden during the last years of the Afghan war they were blessed with the most technical trainings from the CIA and the ISI (Mamdani, 2004).

In his book, *Against All Enemies*, Richard Clarke (2004) analyzes the development of the Mujahedeen fighters who joined Al-Qaeda in the aftermath of the Cold War. In particular, he establishes a correlation between the United States policies in Afghanistan and Arab Afghans. In September of 1991 the United States and the Soviet Union agreed to withdraw all of their resources from Afghanistan and terminate all aid (including the support the Americans had given to both Mujahedeen and pro-government troops) by the beginning of 1992. According to Clarke, this decision minimized the scope of America's influence in a country that remained on the brink of war for over a decade. One significant by-product of the decision is the United States' general lack of a strategy for dealing with the massive military force it had helped

Afghanistan to build in the war against Soviets. In other words, after the Cold War was over, the Reagan administration had no effective policy dealing with Mujahedeen forces, particularly the non-Afghani Arab Afghans. As Mamdani (2004) observes, these circumstances allowed Bin Laden, a famous CIA-trained terrorist, to tighten his grip on an organization whose members shared the capability "of terror tactics, of holy war as a political ideology, and of a transnational recruitment of fighters, who acquired hyphenated identities" (p. 163). These capabilities were highlighted by the bond between Al-Qaeda's members, who knew each other and had "developed an *esprit de corps* in the Afghan 'trenches' or training camps" (Roy, 2004, p. 294).

Chapter 7: Al-Qaeda and Globalization in the Post-Cold War Period

The birth of Al-Qaeda coincided with a significant development in international relations: the rhetoric that some call the 'globalization of the post-Cold war order' (Clark, 2001; Rumford, 2008). The literature generally concurs that the term globalization is “one of the most widely used – and misused – words in the field of international relations today” (O’Neil, 1997, p. 90). There are a variety of interpretations of globalization which reflect its dynamic, wide- ranging and ever-expanding character. As a result, the term globalization is invoked “to explain everything at a cost of leaving nothing that is not still shrouded in haze and mystery” (Clark, 2001, p. 144). This is the basis for Falk's (1999) assertion that globalization has become “the most satisfactory descriptive label for the current historical era... for better or worse” (as cited in Clark, 2001, p. 143). The term has become highly popularized and encompasses a wide range of issues within the present world order. Those who strive to clarify the meaning of globalization commonly agree that it is no longer a predominantly economic phenomenon, as its dimensions have expanded to include social, cultural, geographical, and security-related aspects (O’Neil, 1997).

This research project does *not intend* to put forth a comprehensive account of the literature on globalization, which examines a diverse range of issues pertinent to its causes and effects. Rather, the project is concerned with globalization only *insofar* as it grants the reader a convenient frame of understanding for thinking about the

development of Al-Qaeda in the post-Cold War order, and for evaluating the way in which globalization has facilitated Al-Qaeda's transition to a network of global reach. In his book, *One World Divisible: A Global History Since 1945*, David Reynolds (2000, p. 4) asserts: "if stated without qualification, globalization is just cold war victor's history". Although such a bold interpretation of globalization demands an in-depth investigation in order to determine whether it is credible, Reynolds' identification of the connection between globalization and the Cold War merits specific attention in itself, as globalization is seen to reflect a set of "fundamental dynamics that have persisted between the Cold War and post-1990 periods" (Clark, 2001, p. 139). According to Clark (2001) globalization has integrated significant elements of the Cold War era and as such, ensured their continuity within the post-1990 world order. The end of the Cold War and globalization are significantly correlated in that the latter is perceived as a contributive process in the erosion of Soviet might, terminating the significance of the geopolitical battle that Soviets engaged in their struggle with the West. Anthony Giddens (2002) asserts that Soviet blocs, including East European countries, were matching the West's economic growth rates until early 1970's. It was the Soviet's lack of competitiveness in the global electronic economy which was chiefly responsible for the rapid diminishment of its power in relation to the west. However, as Giddens (2002, p. 14) explains, the profound impact that globalization had on the Soviet Union extended beyond its lack of economic competitiveness:

The ideological and cultural control upon which communist political authority was based similarly could not survive in an era of global media. The Soviet and East European regimes were unable to prevent the reception of Western radio and television broadcasts. Television played a direct role in the 1989 revolutions, which have rightly been called the first "television revolution". Street protestors taking place in one country were watched by television audiences in others, large numbers of whom then took to the street themselves.

It is therefore plausible to assert that the West used globalization to help it undermine the communist struggle. With the demise of the Soviet Union and the

subsequent elimination of geopolitical barriers that had persisted in the aftermath of the WWII, the stage was set for the geographical expansion of globalization in a non-bipolar world. In other words, the Cold War victory was "clearly indicated in the renewed scope for further globalization" in that it had the opportunity to contain the globe once the communist persistence to its growth was overpowered (Clark, 2001, p. 143). The geographical expansion of globalization has subsequently been characterized by a number of qualities. Three of qualities stand out as instructive in that they illuminate the global dimensions of Al-Qaeda in the post-1990 world order: globalization's uneven borderless character, its uneven consequences, and its drastic and unpredictable side.

The borderless nature of globalization is seen to entail an acute awareness of an increasingly interdependent world which is being compressed in a fashion that brings it within the reach of all individuals (It is salient to note that the latter claim is disputed by a number of globalization theorists (Rosenberg, 2000; Wood, 2003). For example, Ellen Wood (2003) rejects the notion that nation-states are losing their power as the result of globalization: "the world today, in fact, is more than ever a world of nation-states. The political form of globalization is not a global state but a global system of multiple local states, structured in a complex relation of domination and subordination" (p. 20)). Globalization has thus enabled "the transformation of geography from a barrier to a connector" in challenging the "dominant conceptions of *political space* in International Relations" (Robert Keohane, 2002, as cited in Baylis, 2007, p. 194; Krause & Renwick, 1996, as cited in Clark, 1999, p. 36). In explaining the impact of globalization vis-à-vis political space, Jan Art Scholte (1997) puts forth an analysis which consists of three conceptual interactions: cross-border interactions, open-border interactions and trans-border interactions. According to Scholte, trans-border interactions mean that "the borders are not so much

crossed or opened as transcended" (as cited in Clark, 1999, p. 36). Scholte further explains that he envisions global interrelationships "not [as] links at a *distance* across territory, but circumstances *without distance* and relatively disconnected from particular location" (as cited in Clark, 1999, p. 36).

Moreover, the process of globalization signals a substantial shift in the foundation of human relationships: this shift is "from a world of discrete but independent national states to the world as a shared social space" (McGrew, 2005, as cited in Baylis, Smith & Owens, 2008 p. 18). Within this context globalization is regarded as a dynamic phenomenon that constantly shapes and re-shapes the organization of human social and economic interrelationships. These relationships are no longer primarily developed locally or within nation-states, as their reach and scale have acquired a transnational or global dimension. Globalization thus connotes "that the cumulative scale, scope, velocity, and depth of contemporary interconnectedness is dissolving the significance of the border and boundaries which separate the world into its some 193 constituent states or political spaces" (Rosenau, 1997, as cited in Baylis, Smith & Owens, 2008, p. 18).

The technological revolution has significantly accelerated the restructuring of socio-political and economic spheres that has accompanied by the process of globalization. Technological advances in communications (i.e. transportation and information technology) are generally acknowledged to be "a major driver of globalization" (O'Neil, 1997, p. 21). The assimilation of financial markets is seen to affirm the significance of the new function of information technology (IT) within globalization. Another example is the increase internet access over the past two decades: in the middle of 1980's only a few thousands computer users had the luxury of accessing internet, while at the end the 1990's, the numbers of computers with internet access surpassed 50 million (O'Neil, 1997). Globalization is thus associated with process of *time-space compression*—that is, with a shrinking world in which "instantaneous

electronic communication erodes the constraints and time on social organization and interaction" (Held & McGrew, 2003, p. 3). The compressed nature of this world is such that local problems have become less significant due to the reciprocal relationship between what is going on 'in here', or within nation-states, and 'out there' on the global level (O'Neil, 1997). Within this process of de-territorialization (as McGrew & Held, 2003 label it) global insecurities are a negative outcome which can manifest as disease, violence, and terrorism, spread quickly and pose a daunting challenge to the global community.

Many International Relations scholars agree that the globalization of the post-Cold War order has had both positive and negative outcomes and that these outcomes vary among countries (i.e. O'Neil, 1997; Giddens, 2002). These scholars assert that globalization has conferred economic advantages upon people from some parts of the world, especially those in the global North, but has concurrently marginalized and disadvantaged many of the citizens of poor nations. In so doing, globalization divides the world's population into winners and losers.

As Giddens (2002, p. 15) remarks:

The share of the poorest fifth of the world's population in global income has dropped from 2.3 per cent to 1.4 per cent between 1989 and 1998. The proportion taken by the richest fifth, on the other hand, has risen. In sub-Saharan Africa, 20 countries have lower incomes per head in real terms than they had in the late 1970's.

However, scholars of International Relations do not agree about what sources of inequality are embedded in the phenomenon of globalization. Some argue that globalization symbolizes the end of the Cold War victory and has become an instrument to "satisfy the demands of the victors" in the post-Cold War era (Clarke, 2001, p. 143). The claim is conjoined with a cynical outlook in which asserts that the end of the bipolar Cold War world gave rise to an American form of imperialism. This view entails

that globalization emerged out of “the barrel of a gun – a gun wielded, pointed, and fired” by the imperial state, the United States (Petras & Veltmeyer, 2005, p. 14) and as such, enabled the United States to control a vast array of strategic sociopolitical and economic resources in various parts of the world. To the contrary, others contend that global inequalities cannot be entirely blamed on wealthy states in claiming that the processes of globalization which occurred after 1990 can only partially be attributed to the Westernization of the world. This perspective is predicated on the belief that although global Northern countries exercise a much greater degree of influence over world developments than global Southern countries, globalization is “becoming increasingly decentred – not under control of any group of nations” (Giddens, 2002, p. 16).

As mentioned, the scholars do agree that globalization has exacerbated inequities: that globalization constitutes a “process of uneven development that fragments as it coordinates... [such that] the outcome is not necessarily, or even usually a generalized set of changes acting in a uniform direction, but consists in mutually opposed tendencies” (Giddens, 1990, as cited in Guillen, 2001, p. 245). As a result of its uneven character and consequences, globalization has shaped a world which is uncertain and unfamiliar in its capacities. As Chris Rumford (2008) contends, this highlights a paradox that exists within the concept of globalization: on the one hand it connotes that the world is becoming increasingly smaller and interconnected, while on the other hand, it indicates that this same world is larger, more complex, and more dangerous and threatening in its capacity. As Rumford (2008) points out:

What is rarely confronted in the literature is that at the same time as the world is re-made by the processes of globalization the world is also becoming increasingly unfamiliar.

Global threats have occasioned a range of solutions which themselves have heightened a sense of insecurity and threat (p. 642).

As globalization constricts the world, it paradoxically brings its enormous size into consideration (Rumford, 2008). Globalization can therefore be seen to have prompted an acute awareness of an increasingly interdependent world which is simultaneously being compressed and reconfigured in a fashion that brings it within the reach of all individuals, for better and for worse. It is best “understood as both the increasing interconnectedness of the world coupled with the realization that *this is the case*” (Robertson, 1992, as cited in Rumford, 2008, p. 633). Both aspects of the paradox are equally significant as each acknowledges that the post-Cold War order can be unfamiliar in its scope and capacity.

It is within the framework of this paradox that Al-Qaeda has emerged as a form of transnational network in the aftermath of the Cold War. A quick overview of its post-1990 development discloses the transformative effect which globalization has had on its modes of organization. The ever-shrinking and compressed nature of the globalized world has facilitated the global movement of Al-Qaeda members across national and regional borders, just as it has done for actors in the world of business. This has turned Al-Qaeda to a borderless organization in the sense that its operation no longer needs to be based in a specific state or jurisdiction.

In the aftermath of the Afghan war many Al-Qaeda members were dispersed throughout the globe to fulfill Bin Laden's dream of exporting Jihad beyond the borders of Afghanistan. This established, harmonized, and mobilized an international Jihadi vanguard consisting of Algerian-Afghans, Egyptian-Afghans, Indonesian-Afghans, and Filipino-Afghans (as well as other Afghan groups). The vanguard is strengthened by its members' shared experience in the Afghan war, which was a unifying theme to politically fuel their Jihadi ambitions. As this unification was not always replicated at the local level, members of the vanguard have sought to

rally the locals in their area to support a common cause. An ideal example of this agenda is provided by the Filipino organization of Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG). Under the supervision of Bin Laden, Abu Sayyaf was established in 1991 by Abubakar Janjalani, an Arab Afghan who fought alongside the Mujahedeen in the 1980s. The local objective of the group was to strive for the creation of an autonomous Islamic republic in the Southern Philippine region of Mindanao and Janjalani justified his actions "in the name of an international Jihadist movement" (Rabasa et al., 2006, p. 35).

Sharing and spreading values and objectives have enabled Bin Laden to create a system of decentralized and indirectly related networks of cells which has flourished throughout the globe (William, 2006). Many political commentators credit Bin Laden for utilizing his educational background in modern management theory in establishing a non-authoritarian technique of leadership, which has led him to successfully produced an adoptive organization of global semi-independent cells working towards a common cause (Hoffman, 2002; Winkates, as cited in Kindt, Post, & Schneider, 2009). Al-Qaeda's decentralized formation is unique in that it is not always necessary for Bin Laden to be at the centre of the organization's activities. ASG again serves as an example, as the training of its members in matters related to explosives was originally assigned to Ramzi Yousef, who was deployed to the Philippines on behalf of Bin Laden to coordinate "the so-called Bojinka plot to blow up 11 U.S.-bound airliners in flight" (the operation was to be carried out predominantly by ASG) (Winkates, as cited in Kindt, Post, & Schneider, 2009, p. 173). The support that ASG has garnered Al-Qaeda showcases Al-Qaeda's dynamic nature as an organization which grants autonomy to its subordinate cells so long as they share its global Jihadi ambitions.

The dynamic and decentralized character of Al-Qaeda demands a mixed and sophisticated operational strategy. To this end, Al-Qaeda employs three levels of personnel to meet its tactical and operational objectives. First, *the professional cadre* is the "most dedicated,

committed, and professional element of Al-Qaeda" (Hoffman, 2002, p. 309). These are persons entrusted to carry out the most important and high value attacks, and are also known as the 'spectaculars'. They belong to carefully selected teams which are well-funded and are provided with enhanced training in the targeting of strategic areas. The hijackers of 9/11 fall within this category.

The second level is composed of *trained amateurs* who are given less professional training and more open-ended instructions for launching operations. Ahmed Ressay is an example of such individuals. Originally a member of Algeria's Armed Islamic Group (GIA), he was later employed by Al-Qaeda, which provided him with basic training at one of their Afghanistan camps. There he was provided a relatively modest \$12,000 in "seed money" for recruiting individuals to join his terrorist cell and ordered to engage in "less steered, determined, and dedicated" work than that assigned to the 9/11 hijackers (Hoffman, 2002, p. 309). Ressay was arrested in 1999 in Port Angeles, Washington State, upon arriving to the U.S. from Canada.

Al-Qaeda's third level of personnel is classified as *local walk-ins*: these are individuals representing factions who design their own plans for attacks on specific areas and seek Al-Qaeda's financial assistance in order to carry out those plans. The Islamist militants captured in Milan on October 2001 are an example of one such faction. Italian authorities revealed that the militants, who had plans to attack the United States interests within the Italian border, were financially assisted by Al-Qaeda (Hoffman, 2002).

In closing this chapter's analysis of the impact which globalization has had on Al-Qaeda it is salient to note that the organization's operations, recruitment processes, and methods for guiding members have increasingly relied upon various facets of information technology. The internet, the cornerstone of information technology, has played a crucial role in advancing Al-Qaeda's cause. It is now known that in the months leading up to September 11 Al-Qaeda affiliates communicated with one another through Yahoo email and Al-Qaeda members used the

internet to learn about the power of chemical crop dusters (Cronin, 2002). Further, technological progress in communications, which is generally acknowledged as "a major driver of globalization" (O'Neil, 1997, p. 21) has been widely exploited by Al-Qaeda. For example, the summer before 9/11 a high quality, two-hour videotape of Bin Laden critiquing the infidels' insult to Muslims in Chechnya, Kashmir, and Lebanon was prepared and distributed to be witnessed around the globe. The video, which foreshadowed the horrific events of 9/11, was later on modified to CD-ROM and DVD formats in order for further absorption by various Al-Qaeda propaganda machines (Hoffman, 2002).

Lastly, in advancing its agenda, Al-Qaeda relies heavily on as-Sahab production as its most influential online representative. As as-Sahab is highly secretive, there is little solid information available about it – not much more than speculations that it is based somewhere on the Afghanistan- Pakistan border. Craig Whitlock (2008) explains that as-Sahab uses technology extensively:

Analysts have said that as -Sahab is outfitted with some of the best technology available. Editors and producers use ultralight Sony Vaio laptops and top-end video cameras. Files are protected using PGP, or Pretty Good Privacy, a virtually unbreakable form of encryption software that is also used by intelligence agencies around the world (as cited in Muthuswamy, 2009, p. 192).

Utilizing advanced technologies to launch its operations has enabled as-Sahab to play a pivotal role in Al-Qaeda's global warfare propaganda. Intercepted videos have revealed that in its regular monthly release, as-Sahab showcases a handful of videos about a variety of subjects, such as Al-Qaeda's senior leaders' most up-to-date speeches or images referencing a specific attack. The video images are often accompanied by a shining yellow logo at the bottom of their screen which implies that the work is an official production of Al-Qaeda. As-Sahab has thus become a "global Jihadist media powerhouse" for Al-Qaeda leaders (Brachman, 2009, p. 131).

Chapter 8: Al-Qaeda: The Emergence of Islamic Fundamentalism or the By-Product of a Blowback World?

As was demonstrated in the detailed discussion about culture talk in chapter 1, after 9/11, American intellectuals focused on the role which culture and religion had played as causes of the tragic incident of 9/11. This view looks at the politics of 9/11 through the lenses of culture and religion. However, culture talk was shown to be problematic in two fundamental ways. First, the cultural interpretation of political events tends to circumvent historical issues. Second, because it defines people of traditional cultures in “authentic and original terms” (Mamdani, 2002, p. 767), it views them as individuals whose identities have been wholly constructed by the static culture into which they were born. This distinction makes it possible to divide the world into modern and pre-modern segments; the former is seen to engage in the art of creating culture, whereas the latter is seen to function as the conduit for culture and not its source. The distinction between modern and pre-modern cultures was also the basis for the argument that Islam was a manifestation of pre-modernity in an ever-expanding globalized world. This line of thought was advanced by individuals such as Samuel Huntington, Bernard Lewis and Aryeh Neiers (the former president of Human Rights Watch), who connected Islam with *fundamentalism* and asserted that the concurrent ideologies constituted 21st century fascism (as cited in Mamdani, 2004). Accordingly, Neiers and those who concur with his view asserted that anti-modern fundamentalists of the new millennium were driven by a formidable aspiration to bring the modern world to

its knees. As was discussed in chapter 1 and 2, this argument is refuted by its failure to address historical factors. As simply stated by Mamdani in what he calls history's crucial lesson for humanity: "claims to divide a people between "good" and "bad", "moderate" and "extremist", must ring a warning bell" (as cited in Khan, 2007, p. 121).

When the limitations of 9/11 culture talk are taken into account, it becomes evident that it is problematic to attribute the ambitious project of 9/11 to fundamentalism, and to define fundamentalism as a countercultural movement that is exclusively associated with Islam. The literature traces the origin of the term fundamentalism to the first decade of the 1900s, when it was coined to describe a number of American Christian Protestant groups, particularly those who opposed Darwin (Giddens, 2002). Fundamentalism is different from fanaticism and authoritarianism in that it preaches strict adherence to sacred scriptures and texts and their social, economic and political applications. Fundamentalism thus provides people (e.g. an ethnic group) with a sanctuary, a means of understanding the world, and a shield against external forces which are perceived to be threatening. As such, it "gives new vitality and importance" to the concept of 'tradition' (Giddens, 2002, p. 48). However, as Phillip McMichael (2004, p. 240) contends, fundamentalism is far from being a stable and static notion:

We have seen a variety of fundamentalism in the rising use of ethnic politics as competition for jobs grow while the economy shrinks. Nothing is absolute or definite about the content of fundamentalism or about the elevation of ethnic identity as a way of drawing boundaries between people. The interpretation of ethnicity is quite plastic and depends very much on the historical and social context in which people reconstruct ethnic divisions. Nevertheless, in an increasingly confused and unstable world, the presumed essentialism of ethnic identity either comforts people or allows them to identify scapegoats. In whatever form, fundamentalist politics has become a powerful weapon for mobilizing people as the stable political and class coalitions of the development era crumble.

The above quotation implies that fundamentalism's power rests in its capacity to be shaped and reshaped through the course of time and history. It is also significant because McMichael identifies an interconnection between the current inequities which

have been exacerbated by globalization and fundamentalism's capacity to function as a force of political mobilization. This correlation reflects the uneven qualities of globalization in the post Cold-War era, which "fragments as it coordinates" (Giddens, 1990, as cited in Guillen, 2001, p. 245). As was demonstrated in chapter 7, globalization has a dualistic nature which entrenches inequalities, particularly in economic spheres. This is evident in United Nations reports on the distribution of income worldwide; in 1960 20% percent of the world's richest people earned more than 30 times what their poorest counterparts earned; and in 1997, this figure had increased to 74 times more (McMichael, 2004). This glaring inequity supports McMichael's claim that contemporary fundamentalism (contemporary since fundamentalism is not a static notion and was galvanized by the conditions of the post-Cold War era) is a conservative countermovement to globalization.

In the shadow of 9/11, scholars who put forth a more progressive analysis of 9/11 than Neier's assert that Islamic fundamentalism is an outcome of globalization's unequal characteristics, particularly in the Middle East. For example, in a 2001 article published in *The New York Times* Peter Maas (2001) highlighted the aspirations of a group of Muslim Pakistani youth who filled the streets of Peshawar in 2001. Mass (2001) contends that the young men were not rioting:

Their anger is only loosely articulated, often because they are struggling to survive...They live where globalization is not working or not working well enough. They believe, or can be led to believe, that America--or their pro-American government, if they live under one--is to blame for their misery...Poor families do their best to send a son to school, but in the end they cannot manage. The son will get a backbreaking job of some sort, or...(enrol) at a madrassah, most of which offer free tuition, room and board. And that's where they learn that it is honourable to blow yourself up amid a crowd of infidels and that the greatest glory is life is to die in a Jihad (as cited in McMichael, 2004, p. 244).

The principal weakness of this analysis, which interlinks fundamentalism and terrorism, is that it oversimplifies conflicts between cultures which are unequal in terms of political power. Power, as a source of authority, is embedded in representation, that representation can take the form of a clergy which upholds interpretations of Quranic texts or the bodies representing a powerful state. Both representatives identify fundamentalisms as an external event or body which is "threatening to their sense of world order" (McMichael, 2004, p. 244). Some people in the global South consider neoliberal economics (i.e. in cutting down wages, privatizing public goods, etc) to be market fundamentalist, just as people in the global North consider political Islam to be fundamentalist. That fundamentalism is threatening to the North, but for people in the South, neoliberal economics is "just as real and threatening to the stability of their communities" and their worldview (McMichael 2004, p. 244). Once this shift is made, it becomes possible to see beyond the narrow understanding of fundamentalism which is posited by analyses based on the concepts of 'culture talk' or the 'clash of civilizations'. That is, it is critical to recognize that fundamentalism and modernity are intertwined; they have developed in tandem rather than in isolation from each other and such, relying on the perception of "easy dichotomies misrepresent[s] the complex relationship between the two" (McMichael, 2004, p. 241).

In the aftermath of 9/11, the West's conflation of fundamentalism and terrorism as a reaction exclusive to Muslims is in itself a fundamentalist position. This is because it defines Islam in "monolithic and alien terms", and in so doing, neglects the "variety of Islamic orders, the relationship between fundamentalism and modernity, and the fact that other religious fundamentalisms (i.e. Christianity and Hinduism) have displayed an equal capacity for violence" (McMichael, 2008, p. 233). In Chapters 1 and 2, analyses of Huntington's Clash of Civilizations

concept and Benjamin Barber's *Jihad versus McWorld*, elucidated a polarized view of fundamentalism as opposed to modernity or the manifestation of a clash between secular and religious states wherein the former's seeks material gain and the latter *resists* it in order to safeguard traditional values. Tariq Ali (2002) highlights the inaccuracy of this view in pointing out that for Islamists, (Al-Qaeda being an example) there are no pure Islamic states and no true Islamic rulers in the contemporary Muslim world – "hence the struggle to change the existing regimes and replace them with holy emirates" (p. 256). Ali (2002) also demonstrates that this type of struggle is not unique to Muslims in noting that some groups of Orthodox Jews view the emergence of Israeli state as a dishonour, whereas others who are affiliated with the Israeli settlers reference the traditional "scriptural sanction" in arguing that "reclaiming the land will hasten the return of the Messiah" (p. 256). He also gives examples of non-Abrahamic religious followers such as Hindu revivalists, who have long criticized Indian Administrations for their soft approach to the 150 million Muslims in India and their unwillingness to mark the supremacy of Hindu culture over 'non-believers' (especially Muslims) culture. The revivalists claim that successive Indian governments have prevented them from fulfilling their destiny of supremacy, which includes destroying Islamic Mosques and replacing them with Hindu temples (Ali, 2002). Ali thus explains that fundamentalism is a dynamic philosophy which is not exclusively the province of Muslims.

It follows that the search to identify the factors which led up to 9/11 must include a careful investigation of "novel historical configurations while articulating both changes and continuities in the present situations" (Kellner, 2003, p. 30). Therein, revisiting the 'blowback' thesis which is the theoretical backbone of this research project affirms that the U.S. foreign policies in the closing decade of the Cold War came back to haunt it on 9/11. In the months preceding 9/11, Johnson (2000, p. x) warned American policy makers that "world politics in the twenty-first century will in all likelihood be driven by blowback from the second half of the Cold

War and the crucial American decision to maintain a Cold War posture in a post-Cold War world". The prediction was based on the premise that the unintended consequences of American-inspired wars in various parts of the world would have alarming consequences, particularly since the U.S. was unrivalled as the world's leading superpower. The Afghan war of 1980's – which has since been identified as the most ambitious project in the history of CIA – was in reality an American-inspired Jihad which funded, armed, sheltered, recruited and trained the world's hardest-line Islamic militias. It was the Afghan War of 1980's which conferred upon the previously minimal right-wing Islamist movement "the organization, the numbers, the skills, the reach, the confidence, [and] a coherent objective" needed to emerge as a formidable force on the world stage (Mamdani, 2004, p. 129). As such, it attained a scope and capacity that stunned the international post-Cold War community. Given that the Americans essentially entered into an unholy alliance with Islamic radicals, "9/11 needs to be understood first and foremost as the unfinished business of the Cold War" (Mamdani, 2004, p. 13).

However, attributing 9/11 exclusively to the shortcomings of the United States foreign policies and its uncalculated support for Islamist fighters is short-sighted and disregards the complexities which characterizes a blowback world. It was these complexities – which extend beyond any one country – in combination with the interconnections that characterized the post-Cold War era which transformed the right-wing Islamist movement in a way that enabled it to launch the ambitious and catastrophic operation of 9/11. The Cold War marked a new beginning for the so-called blowback scenario in that it ended in a "varied and uneven manner across time and space; [as a result], the differentiated nature of its ending(s) planted the seeds of a reactionary form of politics and violence" which has manifest in Al-Qaeda as a modern political group (Saul, as cited in Colas & Saul, 2006, p. 64). As has been discussed, globalization was an integral aspect of the Cold War dynamic and contributed to bringing about its end (i.e. the Soviet's inability to compete with the West in the sphere of global economic spheres). The end

of the Cold War and the subsequent dissolution of the Soviet Union laid fertile ground for the globalization to geographically expand to a massive and more encompassing scale which was threatening, unequal, and dangerous in its scopes. Seen in this light, September 11 poignantly reminds us that globalization is the hallmark of the new millennium in that the "much celebrated flow of people, ideas, technology, media, and goods could have a downside as well as an upside and expensive costs as well as benefits" (Kellner, 2003, p. 41). Defining 9/11 as such reaffirms Ronald Robertson's comment that that the increasingly interconnected nature of the world needs to be coupled with an acute consciousness that "*this is the case*" (as cited in Rumford, 2008, p. 633). Globalization not only allows commerce and communications to move swiftly and easily across and beyond borders, but also facilitates the emergence of global terrorist networks. Al-Qaeda is thus no less a product of globalization than it is a response to an ever-advancing global condition of blowback.

Conclusion

This research project has put forth a global-historical analysis of the development of political Islam which begins in the closing decade of the Cold War. As has been demonstrated, terrorism cannot be solely explained as the outcome of religious tendencies, as is asserted by proponents of ‘culture talk’. Culture talk was refuted because of its inability to interpret and incorporate significant historical and political issues and events. Two primary criticisms were made of this perspective, the first being that it depicted the followers of Islamic faith as not only competent of modernity, but also inherently opposed to modernism. This provided the basis for the following assumption and second primary criticism: the world can be classified into modern and pre-modern cultures and while the former practices the art of creating culture, the latter was only a conduit for culture. In light of 9/11, the danger of such interpretations is evident in the conflation of Islam with terrorism and the popularization of the perception that the 9/11 hijackers were fundamentalist Islamic terrorists.

The research project asserts that terrorism can best be explained as a modern phenomenon which is historically shaped and politically motivated. In order to gauge the credibility of this claim, the project referenced Al-Qaeda as a case study. In describing Al-Qaeda as a modern political organization, it put forth a comprehensive examination of the historical events in the closing decade of the Cold War which facilitated its development—essentially providing it with the necessary means to mastermind 9/11. Therein, it examined the emergence of the Mujahedeen and detailed how the Carter and Reagan administrations helped transform it into a powerful paramilitary group of Islamic radicals. That operation, which

came to be known as the most ambitious CIA initiative ever launched, relied on the aid of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. Both were pursuing the political objective of creating an axis of Jihad, which complimented American objectives. Saudi dollars played a significant role in financing the war, which combined with Pakistani training grounds and the United States' vast supply of weaponry to give the latter the edge in the Afghan War and disadvantage the Soviet Union. The global recruitment of radical Islamic militants who were brought to Pakistan for training was therefore a fundamental aspect of the United States-Saudi-Pakistan operation and the United States performed a crucial role in the recruitment process. In fact, some American cities, including New York, became the territory for the ideological and moral brainwashing of Islamic fighters. In this regard, the Afghan War can be regarded as an American Jihad.

As was discussed, at the end of the Cold War the United States had no concrete policies for dealing with the enormous numbers of Mujahedeen fighters it had recruited from around the globe. In the environment of confusion that ensued, the self-appointed leader of the Mujahedeen, Osama Bin Laden, established the organization of Al-Qaeda. His idea of global Jihad, deeply rooted in the Jihad doctrine of Saeid Qutb, prevailed among Mujahedeen leaders and became the cornerstone of Al-Qaeda's ideology. These fighters were eventually deployed around the world to establish an international Jihadi vanguard of various nationalities. The project has therefore asserted that Al-Qaeda is the outgrowth of a historical event which constituted an unholy alliance between the United States and the Mujahedeen at the end the Cold War.

The research project has employed blowback as its chief theoretical foundation because of its capacity to effectively elucidate historical issues and to analyze their complexity. As such, it supported the project's assertion that 9/11 is a classic example of blowback in that it is a consequence of the United States' unintended policies in the Cold War, and a manifestation of complexities which characterize the post-Cold War world order. The geographical expansion

made possible by globalization in the past two decades has precipitated a new world order which is highly interconnected, unpredictable, and unprecedented in scope and capacity. This was evident in Al-Qaeda's utilization of information technology to coordinate its affairs and in its post-Cold War transformation into a decentralized network of scattered cells around the globe. September 11 revealed that Al-Qaeda members had mastered the art of exploiting globalization's technologies to the extent that "they were more globalized than we were" (Devji, 2005, as cited in Rumsford, 2008, p. 42).

The catastrophic events of 9/11 had significant connotations for American policy makers. The most crucial of these could be the notion that the United States must bear responsibility for its actions. According to Johnson (2004, p. 13), this is "the essence of blowback", which maintains that the consequences of uncalculated policies are not without payback. From this perspective, 9/11 was not just an assault on American soil; it was also an invasion of American foreign policy (Johnson, 2004). Prior to 9/11, the last enemy which targeted America from within was the British army, during its 1812 operation in Washington (Barber, 2002, as cited in Hanen, Barber, & Cassels, 2002). For almost two centuries American policy makers had considered their borders untouchable and believed that they "could forge their own destiny inside of an envelope of two great oceans separated from the world, oblivious to it" (Barber, 2002, as cited in Hanen, Barber, & Cassels, 2002, p. 9). 9/11 shattered this grand American myth and gave notice that formidable as it was, the United States is not immune from the consequences of its actions in the new millennium. The members of Al-Qaeda were in a sense America's "brutal tutors" in conveying this historical lesson and revealing its vulnerability in light of the new world order (Barber, 2002, as cited in Hanen, Barber, & Cassels, 2002 p. 9).

America's response to 9/11 attacks was to invade Afghanistan. However, this act of war did not take the complexity which characterizes a situation of blowback into account. In seeking to hold a nation-state responsible for 9/11, America "acted as if it was still the 19th century and

somebody had crossed the Rhine" (Barber, 2002, p. 10). The 2001 invasion of Afghanistan was the military manifestation of a 'clash of civilizations', promoting a mindset which divided 'us' against 'them' and pitted the 'good' Americans versus the 'bad' Muslims. The United States failed to recognize that global terrorism, as manifest in Al-Qaeda, is the dark underbelly of globalization. As such, it demands a high level of collaboration and cooperation between east and west, not hostility and violence. American foreign policy makers must wake up from the state of complacency which has dulled them for a very long time. The awakening must be coupled with the realization that globalization is not an incidental phenomenon, but is a "shift in our very way of life circumstances; *it is the way we live now*" (Giddens, 2002, p. 19). As the only remaining super power of the world, the United States is beholden to pioneer a collaborative international effort to mitigate the destructive and dangerous aspects of our globalized world. Anthony Giddens (2002) states that such an effort would be an encouraging reminder for humanity. As Giddens (2002, p. 5) so aptly concludes: "we shall never be able to become the masters of our own history, but we can and must find ways of bringing our runaway world to heel".

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