

INTRODUCTION

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The morning of September 11 was clear and bright in New York, the sky especially blue and the breeze light. The flames that shot from the gaping holes in the twin towers were oddly beautiful. The air shimmered with what I suppose were fragments of shattered glass. Occasionally a bit of debris fell from a high floor, dark against the generally bright background. Only after I had stared for three or four minutes did my mind accept what my eyes were really seeing: falling bodies, human beings leaping to one certain death because another seemed worse. And eventually the towers fell and the bright day turned darker than midnight, with ash billowing around and blocking the sun.

To be across the street from the cinematic horror was to be an eyewitness, perhaps, but not to grasp the whole picture. My memories are still startlingly clear, but they are fragments. They do not go to the center of the events of September 11, though they weave my connection to them. Standing alone they do not give the events meaning. Some of the images I saw on TV are as indelible as those formed while I was close enough for the smoke to sting my eyes. My understanding of what happened depends on far more than what I saw that day. The sense of having *seen* it is still powerful, though. Indeed, the visual images are basic to the very idea that there was a singular “it” to be apprehended, that the complex chains of events could be contained into such a specific package. I can try critically to distinguish what I saw firsthand from what I saw only on television (though I fear the operation is inevitably incomplete). It is still harder to separate what I know because I saw it from what I know because someone or another provided words to give shape to that knowledge. It was a terrorist attack. It was war. It was a moment when everything changed. It was simple human tragedy.

Though there were sirens and screams, my aural memories are oddly of quiet. There were no sounds commensurate with the visual shock; there were gasps from horrified onlookers; the principal victims seemed silent. And New York was quiet for days, lower Manhattan because traffic was restricted and the whole city because no one wanted to speak out loud of what had happened and no one could speak of anything else. Yet the dust was everywhere, and everyone knew it

was more than gypsum and steel. And one could choke with a sixth sense that was not premonition of something outside but connection to one's very viscera, a rising sickness, or tears.

Ten minutes into the chain of events, standing in the street just north of the World Financial Center and looking up, I heard from passersby that the damage came from a plane and not a bomb or a gas explosion. Five minutes later I learned that the crash was not an accident—because a second plane hit, certainly, but I was on the other side of the building and didn't see the crash itself; I heard the explanation from people who shouted as they ran away. And then I heard a radio report. And nothing I saw or felt after that was free from the influence of the media and commentary and discussion.

—C. C.

INTERPRETING SEPTEMBER 11

Through varying removes of media and interpretation, the events of September 11 became part of the common memory of people around the world. They were more important and more immediate to some and more distant to others. They were framed in very different ways and connected to other memories of different sorts. Before George Bush ever called this an act of war, World War II veterans in a “senior” residence near the scene were saying “not again.” And of course it wasn't precisely *that* again. Indeed, trying to take hold of the events through the language of war rather than crime was a fateful decision—or impulse—and one that shaped the U.S. response and continues to reverberate, encouraging a search for military victories, for example, and discouraging reliance on international criminal law.

During the days, weeks, and months after September 11 the work of interpretation was carried on disproportionately by government officials and by the press, though also by everyone who stopped to think about what had happened and what it meant. Interpretation was the project of newspaper “op ed” columns, official pronouncements, and coffee-shop discussions. Each led into angry quarrels. Was looking for meaning in global inequality or Middle East politics to dignify the terrorists? Was praying for peace failing in patriotism? Was focusing on causes and effects obscuring the tragedies of the victims and their families?

The press and the conversations also led to a rough consensus in the United States: The *country* had been attacked, not just symbols of its global power. The attack dramatized a threat we had been complacently ignoring and demanded new vigilance from us. We had been “innocent” and now we needed to be “realistic.” The world was a dangerous place.

This was an American consensus, of course, and other collective understandings of what had happened and was likely to happen next formed elsewhere. European allies scrambled to discern where they fit in—to U.S. military plans that were described as “unilateral multilateralism,” and to a U.S.–dominated “West” that included them, but seemed to subordinate them symbolically, militarily, and economically. Sympathy for the U.S. was widespread. The U.S. had to act, a broad consensus suggested, but there was anxiety both in America and around the world lest the response be an overreaction, a dangerous escalation.

The events affected other countries directly through the loss of nationals working in New York and through exacerbated economic recession, as well as indirectly through new lines of global conflict. In Latin America, events helped shift the balance of power among different approaches to civil conflicts; the Colombian government was not alone in emphasizing that its rebels should be called “terrorists.” There was a consensus that Americans failed to recognize the extent to which others had lived through similar horrors before, with perpetrators sometimes supported by the U.S., but there was also an expectation that Americans would forget this—forget even that the date September 11 was the anniversary of the 1973 overthrow of Salvador Allende in Chile. And despite this, there was widespread sympathy for the U.S. and rejection of what was seen as the reactionary antimodernism of Islamist terrorists. In Russia the new circumstances presented an opportunity to solidify alliance, renew a sense of importance to world affairs, and reframe the war against Chechen rebels as part of the global war against terrorism. In South Asia, even before the actual fighting in Afghanistan and its repercussions in Pakistan and India, the September 11 events were woven into regional histories of struggles over Islam. In much of Asia—no least in China—there was a complex mix of recognition that terror was always terrible and yet a certain satisfaction that the United States got a taste of what others had endured and a bit of a comeuppance.

None of these views simply encapsulated the truth. Nor was there a global consensus, but rather varying degrees of regional and local similarity of opinion. And nowhere, in fact, was the consensus simply spontaneous. Everywhere, there were arguments about what the events meant, and everywhere there were pressures to stop those arguments and adopt views backed by governments, or the press, or religious leaders, or public opinion. In the United States, the rough consensus of press and coffee shops was consolidated by political leaders who condemned peace marches, university presidents who tried to stop faculty members from making public criticism of U.S. policies, and a broad willingness to portray any effort to question the standard interpretation as somehow sympathetic to terrorism.

At the same time, though, in other parts of the world, consensus demanded that Osama bin Laden be considered a hero—or that the U.S. contention that he was behind the terrorist attack be dismissed as unfounded, or the possibility entertained that Israel’s Mossad had staged the whole thing. The point is not that one consensus was right and another wrong, but rather that the production of conventional wisdom was everywhere shaped by crowd pressures and media simplifications and political manipulations. In some places it was based more on empirical evidence, and in some places there was greater respect for those who questioned that evidence. Some versions proved more responsive to correction by new information than others. But in no case was the consensus primarily the result of critical inquiry, reflection, and debate. Nowhere was it easy to question either the empirical claims or the categories through which they were presented. In the U.S., for example, it was hard to question the idea that the attacks were acts of “war,” even to argue that this label dignified a criminal network with a kind of respect it did not deserve, implicitly treating it as the sort of international actor that can declare war. It was controversial to wonder aloud whether speaking of terrorists as individuals and networks distracted attention from governments who sometimes used violence to terrify civilians for political purposes.

The attacks are not simply a set of discrete and idiosyncratic events. They are part of complex patterns at several levels—from the very local suffering of families and efforts to rebuild lower Manhattan to the very global projects of peace and prosperity. Both the pain of individuals and the course of history are in some sense infinite; no scale can be calibrated to weigh one against the other. And yet they are interconnected.

It is precisely because the pain of individuals can be so sharp, and because it extends through the networks of family and friendship, and because each of us can identify at some level with victims, that terrorism is a possibility. Civilians—ordinary people engaged in ordinary life projects—are made to suffer to make a point, to weaken a government, to express a grievance. Civilians in a literal sense are also inhabitants of a city, and the city itself suffers. The ruptured relationships were part of its social fabric, the disrupted commerce its sustenance, the destroyed buildings and damaged streets its scars. The city has a reality of its own, just as the family does, not altogether contained by the nation. Those killed on September 11—the immediate, physical victims of the tragedy—came from dozens of countries. New York is part of the United States and yet connected to the world in ways that are not all about being American. And 9/11 has become one of those ways, just as the finance industry, migration and tourism, and global media are others.

Of course, the attackers struck not only New York, but also the U.S. De-

partment of Defense at its famous home base, the Pentagon, outside Washington, D.C. And they struck using airplanes and thus killing people who had no other immediate connections to New York or Washington, and attacking and changing a transportation system that transcended specific localities. Inadvertently, they struck a field in rural Pennsylvania; they struck the earth in literal and metaphorical senses. By including the Pentagon among their targets, they connected all the other targets to U.S. military might and global domination. In some ways, the U.S. military response to 9/11 further stressed that very connection. But even if the attackers and the U.S. government agreed to stress this connection—to frame the events as war—this frame could never contain the events and their diverse implications.

The 9/11 attacks were also part of the causal sequence that brought devastation to Afghan villages, increased violence in Israel and the Palestinian Territories, and resulted in an individual, but not an isolated, loss to the family of Daniel Pearl, a reporter kidnapped and killed by terrorists in Pakistan. The experience of violence is not necessarily unifying, but much violence is nonetheless connected. People's experience has a local history and local effects that may be more powerful than the international connections (though that does not mean these are never made).

Some of the implications of 9/11 involved not so much material change as shifting perspectives. Thus the events came to crystallize issues and clashes that have existed for years: terrorist tactics, for example, and tensions between established states and groups without states to represent them. The events refocused attention and encouraged us to see things differently, to pay central attention to what earlier looked like peripheral concerns. Amid enthusiasm for the spread of information technology, a few observers had recognized the potential for cyberterrorism, and indeed a few relatively minor cases had occurred. But after September 11 the issue moved to the forefront of attention—along with the more straightforward way in which the Internet and improved communications technology could aid the communication of terrorists just as much as anybody else. The fact that police were able to trace Mohammed Atta and others to specific cybercafes, and unearth copies of what they must have thought were private and even long-since-erased communications, gave pause not just to would-be terrorists but to all who use the Internet to send messages they think are private. That security agencies in the U.S. and around the world now propose to increase their routine monitoring of electronic communications makes certain questions more pressing: How should the tension between civil liberties and effective law enforcement, especially antiterrorist policing, be managed? It is a question that

arises especially in the use of special military tribunals instead of civilian courts, in large-scale use of detention without public announcement or other aspects of due process, and in debates over racial or ethnic profiling. In Peter Meyers's terms, the struggle to defend politics from terrorism is not only a matter of overcoming material dangers but also of protecting the possibility of the free and engaged speech without which there can be no democratic politics.

Likewise, the 9/11 attacks focused attention on the vulnerabilities of various sorts of infrastructure and the weaknesses of government preparedness for terrorist attacks. This was most acute in the U.S., not surprisingly, but versions of these concerns were nearly worldwide. The use of civilian aircraft as the mechanisms in terrorist violence called forth new security measures in air travel. But it also and rightly called forth attempts to think through the ways in which all sorts of complex systems might be vulnerable. If an older sort of thinking about what is now called "homeland security" had stressed bridges linking major segments of the highway system, thinkers now added questions about water supplies, mail delivery, energy production, and the power grid. The very infrastructure on which modern economic activity and social integration depend had been improved dramatically, and not least by information technology, yet with the very improvements and the growing interconnection came new vulnerabilities. In the United States, civil defense had long been neglected in the complacent assumption that the real threats lay in more distant military "theaters." Military strategists had begun to raise questions about new threats to "homeland security" years earlier, but these only commanded attention throughout the bureaucratic hierarchy—let alone from the public—after 9/11. Questions about preparedness reached well beyond military planning, though, as the anthrax scare that followed 9/11 called attention to the public health system. Parts of the system, like the Centers for Disease Control, operated at a high level even while other parts, like local-level primary care including vaccinations, were problematic (not least because based on high-cost private providers in a country where a fifth of the population lacked health insurance).

Ironically, while the talk of technology focused on vulnerability in the U.S., a widespread response in the Middle East, even among people who condemned the attacks, was a certain pleasant surprise that for once technology had been mastered by Arabs and not by their enemies. Yet, at the same time, the U.S. intelligence and defense leadership indicated that they would attempt to defend against threats by adding to their technological capabilities. Few seemed to appreciate that one of the prime ironies of 9/11 had been the way in which advanced technology had been turned against its makers.

The 9/11 events raised questions about how well the finance industry could

respond after being hit so directly—and for the most part the answer is in. It responded extremely well. The question of whether the finance industry would continue to be comparably centered in New York is not yet so clearly answered, though, and firms are still wrestling with their own questions about how to prepare for possible future disruptions, whether and how to decentralize, how much to invest in redundancy of computer systems, and what kinds of training employees need for emergencies. Charities were challenged by 9/11 and have played a major part in helping victims, from the families of lost firefighters to workers laid off because their employers were closed or destroyed. Rock stars staged benefit concerts; millions of people gave donations small and large; long-established philanthropic foundations made major grants; voluntary organizations mobilized citizens and created support systems. If the main religious story in the wake of 9/11 focused on the beliefs of perpetrators and whether these were representative of some broader pattern in Islam, the back pages of newspapers carried another less commonly remarked: the centrality of religious organizations to providing assistance after the disaster. Where, one might ask, would such assistance come from if American society were as secular as some of its critics assert?

At the same time, though, systems of charity and voluntary organization were under stress. The performance of some charitable organizations, like the American Red Cross, seemed confused and problematic and led to management upheavals. Numerous new organizations were created to handle new donations, and provisions for public oversight were revealed to be marginal. Worries surfaced that there would be high levels of support for some victims and their survivors while others would fall through the cracks—huge sums were raised for lost policemen, for example, but lost security guards were initially ineligible, no matter that many were among the first to respond and equally heroic.

More generally, practical action raised ethical questions: Should victims' families be compensated in proportion to victims' highly unequal salaries, for example, or should the government and charities treat lost lives as equally valuable? The list of questions could go on and on: How should plans for redeveloping the site of the tragedy take account of the horror; what provisions should be made for mourning and commemoration; and how should these relate to aesthetic, financial, and political concerns? How should one balance the huge amount of money spent to help the victims of tragedy in New York with the lesser sums made available to equally innocent victims of tragedies in less rich countries? How should one balance the very level of attention to 3,000 dead in the World Trade Center attacks to the comparable number dying daily of AIDS?

These questions, though specific to 9/11, reveal ongoing themes. Many of the events that followed, indeed the attacks themselves, are in ways episodes in other,

longer-term stories. In some cases, they come to symbolize a trend; in others they mark a turning point. Perhaps the most important of the latter cases is the whole complex cluster of phenomena grouped together as “globalization.” Globalization communicates not only increasing international flows of people, ideas, and goods, but also the increasing interdependence of well-being, governance, and power.

There is another burden carried by the term “globalization.” To many people around the world, it has seemed not a neutral process of internationalization, but the imposition of an “American” or “Western” model. It has been true that the rich countries have often become so through global investment and trade, seemingly at the expense of the poor. This is part of the complaint. But so is the idea that Western cultural ideas—and sometimes ideologies, like perhaps neoliberalism itself—ride on the back of economic and technological and other forces of globalization to which they are not necessary. In the background of 9/11 is the complaint that it should not be necessary to accept secularism, mass merchandising, pornography, or new gender roles just to be global or modern. There are those that say everyone must take the whole package. And there are those who want to reject all of it—some Qaeda leaders may have been among these. But many more people, all around the world, would like to pick and choose.

Globalization certainly does not explain 9/11, though it is an important context for understanding the events and their repercussions. The events and the response to them raise questions about economic and political inequalities, about migration and freedom of movement, and about the role of the media. They mark a sharp counterpoint to the celebratory discussions of globalization that dominated during the 1990s; they are in the foreground of a gloomier discourse about its dangers.

But this is not just a matter of shifting discussions about globalization; material realities have shifted in important ways as well. September 11 shone a spotlight on some changes, but also played a part in producing or furthering many. Consider, for example, the prominence—sudden to Europeans and Americans—of the Arabic news service Al Jazeera. This has a longer history, including notably the decision of the BBC to disband its Arabic broadcast service in the late 1990s. That was itself partly a story of globalization, including both Britain’s reduced geopolitical presence and the spread of neoliberal ideology that called for reducing state expenditure. Staff released from the BBC (but carrying certain parts of the BBC model with them) formed the core of the new service, which received financial support and a base from the Emir of Qatar. Relying especially on broadcast media, the new service reached both the literate and the illiterate, though it also supplemented its broadcasts with an ef-

fective website. Its well-trained and often incisive interviewers surprised many of their international subjects (including, in the wake of the U.S. attacks on Afghanistan, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld). But, even to many Arabs, it first became famous during the post-9/11 war on terrorism. It emerged that no other news service really operated effectively in Afghanistan. If CNN or ABC wanted to show local footage, buying it from Al Jazeera was usually the best approach. And at the same time, Al Jazeera was broadcasting the story throughout the Arabic world—and in Arabic, not simply reaching the English-speaking elites who might tune in to CNN (itself a symbol of globalization, but a monolingual channel in a polyglot world). The initial U.S. government response was to treat Al Jazeera as though it were somehow part of the problem, a threat because it seemed to tell other sides of the story and especially to provide Osama bin Laden with a media outlet (though the U.S. security services were glad to have the Al Jazeera tape to analyze, and U.S. networks were eager to broadcast extracts from it). After a few weeks, as the U.S. administration saw more need to strengthen alliances in the Arab world and possibly even to try to appeal to Arab public opinion, this position changed. Al Jazeera then looked like a useful tool, and Rumsfeld and others were happy to be interviewed (even if likely a bit ambivalent about some of the results). What 9/11 did, in brief, was to reveal the gulf between the English-language version of media globalization and the demand for information in other languages, and also to strengthen the position of Al Jazeera as a new and important international media network.

Similarly, an important dimension of the 9/11 attacks was the place of international migration, especially of a European sojourn in the background of individual terrorists and European connections in the Qaeda network. Osama bin Laden had briefly studied at Oxford, and several others in Germany; cells were uncovered in Spain and France—and indeed in Malaysia and Singapore. International migration has been part and parcel of globalization for generations, and its acceleration in the late twentieth century had certainly been noted. Likewise, the growth of a Muslim minority in several European countries has gained both public and academic attention. But the two issues come together in important ways in relation to 9/11. In the first place, the events highlight the fact that migration is not a simple movement from one place to another but often a (dis)location into a diasporic flow in which the meanings of both “home” and “away” are changed. The place of European experience in the formation of many apparent terrorists upsets easy accounts of the West vs. the rest, the modern vs. the traditional, the advanced vs. the backward, and even the rich vs. the poor. The terrorists often came from local elites in majority Muslim (and mostly Arab) countries. Whether

the attempt of many to claim the Umma Islam as a transnational home reflected an alternative vision of modernity or a rejection of modernity, it revealed dissatisfaction with the actual conditions of majority Muslim nation-states—not least Saudi Arabia. Some had apparently embarked on careers they expected Western education to advance, and many had become devout in the context of their European experience, not in advance of it. Yet all were joined in a communication circuit that drew sustenance from resentment of Israeli occupation of Arab lands in the Middle East and helped to mobilize volunteers against Soviet-backed rule in Afghanistan. Relatively few were recruited directly from “home” without some apparently triggering experience of “away.” And so migration is revealed to be not merely a matter of closed vs. open doors, access to economic opportunity, or even the struggle to maintain native culture in new settings.

At the same time, the response to 9/11 is likely to close some doors, shift access to economic opportunity, and put new pressures on those who want to maintain at least aspects of the cultures into which they were born and make them available to their children born in distant lands. Certainly one of the important results of 9/11 is a tightening of U.S. immigration policy—and also its integration into a new security regime. As often in its history, the U.S. has seen a tide of nativism—with children and grandchildren of immigrants visible in the vanguard. Yet the contrary is also prominent—self-conscious efforts to reach across ethnic and religious divisions, to renew appreciation of diversity, at least within the bounds of patriotism. In international as well as domestic policy the response to 9/11 is frequently nationalistic, reinscribing the importance of national identity and solidarity in the face of unsettling globalization. Yet this is precisely not the “clash of civilizations” predicted by Samuel Huntington and others who expected transnational alliances of Judeo-Christian West against Muslims and other versions of East (including the lands of Orthodox Christianity and both Confucian and non-Confucian Asia). Ironically or not, it may have looked like that more to Osama bin Laden than to most Western observers. The Bush administration’s first impulses seemed to lean toward such a view, yet quickly a contrary wisdom gained the upper hand and the president importantly visited a mosque and began to retune his speeches to try to make clear that the U.S. did not regard Muslims in general as its enemies.

Nonetheless, after 9/11 it became clear that American self-understanding was not easily meshed with the views of many groups around the world, perhaps most notably Muslims. Where Americans saw openness—including in trade—others saw dominance. Where Americans saw aid, others saw influence. Where Americans saw a “reluctant sheriff” others saw self-appointed police who made the law to suit their own purposes. There is no easy parceling of the truth in these

clashing perspectives. They reflect differences in vantage points, in experience, in analytic frameworks, in values, in evidence considered. What is clear is that they are important and, whatever their truth, are factors to be considered in world affairs. And it is clear also that America's rapid military success in Afghanistan has not ended the battle for public opinion. As late as February 2002, the Gallup poll found that 61 percent of Muslims in nine countries doubted that Arabs were responsible for the 9/11 attacks. Osama bin Laden may have lost face for seeming to hide, but in victory, the public significance of an image of American strength remains at best ambivalent. Is this just vengeance, necessary restoration of order, righteous advocacy of democracy, or the lashing out of a bully after briefly being bested? One of the things Americans find hardest to consider is that strength and dominance are resented, simply as such, and that good intentions do little if anything to temper this.

The point goes even to the dramatically superior military technology the Americans displayed in Afghanistan. The pinpoint bombings were impressive. But while to the American media this was a story mainly about a "clean" war and minimizing of civilian casualties, to much of the world it was a story about the radical asymmetry of power. Americans were willing to inflict but not suffer casualties. And the very sense that the U.S. will not place the lives of American soldiers at risk, and that Americans enter wars only when their computers and airplanes give them a sense of distance, may make America into Goliath in all conflicts and offer the kid with the slingshot and rock some sense of justification in striking first. Indeed, part of the poignancy in the images of 9/11 comes from the marvels of modern technology—the technology in which America has excelled and reveled—being turned into weapons against those who usually wield the technology, those with the economic and military power to benefit disproportionately from such technology.

There is no end to competing narratives. There is no moment when we can say that September 11 meant one and only one thing and must mean the same thing to everyone (nor will it necessarily mean the same thing to any one of us all the time). It will necessarily mean different things to those who lost loved ones and those who think of it as a strategic problem, for those who witnessed devastation first hand and those for whom it is an abstraction. It will mean different things to those in the Middle East and those in the Midwest. It is important to see, though, that the conflicting narratives do not line up into just two or three sides, certainly not into just ours and theirs. It is easy for Americans to forget that there are arguments among Muslims, different theologies and views of the relationship between religion and public life, different histories, different mixings of Islamic and nationalist identities, different projects of modernization and of the

preservation of tradition. There is no more a singular Muslim view of September 11 or of whether modernity is clearly a good thing than there is a singular Christian view or a singular secular view. Yet there is a worrying division between the dominant partial consensuses in the West and those in the Middle East. The recurrence of rhetorical flourishes recalling the Crusades is only evidence of the power of half-unconscious historical memories, renewed by continuing geopolitical divisions.

Indeed, from the point of view of the Middle East, the September 11 attacks are not so much an issue in themselves as one important moment in a longer series of conflicts. This itself can be framed in terms of Islam generally or Arabs more specifically or Palestinians still more specifically—and in terms of Israel, or the United States, or the West as a whole. The September 11 attacks not only reflected roots in this context, among others, but also have influenced the course of further tragic struggles in the Middle East. Sympathies and analyses have both shifted. Israeli actions to “root out the terrorist infrastructure” in the occupied Palestinian territories sounded to many Americans like an extension of President Bush’s own war on terrorism. For Palestinians to have even a fraction of the arms the occupying army had seemed evidence of “Arab terrorism.” Suicide bombings that may have seemed legitimate tactics of struggle to some were mere terrorist acts to others—and the September 11 attacks could be understood as simply suicide bombings with unusually large and complex “bombs.”

Yet the Bush administration tried to play down the increasing violence in Palestine in order to build a coalition for an attack on Iraq—a project that the administration thought flowed directly from the post-September 11 war on terrorism. It had its own account of what kinds of action the September 11 tragedies legitimated. At the same time, the very deepening of the conflict over Palestine reduced the efficacy of September 11 as the anchor to a legitimating narrative for “war against terrorism.”

Still, there are a host of other divisions in the world. The 9/11 tragedies may shape future conflicts far from Palestine or from renewed terrorism by Islamists against the West. Among the most worrying flashpoints is Kashmir and the struggle over a beautiful mountain region that has become the most potent symbol for the unresolved tensions that grew out of the mixture of Islamic and British conquests of South Asia. This embeds 9/11 as a moment in a different history, one that includes the extraordinary civilization of Mughal India, and the civilizations that preceded the Mughal Empire in India. It is a history that included British acts of terrorism and British achievements that remain among the triumphs of the West, a history into which Jews and Catholics also wandered but in which the dominant religious conflicts (and syncretisms) are not Christian

and Muslim but Hindu and Muslim and Sunni and Shi'a within Islam. It is a history that should remind us that civilizations are not hermetically sealed but interrelated. And that such kinship has never stopped bloodshed.

September 11 brought Afghanistan to the forefront of American attention and toppled the Taliban, militant Islamist students who came to power after conflicts with the former USSR and aid from Americans, who then imposed a crude vision of Islamic puritanism on their country, and sheltered and ultimately lost control to their foreign allies, Al Qaeda. September 11 transformed the strategic calculations for Pakistan's rulers and made General Musharaff into a president whose American counterpart wanted him as a friend. This worried Indian rulers who conceivably would prefer the advantage that American enmity to Pakistan offered them over the possibilities of regional peace. It fanned the flames of tensions over Kashmir because it made some groups think they had better seize the moment before being undercut and others think they had a new chance to win once and for all.

The implications of September 11 are not limited to the world's "hotspots." In Europe, questions of how to respond brought Germany's Green Party a parliamentary defeat that could yet prove fatal, for reasons ancillary to the environmentalism that brought it to power. It refused to back its own coalition government partners, the Social Democrats, in taking up arms internationally for the first time since the defeat of the Third Reich. September 11 was intertwined, in other words, with the complex histories of Nazism and pacifism as well. Britain's Tony Blair played his special American relationship to a triumphant crescendo, eagerly appearing as America's European partner (and neatly also using American alliance to keep distance from Europe). Even while it introduced its new currency, the European Union revealed its difficulties forging a common foreign policy. Europeans grumbled at America's disdain for allies' opinions, and at the Bush administration's bellicose rhetoric culminating in its denunciation of an alleged "axis of evil" joining Iraq to Iran and South Korea. Yet European governments, unable to forge their own collective military stance, experienced the meaning of American hegemony as they faced the choice of jumping on the American bandwagon or sitting on the sidelines.

One might have thought that September 11 strikingly revealed the need for strong multilateral institutions. What better argument could be offered for the value of multinational law enforcement and the creation of an International Criminal Court than the dramatic violence of terrorist actions that lacked the backing of any recognized nation-state and benefited from a variety of criminal activities from forged passports to illegal financial transfers? Yet, the American administration—already hostile to such multilateral institutions for fear that

they might try American criminals and diminish national sovereignty—was steadfastly opposed. With minimal gestures to forging an alliance, it chose its own, mainly military, response. Despite the Bush administration's call for a collective struggle of all the world against terrorism, ironically enough, the actual building of multilateral institutions to carry out such a struggle—along with the rest of law enforcement—seems further away than before.

In fact, there are even debates over how much damage terrorism can do. Obviously it can do a lot. But is the real lesson of September 11 perhaps how quickly markets bounced back, how effective the human and technological systems were that sustained trading and communications? Cantor and Fitzgerald, a firm integral to the global bond market, lost two-thirds of its employees in the World Trade Center attacks. Perhaps as important as the human story of its recovery and the care of owners and living employees for lost colleagues and their families is the fact that the firm was able to get its bond trading back to full strength within a week. Clearly the global economy was shaken, but it was not brought to its knees. Of course, this means only that it works—within certain terms of reference—not that it works as well as it might or that it works for good in all respects. It doesn't settle disputes over the proclaimed neutrality of the market vs. the dominance of an American (mostly free-market) model, over economic productivity vs. environmental damage, or over growth vs. inequality.

During all this, newspaper readers discovered that there were more Muslims in India than in Saudi Arabia; that there were perhaps more Muslims than Jews in America (though the number has been debated); and that Muslims were the largest minority in many European countries. But this was also a discovery that any simple account of the secularization of the world was misleading, and that religion matters, in both radical and moderate forms. As Robert Keohane makes clear in this volume, one of the important weaknesses of international relations theory—and it is true of much political and social theory—is its unexamined secularism and failure to appreciate the continuing importance of religion in the world. Fundamentalists, puritans, and extremists of various sorts dominate our concerns for security, but as in lower Manhattan, so too in other parts of the world are religious convictions deployed for peace and care for the needy.

This is one of the challenges to democracies in the wake of 9/11. They must discern effective ways to embrace diversity but also to achieve solidarity in the face of both internal and external pressures. Focus just on America for a moment: A sad teenage boy in Florida flew an airplane into a tall building in imitation of Al Qaeda, though surely he understood little of what that meant. It is still unclear whether anthrax was spread by a more informed sympathizer or simply someone criminally deranged. But it is certain that America faces a range of internal

threats, including ones who, like Timothy McVeigh, claim to speak as Christians and patriots while they cause mass destruction. Democracy depends not merely on tolerance, and not merely on legal procedures, though both are important. It depends also on the virtues of its citizens, on informed public life, and on respect for these conditions of both freedom and self-rule. It is crucial to ask whether the actions taken to protect America in the wake of 9/11 actually protect its democracy, and likewise whether they make democracy more likely elsewhere.

Few doubt that September 11, 2001 was an important day. Their reasons, however, are both varied and contested. It was an attack on America. It was a reminder to America. It brought death to thousands of innocent people and sorrow to their families. It avenged death and suffering elsewhere. It brought economic shocks. It challenged economic hegemony. It produced a new sense of insecurity. It opened American eyes to the insecurity of the world. It renewed American unity and resolve. It called forth American vengeance. And it was not only an American story.

The editorial and “op ed” pages of newspapers touch on all of these issues but usually do not clarify the information, theoretical perspectives, and intellectual commitments that inform different conclusions. How can they, when columnists are limited to 600 words? As a result, there is a need for well formulated and clearly presented analyses that reveal rather than hide their intellectual underpinnings. This book is an attempt to meet this need, and to help in the intellectual task—as basic to science as to democracy—of revising conventional wisdom by bringing forward new evidence, filling in the context that makes facts meaningful, asking questions about received categories of understanding, and clarifying the theoretical assumptions and arguments that support different conclusions.

The work that led to this book started within days of September 11. It was clear that many people recognized a need to move beyond the easy simplifications of the attacks themselves, their perpetrators, and the U.S. response, to explore the wide range of global and local affairs that provided the context to them. There was a sudden desire for more information—about political Islam, about Afghanistan, about the different ways in which the United States might be vulnerable to further terrorist acts, and about how the attacks and the “war on terrorism” would affect the economy, migration, civil rights, and a range of other concerns. Some U.S. newspapers and magazines (and others around the world) did begin to provide this information, and indeed one of the byproducts of the events was an impressive public education about important issues. There was a shortage, however, of analytic writing, and especially writing that would draw effectively on the knowledge social scientists had developed before by research on

related issues. Our first step was to create a website and invite distinguished social scientists from the U.S. and around the world to write short essays; many of the chapters in this book are developed out of these essays, revising and expanding early hurried efforts. Even in the present version, they are rushed into print rather faster than the usual academic process—which would devote a few more years to working out details. This seems important because public discussion needs the deepened sense of context, critical analysis of categories, and reexamination of assumptions they provide.

As is evident throughout these pages, social scientists have no unified view of the 9/11 attacks or responses to them. Anthropologists, economists, historians, political scientists, and sociologists emphasize different aspects; specialists on Islam and on information technology rightly raise different issues. Nor do all of these together offer a complete and final analysis. The course of events is still unfolding; as we write, it is not clear whether the U.S. will attack Iraq or whether there will be some new major strike against America or Americans. It is not clear whether the 9/11 events will be part of a story of new war in Israel and Palestine or of new peace.

Not only is history open-ended; there is no limit to the range of different analytic questions that could be posed. We think the chapters in this book point to most of the major ones. We also hope that the way we have organized them helps the reader to organize her own thoughts. Below we offer some introductions to the sections of the book. The categories we have employed—Islamic Radicalism, Globalization, New War/New World Order?, Terrorism and Democratic Virtues, and Competing Narratives—are not intended as containers for analysis or boundaries of understanding. It is precisely testimony to the significance of the 9/11 events that their repercussions ripple outward in many directions. Information demonstrates its risible untidiness, to paraphrase Adrienne Rich. In this volume, we have done our best to commission and arrange essays in a way that they speak to each other. In so doing, we run the risk of reifying divisions between the subject headings within which they fall. But the reader will note, we hope, that contributors to the volume range widely in their concerns, and that essays speak across the categories we have constructed as well as within them.

OVERVIEW OF THE VOLUME

ISLAMIC RADICALISM

In achieving a deeper understanding of September 11, it is impossible to ignore the role of religion, and Islam in particular, in the attacks and subsequent events. So, like much of the discussion of September 11 in the West, we start with Islam.

But simply saying Islam only begs deeper questions. What is specific to Islam and what is general to religious radicalism, for example? After all, fundamentalist Christians, and Hindus, and Jews have been killers of civilians in the present era. More specifically, how do the versions of Islam linked to the September 11 attacks fit into Islamic history—which has often been peaceful and tolerant—and contemporary Islam—in which theology and politics are both hotly contested?

The attacks were made in the name of God, and the attackers were apparently supported by a group of religious students turned government. But these facts do not simply speak for themselves. The essays in this section provide necessary context. Mark Juergensmeyer helps us understand comparatively the assault on the secular state by religious radicals, and how terrorism developed as a strategy within Islamist movements. He has interviewed (failed) suicide bombers, members of the Taliban, and other Islamic extremists, and thus helps us understand the context of Islamic terrorism. But religious radicalism is not limited to Islam. Other religions are involved in the current events, as the recurring rhetoric of “crusades” and the escalating conflict in Israel/Palestine and Kashmir demonstrate. Juergensmeyer examines the deeply embedded link between violence and religion that exists in almost all major religions, and the link between violence and political support that makes terrorism so attractive.

The entanglement of politics with religion is deep in Islam, but hardly limited to it. Neither is there a single pattern of political movement or political ideal that is universal to Islam. As Barbara Metcalf and Robert Hefner document in their essays, claims about the relationship of religion to worldly power are intensely contested. Not only are there “moderates” and “extremists,” there are also divisions among regions and countries, between Shi‘ites and Sunnis, and simply between different lines of faith. Metcalf’s historical analysis explores the rise of the Deobandi movement, which established the first *madrasas* in South Asia at which the Taliban were schooled, in comparison with the Tablighi movement, which has maintained a separation from politics and the state while attracting Muslim faithful at a phenomenal rate. Thus she highlights a point made explicit by Robert Hefner—there is not one Islam which presents itself in opposition to the West. There are many Islams, of which the fundamentalist, radical variety is a small subset. Hefner further argues that Islam has a long history of cycling between religious conservatism and more secular modernism.

Timur Kuran builds on Hefner’s insights by examining the current and historical relationship between Islam and modern market economies. The Taliban and Osama bin Laden aligned themselves against modern society, and although they are not alone in supporting an Islamic world free from certain materialisms and modern developments, Kuran argues that historical roots of Islam include

the fostering of wide-reaching trade networks, and where Muslims have had the opportunity to compete successfully in modern economies, they have overwhelmingly chosen to do so. But the fundamentalist movements do purport to offer an alternative, and they may be attractive where the market-economy is seen to be unfairly structured.

GLOBALIZATION

Globalization helped to create the conditions for the September 11 attacks; it shaped how people saw them, and, in turn, it will itself be influenced for decades to come not just by the attacks but by responses to them. The essays in this section explore these interactions.

At one level, globalization means simply that a range of social processes are becoming more closely interconnected around the world. Globalization has a long history and was aided by steamships and telegraphs long before television and the Internet. It involves increasing flows of people, money, information, and even diseases across national borders. But further, it captures the organization of power and production on a global scale by corporations, governments, and multilateral organizations in which governments and private companies combine their force. We are increasingly interconnected thus, and our fortunes linked; neither local communities nor national economies are autonomous and self-sufficient.

September 11 was very much a product of this trend—shaping the individuals involved and allowing for the attacks themselves. It thus presents a challenge for globalization as well as demonstrating how profound these global interdependencies have become. On the one hand, as David Held points out in his essay, trends in interconnectedness have offered the opportunity for global institutions of law and justice, so that individuals no longer need depend solely on their home regime for their moral standing. The attacks can be viewed as a crime in this global context, against humanity and its potential for peaceful, cosmopolitan unity, not merely as a crime against New Yorkers and Americans. But from the reverse perspective, Robert Keohane argues that as useful and necessary as such international institutions are and will be, they respond in part to the fact that violence itself has become globalized. The terrorist networks that now cause domestic insecurity and threaten human rights do not themselves respect any boundaries. The new shape of violence challenges us to rethink the appropriate relationships between states, world politics, and justice, and to ask how well democracies are able to protect their citizens from fear.

The term globalization is not simply a neutral synonym for interconnections, though, but takes on more controversial meaning. It has also become a shorthand for *capitalist modernization*. In the process of being drawn into global mar-

kets, economies are transformed by new divisions of labor, industrialization, and openness to new sources of capital, labor, and natural resources. Globalization in this sense means the implementation of new economic systems that emphasize free trade, markets, and protections for private property rights. While historically this structural transformation of economies has dramatically increased incomes, life expectancy, and other measures of basic well-being, economic development has also brought increasing disparities of income and disparities of how well basic needs are met. Even if on balance most people in the world are better off (itself much debated), they are also more unequal—and accordingly, many complain. Thus the processes of globalization are blamed for exacerbating the sense of deprivation that often breeds discontent.

As Saskia Sassen argues, we must at least pay attention to the charge, if not for the sake of equity and human rights, then for the sake of the self-interest of “the north.” If the massive debt burden that poor economies face, and the abject poverty connected to it continue to underlie mass migrations, the spread of disease, and the spread of violence, then the United States and its allies in the developed countries of the global north need to evolve more effective multilateral mechanisms to deal with these “governance hotspots.” But security concerns could also drive both private-sector economic activity and international economic policy in ways that only add to the charges against globalization. Barry Eichengreen points out that international financial institutions, like the International Monetary Fund (IMF), face new pressures to be the solution in places like Afghanistan, while at the same time, private markets may be going the other direction—eschewing politically risky economies in favor of the stable. This may only further widen the gap between rich and poor. Eichengreen argues, as does Sassen, that the West needs to support policies to encourage globalization to do more good than harm.

Globalization has also become shorthand for the increasing international dominance of Western culture, media, and ideologies. Among the many critics of this process are Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden, but they are the more extreme elements of a pervasive sense throughout the world that this dominance is both unnecessary and unwanted. Timur Kuran and Mark Juergensmeyer, in their chapters in the preceding section, locate specific versions of these complaints in the context of Islamist movements.

NEW WAR/NEW WORLD ORDER?

Terrorism and the events of September 11 present new complexities for global security as well as domestic security. While terrorists exploit their transnational status and demonstrate the globalization of violence, responses to terrorism will

likewise challenge national boundaries and state-centered interests. While it is clear that contemporary armed conflict is increasingly less about armed combat for geographical domination between states, what other features of “new wars” stand out post–September 11? And has September 11 challenged us, as some have claimed, to find a New World Order—a post–Cold War, post “unipolar” relationship among states? Or, after a brief hiatus, have familiar patterns of relations between nations reasserted themselves? These are some of the central issues addressed in this section.

Jack Goldstone explores how the political and economic forces in the Middle East and Central Asia gave rise to an international Islamic terror network and Al Qaeda. In doing so, he demonstrates the complexity of motivations of the terrorists and he defines the challenges for creating peace out of this new war. Solutions must go beyond states and nation-building, he argues, to the level of individuals on whom the terror networks rely. But “new war” is not only about a new kind of enemy. It is also about new weapons and strategies. James Der Derian argues that the war on terrorism is as much about Internet and media networks as about terrorist ones. The battlefields are not all physical, but virtual as well. His sees in September 11 a “mimetic war”—a battle of images and representation where bin Laden issues videos that counter the statements made by Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld and President Bush. Dorothy Denning surmises that the Internet may be the next network to be engaged in the battle. As our infrastructures increasingly depend on technology, there are expanding possibilities to inflict real harm through computer networks. Although cyberterror, as she notes, has yet to be realized in any deadly capacity, Al Qaeda claims indicate that it may be a reality soon.

Mary Kaldor, echoing Der Derian’s observation about the media, suggests that contemporary wars are often prosecuted as much for the purpose of political mobilization as for any strategic military victory. Networks wage war to recruit supporters to their cause, and thus modern communications are central. In response, the United States has been developing its capacity to fight *asymmetric warfare*—responding to the weapons of the weak—but simultaneously committed to perfecting the bloodless war. But perhaps more challenging for the international community, civilian casualties and violation of non-combatants’ rights are not merely unfortunate side effects, but are often the central point of the warfare of the weak.

Do events since September 11, both in the prosecution of the war on terrorism and in relations within the community of nations, suggest fundamental change in world order? Many observers, including essayists in this volume, have noted that the U.S. had a newfound appreciation for multilateralism in the weeks

that followed September 11. But Bruce Cumings argues that as much as 9/11 seemed to force a break from past policy, in the end little will have changed. His historical perspective on U.S. engagements around the world leads him to suspect that the U.S. will try to stabilize the Central Asian region—and perhaps overstay its welcome. But more generally, the tougher battle for the U.S. will be to try to maintain public enthusiasm for a world presence when its rationale is little understood by the American public.

Susan Woodward also casts doubt on the proposition that the war in Afghanistan has represented a qualitatively new approach, citing continuities that extend back to the “tortured conflicts” of the 1990s. She shows that while reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan have been informed by the lessons learned about peace-building in the 1990s in Kosovo, Bosnia, and Somalia, many lessons have been forgotten, especially when concerns for military victory have taken precedence over concerns for an effective peace to follow.

While initial indications were that September 11 had introduced new thinking about international relations, global security, and peace-building, Woodward and Cumings share the view that there may be little that is new in the New World Order.

TERRORISM AND DEMOCRATIC VIRTUES

What challenges confront liberal democracies at home, as they face non-state threats of violence? The attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center brought to the U.S. what had been an ongoing concern in Europe, Israel, and elsewhere of assuring safety (or at least order) for citizens at home, not just abroad. The U.S. response, expanding federal investigative powers, suspending court trials for suspected terrorists, and cracking down on immigration, struck many as appropriate, necessary, and reassuring. For many others, it seemed that the terrorist threat had succeeded in shutting down some of the most central aspects of American identity and values—freedom of thought, freedom of movement, civil liberties. So how is a liberal, democratic country to respond when—as Robert Keohane points out (citing Judith Shklar)—the first right we have in a liberal regime is to be protected from fear?

Seyla Benhabib elaborates how the new violence—no longer the monopoly of the state—forces us to fight a war without ever declaring war, where the enemy wants to bring down our way of life, not just our government. And in creating the everyday fear, terrorism challenges our government to new forms of security. But she argues that our systems of protection cannot handle an internal enemy. We are not capable of recognizing the possibility of threat from within our borders without suspiciously eyeing everyone who seems unlike us. We become wary of

the other, and suspicious of dissent. But this distrust of dissent, as Peter Meyers argues, is precisely what the attacks have generated, and in so doing, made democracy falter. Without conversation and argument, he maintains, there can be no politics. Without disagreement, no progress in our views. Thus the terrorists succeed in breaking down our way of life by making us fear the very values on which our society was built.

Ronald Dworkin details the progress that the U.S. government has made in tearing down our civil liberties, arguably one such foundational value. Since September 11, the U.S. has planned for military tribunals that sidestep due-process requirements and expanded government power to conduct secret searches. Echoing Peter Meyers, Dworkin notes the overwhelming approval of the American public for these actions. He recognizes that the public is scared and is being presented with a trade-off: security or liberty. But he, like the other authors in this section, argues that it is a false trade-off.

U.S. society was built, of course, on the fact of immigration as well, and that too is under challenge. In the U.S., immigration has been contentious for centuries, reaching its most hostile discourse in the 1990s. But as Aristide Zolberg demonstrates, critics of a liberal immigration policy needed no prompting to use the events of September 11 to bolster their cause. It reflects the problem that Benhabib points out—we do not know how to handle the enemy—or possible enemy—among us. We can only keep him out, or watch him more closely when he is here. But to distinguish the lawful citizens and foreign-born residents from those who do not have such authorization would be to markedly alter the balance between freedom and control. Again, terrorism challenges liberalism.

COMPETING NARRATIVES

In the preceding chapters of this volume, the authors elaborate on the factors that have facilitated, exacerbated, dramatized, and avenged the events of September 11. But as Marc Ross explains in the first chapter of this section, these factors are at play only in the context of the stories that are told. The way that we recount events—even such seemingly unassailable tragedies as September 11—depends deeply on the world we inhabit as we witness them. What September 11 was to a New Yorker is not exactly what it was to a poor Muslim on the streets of Jakarta. More generally, the value of what the United States does in/to the world depends on where one stands.

Although we may agree on the simple facts, we often construct narratives attributing motives and implications very different from those whose perspectives derive from other situations in the world. This section of the book offers some attempts to examine these divides in perspective.

After 9/11 many Americans repeated a perhaps naïve question: “Why do they hate us?” There was apparently a national expectation to be loved. But the question did also call for a deeper look at America’s symbolic as well as material place in the world. Rajeev Bhargava and Immanuel Wallerstein take up this question. Bhargava writes from a non-Western perspective about September 11, with sympathy for the individuals lost in a horrific event. But he also notes a collective dimension of resentment toward the U.S. found in a commonly expressed satisfaction that even the mighty are sometimes humbled. From within the U.S., Wallerstein looks critically at America’s view of itself, seeing in the twin towers a metaphor for our unlimited aspirations, and yet asking also what that means about American power in the world and how America will respond to a possibly declining hegemony. Nilüfer Göle argues for capturing these events and holding them still before proceeding. Her snapshots are taken mostly from within the Muslim Middle East; they are personal, but also help us locate how perspectives come to differ.

These conflicting perspectives are not confined to North–South and the “clash of civilizations” between Islam and the West. Nor are they so stark as we might think. As Rajeev Bhargava argues, to think at the level of the individual—the victim in the tower—versus the collective—U.S. actions in the world—can itself muddle the moral verdict. Further, if you stand in South Asia and feel that these events confirm your instinct that you do not count, but you are among the academic elite, you need only look around to find those who do not count to you. In Afghanistan, those who may not have counted are the women. As Saba Gul Khattak elaborates, war is a very male activity, and what women take from it is not at all what men may take from it. In the widespread displacement of Afghan refugees from their homes, Khattak finds voices of women for whom September 11, or the twin towers, or the Pentagon, “are as remote from their lives as Mars,” even as their lives are intimately caught up with the competing narratives these terms evoke.

Marita Sturken reflects on the memorialization of the victims of September 11 in New York in the final essay of the volume. This process, necessarily private and public, individual and collective, will shape how these events resonate into the future. While Sturken recognizes that memorializing is centrally about grieving for the dead, she also reminds us of the importance of not “smoothing over” the search for meaning, or trying to bring closure to an event that is riven with conflict.

As with memorialization, our readings of September 11 necessarily depend on both the very singular, particular experience we have of that day and the broader

contexts and ideas we carry with us. They depend on how we connect to the personal stories of victims and the loss felt by families, and how we commit to building a better society and achieving greater security. The terrorist attacks have stimulated public soul-searching. Both the attacks and responses to them have raised a host of questions about social organization, basic social institutions, and how people mobilize amid crises. This book offers insight into these questions and others. We offer it in hope that it will encourage deeper thinking and more determined search and eventually better answers.

We dedicate it to the grandchildren of all who died September 11 and after, not just in New York or Washington or Pennsylvania but around the world, with wishes that they will see less of sadness and carnage than their grandparents.

—C. C., P. P., A. T.