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978-0-521-88393-1 - The Mind of Jihad
Laurent Murawiec
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The Mind of Jihad

This book examines contemporary jihad as a cult of violence and power. All jihadi groups, whether Shiite or Sunni, Arab or not, are characterized by a similar bloodlust. Laurent Murawiec characterizes this belief structure as identical to that of Europe's medieval millenarians and apocalyptics, arguing that both jihadis and their European cousins shared in a Gnostic ideology: A God-given mission endowed the Elect with supernatural powers and placed them above the common law of mankind. Although the ideology of jihad is essentially Islamic, Murawiec traces the political technologies used by modern jihad to the Bolsheviks. Their doctrines of terror as a system of rule were appropriated by radical Islam through multiple lines of communication. This book brings history, anthropology, and theology to bear to understand the mind of jihad that has declared war on the West and the world.

Laurent Murawiec taught philosophy, was a foreign correspondent, cofounded and managed a consulting company for geopolitical and geoeconomic affairs, and taught at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en sciences sociales. He has served as a consultant for the French Ministry of Defense and as a Senior International Policy Analyst with the RAND Corporation and is currently a senior Fellow of the Hudson Institute. He is the author of *La Guerre au XXI^e siècle* (2000 [in Chinese, 2004]), *L'Esprit des Nations: Cultures et géopolitique* (2002), *La Guerre d'Après* (2003), *Vulnerabilities in the Chinese Way of War* (2004), and *Princes of Darkness: The Saudi Assault Against the West* (2005) as well as an acclaimed French translation of Clausewitz's *On War* (1999).

L'homme n'est ni ange ni bête, et le malheur veut que qui veut faire
l'ange fait la bête.

Blaise Pascal

Though this be madness, yet there is method in't.

William Shakespeare

When people think they possess the secret of a perfect social organization which makes evil impossible, they also think that they can use any means, including violence and deceit, in order to bring that organization into being. Politics then becomes a “secular religion” that operates under the illusion of creating paradise in this world.

John Paul II

There are circumstances in which keeping silence means lying. I have just heard a morbid and senseless cry: Long live death. This barbaric paradox is repugnant to me.

Miguel de Unamuno

If anyone wishes to write against this, I will welcome it. For true and false will in no better way be revealed and uncovered than in resistance to a contradiction, according to the saying: “Iron is sharpened by iron.”

Thomas Aquinas

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