

[MUSIC PLAYING]

**RICHARD
NIELSEN:**

Welcome to today's MIT Starr Forum, "Global Jihad, A Brief History." I'm Richard Nielsen, an associate professor of political science. And my primary qualification to host this event is that a few years ago, I also wrote a book about the intellectual leaders of jihadism. And I'm excited to be discussing Glenn Robinson's book today.

For those of you-- let's see. Getting my script out of order. I first need to thank the MIT Center for International Studies, which is hosting this day's event. I'd also like to thank Professor Robinson for being here, and of course, all of you for attending the virtual webinar and for our small but stalwart in-person audience here at MIT, kept small to meet MIT's COVID regulations.

For those of you on the webinar, please look for the Q&A feature at the bottom of your toolbar. This is where you can type in questions, and we'll hopefully get to as many of them as possible at the end of the talk. Also, pay attention to the chat feature, which we'll be using to send out some resource links, bios, upcoming events, other information, et cetera. Might be of interest to you.

For those of you here in the room, you can ask your question from where you are. And then I'll be repeating those questions, hopefully accurately, so that those on the webinar can hear them.

Now, let me introduce you to our speaker and to the talk. Professor Glenn Robinson is a faculty member in the Defense Analysis Department at the Naval Postgraduate School in lovely Monterey, California-- and it is lovely. He is affiliated with the Center for Middle Eastern studies at Berkeley in addition to the book that we're here about today. He has written extensively numerous books and articles about the Middle East and especially about the politics of Palestine.

His CV is very long, and he's also written a number of technical reports, evidence of his interest in policy work, especially for USAID, and for the Department of Defense. Today, we'll be hearing about his new book from Stanford University Press, titled *Global Jihad, A Brief History*. It is, to my reading, the most compact, coherent, and approachable history of global jihadism that I've read. And so it's now at the top of my list of recommendations.

I think it's an excellent moment for us to be reflecting on the history and trajectory of global jihadism. I don't want to spoil too much of Professor Robinson's thunder, but the book starts out with the Taliban enabling global jihadism in Afghanistan 20 years ago. And now, as of last month, the Taliban are back in control of Kabul and the majority of Afghanistan.

And in a sort of *Back to the Future* moment, I think a lot of folks will be trying to get a refresher on the global jihad and jihad as a movement. And I hope that this is the book that they pick up. If you're looking to pick up the book, we do have a promo code that you can use to get 20% off. And I am bad at remembering promo codes. I think I have it here, ROBINSON20.

And without further ado, I'll turn it over to Professor Robinson.

**GLENN E.
ROBINSON:**

Thank you very much, Rich, for the kind introduction. And I'd like to also add my thanks to MIT for the generous invitation to come here and discuss my research and recent book, again from Stanford. So without further ado, I'll get into-- right into it. Next? Next?

So in the book, I make two broad arguments. And the first argument you see on your screen is the-- or on this screen is the major part of the book. And basically, it's a bit of an intellectual history, but an analytical framework of how to understand variations in this global jihad movement that has been around, as Rich said, since the 1980s, with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and everything that transpired since then.

And I argue that there have been four very distinct iterations of global jihad, the first one beginning in the 1980s-- we'll go over that-- and the fourth iteration, or I call it wave in the book, is the current wave, the jihad [ARABIC], the personal jihad wave as well.

The second argument that I make, and I'll visit that in the last few minutes today as well, is ask the question of, where does this movement stack up in the universe of violent political movements? I've done a lot of work in social movement theory over the years. And this is clearly at one far end of those kinds of cases.

So I do some comparative work, and I make a-- I think it's a fairly provocative argument about movements-- what I call movements of rage, drawing on Ken Jowitt's work from the 1990s. And so that-- this, I argue when you see global jihad, you see an iteration or a variant form of a movement of rage. So those are the two main arguments. And let's get right into it.

So at the beginning of the book, of course I have to set the stage. There is an introduction of-- that basically looks at three milestones in the path of global jihad over the 20th century. The first is Islamism, Islamic fundamentalism, political Islam. It goes by different titles, very much a 20th century phenomenon. Most people will date it at its earliest to 1928 when the fellow on the top of your screen, Hassan al-Banna, founded the [ARABIC], the Muslim Brotherhood, in Egypt. And Muslim Brotherhood, of course, has been the predominant Islamist group throughout the Muslim world, either itself or some variant form of the Muslim Brotherhood.

In the 1960s and early '70s, frankly largely as a result of the failures of Islamism to really change politics much, especially in the Middle East, you had a rise of jihadism, and the intellectual architecture being formed in the '60s and '70s for the use of violence typically to overthrow a state.

Most of you will recognize Ayatollah Khomeini or the fellow beneath him, Sayyid Qutb, an Egyptian often known as sort of the godfather of jihadism. Both of them and many others laid the intellectual foundations for jihadism to come-- or in other words, the use of violence. And that's the big distinguisher, I argue, between Islamism and jihadism is violence, that Islamism is predominantly a political or sociopolitical movement. It's not that it's nonviolent, but violence is not central to its program. Contrast that to jihadism, where violence is the cornerstone. It is central to the program of, again, regime change, or whatever the specific goal is.

And then I make the argument that in the beginning of the 1980s, you had a variant form of jihadism originate that we refer to often as global jihad. So that's the introductory part. Next.

So let's just get right into it. The first wave, I argue, is about occupied lands. And again, the specific crisis that begins this thinking about global jihad is the Soviet invasion in 1979 and occupation of Afghanistan. As that-- Afghan jihad is going along. Of course, there are a lot of the sort of intellectual fervor on the jihadi side of things, on the mujahideen side of things. And one of the leading ideologues who is not an Afghan-- in fact, he's a Palestinian raised in Jordan-- there's this picture there, Abdullah Yusuf Azzam, imam of jihad, the preacher of jihad. He becomes in the 1980s a very important ideologue and really the first ideologue laying out the case for global jihad as opposed to local regime change or grab a chunk of territory or what-have-you, local concerns. He lays out a vision for global jihad.

He was a cleric. He was educated at Al-Azhar in Cairo, so he actually-- and this is a bit rare, to have trained Azhari or similar clerics being so prominent in a jihad movement or a jihad group. But he does have that street. He's prolific. He wrote a lot. The two books on the bottom-- the first one actually, *Defense of Muslim Lands*, began as a fatwa, a religious opinion that he issued as a trained cleric, and then he turned it into a book. And then the second one, *Join the Caravan*-- these, originally in Arabic. They've been translated into many, many different languages, widely available online and pretty much any language you want. But certainly in Arabic and English.

All right. What was his vision? Next, please. His vision of global jihad was about territorial occupation and liberation. So in other words, that Afghan model of a foreign invader coming in and occupying a Muslim land. He looked around and said, look, what we're doing in Afghanistan is not just for Afghanistan. It can be a model for a dozen other places around the world, in Central Asia and Mindanao in the Philippines and Kashmir in northern India. But first and foremost, after Afghanistan, Palestine. And again, he, being of Palestinian ethnicity or Palestinian origin-- one can see why that was important to him.

Now, I go through a number of what I refer to as ideological innovations that Azzam made for the-- and you can see here the jihadist permanent revolution, for example, making an argument about tawhid, not just monotheism but really sort of the awesomeness of God and knowing that, gave a philosophical structure to this notion that jihad is not episodic, but is in fact a continuous obligation. The cult of martyrdom that you see in a lot of jihad groups is essentially first laid out by Abdullah Azzam. We can talk more about that in the discussion if you want.

But the thing I want to point to just for the next minute or two is the point number two here, the-- what's in Arabic the [ARABIC], which is translated as the solid base or the solid foundation. This was a very interesting development in Azzam's thought. This was a common phrase amongst jihadis in Afghanistan in particular. During the 1980s, it was widely used.

And it meant a territorial base. What jihadis and mujahideen that were fighting the Soviets, but particularly the foreign jihadis in Afghanistan-- what they meant by that was Afghanistan. Afghanistan, once the Soviets were defeated, would serve as a territorial base for a global jihadi project.

Azzam also thought that for a number of years. But in the last two years of his life, he started to change his mind. And there's an article in the journal that you see in the upper right here, but that goes by the same name, [ARABIC]. In it, he begins to outline a different vision. He begins to outline what I have referred to as a jihadi international, very similar to the Communist International that was begun in the 1910s, 1920s that was supposed to create essentially a warrior class to assist oppressed populations to overcome, overthrow bourgeois repression.

This was Azzam's vision for global jihad. In other words, the creation of an [ARABIC], a solid base, of warriors, of pious, trained warriors who would then travel the world, work with local Muslim communities to liberate their lands that were under some version of foreign occupation. As I said before, Azzam thought that first should be used in Palestine, but the places he mentioned included Central Asia, Kashmir and Mindanao, as I have mentioned.

This wave, this first wave, hardly gets off the ground. I mean, the Afghan model is what it is, this jihadi international model that he wanted to take and export it elsewhere. He was killed, Azzam was killed, in 1989, was assassinated along with a couple of his sons in Peshawar, Pakistan.

And one of his close associates at the time, Osama bin Laden, took that idea of the jihadi international to the Saudis after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August of 1990, and said, don't bring in the Americans or other infidels. Let me do the jihadi international model. I will raise 100,000 mujahideen from the Arab world, and we will drive the Iraqis out of Kuwait. Needless to say, that was not a very enticing invitation to the Saudis, who declined, which was actually a major stepping stone in bin Laden's own radicalization.

So with Azzam's death and with its not being useful in its first test case in the real world-- that is, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait-- this idea, this jihadi international first wave of global jihad, essentially dies off. There obviously are still a few believers-- well, in everything, but including this-- but it then had the wind taken out of its sails. OK. Next, please.

The second wave is, of course, quite familiar to all Americans, particularly on this just past 20th anniversary of the terror attacks of 9/11. The second wave is the bin Laden al-Qaeda wave that has nothing to do with territorial liberation, right? So already, the cause that is to be addressed by global jihad are quite dissimilar.

The specific crisis that bin Laden seized in the middle of the 1990s-- if you're Fawaz Gerges, you date it to '95. I date it to '96 with the publication of a long speech that bin Laden made in the Hindu Kush.

But you're looking at the reversal of gains from the early 1990s by various jihad groups, and frankly even more extreme Islamist groups, that had either come to power or were exercising real influence in the late '80s, early '90s in a way that all of a sudden was waning in the middle of the 1990s.

And in particular, in two of the most important Arab countries, Egypt and Algeria, a low-intensity conflict in Egypt and a hot civil war in Algeria-- from a jihadi perspective, those look quite promising in the early '90s, that they would likely succeed. By the mid '90s, '95, it was very clear that they wouldn't. By '97, they were formally over in both countries.

Bin Laden sees this, and he also sees it at a time of a growing American military footprint in the Gulf following the 1990-91 Gulf War, and he basically puts those two things together.

And before I go to the next, just-- so two of the key early documents for bin Laden-- one is this 1996 declaration of war. This other was this interesting so-called fatwa that was issued by five individuals, lead author Shaykh Muhammad Osama bin Laden-- in 1998. And for those of you that can read Arabic, the [ARABIC] Newspaper, the top line is the announcement of this fatwa that bin Laden-- Ayman al-Zawahiri-- Rifa'i Taha was another Egyptian jihadi-- issued this fatwa to kill Americans everywhere, [ARABIC].

And it goes on to say no distinction between military and civilian. It is obligatory, [ARABIC], individual obligation for Muslims everywhere who are capable to try and kill American, civilian and military. So it was a very draconian call for mass murder. Next.

So what was sort of the value added within jihadi strategic studies, if I can use that phrase, of what bin Laden was arguing? And again, I talk about several. The one I want to underline is the flipping, the 180-degree change in this near enemy/far enemy dichotomy. This dichotomy is not an old tradition or anything. It was invented by this fellow on the top of the screen in his-- in this book here by Muhammad abd-al-Salam Faraj, or "Far-ag" for Egyptian speakers.

And in this book, *Al Farida al Ghaiba, The Missing Duty or The Hidden Obligation*, which was arm jihad, Faraj makes a case for this near enemy and invents this near enemy/far enemy distinction in order to warn his fellow Egyptian jihadis and elsewhere in the Arab world not to go after the far enemy. Do not use your precious resources on this sort of pipe dream going after the far enemy, which was not the United States. It was Israel for Faraj.

And he was saying, look, let's-- we can deal with that later. But right now, we need to focus our attention on the near enemy, which was the Egyptian regime at the time of Anwar Sadat. He was, of course, the leader of the group that ends up assassinating Sadat in 1981.

Bin Laden takes this and says-- reverses 180 degrees. He says, we can't overthrow these near enemy regimes until we drive the Americans out, because every time you think of the old Bobo dolls-- I don't know if they still exist, these sort of plastic clown face, about four feet high or so. And they're plastic, filled with air, with a little weight on the bottom, and you'd punch them, a little punching bag, and they'd wobble, but they'd always right themselves up because of that weight in the bottom.

And bin Laden-- he did not use the Bobo doll analogy. That's my analogy for him. But he essentially says that we can't-- I mean, we can assassinate folks and Sadat and others, take out prime ministers, cabinet ministers. We can do things. We can make the doll wobble a bit. But it always rights itself. And the reason it always rights itself is because the United States and its allies, but primarily the US.

So before we can focus any attention on near enemy regimes, we have to drive the Americans out of the region. And this then is the impetus, if you will, or the rationale for the second wave of global jihad. Again, it was about driving the Americans out of the region in order to weaken local regimes-- apostate regimes, in his view-- and make them liable to overthrow at that point.

It's a vision of global jihad, but it's a very different vision of global jihad and then you had with Mohamed Azzam and the jihadi International.

All right. The third wave, again, is familiar to most everyone, the ISIS wave or the caliphate wave, if you will. It also had a specific crisis or crises. The invasion of Iraq by the Americans in 2003 was the initial crisis. It didn't go very well, frankly, those first few years in Iraq, but they were given a new opening with the Syrian Civil War that broke out in March of 2011. And things went much better from a-- the name changed over time. I'll just refer to the ISIS wave.

The specific crises of essentially heretical regimes in Baghdad and Damascus that were run by what they viewed as Shia [ARABIC], or these Shia rejectionist regimes, underlying the broader crisis, in the same way that for bin Laden, that-- you see the defeat of these jihadi movements, what-have-you. The broader crisis was the durability of these apostate regimes. They remained in power when they shouldn't, in his mind.

The third wave, the caliphate wave-- the rationale was completely different. Again, it wasn't about liberating territory. It wasn't about driving the Americans out of the region. Instead, it was about apostasy itself. Apostasy itself. And that is sinful behavior. This is the state building wave of global jihad, not a Westphalian state-- I'll get into that in just a moment-- but a pre-Westphalian state to allow Muslims to lead an absolutely pious and righteous life that-- devoid of these temptations that lead Muslims to go astray, or in other religious traditions similar sorts of things.

This is by far the biggest wave of the four that I talk about in the book, just in terms of people and material and budgets-- all of that. This is a much larger. So there are a lot more people that one could point to. There are a lot more documents that one could point to.

One of the documents that I rely on was published-- it was before ISIS, per se, existed. *Butdarat al-Tawahhush, The Management, or administration, of Savagery*. And has-- that's been translated, incidentally, into English as well. Which is a blueprint for the kind of violence that we saw in-- under ISIS in Iraq and Syria in later years. And it lays out a rationale for the sort of gory performative violence that is very important in taking territory, making territory go from regime control to gray area. And it was important to hold that territory before you have built the proper institutions of power and statehood.

So anyway, there are a lot of documents that I rely on, some of which are, again, available in-- all of which are available in Arabic, some of which are available in English.

So the ideological innovations-- again, much bigger movement. Had a much more successful movement than the first two. And I just want to underline the differences here-- not about liberating occupied territory, not about driving the Americans out of the region, but about building a pre-Westphalian state to address the issue of apostasy, of temptation, of sinful behavior. So build a pious state.

I don't want to go down this rabbit hole too far, but it's kind of akin to the city of man, city of God distinction in early Christian thought, that the purpose of the city of man was to essentially make the city of God possible so that people could live a pious, Christian life that get protected by the city of man, by temporal and secular-- essentially, secular authority. The ISIS vision was somewhat similar to that to some degree.

But anyway, so a lot of different ideological innovations. I talk about *The Management of Savagery* and sort of the use of violence that came out of this. A period 2003 to 2005, the first two years after the American invasion of Iraq, led to just a plethora and explosion of the most radical forms of jihadi thought that we've ever seen. A lot of the mainstay documents in global jihad in particular come from that two-year period, a very productive period, I suppose one could say.

The apocalyptic ideology-- there are a couple of-- my colleagues at other universities have written books on the apocalyptic nature of the ISIS ideology. I won't repeat that here. The storytelling, as opposed to theology-- one of the things that's interesting to me, at least-- and Rich, you might have some really good things to say about this-- is how ISIS basically didn't try to convince senior clerics around the Muslim world of the justice and righteousness of its cause. Its messaging was not about deep, theological argumentation. It's much more about storytelling as a means to recruit and indoctrinate their recruits into their program.

Extreme sectarianism, which you did not see in the first two waves-- I mean-- by sectarian and sectarianism, I mean anti-Shia rhetoric. It is it's just over the top in the ISIS wave. Zarqawi himself engaged in-- just again, very bitter, anti-Shia writing.

And then finally, it's something I spend some time on in the book, is looking at what I call jihadi cool. And again, this is marketing to young men as opposed to making theological arguments to clerics, to high-ranking clerics, is to provide them a life that is meaningful, that's exciting, that is cool. And this was the heart of their messaging that didn't appeal to the vast majority of Muslims around the world, but it did appeal to a slice of young men, which was really who they were trying to target in their recruiting.

And I compare this to the old 19th century anarchist notion of the propaganda of the deed, or what Nike would say today, just do it, right? Let your actions speak for themselves. [CLEARs THROAT] Excuse me. So go out and do things, and don't worry about convincing people with long tracts of ideological argumentation, so this emphasis on jihadi cool propaganda of the deed. All right.

So the fourth wave is the-- what I call the jihad [ARABIC] wave. I'm just stealing the term from the fellow you see in the upper right, Abu Musab al-Suri, a Syrian from the Aleppo area who was active in the early '80s, in the first attempt to overthrow the Ba'athist Assad regime in Damascus that failed ultimately in 1982.

He also then starts asking the question, after the overthrow of the Taliban in late 2001, which was a catastrophe for al-Suri. Now, al-Suri is oftentimes called an al-Qaeda ideologue. He is really much more of an independent, free agent, very much a global jihadi, very Machiavellian, sort of very cold and capable of self-criticism. He's a very interesting figure, which is why a lot of Western academics kind of-- not a lot, but a few, focus on him, because he's so interesting by comparison to the others. Not in a humanitarian, good way, but again intellectually quite interesting.

He wants to put out a strategy to allow jihadis to live to fight another day, to allow global jihad to survive in very trying times. He lays out-- he was very critical of Osama bin Laden. He was very critical of the 9/11 attacks that brought the American military into-- and coalition forces into Afghanistan.

And he basically thought the movement was close to being rolled up entirely. So how do we create a strategy-- how do we global jihadists create a strategy that will allow for survival now? In the future, we can get territory. We can get back to where we had been. But it's about survival now.

And so that was his goal, is to write out this strategy for survival. Again, he wrote a lot. Like Azzam, he was a very prolific writer-- author. The book you see in the lower right-hand corner is his last major book. It's a 1,600-page book in Arabic that you can find online. A little bit has been translated into English, *Da'wat al-Muqawamah al-Islamiyyah al-'Alamiyyah, The Call for Global Islamic Resistance*. And this is where he lays out that strategy.

But next, what is that strategy? It is-- in fact, the phrase that he uses is [ARABIC], [ARABIC]. So not an organization. He saw too many organizations. So he wanted a system, [ARABIC], not an organization. Why? Because he basically did a historical review beginning in the early 1960s of all these various jihadi movements across particularly the Middle East, but outside as well.

And just to look at-- all of them have been rolled up eventually. It doesn't take much to roll up a jihad group, a hierarchical organization. You capture one or two guys. The state security forces torture them. They get the other names. They get them, torture them, get other names. And pretty soon, the group is finished.

So how to think about a system that doesn't involve organizations, and most importantly, how to use 21st century technology? And he has not been heard from. Abu Musab al-Suri has not been heard from since 2005. There's various theories about him. But I would also add that even the destruction of the ISIS caliphate in 2017, the territorial state of ISIS, added to this problem of, how do we survive? We don't control any territory. We have the Americans, the Europeans, the local regimes-- they're all coming after us. How do we survive under those circumstances?

So he lays out this system of network [ARABIC], resistance, as he would call it. And in the book I really focus on three parts of the system that he lays out, the first the name jihad [ARABIC], which literally means personal jihad - it's common to the English language as leaderless jihad. So this is a network-- it's not a hierarchy. It's a network of individuals and small clusters of people, small groups, individuals-- what we often refer to as lone wolves and sometimes small groups.

And it's that network of like-minded individuals where one or another or another or another can undertake an attack, use media to do so. He emphasizes that. If you don't say this is under the banner of global jihad, it's kind of just a criminal act. And so you want to make full use of the media as part of this.

The second thing I look at is what I call a Wiki narrative. A Wiki narrative is a narrative that all-- it basically is put together by not just hundreds, but I mean thousands, of individuals of like-minded, committed-- at least ideologically committed-- jihadis that continuously evolve the ideology. I mean, not radically, but massage it constantly.

If there's a new attack-- for example, the one some months ago in Vienna, bring that into the narrative. So it's always changing. It's a communal effort, a group effort to kind of tell the story of global jihad and embed recent events into that story as a way to motivate others, right? And so it's not just recruitment, but it's motivation. It's telling the story that they want to tell and trying to recruit people to undertake action.

And again, the third point here is violence and gore. Abu Musab al-Suri was very-- he was attached to the GIA in Algeria in the 1990s for a number of years. They ultimately had a falling out. But the kind of grotesque violence, this gory, performative violence that you saw in Algeria in the 1990s, was basically done by ISIS as well. I mean, it's a very-- the type of violence that was done by both groups is very, very similar. And is-- really has al-Suri's-- his hallmark.

All right. So the phrase that I think is really important to understanding the fourth wave, this current wave, of survival is this last bullet point here, stochastic violence or stochastic terror. It's almost always terrorism, because it's almost always directed at uninvolved civilians or noncombatants.

Stochastic is-- it refers to-- it's a term of probability. And what this means is inspired violence, not violence that is directed, logistically planned, paid for, et cetera, by some group, whether it's al-Qaeda or ISIS or somebody else, but it's inspired. They put out a call. They let it be known that they want people to undertake acts of violence, make suggestions about what type of violence would be useful-- getting in a car or truck, for example, was one of ISIS's suggestion. But they don't have any connection to the person who actually radicalizes.

And so the stochastic part of it means the probability-- when a call goes out, the probability of violence increases, but you just can't know where it's going to come from. Because again, there are no ties to track through intelligence work or police work between an individual or a small cell and the group. These are autonomous acts of violence by inspired individuals.

Most acts of jihadi violence over the last seven years have been stochastic. They've been inspired, but not directed, by any particular group-- again, ISIS or al-Qaeda or others.

And so a couple of pictures-- again, we're in Boston. You'll recognize the picture of the Boston Marathon twin bombings. As far as we know, that was a stochastic act of terror by these two brothers. They were not being directed by anybody or paid for anything. They were inspired-- particularly, the one brother was inspired to do this.

And the Pulse nightclub bombing in Orlando, Florida-- Omar Mateen there. Again, a fellow that had problems with his own latent homosexuality, it appears, but wasn't directed. He called 9-1-1 during the attacks to claim this attack for ISIS. ISIS had no idea that he existed.

And ISIS typically would refer to-- would let people know that they didn't know this was coming. They don't know that this attack was about to happen. They're not familiar with this individual by referring to them as a soldier of the caliphate. That was their way of letting people know that this was a stochastic act of terror or violence that was inspired by ISIS or some other group but without any kind of logistical connections.

And I'll get to it in just a moment, but one of the things that's interesting-- the stochastic violence is very much a 21st century form of violence. It relies on the internet, social media, and modern information technologies. It's really impossible without that, which is why it has been used by other groups.

White nationalists or white supremacist groups also rely on stochastic violence. In fact, it was white supremacists in the 1990s associated with the KKK that came up with this idea. The first people that I am aware of that thought through, how does these-- how does the internet in particular, this-- these new information technologies-- how can that help our cause? And they're the ones that were the first to write about that.

All right. Next slide. All right. So that's the four waves. Three are mostly over, ISIS with the defeat of its territorial state in 2017. There's still a group out there, so it's not like they're unimportant, but the thing that's made them different, that set them apart, that territorial state, is no longer with us. But the fourth wave is, and I think it will be with us for quite some time. It strikes me as a very durable form of violence going forward.

But just in the last few minutes, I'd like to sort of open up the aperture and say, well, OK, so this is a nice story, interesting story, about four distinct waves of global jihad, very different goals, quite distinct ideologies in many ways. Where does that fit in the larger universe?

And there's a large literature on political violence out there on various movements. And I make the point that most political movements or violence associated with political movements over the last century come from one of three sources. And they're all enlightenment-based sources. You'll see fascism and say, what is he talking about? Give me a chance.

So Leninist groups, or communists, if you will, but more accurately referred to as Leninist groups, have undertaken significant violence over the last century-plus under the banner of progress, right? This was the scientific march of history as Marx and Lenin and others would talk about.

So this was-- Leninism was about bringing progress to a society, overthrowing feudal overlords, capitalists, et cetera, and the forward march of human progress. National Liberation, primarily in the aftermath of the Second World War-- a lot of violence there. This was in the name of liberty, right, the name of freedom, of independence-- again, enlightenment-based ideals.

And even fascism in the sense that fascists believed in modernization, which is why the ideology was quite popular in-- not just in the Middle East, but elsewhere for newly independent states, again, following the Second World War. Some fascist movement existed pretty much everywhere because it was about orderly modernization, right? In Mussolini's famous words, to make the trains run on time, right? That's what they were about. They were about a very conservative version of the enlightenment-- you know, law and order and all of that. But it was still about material progress, moving forward.

But you have this small group of-- or small category of groups that have undertaken political violence that don't fit any of those, don't fit our usual explanations. And this is-- next slide, please. This is what I refer to-- again, drawing on the work of Ken Jowitt in the 1990s-- of movements of rage.

And I take Jowitt's idea, and I play with it and I hopefully make it a more useful concept in today's world. Basically, two characteristics that distinguish movements of rage from other violent political movements-- again, if you look at social movement theory, we're talking about the far end, the most violent end of social movements. And the two characteristics are-- one is nihilistic violence, nihilism in the political sense, not the philosophical sense, right? If you don't make that distinction, people say, well, nihilism means nothing, right? It's meaningless violence.

This is not meaningless violence. It has a meaning. It has a purpose. When you call for the murder of all Americans, wherever they are in the world, that's not meaningless. But it is nihilistic in the political sense, and again going back to the Russian anarchists of the second half of the 19th century, and even the early part of the 20th century, they use the term nihilism in a political sense to mean system-destroying violence, root and branch violence, like over-the-top violence.

This is not directed, sort of pinprick or strategic surgical strikes, that sort of thing. This is violence to wipe out an entire system, if you will. So groups that call for nihilistic violence and apocalyptic, antienlightenment ideologies-- again, the apocalyptic nature that we see not just in religious groups, where the term the phrase comes from, but in secular groups as well, in a number of secular groups that are promising a sort of a nirvana mostly associated with Maoist groups-- it kind of goes sideways-- promising an agrarian nirvana in this coming age that's right around the corner.

In this apocalyptic type ideology, you will always see an element of cultural contamination, and typically, cultural contamination by elites people that-- too westernized, in many cases.

So I coined this term gnosicide. It's a mixture of Greek and Latin, Greek "gnosis," knowledge, "cide" from the Latin, meaning of "the killing of," the killing of knowledge, or the killing or violent marginalization of those with knowledge. And movements of rage will typically have this-- at least an element of gnosicide.

All right. Next, please. So other examples of movements of rage-- the premier example is the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia in the second half of the 1970s, before the Vietnamese defeated them in war. What was one of the very first things the Khmer Rouge did when they came to power was to empty Phnom Penh, the capital city. And they would target people that wore glasses, that wore ties, that spoke a foreign language, that had any attribute that suggested cultural contamination away from this pure, mythological Khmer society that the Khmer Rouge were promising-- again, under the banner of Maoism. This is initially a Maoist movement. But it ends up being much more of a movement of rage than it does a Maoist movement.

10 years earlier, you had a similar kind of thing in the Red Guards in China. And before I get a question, I'll just say it right up front-- yes, Mao used the Red Guards. He took advantage of them. He had basically had fallen out of favor given some earlier disastrous policies. And he rode the Red Guard's tail, if you will, to come back into power as a preeminent figure of authority in communist China.

But the Red Guards began as an autonomous movement. And it directed its attacks at educated elites, principals, teachers, professors-- those sorts of people in high schools and colleges. And it led to this disastrous policy of up to the countryside, or back to the countryside, that led to the deaths of millions of Chinese, ultimately, as a result of these Red Guards. Universities were closed. This was during-- this is responsible for the Cultural Revolution, so universities were closed from 1966 to 1972 in China. Again, another good example of gnosicide.

I talk about others, Boko Haram in Nigeria before they sort of glommed on to global jihad, very much antieducation, antielitism, and over-the-top violence. interestingly, I think I discussed the Brownshirts in Germany in the 1920s up to 1934. These were the protectors of Nazi rallies. These were the thugs of the Nazis that would beat up protesters and that sort of thing. They were ultimately gotten rid of by Hitler in 1934. They really weren't needed anymore.

But these were semiliterate, semirural, white men that had a very strong sense of cultural contamination by-- the phrase that often got used was cosmopolitan elites-- typically Jews, obviously, as it turned out. But an early form in an advanced industrial economy of a movement of rage. So this is not limited to just third world examples.

And also elements of white nationalism today, I think, are very clearly movements of rage, have these attributes that we see in other movements of rage.

So next slide. So global jihad is a variant form, in my analysis, of movement of rage. Why? Because all the examples I just gave you, and all the examples that we have, are nationally based. They're in one country, and that's what they're focused on. Global jihad, of course, focuses on a systemic, global system that they want to attack for various reasons.

There's also a strong element of cultural contamination in-- not everyone's, right? I don't want to say everybody writes this, but a lot of jihadi ideologues are-- even starting with Sayyid Qutb, the architect of local jihad and global jihad, had a very strong cultural contamination. I mean, you read his notes from his two-year stay in America in the late '40s, early '50s, and there's just a lot of cultural contamination kind of argument going on.

All right. So I think that wraps up the talk. I want to thank you so much for your time and attention. And again, I want to thank Rich in particular for his hospitality. And I look forward to the discussion. Thank you all very much.

[APPLAUSE]

**RICHARD
NIELSEN:**

Thank you very much for that enlightening talk. And I thought a very good summary of the book. I am supposed to sit, so I will do that. I'm excited to kick off our discussion of this book, but it won't be just me discussing. That's why I've dragged a laptop as well as my notes up here so that I can try to coordinate questions that I have, questions that you have here in the room, and then questions that are coming through via the chat function.

I am looking at those, and I will be curating them. I forgot to turn on my microphone. That has probably been very frustrating to people. OK, it was working. Now, maybe it will work even better. I will also be curating and trying to get to as many questions in the chat as possible.

But I will indulge myself at the beginning to ask a few of the things that came to mind for me after reading this book. And I will forebear from the more nit-picky questions, like why did you leave out my favorite jihadis?

**GLENN E.
ROBINSON:**

[LAUGHS]

**RICHARD
NIELSEN:**

We can talk about that after the group discussion. A first question-- how should we think about religious authority in each of these four waves? So religious authority is something that's of great interest to me. It seems from your narrative that it's been in decline over each of these four waves, that the first wave was led by someone who had Azhari training.

The second wave-- bin Laden cared, to some extent, to try to fake credentials and then got booed for it. And then in the third and fourth waves, that they've engaged perhaps less with religious authority, although ISIS did certainly put people up as clerics an issue a very large number of fatwas to its followers that came in books. But those weren't, as you point out, advertising materials. They were not advertising with fatwas in the way that Abdullah Azzam was advertising with fatwas.

Is that characterization accurate? What does it mean for the future of jihadism? Is this that there's been a secular decline in reliance on religious authority that can't be reversed, because religious authorities are now seen as tainted in the sort of gnosicide concept that you've introduced? How do you see that?

**GLENN E.
ROBINSON:**

Great question, and I think it's fairly put. And that is in the 1980s, when Abdullah Azzam was introducing us to the jihadi international, he not only was a Azhari cleric himself, but he-- at least he claims to have-- I've not actually seen the physical evidence for this-- but he claims to have had the support and an actual introduction to his fatwa written by-- that became this book-- written by Sheikh bin Baz, who was the mufti of Saudi Arabia at the time-- again, one of the highest ranking clerics in the world.

So Azzam was considerate of traditional religious authority. And I think it's also fair to characterize bin Laden as kind of wanting to be deferential, but I mean, he wrote a couple of long and not very nice letters to bin Baz criticizing him for all these problems that are happening from the Saudi royal family on his watch, as the mufti.

But he also-- I mean, he did try to go out of his way to some degree-- I don't want to overstate this-- to try and be deferential a bit to traditional Islamic learning, traditional clerics, at least up to a point.

But you're right. In the last two waves, the attempt to even bring in traditional religious authority has really not even been attempted in any serious way. And I think that does suggest that-- I mean, there's a gulf between most jihadi ideologues and the traditional, particularly higher ranking [ARABIC]-- clergy-- that they don't like each other very much, and they don't think each other is particularly legitimate, as a broad, general statement.

And so as time has moved on, there has been less and less attention by global jihadis to the sort of sentiments and traditions of traditional religious authority. I think that's exactly right.

**RICHARD
NIELSEN:**

Great. A different tack, although maybe it relates here-- so one aspect of your waves is that two of the waves are simultaneous. And I'm curious how you think the fourth wave proceeds without the simultaneous third wave, if ISIS is, indeed, going to kind of recede into the rear view mirror. So you predicted violence for a long time, because this is a hard thing to root out. On the other hand, folks like Omar Mateen definitely saw value in proclaiming their attacks for ISIS. And I wondered if, without an organization to inspire and give blessing to attacks, if maybe just the base rate of this stochastic process is going to be quite a bit lower. How do you see that?

**GLENN E.
ROBINSON:**

Yeah, again, it's a great issue. The first thing is the words that you choose to put in a book-- it would be more proper to use the term iteration, four iterations of global jihad. But that doesn't sound very nice, right? And so using the term "waves" is really not as accurate, but I think it's more evocative. And of course, the third and fourth waves begin at pretty much the same time, in the early 2000s. So, yeah, we shouldn't think of this as nicely timed, spread out waves, but four distinct iterations.

The third and fourth wave, I think, are really quite separate from each other, and in part because they have very different causes that launch them. The third wave gets very much launched by the invasion of Iraq in 2003 and then gets a second wind with the civil war in Syria, and it has a different set of questions that it wants to address, that it has concerns about.

And the fourth wave, coming out of Afghanistan, where it all started, really has nothing to do with state building, right? This is just about survival. And some people misinterpret al-Suri to think that his vision of sort of networked, violent jihad is forever. And it's not. He was very clear-- this is-- desperate times, desperate measures. Eventually, when the strategic calculation is different and more conducive to jihadis, they can get territory again, and the territorial part of it will be important. This is just-- this is a bridge to get from point A to point B, the stochastic wave.

Now, one other point on the stochastic wave, I guess to your last point, personally, I think al-Suri overstates the value of stochastic violence. He believed that that Wiki narrative-- and he just uses the word [ARABIC], I mean just culture. But what he's really talking about is a narrative, a community narrative. He believed that that community narrative of patching together, stitching in various acts of violence and other things into a grand narrative and the use of the media to do it, would make the sum of the parts greater, or the end greater than some of the parts, I should say, that these-- and he recognized that we're mostly talking about kind of pinprick attacks. You might kill a few people. This is not an existential threat. It's not even a major strategic threat. But if you can stitch them together so it looks to the outside observer as kind of a monumental movement as opposed to a series of pinpricks, that will then have greater overall impact.

I don't think it's worked out very well, at the end of the day. So I think he probably overstated that value. But certainly that's what he's writing about.

RICHARD NIELSEN: All right. People are antsy in the chat, but I have to indulge in one more question, because you provocatively asked in the conclusion, which didn't come up as much in the talk-- who won? And you seem to side with the folks who think that the threat of Islamist terrorism is perhaps overhyped. Now, I don't want to put words in your mouth, so I'm going to ask you if that is actually your position. But you cite favorably the comparison of bathtub deaths with jihadist terrorism deaths over the last decade.

And also, though, you note that bin Laden, had he had more weaponry, would have been interested in killing more people. So on which side of this do you fall? And what would you say, or what are you telling, US policymakers who are considering the priority that they should give to jihadist terrorism going forward?

GLENN E. ROBINSON: Yeah, well, of course, the policy today is great power competition, so it's like jihadism has faded entirely and very quickly.

RICHARD NIELSEN: [INAUDIBLE].

GLENN E. ROBINSON: Yeah. The important thing for me is to right-size the threat, that it's-- you don't want to dismiss it, right? This is something that you need to pay attention to. But you don't want to overly dramatize it, either. You don't want to take it out of proportion. I think we have had, over the last 20 years, a tendency to take it out of proportion as to what-- I mean, it's an actual threat, but at what level? How do we compare it to other conflicts, other problems, other threats in the world. I think it has tended to be overhyped.

But going back to your point, when you look at threats, you look at capabilities and intentions, right? You can have very powerful military actors in the UK and France and Japan and elsewhere-- Japan, I guess, technically doesn't have a military, but it's still a powerful military actor. They're very friendly, so there's great capability, but there's no intent to do damage.

The jihadis are on the other side. The global jihadis that I talked about are on the other side of the spectrum, where they have malicious intent. They just don't have many capabilities to implement them. But that malicious intent is enough that it is and should be a policy issue that is kept track of, that is right sized, but not either dismissed out of hand or overblown.

RICHARD Great. I'd like to open it up for questions here in the room. Please-- and introduce yourself.

NIELSEN:

AUDIENCE: Sure, hi. My name is Pouya. I teach Middle East history here at MIT. I very much enjoyed your talk, very much. And seeing all these images of-- I feel like I've grown up with some of these.

GLENN E. [LAUGHS]

ROBINSON:

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE] characters on TV for this long now. You know, I was happy to hear-- you brought up Fawaz Gerges. And there's-- the categorizations are very useful to me. I appreciated the categorizations. I did kind of feel like there was a link between, let's say, bin Laden and the 9/11 and the two-pronged strategy that he may have had.

And ultimately, what ended up happening with the territorial caliphate. An idea-- and this is where I want to know if I'm actually correct here. I feel like the idea was either to attack the United States and the United States would withdraw-- like, and there's precedent for this, with the bombing of the US Marine Corps and embassies in Lebanon, which prompted the withdrawals, or we come full steam ahead into the region, and through a war-- that ended up actually happening with Afghanistan and Iraq-- these borders will-- more and more people will be recruited to the polarization and through these wars, and then the borders would fall.

So if that assessment is correct, and this is where I would love to see if I'm actually on point here, then there is a continuity between bin Laden and ISIS, that even though bin Laden's successor ended up disavowing.

RICHARD If I could just summarize quickly, since we have folks on the call here who can't hear it. Very quickly, the question is, the link-- is there a link between bin Laden's ideas about attacking the West and the subsequent territorial caliphate that ISIS was interested in? The sum of ideas that bin Laden introduced or thought about could have involved breaking down international borders and eventually resulting in something like a caliphate. Is that a fair-

AUDIENCE: That was very succinct.

RICHARD Is that a fair summary, Pouya?

NIELSEN:

AUDIENCE: I loved it.

RICHARD All right.

NIELSEN:

GLENN E. [LAUGHS] And thank you for the question, excellent question. And there are these two arguments out there over 9/11, that one was bin Laden was just trying to-- this was driving the Americans out, so they would have nothing to do with the Middle East. The embassy and marine barracks bombings in the early '80s pointed to, also Black Hawk Down in Somalia-- so bin Laden seemed sincere that if you attack the Americans hard enough, they'll, as they say, cut and run.

Other people say, ah, but bin Laden was a sly guy, and the whole idea was to entice the Americans in. And then once the Americans are in, they're in a quagmire, and then we just get them from all sides. That second argument is-- it's very appealing at some level. I have seen no evidence for it. And I've either read or listen to pretty much everything that bin Laden ever came out with. And he, in my reading of it, seemed genuinely surprised that the Americans attacked Iraq. He wasn't disappointed in that. I mean, it was the thing to take advantage of it.

But this notion that he was deliberately trying to entice the Americans into the region so we can get them stuck in a quagmire-- I just don't see evidence for that. I do see evidence for him truly believing that if you hit the Americans, you know, they'll just back off. This is not something that they're going to go to the mat on. So that's where I-- on that question, that's the way I would answer it.

The other thing, just very quickly-- they tried once to sort of claim they did, but bin Laden and al-Qaeda never declared a caliphate. And when ISIS did-- bin Laden, of course, was killed in 2011, and in 2014, the caliphate is declared. Ayman Zawahiri, of course, is the head of al-Qaeda. He strongly criticized ISIS for doing this. And it wasn't just Ayman Zawahiri. Others did as well.

And the logic was, you can't do that, we can't do that, until we have territory that we can defend, because what's going to happen is you're just inviting the whole Western world to come in and roll over you. So until you have a defensible, defensible space, territory, you shouldn't be going around declaring a caliphate.

I talk about the declaration of the caliphate as part of the jihadi cool argument. Nobody else did this, right? It was only ISIS that did this. And this, again, for 19, 20-year-old male looking for meaning and excitement in his life-- that's a really-- I mean, my goodness, to do that took something, right? It was super cool.

So a last point is, these are all forms of global jihad. They all come under the umbrella of global jihad, because they all see a problem that is systemic to the international system that needs to be addressed under the banner of Islam and under the banner of jihad in particular.

Beyond that, there's-- I think there's more that separates ISIS and its views, its ideology, than what we saw with bin Laden. It was quite different in my view. Thank you for the question.

**RICHARD
NIELSEN:**

I'm going to take a question now from the folks listening on the webinar-- not least to convince them that the other-- we'll get to the other list of questions that's here. I'm going to try to put together a couple of questions that have been asked about the motivations of the latest wave of the jihadist movement that you identify and about its motivations. So from [? Jan ?] [? Guernica, ?] we get, "Are the latest-- are the motivations of this latest wave primarily religious, socioeconomic, gratuitous, all of the above? And a tag on question of, what percentage of Muslims worldwide might support jihadism for each of those polls?"

I'm not sure if that last question is answerable, but I'm curious of your thoughts as well. And a couple of the other questions here. Note that on one hand, you highlight the motivation of rage, frustration against intellectuals or against the elites, but on the other hand, there's this jihadi cool and participating in something meaningful and even a religious angle to that of participating in bringing about the Second Coming of the Mahdi. And perhaps that's a motivator as well. What do you see as the motivators for this kind of fourth-most personal wave?

GLENN E. ROBINSON:

Yeah, and again, thank you for the questions. And I want to be clear, if I haven't already, the folks I'm talking about here represent a really tiny slice of the Muslim population. There's about 1.7, 1.8 billion Muslims in the world today. Global jihadis would be a would be a remarkably small slice of that.

And we do actually have some polling we can look to to substantiate that claim, and both Jordan and Morocco immediately come to mind, where after, for example, positive feelings about either Osama bin Laden or al-Qaeda, but mostly Osama bin Laden, in Jordan, for example, typically ran over 50% until the hotel bombings, until Zarqawi's group, which evolved into ISIS, blew up several hotels, killed a lot of Arabs-- mostly Muslims.

And overnight, the-- this favorability rating of Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda and the Zarqawi and Iraq, all of that-- different surveys asked it differently-- but dropped to single digits. And as far as I know, has stayed there ever since. And the same thing happened in Morocco after the Casablanca bombings, that sort of the general revolution-- you know, the Islamist revolution, what-have-you, sounded good when it was happening over there. But when people you knew got blown up, the favorability rating dropped precipitously and stayed down.

So the people I'm talking about are just-- again, are a very, very small-- important, I think, in a certain way-- but represent a small portion of the general Muslim population.

Now, in terms of motivation, I'm not convinced that we can make sort of a one size fits all, that everybody is motivated by this. I mean, we've mentioned Omar Mateen and the Pulse nightclub bombing in Orlando. There's a fair amount of evidence to suggest that his-- he just couldn't handle his latent homosexuality, and that probably fed into this. And his radicalization literally happened in the last five or six months of his life, according to his wife and some other people, coworkers.

If you look at the San Bernardino bombings, they didn't-- an American-born Muslim man and a Pakistani bride, raised in Saudi Arabia, if I recall-- they didn't leave a message behind. It was almost certainly stochastic terror. I think most people would categorize that. But they didn't leave that message behind, so we don't have a direct motivation.

How many are motivated by a sense that, indeed, America is at war with Islam and is killing Muslims and a lot of different Muslim countries over the last 20 years, and so it's payback time? There have been a number of people that have made those kinds of claims before or after they have undertaken acts of violence, again, under the banner of global jihad.

So I think there's not an endless list of motivations, but at least a handful that we see with some regularity.

RICHARD NIELSEN:

From the room? Please.

AUDIENCE:

Thank you so much for your time. I'm Pete Atkinson, military fellow with the Security Studies Program. One thing that I'm looking for, and kind of your thoughts-- any predictions on the fifth wave or an amalgamation or some sort of evolution in some of the previous waves? So it seems like we've been pretty successful, overall, from the US perspective, of countering some of these waves or assassination [INAUDIBLE] things. But what would you predict is something might take root in the fifth wave or an evolution thereof? It might take more success from a policymaker perspective. As you mentioned, the shift to strategic competition versus violent extremist or global jihadi movements-- any thoughts on that? Or leaning towards [INAUDIBLE] from your previous analysis and research?

GLENN E. ROBINSON:

Pete, thanks for your question. I get asked that question a lot about a fifth wave. And I guess I'm just-- I'm not a creative enough thinker to come up with a good answer, because I think the fourth wave is going to be with us for a long time. You still have other, more traditional forms-- I mean, al-Qaeda-- there's not much left to it, but there's something there. ISIS remains the largest jihadi group in the world, and so therefore quite lethal, but not-- does not have a territorial state anymore and has lost some wind from its sails because of its defeats as a result.

This fourth wave of inspired violence, I think, is-- first of all, there are a lot of acts of-- potential acts of violence that get stopped ahead of time, that most Americans never hear about. So it's not like we're helpless to try and contain and to control or stop, in this case, global jihadi violence by inspired individuals. So there has been a history of some success in that regard. But it's such a durable form, because it is really impossible to stamp out entirely.

It is something that at the end-- it's kind of like-- many Israelis, with acts of violence that happen there-- they essentially learn to live with it at some level. If it gets out of hand, that's a different measure. And my not very satisfying answer is as long as it's an occasional pinprick, then you basically learn to live with it.

You Do what you can, good police work, good intelligence sharing, all of that. Europeans have become much better in recent years of intelligence sharing in a way that they just were not some years ago. Germans wouldn't give intelligence to the French, and they wouldn't listen to the Belgians, et cetera. So just sort of good police work, good intelligence sharing, will, I think, contain the threat at pretty low levels that you learn to live with.

Again, not a very satisfying answer, but I don't see-- I think there's some things that are on the table now that you can't unring the bell. So the ISIS declaration of the caliphate is one of those things. I think that's on the table now kind of across the Muslim world. It is a latent issue that has now come to the forefront in a way that you really haven't seen since Turkey abolished the caliphate in 1924, if I recall the date.

It gets talked about a lot. It gets talked about by radicals and it gets talked about in the mainstream now as well. So that is sort of any jihad group's position on the Declaration of the caliphate. And do you recognize ISIS, or whatever? I think that issue-- that's a bell that can't be unrung, and we're just going to be-- have to learn to live with that for many years.

RICHARD NIELSEN:

One thought on that issue I have is that it seems like it'll create two countervailing incentives, although maybe you disagree. One is that groups will have an incentive to out-compete to be the ones to declare a caliphate, and now the bell has been rung, as you say, there's a real prestige in being the group that has claimed a caliphate and controls territory. Also, controlling territory is very hard, and definitely puts a place for the United States military to drop heavy armaments.

GLENN E. ROBINSON:

Yeah, exactly. And just one other point on that-- the jihadi cool thing, I think, is another bell that can't be unrung. Most jihad groups, prior to ISIS-- how to put this? I mean, they took their messaging seriously, that they were trying to do something righteous. Not very many people would view it that way, but they certainly did. ISIS kind of, again, put that aside to some degree in an attempt to recruit people. And they were far more successful at recruitment than anybody else ever has been. And I think that kind of jihadi cool has a lot to do with its success in recruiting.

So unfortunately, I think that's another bell that can't be unrung, and you're going to probably see more of that in the future, and it won't just dissipate and go away.

**RICHARD
NIELSEN:** A question coming from online. So this question references a book by Darryl Li that you may be familiar with. In that book, Li argues that there are numerous types of jihad-- fighting occupation, fighting a despotic leader, fighting US imperialism, and that the War on Terror narrative has tended to just conflate these all into a single movement. This question, by the way, is coming from Nasir Almasri who I know is a PhD student of ours here at MIT.

To what extent-- and I'm going to twist Nasir's question just a little bit here. But to what extent do you see these as a single movement or as truly different movements doing different things? I know you make a distinction between global and local jihad that might mirror some of what Li is talking about, but he might he might disagree with some of that. And to what extent does trying to create these master narratives, a simple or simpler history than perhaps kind of the nuance of these kind of intertwined movements instead of a single movement-- does that fuel potentially animosity towards Muslims generally in the way that the War on Terror narrative has sometimes been accused of doing so?

**GLENN E.
ROBINSON:** Nasir, thank you for the question, and I agree absolutely with what he is saying, what Professor Li had said. There are a lot of different types of Islamist groups, a lot of different types of jihad groups. [CLEARs THROAT] Excuse me. In an earlier article, I had sort of created a-- in good political science tradition, a 2 by 2 matrix looking at these different groups, looking at the locus of ideology, being local or international, and the locus of violence, being local or international, and coming up with four distinct types.

So I think there are clearly a variety of jihad groups. Groups like Hamas and Hezbollah that are essentially, at least in their origin, fighting over territory, of occupied lands-- locally, not sort of a global issue, but just-- there's a local power. Make them and other territorially-based jihad groups quite different from these Egyptian groups that would live in caves in the 1970s and whatnot. So there are a variety of different kinds of jihad groups. And this book is looking at one variety.

**RICHARD
NIELSEN:** We're getting close to time, but I'll indulge in one more from the room. Please?

AUDIENCE: Hi.

**RICHARD
NIELSEN:** And introduce yourself.

AUDIENCE: I'm [INAUDIBLE], a grad student from MIT. And I have a question. We know that the tensions between the United States and Russia have very much influenced jihad for the past 20 years, and China is becoming more and more powerful. How do you think will these tensions between the United States and China-- the rise of China as a major power-- influence events in the Middle East, and most importantly, how local jihadist movements may involve, given what is happening in [INAUDIBLE] and other regions?

**GLENN E.
ROBINSON:** Do you need to translate for the--

**RICHARD
NIELSEN:** Yes, sorry. I would-- can you translate? I was actually checking the chat question.

GLENN E. [LAUGHS]

ROBINSON:

RICHARD I did not pay as close attention as I did to the first question from the room. I apologize.

NIELSEN:

GLENN E. Not a problem. So I mean, essentially, it's the-- looking forward, the impact of the rise of China as a power on
ROBINSON: jihadi Islamist groups, et cetera. One of the things that has been quite apparent in recent years-- and I think the rise of Mohammed bin Salman and Mohamed bin Zayed in Saudi Arabia and the UAE, respectively, is how little Muslim states are willing to put in peril relations with China over the Uighur issue, right, over Chinese Muslims in Western Xinjiang province, Western China, Kashgar, in that area.

So I mean, right now, it appears that whatever-- I mean, the Chinese have constructed-- not to put a fine point on it-- a terrifying police state in Western China in the Uighur population. I mean, we haven't seen this kind of a terrifying big brother type police state in a long time, and probably never, because the use of really cutting edge technologies to catalog the population in Xinjiang, imprison large, large numbers.

So the Chinese are doing some pretty horrible things, frankly, to its Muslim population. And we're not hearing much of a peep about that from major Muslim powers like Saudi Arabia, nor have we heard much in terms of Myanmar's-- the Rohingya-- Myanmar's Muslim population from, again, Muslim power that you'd say-- you would hope would speak up in defense and sort of in solidarity with Muslim brothers.

So up to this point, it appears that China essentially has a free hand to do what it wants with its own Muslim population and not suffer any significant consequences in the Middle East or the broader Muslim world. Will that change in the future? I don't know, but right now, that seems to be pretty apparent.

RICHARD All right. With that, we're getting close to time. I'm going to move over here to the podium. Please join me in
NIELSEN: thanking Professor Robinson.

[APPLAUSE]

GLENN E. Thank you.

ROBINSON:

RICHARD And I do need to thank as well our sponsors, the Center for International Studies, a reminder that the book is on
NIELSEN: sale. I do recommend it, from Stanford University Press. That code will get you 20% off. It is also on Amazon. I checked. And I think that is all the wrap up I need to do. So I'll just say take care, good day, and thank you so much for being with us, either in person or virtually.