

# Preliminary Notes for Discussion

Prof. Gilles Kepel, Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris (Sciences Po)

The Jihadist Movement became global in the late 1990s because 1/ it had failed to mobilize the Muslim masses through the guerilla wars it launched during that decade 2/it wanted to capitalize on the emotional dimension of the 'martyrdom operations' in Palestine throughout the Muslim world and hijack their methods for its own sake - thanks to the use of the new technology of information and communication, such as satellite channels, the internet, etc.

By the end of the 2000s decade, this attempt at mobilizing the Muslim masses has failed everywhere, and other Islamist actors have emerged instead of the Global Jihadists : 1/ Radical Shiite movements backed by the present Iranian regime, that are trying to widen their alliances on an anti-imperialist agenda, but are polarized in the Muslim world against Sunni governments and Sunni radicals 2/ 'Moderate' Islamist movements such as the Muslim Brothers or the AKP in Turkey, who have managed - or are trying - to deal with the West on a non-confrontational basis and played the electoral game. They range from the co-opted AKP to the banished Hamas via the semi-legal Egyptian MB, and, as opposed to the Global Jihadists, have strong local politics agendas.

Those two poles are, I believe, the main players for the years to come, and Global Jihadists are going to be caught between the Radical - and to some extent global - Shiite rock and the local Islamists hard place. All the more so as internal criticism has marred the Global Jihadists grand narrative, in particular after so much 'Muslim blood' was shed by Al Qaeda. The Iraqi battlefield proved a failure for Zawahiri and Bin Laden's fantasy of an AQ led 'Islamic Emirate', and the present war in Afghanistan and the tribal areas in Pakistan is wedged by the local, grass-rooted Taleban.