



Quicklet on Lawrence Wright's The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9-11 (CliffNotes-like Summary, Analysis, and Review)

Samuel Moniz

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ABOUT THE BOOK

The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11 was first published in 2006, although Wright began the project some time earlier, conducting several hundred interviews with a wide range of individuals, from terrorist sympathizers to American law enforcement. The intent of the book was to provide a narrative of the events leading up to the events of September 11, 2001.

This meant an in-depth discussion of the roots of al-Qaeda and similar organizations, the reasons for its decision to target America, and an explanation for the failure of American intelligence agencies to prevent the attack. Although it was not the first analysis of these events, *The Looming Tower* is distinguished by its focus on detail, and has been called a narrative history that possesses all the immediacy and emotional power of a novel, (New York Times).

The book focuses on the history and psychology of the key figures in the evolution of the ideology that ultimately brought down the World Trade Center.

MEET THE AUTHOR

Samuel Moniz is a graduate of UC Berkeley, where he majored in Modern European History. In addition to academic papers, he has occasionally scribbled for the odd student paper or magazine. His interests include (unsurprisingly) history, as well as politics, philosophy, current events, and related subjects.

EXCERPT FROM THE BOOK

Wright begins his tale with a man named Sayyid Qutb, who traveled from Egypt to New York in 1948 after his criticism of his government provoked Egypt's monarch to issue a warrant for his arrest. A writer and teacher, Qutb had spent time as a functionary in Egypt's government before his departure.

Politically, he opposed the British occupation of Egypt, and was hostile to Israel and its ally, the United States. Sophisticated and educated, he dressed formally, read French literature, and enjoyed American movies. This was the man who would be largely responsible for creating the movement that produced al-Qaeda.

Wright describes Sayyid Qutb's impression of America as an attitude of ever-increasing disgust. This disgust began while he was still in transit to New York, when, on his cruise ship, a young woman offended him by offering to join him in his room for the night. Later, he witnessed a school dance...

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CHAPTER OUTLINE

Lawrence Wright's The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11

- + Introduction
- + About Lawrence Wright
- + About the Book
- + The Looming Tower: Overall Summary
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