



Handbook of terrorism and counter terrorism post 9/11

edited by David Martin Jones, Paul Schulte, Carl Ungerer and M. L. R. Smith, Edward Elgar, 2019 (hardcover), Cheltenham, UK, ISBN: 978-1-78643-801-0

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Studies in the field of counter terrorism have undoubtedly evolved since the start of the twenty-first century, primarily due to the 9/11 attacks in 2001 and the 'new war' against global terrorism which consequently emerged. The *Handbook of terrorism and counter terrorism post 9/11* is a collection of 33 essays from eminent contributors from the U.S., Europe, the Middle East, Australia and New Zealand. The authors offer an international perspective into a diversity of subjects, which are either under developed within this academic field, or are issues which have now become more prominent in tackling global terrorism. All contributions acknowledge the now multi-faceted nature of contemporary terrorist study.

After a short introduction by the editors, the book is divided into three distinct sections – Part I: General Themes, Part II: Regional and Country Studies (which is further subdivided into four distinct geographical areas) and Part III: Conclusions.

The first section 'General Themes', includes 13 essays which extends the readers understanding into some of the terror threats now posed. Prominent essays in this section include those addressing the role of the internet within terrorism, which in recent years has become an important strategic device for terrorists, to how terrorist financing has evolved in line with the changing face of terrorism and the hierarchal structures of terror groups since the 9/11 attacks. The authors of the essay '*Terrorist financing since 9/11*', Holland-McCowan and Basra, begin by presenting short case studies on the financing and revenue streams of established organisations including al-Qaeda, The Islamic State and The Kurdistan Workers Party, and how three very different groups, with varying lengths of service, source their funding and revenue. New perspectives into how the financing of terrorism has changed in line with the adoption of often self-funded, low complexity and unsophisticated methodologies, which terror groups and their supporters are now favouring, are then discussed and becomes pertinent when considered against recent attacks across Europe. The essay concludes with an exploration into how the investigation of counterterrorist financing is currently being employed within financial institutions, government agencies and through the regulation of charities, making the article, as with many in this text, of interest to a multi-dimensional audience. In this instance not just scholars in the field of terrorism but also practitioners from financial investigation backgrounds.

Brendan Blair's case study into the Norwegian far-right terrorist, Anders Brevik, is another essay worthy of note, acknowledging the growing right wing threat and increase in violence driven by extreme right wing ideologies, which is currently growing in contemporary society. Blair presents a comprehensive exploration into Brevik's background and how his early attempts to join Norwegian extremist far right groups undeniably led him to prepare and conduct the Utoya and Oslo attacks in 2011. Most interesting, is the study made into Brevik's psychiatric status and the assessments conducted on him in preparation for his trial. The arguments with reference to the current limitations of conventional psychiatric definitions, when applied to the behaviour of those conducting terrorist attacks, are thoroughly discussed and leave the reader questioning whether Brevik was mentally ill or whether his actions on that fateful day in 2011, as he himself perceives, were his personal response to protect the values of Western civilisation. A similar outlook to the justification of terrorist acts by contemporary jihadi extremists.

Such is the diversity of essays within this first section, Cook's enlightening study into the role of women within ISIS will be of interest to those wishing to explore the representation of females within terrorism further – an area of study gradually coming into prominence within

the terrorism field. Cook, a senior research fellow from Kings College, London, whose previous research has explored the role of women within violent extremism, explores the motivations for women to join ISIS, the roles women held in Iraq and Syria, the potential security threats posed to women, and the policy and practice implications associated with this group. An interesting study in light of the changing role of women within this section of society and a refreshing look at terrorism away from the traditional masculine portrayals. Should the reader wish to extend their study into the structure of ISIS further, Gina Vale presents an informative study into the role of minors within the terror group, ('A minor issue? Trajectories of Islamic States underage members'), which is additionally incorporated in this section.

Part two of the handbook includes a collection of 18 essays with reference to specific countries and regions and the impact and responses to terrorism within them. The essays are divided into four categories: (1) Central Asia, Middle East and Africa, (2) Europe including Russia, (3) East, South and South East Asia, and (4) North and South America. Along with the expected studies into countries such as Iraq, Iran and Syria, which have heavily dominated terrorist studies over the last decade, interspersed are studies relating to Jihadism within Italy, how France is addressing the fight against terror, to the threat of home-grown terrorism within Australia. All of which offer a fresh exploration into this crime and provide an original and innovative stance to the study of global terrorism. Sadly however, although there are editors and contributors to the text from the UK, any specific essay directly focusing on the UK and the UK's approach to this crime is lacking and would have been welcomed within this section. With the UK witnessing an increase in attacks posts 9/11 an essay perhaps addressing the role of the rise of lone actors within the UK could have been included.

Weaknesses within the book are few. However, although the text offers a list of the contributors to the publication with name, role and academic/government institution recorded, it lacks a short biographical profile on each individual covering their research interests and any previous publications/research. Likewise tables and graphs are sparse in this book, it is 400 pages of mostly written text, which if you are not dipping in and out of particular essays, can make for heavy reading. The main strength of the book however, is that it covers something for everyone. The breadth of themes discussed whether it be right wing terrorism, specific groups such as ISIS and Hamas, how specific countries have addressed counter-terrorism initiatives, or the developing methodologies used by those engaged in this crime, are all covered in minute detail and thus illustrate the global issues that face terrorism today.

Overall, this compilation of essays, which I would prefer to class as an 'anthology' as opposed to a handbook, is an important and thought-provoking exploration into how security and counter terrorism is now situated in the contemporary world, covering a cornucopia of issues that are relevant in understanding this crime and the challenges of understanding terrorism within a contemporary setting. Jones et al have collected a series of essays that present how dramatically the face of terrorism has changed since the attacks of 2001 and how those engaged in the activity are adapting to the evolution. I highly recommend the *Handbook of terrorism and counter terrorism post 9/11* as an excellent reference book for students of all levels studying terrorism, and offers some interesting areas which could be further developed by academics and researchers. Likewise those working in security and defence organisations who wish to enhance their knowledge and develop thinking into new concepts, will also find this text of interest.

Terrorism will continue to evolve and diversify. It is no longer a domestic problem, but a global issue which will continue to adapt to not just societal changes but also to the advancements in technology and developments in counter-terrorism strategy. I hope that the authors

will continue sourcing essays and produce follow up editions to the handbook in the future, there is certainly scope for further editions.

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