McJihad:
Globalization and Terrorism of the Diaspora

YNGVE GEORG LITHMAN

University of Bergen, Norway
University of Calgary, Canada (visiting)

National Europe Centre Paper No. 71

Paper presented to conference entitled
The Challenges of Immigration and Integration in the European Union and Australia,
18-20 February 2003, University of Sydney
**Abstract:** This paper begins by making a distinction between terrorism in the diaspora and terrorism of the diaspora. An argument is developed to the effect that what we witness of terrorism of the ‘al-Qaeda’ type (as a generic albeit broad and imprecise label) is to be understood as a specifically diasporic phenomenon, a phenomenon of the diaspora. The argument behind this assertion is multidimensional. The diaspora production is analysed against the political and economic developments in some Middle East countries, and in particular the arrest of nationalistic, capitalistic and class-based interest manifestations. The argument here focuses on how these processes have been conceptually linked to the role played by ‘the West’, and the US in particular. The diaspora, partly produced by these processes of arrestation, in the specifics of its preconditions, make possible the shaping features of a ‘symbolic universe,’ an integrated worldview, where terrorism becomes expressive of a globalised understanding of the world. Thus understood, the ‘al-Qaeda’ type of terrorism is not a response to modernisation and globalisation, but is indeed as expressive of it as the fight against it.
Introduction

History is best written with hindsight. In the turmoil of on-going affairs, we almost always tend to miss what future historians will find important. However, that what happened September 11, 2001, will have iconic status, as a massive energizer of concerns in many fields seems pretty clear. Already, many insightful analyses have been made, sometimes as virtual appendices to works on relevant themes already in progress. (That September 11 also prompted a torrent of ‘quickies’ of doubtful qualities is another matter.) It seems, however, that one crucial dimension, in fact a *sine qua non*, has gone mainly over-looked – that September 11 has to be understood as a diasporic phenomenon. It is an example of terrorism *of* the diaspora as distinct from *in* the diaspora.

The background of September 11, as will be discussed here, is that history has served up some pretty complex contemporary situations, that migratory and diasporic phenomena are parts of this complexity, and that under certain circumstances, acts of terrorism has to be seen as linked to diasporic conditions. Such terrorism can have two different links to diasporic conditions; they can be *in* the diaspora or *of* the diaspora. To terrorism *in* the diaspora would count e.g. the IRA activities in England, and the Croat-related killing of the Yugoslav ambassador in Sweden. In cases such as these, we are dealing with activities of a kind that have their ideological and social action grounding in well-established political and economic features, e.g. and perhaps most prominently, nationalistic movements. The terrorist acts take place in the diaspora, but this is virtually incidental – the acts are aimed at an occupant/aggressor in the homelands. The diasporic quality is not a definatory constituent quality of the terrorist activity. Terrorism *of* the diaspora, on the other hand, would mean acts of terrorism that are analytically constituted in, emergent in, and expressed in, the diasporic condition. In, fact, the argument here suggests that terrorism *of* the diaspora has certain paradigmatic qualities.

Terrorism is a loaded word, and rightly so. However, without detracting from the horrors it produces, we must also attempt to understand its logic. One person’s terrorist may well be another person’s freedom fighter or holy warrior. If we don’t try to understand how this can be, we will certainly also make ourselves unnecessarily vulnerable.

The argument to be presented here is that the diasporic situation provides certain possibilities for thinking and action, which are unlikely to emerge in non-diasporic situations. If one so wishes, this can be regarded as a structural-functional argument (and in spite of the criticism against such arguments: who can do without structural and functional arguments in a social science analysis?). With this basis, it is also obvious that the argument here is an anthropological-sociological one; contrary to what the individualism ideology in which we live our everyday lives tells us. Steering away from making personal decisions by people like bin Laden supremely important, or even turning specific biographies into explanations, the focus is on social and cultural processes. In terms of the thematic, terrorism of the diaspora, the genesis of specific diasporic situations carries with it also opportunities and closures as to the possibilities that are contained within the diasporic situation, i.e., related to how to interpret the world and how to action-wise relate to it. And, as will be demonstrated later, the sociology of
religion has provided us with some exceptionally clear insights as to how religious beliefs and activities are likely to shape up under different conditions.

Jihad is a term which has many elaborations, from exertions in the direction of living a pious life to, more commonly, holy war. In a highly interesting book, which also has influenced many later writers, Barber (1995), Jihad is formed into a symbol for ‘tribalism,’ which is perhaps not the best term for what Barber is after, the localized, the non-globalized. However, Barber is after the dialectic between on the one hand mass society and market globalization, McWorld, and on the other a fragmentation of nation-states and other political entities into e.g. ethnically or religiously argued political particularisms, i.e. Jihad. In this sense, Barber’s ambitions are superficially somewhat similar to the ambitions in this article. However, Barber stresses the independence and dynamics between McWorld and Jihad, and makes ontological distinctions between them. They are, so to say, engaged in a battle where one of them potentially can be a winner. An analysis of September 11 with a proper weight to the formation of and the dynamics of the diasporic dimensions will suggest a somewhat different interpretation, that this particular form of Jihad should be seen in all its relevant aspects as not just in a dialectical relationship with globalization. Instead, it can be seen as a prime example of the forces of globalization. This said, the present author is immediately anxious to stress that this article is not in the least meant as a blanket condemnation of globalization. Globalization is a many-facetted phenomenon, and the analysis presented here deals with just one little aspect.

The emergence of the new Muslim diaspora in Europe

In 1777 the envoy of the Sublime Porte, Resmi Ahmed Effendi, wrote a report to Sultan Abdul Hamid I where he enthusiastically recounted his reception in Berlin, and stated, “the population of Berlin recognizes the prophet Mohammed and would not be afraid to accept Islam” (Thomä-Venske 1988:78). History, as we all know, turned out to be a bit more complicated than that. While we have had a significant Islamic presence in parts of Europe, it was not until almost 200 years later that there was a notable number of Muslims in northern Europe. This came mainly about through what can roughly be described as the streams of labor migration in the post-war, pre-oil crisis times. It would be mistaken to believe, however, that we are just dealing with laborers; on the contrary, significant numbers were in fact also students, marriage partners, etc., and their motivations for moving to northern Europe also included a variety of dissatisfactions with the conditions in their home countries. This was, after all, virulent times associated with de-colonization and nation-building in many of the countries from which Muslims came. The result of all this is fairly well known in its broad outlines. In many northern European countries, this period resulted in the establishment of notable minorities with Muslim background. In all likelihood, there was more social mobility and assimilation than we usually recognize, but there was also the formation of neighbourhoods of people with such backgrounds having difficulties to achieve any reasonably dignified existence in the new countries. It should be pointed out, that Muslim or Islamic here does not denote socially effective entities. On the contrary, there were a variety of divisions and distinctions, running a.o. along sectarian, home country, and linguistic lines, as well as along a general secular-religious continuum.
The period after the mid-1970s saw a different kind of immigration, mainly by refugees and people who came through family (re)unification openings. Hereby the diversity of the Muslim populations increased further, as this refugee-generation encompassed situations in a variety of countries, including the Iran-Iraqi conflict, the collapse of former Yugoslavia, the wars in Ethiopia, Sudan, Nigeria, and also smaller numbers from Asian conflicts. There are significant indications, that these refugees, especially those from Arab and African countries, have had perhaps bigger problems than any other immigrants to find a good or even acceptable living in the receiving countries.

**The developments in the Islamic heartlands**

Many commentators to September 11 have pointed to the role of the Western states in shaping the present Arab world, and rightly so. The Cold War and superpower involvement in the Arab world, of course energized by the oil fields, included a role in largely destroying a budding state-bounded or Arab nationalism. Much has also been made of the presumed Saudi inability to protect the Islamic heartlands against ‘the infidels,’ particularly against the Americans in relations to the Iraqi war. More generally, the coalition between the US and Saudi-Arabia has been seen as a vehicle, it has been claimed, to have a proper development in the Muslim/Islamic world. The Israeli-Palestine conflict has also, of course, received attention as a festering conflict involving superpower(s). A number of other issues have quite rightly been noted in order to account for the ‘background’ to the presumed frustrations on the part on those advocating an Islamic fundamentalism.

However significant particular issues like these may be, it is possible to depict certain processes and their inter-relationship, and to see these as having analytical advantages in ‘explaining’ what led up to September 11. There are three processes in particular that are to be dealt with here, the arrest of an incipient nationalist, the arrest of an incipient capitalism, and the dynamics of diaspora formation. The import of these processes have to do with three things, the way in which they open for interpretations of how the world is configured (and this will lead to a sociology of knowledge application), the ways they served to create part-diasporas with specific features, and the way they led to certain characteristics of the present Arab/Muslim heartlands. The last of these issues, the diaspora’s relationships to the heartlands, is not least important to understand. And, as hinted at above, it is the combined, mutual energizing that took place as a result of these processes that should be primarily kept in mind.
The arrest of an incipient nationalism

After the Second World War, there were a number of reasons to believe that the Middle East would develop along nationalistic principles of structuring. Countries such as Iran certainly took significant steps in that direction, and even the ousting of Mossađeq did not put a complete end to this development. A modernization project under the management of the Shah did not, however, more than to a very limited degree involve democratization and the building towards nationalism. Defining the political unit as the people within a geopolitical unit was not to be reconciled with an increasingly despotic regime in collaboration with major oil interests and seeing as one of its task to counter any Soviet expansion towards the Gulf. The absence of virtually any democratic institutions left few vehicles for organization and resistance, and it would be political theology that would carry Khomeni to his peak achievement, backed by a frustrated middle class. In the early 1970s, there were also various Marxist groups who, inspired even by persons like Che Guevara and Mao and also supported by Iranians in the European diaspora, attempted to achieve a change of regime. The end of all this is well known – Khomeni’s return in triumph after a fifteen-year exile.

Looking at several other countries in the region, such as Iran, we find up to and including the 1960s a strong tendency towards something of a separation of Islam and public life. Socialism, anti-Zionism and trends towards a pan-Arabic nationalism are some features. It should not be forgotten that Saddam Hussein in his career was a Baathist, a supporter of a pan-Arabic nationalism.

The list could be made longer, and would contain roughly the same ingredients. Does that mean that the thwarted nationalistic attempts all should be explained on a case-by-case basis? Not really. One can see how certain dimensions of social, political, economic, and religious life are constantly present as obstacles to nationalistic developments both in specific countries and also on a more regional basis. For one thing, there is, or in this context, was, the distinction between the monarchies, Saudi Arabia and Jordan, and the often-called progressives, primarily Egypt, Syria, and Iraq. Furthermore, and more generally, these countries were virtually all constructions during the 20th century. As such, they reflected little development based on internal homogeneity. Instead, they were all characterized by significant divisions that made any all-embracing nationalism all but impossible. Iraq is of course a splendid example. It was thrown together by the British, with the remarkable Gertrude Bell as kingmaker, after the First World War. Its name means ‘the well-rooted country’ – while in fact the British expected all the divisions within it, religious, ethnic, class-wise, would make it easy to control. The British also installed Faisal 1 as king – a man who was the son of the Sharif of Mecca, who had never visited what was to become Iraq, and who was voted ruler by an English-staged congregation where no-one had met the King to be – which did not prevent the candidate from receiving a virtually unanimous support. In Anderson’s (1988) terms, the history, geography, religious and ethnic division of Iraq makes it virtually impossible to imagine what kind of discourse that could have promoted the development of a sustainable nationalistic ideology.

The story from Iraq is –with variations- the story from several of the countries in the area. Once formal
de-colonization had run its course, once the resistance against occupying forces was void, the nationalistic ideologies also got into progressively worse problems. However, one effect of the nationalistic movements was the creation of a diaspora, not least comprised of refugees, for whom their home countries represented un-fulfilled political developments.

Saudi Arabia of course stands out as something of a singularity. Maybe Bernhard Lewis (2002) has the most striking formulation:

“Imagine … if the Ku Klux Klan or Aryan Nation had obtained total control of Texas and had at its disposal all the oil revenues, and used this money to establish a network of well-endowed schools and colleges all over Christendom peddling their particular brand of Christianity. This is what the Saudis have done with Wahhabism. The oil money has enabled them to spread this fanatical, destructive form of Islam all over the Muslim world and among Muslims in the west. Without oil and the creation of the Saudi kingdom, wahhabism would have remained a lunatic fringe in a marginal country.”

Egypt and nationalism is of course tied to the name of Nasser, who led the failed war against Israel. Nasser, the self-described progressive got threatened by leftist students, and his successor, Sadat, saw the Islamization of the campuses as a way of defusing the leftist threat – and at the same time gave up the state prerogative regarding ideological expressions in the public space.

The arrest of an incipient capitalism
If the nationalistic option, if this is what we can call one type of development, as a part of modernization was closed, another significant development associated with what we usually call modernity was also closed. For the sake of brevity, this can be called the development of a capitalist society, a society where the conflict between different segments of society is a major structuring vehicle. In a more reduced version, we find capital pitted against workers, and with the state providing the mediation and ensuring the functioning of the economy. (This is not intended as a particularly Marxist version of sociology, but rather a kind of description pretty close to data.) The main point in this argument is that the emergence of a class-based society, in the sense of worker collectivities, etc., never emerged as major instruments in social change. This, however, took place against a background where socialist and Marxist ideas had been very prominent parts of the de-colonization struggle, and also afterwards. There was also any number of manifestations of attempts by workers to appear as a collectivity in these countries, such as the first student rebellion in Egypt against Nasser in 1968, backed by workers from the industrial city of Helouan. However, especially in the big oil countries, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, the major economic activities came to be defined within state power, and what Kepel (2002) so fittingly calls Petro-Islam was a development within this context. There were certainly capitalists, and Bin Ladin’s father was one of those who made it big, in his case in construction. However, there never emerged a class of capitalists, for example through the expansion of the bazaar economies, which was able to function outside the state apparatus to the extent that it could
assert itself as a class with a significant measure of autonomy vis-à-vis the state. Similarly, there never emerged a sustained working class in the sense of class belonging being a significant reference for consciousness formation or social action.

The situation in Iran towards the end of the previous century, as described by Kepel (2002: 106), was of course in some sense unique, “…massive unemployment moral repression, and a cataleptic social order that was completely dominate by the religious hierarchy, the ‘pious foundations’ that controlled the economy in collusion with the bazaar merchants, and a whole crew of profiteers who prayed on the Islamic Republic.” At the same time, it illustrates very well the arrest of a capitalist development. In so doing, it also points to the collusion between state power and its encompassment of economic opportunities.

To this should be added, that the western states, in particular the US, is continuously interpreted as being one or the major source of the troubles. The US had in large measure supported the Islamist trend, not just in its collaboration with the Taliban but also in a variety of other ways, including the initial support of the Islamists in Algeria. At the same time, the Islamists from Saudi Arabia and everywhere else saw the West, in particular the US, supporting Israel and the US (as the symbol of the western world) was made out (partly as a legacy of left-wing intellectual legacies in Arab countries going back decades) to be responsible for the economic and political squeeze resulting in dire circumstances facing the Islamic heartlands and Islamic countries everywhere. Its collusion with the government of Saudi Arabia secured this regime. By Islamists, Saudi Arabia’s granting the US to station troops in the ‘holy lands’ was made out to be a gross breach of Quranic injunctions against infidels. Given the ideology of the religious hardliners, Saudi Arabia betrayed its trust – it was, to put it that way, not wahhabitic enough. From another perspective, the US collaboration with the Saudi government gave no additional room for expanding the public space.

The diasporic conditions
These developments in the states in the Islamic heartlands (and countries such as Pakistan and Indonesia have not been dealt with above, but could easily be included in the analysis) led to diasporic developments with some specific qualities.

For one thing, we had a large number of people who migrated from largely Muslim countries due to any variety of political, economic or other reasons. Here we find those populating the poor suburbs in our major western European cities. While these millions were not involved in anything relating to the September 11 terrorism, by Islamists (and I use this term loosely) their conditions were seen as emblematic of the disdain with which the West treated Muslims. They also had another important role in the new geography of the world created by the Islamists, they provided an alibi for claiming that at least parts of Europe were, or were in the process of becoming, dar-el-Islam, Islamic heartlands. The implication of this was, that Islamic observances should be much more forcefully upheld. When the Muslim worker interviewed by Schiffauer (1988) in the 1980s states as a fact that ‘this is Germany,’ he
also meant that this was a place where you could not be a Muslim; an attitude coupled with a resigned utilitarianism.

These millions of migrants, however, were neither without interest to their sending countries, nor to the dissidents in these countries. Petro-Islam, via countries such as Saudi-Arabia, Iran, Libya, and also, almost as a counter-measure, Turkey, got heavily involved in trying to assume some ideological control over these diasporic populations. The reasons were manifold. The migrants represented significant economic resources, e.g. through remittances, but perhaps even more important was their possible influence, ideologically, politically, over the future shape of Islamic expansion – and also what repercussions this would have in the Islamic heartlands. To some extent, youth from these diasporic conditions were also recruited for various Islamistic courses.

This diaspora also provided the basis and legitimacy for a number of activists and organizers who grafted themselves onto it. We can see this as a second diasporic development, and with very different roots from the general migration from countries with a heavy Muslim population. It is now that e.g. ‘Londonistan’ became a phrase to denote the coexistence of a variety of groups related to the battles, military or otherwise, going on in Afghanistan, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, etc. The emergence of this variety of groups, headed by assorted intellectuals, imams, jihadists, etc., had significant consequences, also for how several western states related to Islamic concerns. It also led to much more articulated demands on these states about how to relate to Islam and the diasporic populations – including exhortations that Chirac should embrace the Muslim faith.

In very general terms, one may say that England became much more important than France for this second diasporic development. Initially, there appears to have been a great degree of caution on the part of this second diaspora to create issues in France, and the designation of France as a dar-el-Islam, an Islamic land, served to restrain from e.g. violence (but also led to e.g. an emphasis on veils). This situation changed during the latter part of the 1990s, with violence erupting in France. To this second diasporic development belongs also the ‘blind sheik,’ Omar Abdel Rahman, known for his involvement in the first World Trade Center bombing in 1993.

The third diasporic development to note here is the movements associated with Afghanistan. The war against the Soviet Union was turned into a jihad, and attracted a number of ‘Arab’ fighters, as well as Muslims from other countries, to help in the battle. After the cease of that war, these fighters constituted a “.milieu … cut off from social reality; its inhabitants perceived the world in the light of religious doctrine and armed violence …”, and “they constituted a pool of manpower that could be used by the secret services of a number of states who might find it opportune to manipulate unattached extremist militants” (Kepel 2002:219). Their ideology, jihadist-salafism, advocated a return to the ways of the devout ancestors and was hostile to any and all religious innovation. The ideologues included Abu Qatada, a Palestinian, Abu Musab – a Syrian naturalized in Spain, the Egyptian Mustapha Kamel, naturalized in Britain.
The logic of religious action

The analysis of September 11 has so far contained virtually no real treatment of what led up to it from the perspective of the sociology of religion. This is all the more notable since there is a great literature about what forms of religiosity that is likely to emerge under which social, cultural and economic circumstances. While such an analysis will contribute significantly to grasp the issues at hand, it will of course just be one part of the puzzle with which this article is concerned.

The classical tenet of the sociology of religions is that there is a correspondence between social situation and form of religiosity. In Weber’s (1965) classical schema, he makes a distinction on the one hand between asceticism and mysticism on the one hand, and inner- and other-worldly orientations on the other. Islam, he sees representing a kind of inner-worldly asceticism, but he (if anyone!) is also fully aware of the shaping societal forces. Rex (1988) points out that what seems to characterize Islam in the early period of immigration and minority status in the western European states are pragmatic and quietistic adjustments. As Rex points out, in Niebuhr’s (1975) typology, the Muslims in the diaspora fell somewhere between ‘the churches of the middle classes’ (a doctrine of individual piety is substituted for any social doctrine) and ‘the churches of the disinherit’ (the churches demanding a reversal of the social order). In actual practice, the reversal of the social order was pretty well confined to those aspects of existence that relate to Islamic family life and sexuality, and the implications this had for changes in the educational system, a.a.

The Muslim populations in Western Europe, with the exceptions of the tiniest of minorities, had of course no relationship to the executioners of September 11. Their situation, however, became a part of an ideologizing which provided a general interpretation of the world where terrorism (against the west, the US) became a result. This ideologizing has the characteristics of what Berger and Luckmann (1967:103) called a ‘symbolic universe,’ ‘a comprehensive integration of all discrete institutional processes. The entire society now makes sense.’ In the case of Al Queda and similar groupings, what makes up this symbolic universe? The answer has to deal both with closures of other ways of conceptualizing the world, and also show how this ‘symbolic universe’ was constructed and what energized people to act on this image of, as it were, the world.

The main ingredient in this ideologizing can be said to be a globalized version of an integrismo Islam, an Islam where all parts of society is organized according to Islamic prescriptions. It was a globalization that was much more pregnant and went far beyond some general admonition by a religious founding father to have his disciples preach his gospel. Instead, it was created out of what was perceived as and underpinned by real and often painful experiences of global forces. The ideologizing was totalizing – the whole world made sense, if interpreted within its schema. It should also be pointed out, that this totalizing was not new in Islamic circles. The best known example is perhaps the ideology behind Jamaat-I-Islami, the creation of Mawlana Mawdudi, a trans-national who was born in India and in the 1920’s started to produce what was to become Pakistan’s perhaps main contribution to such ideologizing. Sayyid Qutb, an Egyptian, and Khomeni are others who should be mentioned in this
context.

The first step in explaining the totalizing ideology has to go back to the situation in the Muslim countries (literary expediency forces me to use such a poor expression). The first thing to note is the terrible state of many of these countries. At the same time, the mechanisms for change are in many ways blocked – reference was made earlier to the arrest of the nationalist and the capitalist options. The attempts at socialist developments have also collapsed. The causes of the bad shape in which these countries find themselves, in this ideologizing, was a combination of corrupt and/or infidel leadership in these countries together with their collaboration with the Western states, particularly the US. The condition facing the Muslim immigrants in Western Europe was just proof of the denigration of Muslims.

Two singularities impacted upon this situation, the war in Afghanistan and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The war brought together also a transnational band of fighters for the Islamic cause, and showed (rightly or wrongly) that Islamic forces could successfully defeat a superpower. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict was, in this interpretation of the world, expressive of that justice and equity was not to be had from the hands of infidels – and that the Palestinian suffering could only be ended through violence against the oppressors.

Who were those who created this ideology? And who acted upon it, even to the degree of the suicide flyings? To say that this ideology was created by people like Bin Laden is not very correct – Mawdudi and others had spelled out its essentials long before the turn of the century. However, it was picked up and energized by persons who were in many ways really characterized by their trans-national qualities. Not only did they come from different states, but they were also in large measure dispossessed by these states. They represented the excluded, and their identification was with a variety of Muslim situations: the conditions in the Middle East, Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Muslim minorities in Europe, the Palestinians. We are, with a very peculiar example, back to Niebuhr’s religion of the dispossessed. The logic goes: the dispossessed demands a reversal of the social order, and since this social order is seen as manifest in a global web of deceit and dependencies, as far as the loci of powers are concerned in this ideologizing, the global order of things have to be changed. And the transnationals, unrestricted by a homeland geography and secular solidarities within the homelands, were the one’s who could see themselves as the vanguard of transformation. The fact that some of these, with bin Ladin as the paradigmatic example, of course, were born into wealth and status does not detract from the characterization of dispossess. What he, and his ideological compatriots reacted against, was not their private situations, but the denigration of the social world which they felt they were a part of – and this social world came to be interpreted as the Muslim community.

The fractionalization of nationalist, socialist and capitalist endeavors as well as fractionalized class belongings, is one thing to remember when trying to understand why ‘no other’ ways of formulating protests were available. To avoid misunderstandings, it should be pointed out that other ‘solutions’ of
Conclusions

Looking at this from the perspective of what it entails for the understanding of migration and the Muslim existence in Europe, what conclusions can be drawn? If we live in a world where globalization is a factor, of course we will also see violence that has to be partly explained with reference to globalization.

Further, what is often described as varieties of ‘fundamentalism’ must sometimes, perhaps often, or always, be interpreted not as reactions against modernity. Instead, one may well argue, as has been done in this article, that fundamentalism (which is how many have described e.g. the Al Queda ideology and activities) may be firmly generated out of modernity and globalization. This, of course, also means that the distinction is not between McWorld and Jihad, but that there are varieties of McWorld (and one of them happens to be McJihad). It also follows, that what is sometimes characterized as religious fundamentalism cannot be understood as religious fundamentalism. Religion always encodes social, political and economic circumstances, and expresses them in culturalized understandings. Therefore, the focus on religion itself as a prime explanation will never do.

The future, if we are to follow the insights from the sociology of religion, as to the Muslims in Europe, will be related to two factors. On the one hand, a dispossession will result also in a greater demand for a reversal of the social order. On the other, the creation of loyalties following non-religious dimensions will serve to reduce the strengthening of ‘the religion of the dispossessed.’ The conclusion to be drawn from all this is almost banal: decent societies create decent people.
References

Lewis B. 2002 Fundamental Truths. Financial Times, August 10/11. (Interview)

Notes

i This article has benefited from several discussions with Bruce Kapferer. The day before September 11, 2001, we had been discussing what we thought was a surprising lack of terrorist activities in the US, including such things as suicide bombings with hijacked airplanes. Once the World Trade Center attack had happened, he was immediately ready with an analysis that included class fragmentation and the symbolic importance of the Muslim migrants in the West.

ii There is a fairly large but uneven literature about these issues. Kepel deals excellently with some of the Islamic issues in a number of works. Gerholm and Lithman (1988), although depicting a somewhat earlier period, also deals with the situation in several countries.

iii The Mossadeq overthrow is a paradigmatic example; the CIA planning, available on the Internet, makes Greene’s quiet American seem a very straightforward guy.

iv The term fundamentalism, originally used to connote certain protestant/evangelical sects, is for several reasons not a very good term. It stresses the Quranic texts, rather than the ‘integrated’ social, political, and economic life within Islamic life that those called ‘fundamentalists’ strive for. However, since the designation fundamentalists appears to become the standard term, I will –for the sake of brevity and simplicity- use it here.

v While my argument is somewhat different, Kepel (2002) is an excellent source for many of the issues covered here.

vi Rex deals with England, the extension to the rest of Western Europe is by the present author. Justification for this can be drawn from the other articles in the volume.