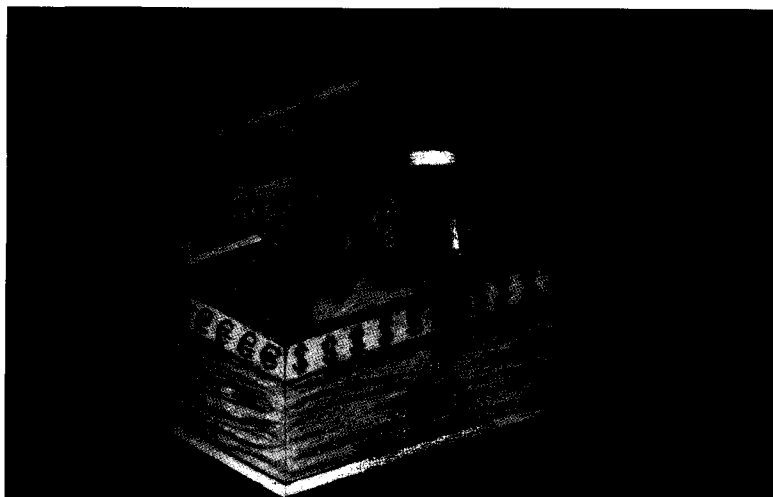


Pandora's Box

Terrorism and Globalization

by Morgan Norval



Stephen Ward Anderson

Globalization is remaking the world in ways that will profoundly affect how people do business, govern themselves, and even make war. We may debate what the driving force behind globalization is—capitalism or technology, for example—but there is no doubt that capital goods, services, people, and ideas cross borders with increasing speed, frequency, and ease. Actions in one country have consequences and significance in distant places. The world, in the minds of the globalizers, is becoming “one place” with global communications and media, supranational institutions, integrated markets, and a financial system that trades 24 hours a day. Trade barriers have fallen, and technological advances have enabled the expansion of transnational corporations and financial networks that seek to take advantage of regions with low production costs and new markets in an increasingly competitive environment.

The computer is the gilded icon driving the process of globalization. In addition to revolutionizing everyday life, the computer has become a tool of war in international terrorism. Revolutionaries, counterrevolutionaries, extremist groups, separatist movements, and cults and their critics all use the internet for their purposes. The explosion in new technology has significantly abetted the growth and proliferation of international crime and terrorism. Thanks to globalization, these groups, if they desire to go international, now have the tools they need. Access to modern communications and weapons technologies have provided criminals, warlords, and terrorists with considerable political and economic leverage in cyberspace.

Globalization is creating a bifurcated world order that is broadly divided between those countries that are largely integrated into the global economy and those countries that either are being left behind or that challenge and even reject the norms of the globalizers. (Militant Islamic states are among the

more violent opponents.) All is not well in the “global community.”

Meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have become violent clashes between local security forces and a disparate array of groups united only by their opposition to globalization. It is the height of irony that both IMF protesters and militant Islam make skillful use of the technological tools that further globalization.

Advances in communication technology, so critical to globalization, have increased the awareness of ethnic groups living within the same territory. This awareness is a two-edged sword: Not only does one become more aware of those who share the same cultural and ethnic identity, but he becomes more aware of alien ethnic groups. The result is the crumbling of many of the multicultural countries of the world, as separatist movements arise in such diverse countries as Spain, Thailand, Burma, and even Ethiopia. This illustrates a looming danger for the United States, as our homegrown global elites, over the opposition of most Americans, establish lax immigration laws and policies that encourage the transformation of America into an unstable and fragmented multicultural collective. This is dangerous, because multicultural societies squander creative energies and human capital on social struggles aimed at enhancing group power at the expense of the nation. When cultural confrontation pits alternative value systems against one another, the country declines—no matter what the relative merit of the contending values.

The continuous weakening or even disappearance of multi-ethnic countries has unleashed a resurgence of ancient tribal and cultural affinities. People are deciding that it is better to fight and die in the name of the tribe than in the name of a discredited, disappearing, and often artificially contrived national identity. It is safer to be among your kith and kin as a majority in a small enclave than to be a minority in a political entity

Morgan Norval writes from Alexandria, Virginia.

ruled by your enemy.

During the next half-century, the world's population is expected to double. While proponents of globalization believe that new technological advances and expanding markets will help nations cope with this population explosion, they overlook a key fact: Ninety-five percent of that increase will be in the poorest regions of the world—in Africa, for example, where what passes for government often fails even to function.

This population explosion will coincide with, and add to, a great migration of peoples. The migration will be both within existing borders, as rural dwellers move into the cities, and across borders, as people flee strife, famine, resource depletion, and disease to seek a better life elsewhere. Some portion of these migrants will be criminals, thugs, and terrorists who will find succor within the teeming, anonymous masses of their urban environment.

Globalization is not only reshaping the world's economy; it is shaping international politics and security affairs. Globalization has muddied the waters for combating and trying to control terrorism. Terrorism's diffuse and underdefined structures make it difficult to expose and eradicate. Moreover, obscure cliques of religious fanatics, with no clear ideological objectives, have introduced a far more dangerous component into terrorism: a desire to use violence against the United States—the chief proponent of globalization—and its citizens.

The decentralized structure of terrorist networks—Al Qaeda is composed of small cells in 60 countries spread across the globe—makes it extremely difficult to deal these networks one fatal blow. They have demonstrated great skill in using globalization and its associated technologies for their sinister purposes.

People displaced by globalization are, thanks to globalization's technologies, increasingly associating with their counterparts throughout the world, networking and working on shared problems, and evolving or sustaining institutions that can further their goals. The Armenians, Palestinians, Irish, Jews, Tamils, Kurds, and Sikhs—to name just a few—all get financial and political support from their diaspora. They have developed a number of ways of reinforcing their shared symbols and cultural ties, maintaining clear lines of communication, distributing financial and material assistance to their beleaguered colleagues, and otherwise strengthening their bonds across international borders. Globalization and the jet plane have made it possible for people, ideas, money, goods, and services to pass through, avoid, or otherwise ignore the control of states with relative impunity.

Information technologies help geographically dispersed terrorists plot and conduct acts of terror anywhere on the globe. Using the internet for communication can speed mobilization and dialogue between the plotters, enhancing the terrorists' flexibility, since tactics can be adjusted more frequently. Individuals with a common agenda and goals can form subgroups, meet at a target location, conduct the terrorist operation, and then readily end their relationship and redisperse back into their respective diaspora.

In addition to this operational flexibility, terrorist groups and their networks can protect their vital communications through readily available commercial technology, such as encryption programs. Commercial encryption programs are becoming so sophisticated that coded e-mails may soon be extremely difficult to crack. Terrorists can also use steganography—a method of

hiding secret data in other data, such as embedding a secret message within a picture file. They can encrypt cell-phone transmissions, steal cell-phone numbers and program them into a single phone, or use prepaid cell-phone cards purchased anonymously to keep their communications secure.

Governments around the world are increasingly being reshaped by powerful, restless individuals and groups who know they are off the radar of the global elites. They are willing to question authority and are capable of working and using the fast-paced events of globalization to their advantage. They are abandoning unquestioned and unthinking obedience to their rulers and are demanding that those rulers fulfill their demands—or else. Osama bin Laden is a prime example. He questioned both the policies of his Saudi rulers and the willingness of “mainstream” Islam to cozy up to the United States. Forced into exile, ultimately in caves in Afghanistan—the epitome of remoteness—and utilizing the tools of globalization, he was able to plan, organize, and carry out the audacious terror attacks on the United States. Unfortunately, there are more bin Ladens capable of causing mischief by employing the forces of globalization and diaspora to attack their opponents from within.

Our war against terrorism will create a dozen new enemies for each one we destroy.

Thanks to modern technology, small groups, tribes, Asian triads, Islamic fundamentalists, gangsters, militias, and even solitary individuals have gained increasing military effectiveness. They will exercise more real power in this century than they have since the 17th century. What will be the result? Wars will be fought more and more by hydra-headed gangs of terrorists, drug warlords, and revolutionaries too decentralized, spread out, and unpredictable to be targeted by Cruise missiles, stealth bombers, or tanks and artillery—the arsenal of our very technologically dependent military stockpile.

At no time in history have men been able to move as quickly, as cheaply, and as often as they can in today's globalized world. That mobility, coupled with the lack of scruples of the terrorists, Islamic fanatics, ethnic cleansers, drug lords, and other players in the murky world of nonstate violence, provides our current and future enemies a great deal of tactical flexibility. Thanks to globalization, aggressive nonstate groups, wielding high-tech equipment, have a tremendous time advantage over slow, hulking states, paralyzed by administrative inertia and legalistic nitpicking. Not only will these groups thrive in failed states—globalization's losers—but, in many instances, they will be instrumental in causing the crumbling of other states.

The microchip is neutralizing the enormously expensive modern military machines of today, making total war less profitable and, therefore, less likely. Smart shoulder-held missiles, such as the Stinger surface-to-air missile, effectively neutralized much of the advantage that large and wealthy states formerly enjoyed. The presence of old Soviet surface-to-air missiles in the hands of Serbian forces in Kosovo forced the NATO air campaign to bomb at levels above 15,000 feet, eliminating close

air support. The fear of similar weapons affected our recent campaign in Afghanistan, although mistaken tactics by the Taliban played to the strengths of our airpower and reduced the necessity for extensive close air support. Given the technological weapons available—portable missiles, faxes, cell phones, the internet—terrorists are well positioned to continue to take advantage of the forces of globalization. Even compact modern assault rifles can provide a handful of individuals with the equivalent firepower of an entire regiment in Napoleon's army.

Israel, a willing beneficiary of globalization, serves as a clear example of the difficulty in countering independent terrorist groups. Israel has superior military assets, including defense forces and intelligence services that are among the best in the world, policymakers and a public who are willing to take risks and to accept casualties, and widespread support for the military that does not flag even if mistakes are made. Yet the country cannot prevent or deter terrorist attacks, or even rocket assaults from southern Lebanon. Israel's experience shows that, at best, governments can only manage the problem of terrorism.

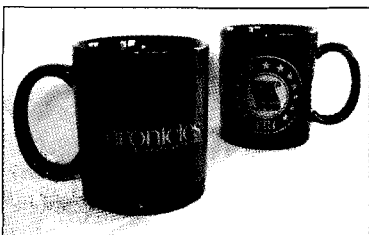
Thanks to globalization, our enemies are everywhere but nowhere—known to many but elusive to all—obviously dangerous but mostly invisible, like "shadowy strangers" among us that hide their true faces. And our war against them will create a dozen new enemies for each one we destroy. Every action we take, no matter how justifiable, will give the mass murderers of our era the excuse they want to polarize the masses and to recruit more fighters. They will not hesitate to take advantage of globalization, which they hate, in order to aid their efforts. One of three possible scenarios may result. The most utopian is that globalization will spread democracy and free markets through-

out the world, creating a stable new world order. It is also possible that the world will remain much as it is today: bifurcated, beset by strife and economic hardship; or, perhaps, the collapse of the emerging global system will be brought about by widespread economic turmoil, caused by the interaction of globalization and the forces of disorder, including terrorism.

The joker in the deck is resurgent mainstream Islam. Across the Muslim world, in nations with poor economies and burgeoning populations, globalization is feared and distrusted, and Islamic fanatics have a growing pool of believers who are becoming more susceptible to their message. This resurgence is a product of modernity—including globalization—and of Muslims' attempts to deal with it by rejecting Western culture and influence and recommitting themselves to Islam. This will affect our war on terrorism, because the primary obstacle to success in this war is a cultural one. To a great extent, the war on terrorism is a clash of civilizations, as Islam is fundamentally anti-Western; thus, the prospects for success are limited. Unless we recognize that we are engaged in the revival of the centuries-old clash between Islam and the Christian West and act accordingly, we face a future where the best we can hope for is to keep terrorist acts to a manageable level. If Islam does not self-destruct, it will remain a bitter foe of the West and the forces of globalization, and it will hold to its age-old worldview in which it is at war with the non-Muslim world (*Dar al' Harb*). The use of terrorism will be an attractive option in the struggle to lash out at Islam's enemies while attempting to impose the Allah-mandated *Dar al' Islam* (the House of Islam) on the rest of the non-Muslim world.

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The Tarantulas

by Curtis Cate

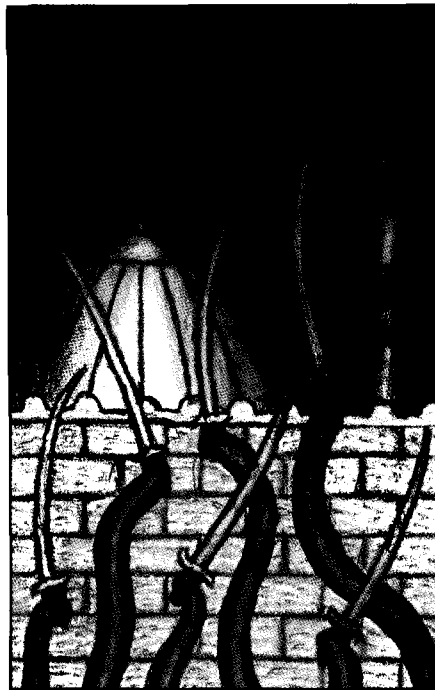
“That precisely for us is justice, that the world be filled with the tempests of our revenge’—so speak they to each other.”

—Friedrich Nietzsche

In the Name of Osama Bin Laden
by Roland Jacquard
Durham: Duke University Press;
312 pp., \$54.95

**Dollars for Terror:
The United States and Islam**
by Richard Labévière
New York: Agora Publications;
408 pp., \$24.95

**Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and
Fundamentalism in Central Asia**
by Ahmed Rashid
New Haven: Yale University Press;
288 pp., \$29.95



Stephen Ward Anderson

Ortega y Gasset once judiciously observed that “Man reaches truth with hands bloodied from the strangling of a hundred platitudes.” One such commonplace is the popular belief that virtually all of the terrorist assaults that have been mounted in recent years against U.S. embassies and servicemen abroad have been the diabolical work of a single network, which is also responsible for the massive destruction of last September 11: the Al Qaeda network of Osama bin Laden. This simplistic notion obscures a fundamental feature of what has become a planetary phenomenon: the fact that

Curtis Cate is the author of biographies of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, George Sand, and André Malraux. He began his career in journalism as a freelance writer for the Christian Science Monitor and the Middle East correspondent of Vision magazine.

the *jihad* now being waged by Muslim extremists against America in particular and the West in general is also, in effect, an ideological civil war in the very heart of Islam—indeed, inside the very holiest of its holy books—with regard to the “correct” interpretation of the “Glorious Koran.” Let us now see if, with the help of three books written by “experts” who have spent years probing the mysteries of what the French aptly call a *nébuleuse*, we can begin to penetrate more deeply the galactic mists and periodic explosions of this phenomenon.

The first volume is *Au nom d'Oussama Ben Laden* (*In the Name of Osama Bin Laden*), which, because of its hot-off-the-press timeliness, created a sensation at the Frankfurt Book Fair last October, enabling the small Paris publisher, Jean Piccollec, to sell foreign rights to a dozen non-French publishers, including Duke University in South Carolina. The author, Roland Jacquard, has for years been writing books and articles about terrorism

and terrorists, including one on the Venezuelan terrorist “Carlos,” who, for a time in the 1970’s, was the “most wanted” terrorist in the world. The expertise acquired from years of investigations into the increasingly planetary underworld of Terror—accomplished, it is clear, with the aid and connivance of French and other secret intelligence agencies—has made Jacquard a recognized “authority” who is often consulted on such matters by the United Nations Security Council in New York City and the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.

The inherent weakness of any book largely based on information provided by secret intelligence agents of one kind or another is that the sources cannot be publicly named. But this is not to say that the factual information thus derived is valueless. Roland Jacquard has done his best to overcome the unavoidable flaw in books of this kind by adding footnotes at the end of each chapter and providing the reader with a useful index filled with Arabic and other names. His book even contains facsimile reproductions of Islamic *pronunciamentos* and bellicose communiqués, presented in the original Arabic script.

It is always an uncharitable error to criticize an author for not having written the kind of book he *should* have written. Roland Jacquard makes no claim to being a psychologist, whether Freudian or otherwise, and his book, though it contains the basic facts about the upbringing of the 25th son of a wealthy Saudi Arabian entrepreneur of Yemenite origin, makes no attempt to explain why Osama bin Laden should have suddenly become not merely a maverick but an intransigent critic of the Saudi royal family, with