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Making Enemies,
Part Two

ANNA SIMONS

Editor's Note: *This article is the second in a two-part series. Part One may be found in the Summer 2006 issue.*

To continue this investigation into the nature of our enemy in the War on Terror, my premise, again, is this: Westernization is an endemic threat to any group wishing to retain its non-Western and often pre-modern corporate identity. This threat produces reactions shaped by demography (un- or under-employed adolescent males), by factionalism, by political circumstances and by the cultural predicates of religious belief. These demographic, social, political and cultural factors are often varyingly mistaken as *causes* of Islamist violence when, more properly, they should be called enablers. What has *caused* our Islamist enemies to be what they are erupts from factional divides we exacerbate when we push individual rights and freedoms, live as though we privilege the material over the spiritual, and universalize our notions of equality.

I have suggested that important policy implications flow from the divides Westernization engenders between those who wish to preserve their corporate identity (I refer to them as "nativists") and accommodationists, who, along with us, imperil that corporate identity. These policy implications fall into three broad categories.

First, while not all forms of anti-Westernism produce violence, Islamist nativism does and will continue to do so. Nor will methods used to successfully limit earlier forms of nativist, anti-Western violence work against Islamists. Islam, a world religion, introduces new wrinkles into what was often "just" a localized, tribal problem in the past. This means that the War on Terror could well be a long war—although not for the reasons the Bush Administration has espoused. It will be long not because the democratic reforms necessary to transform the Middle East will be, in the President's words, "the work of generations." Rather, it will be long because nativists will ensure that to increasing numbers of Muslims the identity and existence of Islam itself will seem to hang in the balance.

Second, contrary to much common assertion, Islamists view the struggle as a religious conflict, not an ideological one. The contention that Islamism is a wholly modern ideology divorced from the sacred, having little to do with Islam as a religion, is wishful thinking. While Islamists have borrowed liberally from Western, Marxist and other ideologies, that does not mean that Islamism is *essentially* an ideology, or

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that it is *mostly* borrowed. At its core there is a religious and divinely mandated template as old as the Quran itself.

Third, the strategy that posits that the key to success in battling Islamist violence is to appeal to and separate moderates in Muslim countries from so-called radicals is a chimera. It presupposes the erection of political firewalls, as if these can keep co-religionists apart, or as if it's possible to prevent moderates from being radicalized by unforeseen events. This presumes that we can identify who among our own population might go postal, who might shoot up a high school, or who might react to an incident like Waco as Timothy McVeigh did. Clearly, we can't accurately identify or predict radicals here at home. What makes us think we can do any better abroad?

But even if winning over Muslim moderates were the key to defusing this "long war", a U.S. values offensive—our advocacy of democracy, gender equality, "human rights" and religious freedom as defined in the West—is the worst possible way to proceed. Given the dynamics of factionalism and nativism, any focus on values hands nativists exactly what they need: By condemning their choices, we make traditional practices, and whatever religious precepts are thought to undergird them, *the* issue. It is hard to think of a policy concept that is more misguided or inimical to our interests.

Sources of the Long War

We need to be clear: Being anti-Western or even anti-modern need not presuppose anti-Western violence. Also, modernization is not completely synonymous with Westernization, so rejecting the former need not entail rejecting the latter: The Amish, for instance, are in many ways anti-modern, but they are hardly anti-Western. Almost all nomadic pastoralists (people who keep livestock)—Maasai in East Africa, Fulani and Tuareg in the Sahel, Bedouin throughout the Middle East, and many Somalis—can likewise be considered anti-modern: They reject permanent settlement. Nor does much of what modernity has to offer accord well with their peripatetic life. But so long as they can reject what they don't need, and can remain culturally autonomous *and* nomadic, there is no reason for pastoral nomads to adopt a violently anti-modern let alone anti-Western stance.

Many American Indian tribes, too—Navajo, Lakota and most Pueblos—contain significant traditionalist, nativist and anti-assimilationist factions whose aim is to remain as spiritually Indian as possible. Because traditionalist Indians reject Christianity, we could say this makes them anti-Western (and not just anti-modern) by default, but they are not *actively* anti-Western. Rather, thanks to reservations and the space these offer, the U.S. government no longer needs to force Indians to assimilate, and so traditionalist Indians have no current reason to wage war against the United States.

We would do well to distinguish between anti-modern traditionalists who have *inherited* their way of life, however, and those who *choose* to reject the modern world in which they were raised. As to the former, nothing about their rejection of modernity requires them to take up arms. Typically, they are not interested in proselytizing; they just want to be left alone. The lesson this suggests is that if only we grant anti-modern traditionalists space, autonomy and the freedom to operate communally, they pose no threat. In contrast, those who choose to reject the world in which they were raised—like the Unabomber, Ted Kaczynski, for example—do pose a problem. This is the problem Olivier Roy and others have identified when they home in on young, de-communalized but not de-racinated Muslims in Europe. These are youth who want what modernity has to offer yet grow increasingly anti-Western in the process.

Again, peoples and factions in such circumstances need not turn violent. Take, for example, most self-segregated Muslim communities outside the Middle East prior to the Iranian Revolution, or most ultra-Orthodox Jewish communities everywhere to this day. The latter are religious but usually not politically mobilized. Having removed or isolated themselves physically from the larger society, and by purposely and carefully forgoing lots of things (even if not everything), they can assiduously avoid or control threats to their communal identity. Push a bit further, and what becomes apparent is that most such enclaves have fig-

ured out how to subsist "within us but without us", which means *they* have reached an accommodation. So long as group members believe they can remain true to their traditions, they are unlikely to want to draw attention to themselves, let alone cause problems for us. In other words, with sufficient social distance, mutual tolerance—even if not mutual respect—may well be possible, but probably only when people are willing to remain marginal, subordinate and apolitical.

By contrast, people who cannot or do not wish to remain marginal, who cannot or do not wish to subsist without modern, Western amenities, yet who actively disparage and rail against Western values, make much less sense to us. This describes most Islamists and all jihadists, whether they live in the Middle East, Europe or North America. How can they take so much of what the West produces, be so dependent, and yet still act so hostile and aggressively anti-Western? To us this reeks of hypocrisy or ingratitude, or both. No doubt this is one reason we assume that, in despising us, Islamists really despise themselves; how can they not when they're so technologically incapable and inferior?

The catch is that these are *our* readings of their motivations. We forget that as Americans we tend to measure worth according to technological prowess and individual freedoms. Without these characteristics we could not have generated our present wealth or well-being. Nor would we be able to keep growing, changing and generating more opportunities—the hallmarks of both democracy and capitalism. But embedded in this measure of worth is a self-reinforcing logic that may be more peculiar to us than we suppose: We privilege technology and opportunity because they have privileged us, and so we consider them to be the measures of success and superiority for everyone. In short, we are still quite Calvinist, and we take the fact that nearly everyone wants so much of what we produce and consume as further proof that our standards are universal.

However, the French (just to pick on them—why not?) would hardly agree. According to their sensibilities, *they* set the standard to which all should aspire: superior High Culture. Not only do the French know how to live well, but by the criteria of style, art and cuisine they reign supreme. Of course, Italians might beg to differ, while Swedes and Norwegians would doubtless argue that, in terms of health and *social* well-being, they actually live best. The point is that different peoples judge not only their own worth, but also that of others, according to standards that tend to reflect what they value most.

Such standards vary according to how, or even if, they can be measured. It is easy, for instance, to claim technological superiority. That is measurable not only in numbers of patents, but in engineering feats, miracles of modern medicine or through contests of arms. Claims to superiority based on style or high culture are harder to prove, though who people emulate and what they buy may be considered sufficiently convincing demonstrations of worth. But what about *moral* superiority? When it comes to moral worth, what could possibly count as an agreed-upon measure for peoples who adhere to different moral codes? For those who are religious, for instance, the only real proofs of moral rectitude come with divine judgment. And while different peoples might view natural disasters such as tsunamis, earthquakes or floods as testaments, are these warnings or punishments? Even that cannot be answered with certainty.

We privilege technology and opportunity because they have privileged us.

What this in turn means is that for those who use morality as the yardstick by which to measure societal superiority, we can never prove ourselves superior, or even equal, unless we adopt *their* standards. This is what we are up against not only with Islamists, but potentially all Muslims who hold their faith dear. Muslims' measure of their worth has everything to do with Islam's moral superiority. A poor peasant who lives in a mud hut will consider himself superior to us, and there is nothing any information campaign or "war of ideas" strategy can do to persuade him otherwise.

This explains more about our current predicament than most policymakers want to recognize. For instance, Muslims' convictions about their God-given superiority justify their making a whole range of separations that we do not. To take just one example, men and women are not the same and therefore should not be treated the same. That's not just an ideological but a moral stance. Another example: The connections *we* make between our values and our productivity mean nothing to people who don't believe material well-being and moral worth are causally related. Far more compelling, instead, is the notion that moral superiors deserve whatever moral inferiors are clever enough to design and build. If we are those moral inferiors—and we are in many Muslims' eyes—then there can't be anything hypocritical about using what we produce.

We err deeply when we assume that we can seduce people into adopting our values by getting them to adopt our stuff. There is virtually no evidence that this works in the non-Christian, non-West; if it did, there would no longer *be* a non-Christian, non-West. Consider all the Western goods that fill markets and houses in the Middle East and beyond. This should be an indicator that we only fool ourselves when we assume Muslims resent us because of our productivity and material success, and don't instead resent us for our lack of moral worth—worth we lack because we refuse to recognize Islam as the superior faith.

Muslims' commitment to their own superiority should not surprise us, for in case after case those who have fought Westernization have done so not just because they do not want to change, but because they consider their way of life, their beliefs and their morals to be both superior and at risk. Nobody rallied more American Indians to stand firm against whites than Tecumseh, a Shawnee, of whom it has been said that the "constant, crucial ambition of Shawnee was to remain Shawnee, which they were unshakably convinced was much better than being anyone else."[1] Clearly, this was not true for all Shawnee, since some willingly assimilated, but it is what drove Tecumseh to fight to the death. The same was the case for legions of other Indian leaders: Better to fight and die as an Indian than to surrender and become something else.

Submission is the critical concept here. How can a group of people sure of their moral superiority ever submit to anyone else's moral code? (Civil authority yes, but only if it does not contradict religious precepts; not coincidentally, that is exactly what Muslim law obligates.) This issue of submission and moral superiority represents the crux of the struggle between Islamists and the West, which, tellingly, Islamists assert without reservation but which no Westerner in a position of power dares mention. For that would make this war essentially a religious war, which it mustn't be—but which in fact it is.

The historical logic that emerges from earlier cases of anti-Western nativism suggests that if only we could grant Muslims sufficient space and autonomy to live communally and according to their own moral precepts, we could take the violent sting out of their opposition. But if we use history as a guide, we would also have to first either subdue and then sequester them, or let them go off and be anti-Western in some resourceless hinterland somewhere. Alternatively, we might try to forcibly Westernize all Muslims, obliterate them, or tolerate al-Qaeda-like attacks in perpetuity. But given that most

[1]Bil Gilbert, *God Gave Us This Country: Tekamthi and the First American Civil War* (Anchor Books, 1990), p. 51.

Reuters/CORBIS

Tecumseh

of these options are demographically or logistically impossible, and the last is, or ought to be, unacceptable, we face a real dilemma: History suggests no arena in which a struggle such as the present one can be peaceably worked out or ended quickly.

Compounding our difficulties is the fact that overwhelming conventional military strength such as ours invites unconventional responses from clever enemies. The corollary is that when people fight a war to defend their identity or their corporate right to exist, they almost always end up "fighting dirty." Those who fight to secure, establish or improve their reputation or standing usually do not. Thus, what lies *behind* the asymmetry of the present war is what should most arrest our attention. That we are currently on the receiving end of a war that deliberately seeks the mass murder of civilians should tell us that our Islamist adversaries believe their identity and existence, not just their reputation, are at stake. This, too, has critical implications for how long the War on Terror will last, and for how far our adversaries will go to prosecute it.

There are plenty of examples from the last two centuries that show us how groups fighting for their identity and existence behave. Typically, nativists believe their spiritual power—or strength of will—can overcome Western technology, even when they themselves make use of Western weapons. For instance, the Japanese in World War II were firmly convinced that their superior will, coupled with advanced technology, would allow them to beat us. When we won instead they recognized that they had applied their superior will to the wrong means (that is, they should not have fought us militarily). Under the Emperor's command, they then shifted *en masse* from pursuing anti-Western goals militarily to, some might argue, pursuing them economically. Up to the 1980s they even seemed poised to succeed.

In contrast, Islamists represent some of what made the Japanese so formidable: strength of will married to selected advanced technology. But Islamists cannot retool as the Japanese did after World War II. There is no emperor (or caliph) who can command all Islamists, let alone urge jihadists to change tack. Also, Islam generates bountiful nativism. The call to purify the religion and expunge corrupting influences, as well as a demand for obeisance or, at the very least, respect from infidels, is built-in. It has been since the 7th century. What is new today is that Westernization is the target. For most of our mutual history Westerners encountered Muslim armies, the vanguard of Muslim societies, but not Muslim communities *per se*. With Western imperial thrusts, however, social distance, which began to erode in the 19th century and was sharply curtailed in the 20th, has virtually disappeared now in the 21st. Not only have we come to represent the most prominent "other" confronting Islam, but we seem to be everywhere they are.

Religion and Ideology

Religions can either exclude or include, can divide or unify otherwise disparate peoples. Part of Islam's appeal is its inclusivity. Islam is not confined to a single tribe, race or ethnicity. It also offers a recipe for action to its adherents. The Quran and Hadith serve as templates for replicating Muhammad's success, joining people together across lineages, tribes and all sorts of boundaries that otherwise still fracture the non-West. Even better, scripture in the case of Islam serves as script: Muhammad formed the ultimate secret society and with it waged a series of triumphant, even miraculous battles. Combine early Islam's resoundingly

successful history with a cyclical view of history, and it should be clear how hope ends up fused to purpose.

This makes the *re*-ascendance of Islam eminently attractive to youth in particular. But the package is even neater than this because, in addition to containing within itself a revolutionary or reformist impulse, Islam, through Muhammad's example, formats *how* reform or revolution are to be accomplished—and promises Allah's assistance given a sufficiently righteous cause. This is yet another reason this religion represents a particular challenge; it has been fought for before and persists, thanks to the dogged determination of the faithful. Consider the fate of the Soviets in Afghanistan. Ignore Stinger missiles and focus on fervor: That's what earned the *mujaheddin* those Stingers in the first place.

Ideology has never equaled religion as a motivating factor for believers.

Faith brings us to the heart of the matter and to a key set of differences between religion and ideology. Though ideology has at times seemed to approach religion as a motivating factor, it has never equaled it. The most obvious distinction between the two involves divinity and the afterlife. Those who believe in God typically believe in divine judgment. If God is believed to have sanctioned a certain war and certain behaviors, there are no limits to what some men will then do. Whether religion engenders a greater will to win in individuals than *-isms* (like nationalism or communism) is debatable, but for sheer numbers of people whom it can galvanize and inspire, religion is hard to beat. That is because, already representing a coherent set of rituals, behaviors and beliefs, religion offers a ready-made supply of organizable worshippers and a means for mobilizing them. It also offers the ultimate grand strategy ("We are following God's plan") and rules that already feel familiar to adherents.

For most people, members of communal societies especially, religion is primordial: Individuals are born simultaneously into religion and family. With family and religion intertwined from the outset, an individual's personal faith can wax and wane over time. No decision need be made regarding how much or how little to belong. Family members rarely question the depth of each other's religious feelings (which is yet another reason suicide terrorism is so stealthy—individual fervor is easy to bury in practices family members simply associate with being Muslim). But also, because religion is embedded within family, the most normal and natural organization of human life, faith doesn't seem or feel invented—especially not when it dovetails with belonging to something greater than oneself, which is what extended family represents at the lowest end of the scale, the community of believers at the broadest.

What then could possibly trump religion? Nothing—or nothing we know thus far. There is no discernible ideological mass movement or *-ism* (apart from, perhaps, future manifestations of environmentalism) that can inspire so many segments of so many populations. Nationalism, an equally potent force in terms of its primordial tugs (since one is born into a "nation" when one is born into a family), is by definition much more exclusive. It's also secular. Indeed, even if something were to develop with mass appeal and a unifying message, it is hard to imagine how it could supersede faith in an omnipotent, omniscient power. *This* is the source of religion's ultimate survivability: Its claim that whatever it cannot explain cannot be understood. That makes it undisprovable, and it is virtually impossible to convince people that they are wrong (or misguided) regarding anything undisprovable. For instance, someone who scoffs at the existence of Bigfoot or aliens, and who can readily discount all the evidence that believers muster, can be "converted" overnight should Bigfoot or aliens suddenly make contact. However, what evidence can skeptics offer to believers to make them doubt? Take the existence of God itself: a lack of empirical evidence is irrelevant for those who believe God owes us no proofs. And though some people will shed their faith after a catastrophic event, others will understand tragedy as a test—especially if severe tests of faith occurred in the past, and particularly if they are described in scripture itself.

Not so with ideology. By definition ideology is secular, and each ideology that comes along promises answers for all human problems. No religion dares go that far. As a consequence, while numerous ideologies have proven capable of replacing religion in the minds and hearts of some, coercion has been required to instill respect for ideology in the minds of all. It cannot be a coincidence that secularist totalitarian systems perfect surveillance and compulsion. Unlike religions, ideologies require inculcation individual by individual. Whatever solidarity they foster has to be consciously and continually re-created. Thus, ideological bonds cannot in any sense be considered primordial, not even by their fiercest advocates.

Nor are ideologies particularly flexible, probably because they are not organic. They are intellectually engineered and artificially, even ingeniously, designed to be imposed from the top down. They neither revolve around nor evolve from a core set of rituals, habits or customs. The beauty of these at the heart of religion is that so long as some practices remain consistently the same, others can be permitted to change over time such that the overall shifts feel natural and unforced. Nor is it a coincidence that religions become most resilient when adherents have reason to worry about their fate and thus the afterlife; this renders believers all the more responsive. That's not a dynamic we find in ideologies.

Boil down the differences between religion and ideology and we see that we Americans would do better fighting *against* an ideology on *behalf* of a religion. In the minds of many this is how we won the Cold War—we believed in God and the enemy did not. That cannot be said of our current enemies who, for a host of reasons, we nonetheless want to believe are motivated by ideology. Why? The short answer is because we believe we are, and we desperately seek a symmetrical struggle.

During the Cold War we competed against the Soviets over the same things in a wide range of arenas: sports, space, underwater technology, food production and so forth. Because we were each striving to prove whose political economy or system was better, the Soviets could not overtly use our technology (not that they didn't steal blueprints and plans whenever they could). The rivalry was instead played out in terms of who could out-invent and out-produce the enemy. Along practically every dimension the contest came down to tangibles, and all sides, even neutrals, agreed on these standards.

We could even go so far as to say that minds were our targets in the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc, and cognitive dissonance provided the ideal lever to move them our way: The shoddier their goods relative to ours, the more bankrupt their system appeared. But no such reciprocities exist in this current struggle. Islamists are not Islamists by virtue of cognition. Nor are Muslims compelled by force to keep the faith. In the case of Islam (or any religion) it is virtue, not technical prowess, that matters, and souls, not minds, are the key.

It is hard to miss the deeper irony here. Although we as Americans believe that by sharing a democracy we share an ideology (at most, a desacralized civil religion), the context for our form of democracy has always been religious—Protestantism, to be specific.[2] We privilege the ideological components of our faith (little "f") over the religious components because all forms of Protestantism are not the same and not all Americans are Protestants. The upside of this is that we are predisposed to treat all religions equally. The downside is that it makes us susceptible to viewing everything in ideological terms. We are downright voluble about wanting to see our morals—gender equity, the protection of individual rights and so forth—adopted abroad. And because we couch these values in universal ideological terms, not more parochial Christian (or Judeo-Christian) religious ones, we believe others should view them that way, too. But they don't.

All this is of a piece with our Enlightenment conviction that ideas are liberating. The problem with this notion is that we then mistakenly assume that others oppose us for the ideas we disseminate, not recognizing that ideas on their own cannot contaminate non-Western societies; ideas need people as agents, and practices as proof. These agents contaminate; so these—meaning us—are what nativists believe need to

[2]See James Kurth, "George Bush and the Protestant Deformation", *The American Interest* (Winter 2005).

be wiped out, our practices along with us.

Of course, the Bush Administration has gone out of its way to reaffirm that the War on Terror is not an attack on Islam. On its face, such a demurral suggests that we recognize the gravity of "religicizing" the war—as does the other side, which has not attacked Christianity as such. But if so, this implies a sort of reciprocity of legitimacy that neither side would agree exists. To "them", we advocate a misguided liberal ideology that seeks to unseat Islam's role in a Muslim world. To us, they represent an ideologically extreme version of an otherwise compatible faith. In other words, when Muslims look at us, they see a religion pretending to be an ideology. When we look at Islamists, we see an ideology pretending to be a religion.

Moderates, Imperialists & Crusaders

While it may be inevitable that we Americans view Islam through an ideological prism, and that Muslims view us through a religious one, neither perception is quite right. But put them together and it is clear: Liberal ideology is no more separable from its Protestant religious heritage than Islam is fully compatible with individuation or other Western values. Yet so long as this mutual misapprehension exists, it does grant us a small window of opportunity. We might yet have time to shift the conflict away from a contest that forces Muslims to choose how much or how little to demonstrate their commitment to Faith (capital "F"), though to do so we must stop trying to woo moderates in order to isolate radicals.

Because we are still at an early stage in this long war, neither "side" is as yet fully-formed. There are struggles within the West as well as among Muslims over what has transpired thus far, and what should occur in the future. At the same time, Muslim moderates *appear* to be up for grabs, and everyone is trying to grab them. It's as if they represent *the* solution or, at the very least, a stopgap. But how so? While moderates may vote, they cannot seize attention, let alone galvanize youth or sway public opinion, unless they are willing to speak or act with as much passion as partisans—and by definition they don't. Likewise, moderates are never ruthless enough to defeat those bent on using violence to cleanse and purify. Thus, it is wholly unrealistic to assume that we can inspire moderate Muslims to take up cudgels in our defense. Worse, in the long history of Islam, "cleansers" have usually prevailed. How can they not, when they thrive on hardship, asceticism, the romance of self-sacrifice and total dedication to a righteous cause?

Another reason that banking on moderates is a mistake takes us back to factionalization. Again, our doing anything (or even openly desiring it) becomes the means by which we not only guarantee that accommodationists (our allies) will have nativists to contend with in perpetuity, but by defining "radical" Islam as an ideology, we enable nativists to make far more of it as a religion. Saying *anything* about Islam just reaffirms suspicions about our intentions and stokes speculation—speculation we then can't control—about what we are really up to. If not conversion or eradication, then what? How can our expressed hopes for Islamic "reform" *not* amount to distortion or a contravention of the true faith?

If it seems that we're hoisted on a virtually impossible petard, that could be because we are. We can't target the basic social and political values of the vast majority of Muslims without challenging Islam, which suffuses their way of life. But do this and we might as well embark on a full-blown, old-fashioned crusade. Trying to promote any major social change, even—or maybe especially—when couched as liberation or a "freedom agenda", is likewise fraught. First, no matter how many Muslims tell us they want to be free, pushing our notions of freedom (and democracy) implies that theirs are no good. Here we're back to lauding our values and denigrating theirs. Or to cut to the chase from a different angle, devout, practicing, believing Muslims cannot adopt our moral values and still remain Muslim. Besides, for those who believe that Islam is incontestably morally superior, who are we to speak to them of values anyway?

Clearly, then, while it's not easy to figure out what we should do, some things we certainly *shouldn't* do. For instance, we need to stop emphasizing gender equality. We've only recently

converted to this ourselves and are now its chief proselytizers. Yet the more vociferously we beat the drum for Muslim women's liberation, the more we cause nativists to oppose us because they can't countenance the atomization of families and society to which our version of equality all too plainly leads, *and* because what we promote contravenes Quranic common sense as well as law. Moreover, to threaten people's core moral sensibilities—especially when these involve things so critical as sexual and social reproduction—is to threaten their identity and therefore ensure a violent response. Consider, too, that while in theory it might seem that liberated Muslim women will raise tolerant, pro-Western Muslim sons, what will happen when those sons find themselves pitted against nativist parents and *their* sons? Who will fight, and who will win? The answers are all too clear.

Our Options

Our solipsism—we honestly want everyone to be able to live just like us—causes untold problems, as does our generosity, which is the flip side of assuming everyone *is* like us (but they just don't realize it yet). For instance, to return to the subject of superiority, our *attitudes* about ourselves are quite imperial: Virtually all great powers have been driven by confidence in their technological, military and moral superiority. Yet our *behavior* toward others is not the least bit imperial: We are not comfortable swallowing extant peoples; we no longer engage in conquest; we want people to remain "free"; we are uncomfortable treating others as inferior. Our ideals tell us to be inclusive and egalitarian. Consequently, we assimilate individuals from absolutely anywhere—as long as they adopt our values.

But this is also how we appear schizophrenic, wedded as we are to egalitarian ideals, yet committed to staying on top in order to ensure that these ideals—and our freedoms—stay secure. This means we ourselves can't be considered moderate when it comes to protecting American power or our way of life. Although our roots are as a Promised Land rather than a Crusader State, in the felicitous phrasing of Walter MacDougall's 1997 book, at this point in time our version of global capitalism has locked us into a continual search for new markets, both for cheaper labor and willing buyers. Nor can we remain ourselves and not export practices we want others to adopt in order that they may become more prosperous. In our view, this is how we help people progress, progress being one of our most cherished values.

This does not mean that our brand of Westernization is consciously malign. Indeed, what we currently push is considerably different than the imperialisms of previous centuries, when conquerors inserted themselves atop local power structures. Today, we seek to reform what we take to be unfair power structures, not co-opt or dominate them. The problem is, however, that not even this seemingly noble motivation is value neutral. Rather, whenever we promote wide-ranging change, we inadvertently (though sometimes purposely) threaten local social relations. To those for whom these relations are sources of power, we upset the apple cart. To those for whom these relations are sacrosanct, we attack their identity. Nativism is one predictable consequence of both scenarios.

But if pushing change is unwise given the second- and third-order effects that can lead to anti-Western blowback, then perhaps we should focus on toleration and on encouraging more mutual respect instead. Toleration clearly works for us, so it is hard not to assume it should work for everyone. There was even a time (prior to World War II) when friendship and respect characterized relations between Middle Easterners and visitors from the English-speaking world. Think T. E. Lawrence, Gertrude Bell, Freya Stark and the other great Orientalists Edward Said was so fond of disparaging. But no more. Even prior to the rise of terrorism, few American tourists ventured to the Middle East (outside of Israel and Christian religious sites) to see anything other than ruins. Westerners flock to India to sit at the feet of gurus; Buddhism continues to attract lifelong devotees; New Agers have made a fetish of Native American spiritualism. But few Americans have manifested in recent decades anything approaching deep respect for Islam's intrinsic worth. This can

only reinforce Islamists' long-standing conviction that we do not take them or their religion seriously. The fact that we express no admiration, let alone interest except in the wake of terror and violence, sends all sorts of signals and surely serves as yet another motivation for Islamist youth (especially) to prove us wrong.

There is, of course, another reason to mention aesthetics in relation to respect. Through the ages, rulers who sought to create great works by which to boost their prestige and enhance their reputation gathered together the most skilled artisans and craftsmen they could find, regardless of their communal affiliations. Appreciation of others' artistic talents has long been a stepping-

Corporate identity versus individualism has been spinning societies in different directions for centuries.

stone to tolerance. But kings, queens, caliphs, emperors and others usually guaranteed this only by carefully balancing different factions and communities. In the United States, we discovered an alternative to benign autocracy. In America, institutionalized checks guarantee individual liberty. We could say that while empires were comprised of groups out of which individuals (great painters, musicians and builders) could emerge, we consist of individuals from among whom groups can form. The loci of control are completely different.

But peering beneath the surface, so too is what is tolerated. For instance, for all the toleration we claim to manifest, and for all our lauding of multiculturalism and pluralism (something empires like the Ottoman and Habsburg really did protect), there are at least two things we not only cannot, but will not, tolerate. One is communal solidarities or attachments that take precedence over the primacy of individuals; the second is domination by a single denomination. Because we cannot reconcile ourselves to either of these, a fundamental incompatibility does exist between us and the world of Islam, not just between us and violent Islamists. Ironically, our liberty only exacerbates this incompatibility, especially if Isaiah Berlin was correct that individuals must have secure cultural belonging if they are to be genuinely free.

I raise this because the salience of communal or corporate identity versus individualism has been spinning societies and cultures along different trajectories for centuries. Despite optimism about modernization that once led social scientists to predict the withering away of communal attachments, it should now be clear that liberal concepts work only among those willing to question their identity and religion—that is, people who already regard themselves as independent agents. Our ideas, therefore, can erode beliefs only among those who do not *want* to draw their primary identity from the group, or do not feel they owe the group their allegiance.

Such independent agents have existed in every society, so our ideas have always won some allies within the world of Islam and always will. But then there is factionalization: The more independent Westernized agents there are, and the more such people openly question or even ridicule tradition, the more this produces and strengthens nativists. Remember, entire societies never Westernize or modernize without tremendous force being applied from on high by fiat, or from without. Most societies have to face catastrophe before they'll voluntarily give up what's most essential to their identity. Ironically, this surrender is all the less likely in democratic configurations, where recalcitrance is that much easier to keep alive politically.

Nevertheless, because we see *some* independent agents embracing our values in all societies, it is easy to convince ourselves that with just a bit more urging—with stickier messages and the right format, or greater investment and economic opportunity—we can push people over the tipping point to our way of doing things. But again, the reality is that the very same things we use to attract likewise repel. Worse, when nativists belong to one of the world's great religions, religion

offers them a global community. It may not be a community that really holds together, but so long as small constituent groups think it might, or believe it should, they will retain their sense of purpose and strive to make others feel it, too, through spectacular acts of devotion.

There is at least one other thing that a religion—in theory—can also enable. Peoples who share the same religion may take on the characteristics of a nation over time. We could say that this is what Muhammad wove together for the Arabs, who, prior to Islam, shared a language and modes of livelihood but little else. Muhammad and the early caliphs emphasized the *umma*, a concept that, if wielded skillfully, could prove more overarching than "the Arabs" or any other collectivity yet known. How inclusive has the *umma* proved? If we go back just a century, we don't find a pan-Islamic community of believers; the *umma* was not united in World War I or during World War II. Or take what is occurring in Darfur or Iraq today. Divisions persist. Some are tribal; others by now are national. It's not at all clear that Shi'i affiliation, for instance, can trump Iraqi or Iranian identities. It didn't during the 1980–88 Iran-Iraq War or during the first Gulf War.

In Part One of this essay, I made the case that adolescence and factionalization are facts of human existence that roil the world—and thus deserve more concerted attention than they receive. Here the focus has been on religion, Islam in particular. Religion is not something we mortals can supersede, while Islam as a specific religion is not one we can contain. For these reasons, Islam is also not a subject we should address directly, counterintuitive as this may seem. As soon as we voice our preferences, or praise moderation and moderates, or preach toleration, we create problems for those who want to work with us. Clearly, we would do better instead to encourage dissent over anything but religion. But what, in that case, should we appeal to instead?

If religion trumps ideology, ideology is not the answer. Nor is class. Workers of the world never unite sufficiently to cross-cut parochial allegiances, no matter how domestically useful class politics may be. The fact of parochial interests does, however, raise an intriguing specter: What about nationalism, religion's closest secular counterpart, and the very thing that kept the *umma* fractured before?

We already know that nationalism works. We even know how it works. How ironic, then, if the scourge of the last two centuries could prove salutary in this one. But also how fitting if allegiance to the nation-state—a modern, Western invention—turned out to be the most effective antidote to anti-Westernization. Given the configuration of our world, it is hard to imagine what else, apart from nationalism, might inspire governments to rally their young men *and* keep them under control. After all, young men are a main component of the problem and a cohort that governments should be able to do something about, government being the most legitimate purveyor of force we know—apart, that is, from religion.

If the current diplomacy fails, the most likely chain of events will be a unilateral Israeli withdrawal, followed by Hizballah provocations, followed in turn by massive Israeli air and commando attacks on Hizballah in Lebanon, both in the south and in the Beirut area as well. That would probably trigger rocket attacks on Israel far deeper into its territory than ever before. If these exchanges get out of hand—or if Israeli planes are lost to Stinger rockets—a sizable Israeli incursion into Lebanon might follow, and with it a war with Syria involving missiles of still greater ranges falling onto Israeli population centers.

—**Adam Garfinkle,** "The Next Middle Eastern War", *American Diplomacy* (Summer 1998).