



Journey of the Jihadist: Inside Muslim Militancy

By Fawaz A. Gerges

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Renowned Middle Eastern expert Fawaz A. Gerges takes us into the mind-set of the jihadi—or holy warrior—that lies behind so many headlines yet remains nearly impenetrable to us. Using his firsthand knowledge of the "Arab street," he brings to life the stories of Kamal al-Said Habib, a founder of the Jihadist Movement, as well as dozens of other Islamic fundamentalists, as they struggle with the battle being waged for the soul of Islam.

Journey of the Jihadist puts a human face to events of the last thirty years—from the civil war in Lebanon to the war in Iraq to the conflict in Lebanon today. This important work, now with a new afterword addressing the rise of Hezbollah, will join the ranks of those by Thomas L. Friedman, Fareed Zakaria, and Bernard Lewis.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

In September 2005, Gerges, an academic turned news commentator, published a rare and thoughtful piece of scholarship, *The Far Enemy*, that sought to map the different views within militant Islam's explosive underworld. Gerges argued nimbly, drawing upon numerous primary sources and firsthand interviews. After traveling across the Middle East and meeting with former jihadists, he learned that Islamic militants often disagreed on critical issues (including whether to attack the United States) and that their movement was far more variegated than Washington's official portrayal suggests. Published less than a year later, this new volume reads like a quicky follow-up. It covers similar ground, draws upon similar sources and is considerably more limited in its scholarly aspirations—although not, perhaps, in its commercial ones. Yet the follow-up may be the better book. Gerges has distilled his ideas to their core and done away with some of *The Far Enemy's* repetitions. The book's structure is also improved. It's now built around a series of profiles that give focus to each chapter and shed light on how key personalities within the jihadist vanguard see the world. Gerges even devotes time to his own upbringing in war-torn Lebanon, and although the veers into his personal story are not always relevant, they are fascinating in their own right, adding both intimacy and depth to this valuable book. (May)

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From [Booklist](#)

In America before 9/11, understanding violent Islamic radicalism was a prime concern mostly of Middle Eastern-studies academics. For that we can be grateful, at least when those academics write as unstuffily and accessibly as Gerges. A Greek Orthodox Lebanese Arab, Gerges has won the trust of some very prominent, formerly violent jihadists, whose personalities and words he uses to limn radical Islam with an intimacy other good explanatory works on violent Islam lack. His principal informants are Kamal al-Said Habib, cofounder of the largest jihadist organization, and, through interviews he didn't conduct, Osama bin Laden's former bodyguard, Abu-Jandal. Both have forsaken terrorism, though not violence. They exemplify a split in jihadism over whether to unite Muslim-majority nations under Islamic law or to radically expand Islam by destroying its enemies throughout the world (bin Laden's strategy). The split rather recalls that between Stalinists (advocating socialism in one country first) and Trotskyites (fomenting world revolution) in 1930s Communism, and Gerges insists that politics, not religion, is the root motivation of all organized jihad. The good news is that nonterrorist jihadists vastly outnumber terrorist jihadists; the bad, that Gerges' informants repudiate terrorism, not violence per se. *Ray Olson*

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Review

PRAISE FOR JOURNEY OF THE JIHADIST

"Many of the shortcomings of the war on terrorism can be viewed as stemming from the failure to understand the motives and belief systems of jihadist Muslims . . . Fortunately, there are academics like Fawaz Gerges."?THE VILLAGE VOICE

"This book is essential reading for anyone seeking to understand the world of militant Islam?a subject that has never seemed more relevant."?MARY ANNE WEAVER, author of PAKISTAN: IN THE SHADOW OF JIHAD AND AFGHANISTAN

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Mark Miller:

Playing with family within a park, coming to see the coastal world or hanging out with buddies is thing that usually you have done when you have spare time, subsequently why you don't try matter that really opposite from that. A single activity that make you not sense tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you have been ride on and with addition details. Even you love Journey of the Jihadist: Inside Muslim Militancy, you are able to enjoy both. It is excellent combination right, you still need to miss it? What kind of hang type is it? Oh can happen its mind hangout fellas. What? Still don't get it, oh come on its called reading friends.

Bonnie Thorp:

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Beverly Rosa:

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