

BOOKSHELF

Counter-Terrorism Bookshelf: Eleven Books on Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism-Related Subjects

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Naved Bakali and Farid Hafez (Eds), *The Rise of Global Islamophobia in the War on Terror: Coloniality, Race, and Islam* (Manchester, England, UK: Manchester University Press, 2022), 264 pp, US \$ 140.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-5261-6175-8

The contributors to this important edited volume examine the role of Islamophobia in shaping governments' counter-terrorism campaigns. The case studies cover the impact of Islamophobia, as well as the activism and resistance against Islamophobia, in Australia, Austria, Brazil-Argentina-Paraguay, Canada, China, France, India, the Netherlands, South Africa, United Kingdom, and the United States. A separate chapter examines the Myanmar government's genocide of the Muslim Rohingya insurgency through the prism of Islamophobia. As pointed out by the editors, Islamophobia became pervasive following 9/11 and the War on Terror, as part of the global pattern of "power structures of the contemporary world," with the United States issuing the ultimatum: "'you're either with us or against us'... which reiterates the centrality of coloniality and race in the making of the world today" (pp. 8-9). While some might disagree with this characterisation of the War on Terror, it is important to understand the impact of Islamophobia on governments' counter-terrorism campaigns against their Islamist terrorist adversaries to ensure they are based on real threats and not misunderstanding of the terrorist adversaries and their grievances. Naved Bakali is an Assistant Professor of Anti-Racism Education at the University of Windsor, Ontario, Canada. Farid Hafez is a Class of 1955 Visiting Professor of International Studies at Williams College, Williamstown, MA.

James Crossland, *The Rise of Devils: Fear and the Origins of Modern Terrorism* (Manchester, England, UK: Manchester University Press, 2023), 376 pp., US \$ 29.95 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-5261-6067-6.

This is a fascinating, well-written and extensively detailed account of the origins of terrorism in 19th century Europe, in what David Rapoport has conceptualised as the First Historical Wave of Modern Terrorism, and its impact on contemporary terrorism. As the author explains in the preface, his objective is to examine "What drives people to become terrorists? What are their goals and why do they see violence and fear as the best ways to achieve them? How serious is the threat they pose? What is a 'war on terror' and how are you meant to fight it?" (p. xxi). To answer these questions, the account spans the period of 1860s through the 1890s, when the anarchist terrorists were able to take advantage of new weapons, such as firearms and explosives, to carry out their attacks. The author characterises "These progenitors of modern terrorism ...[as – JS] an eclectic bunch – philosophers, cult-leaders, ruthless criminals, shameless charlatans and dangerous fantasists. Others were earnest revolutionaries, seduced by the idea that terrorism was a remedy for the ills of a world they resolved to heal" (p. xxv). This account is also valuable for its listing of the *dramatis personae* who appear in the book, and a chronological timeline of the events that made up the first historical wave of modern terrorism. The author is Reader in International History at Liverpool John Moores University, England, UK.

Bruce Hoffman and Jacob Ware, *God, Guns, and Far-Right Terrorism in America* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2023), 448 pp., US \$ 28.95 [Hardcover], ISBN 978-0-2312-1122-2.

This is an important and detailed account of the rise of far-right militant movements and terrorists, whether as groups or lone actors, in the United States. Their militancy culminated on January 6, 2021 with former President Donald Trump's urging his thousands of followers to launch a violent takeover of the US Capitol Building to overturn the certification of his defeat

in the November 2020 elections. This incident, and the follow-up attacks and plots by far-right terrorists, who are group-based or lone actor assailants, as the authors point out, are part of a process that had been brewing for several decades by a variegated mix of extremist ideologies, such as white supremacism, racism towards blacks, Jews, Muslims, and other minority communities; as well as conspiracists such as QAnon and other anti-government extremists.

To examine these issues, the account begins by discussing how far-right extremism is influenced by the notion of accelerationism, with mass violence by militants expected to lead to civil war with their victory ushering a return of “the United States to some long-lost halcyon days defined by hierarchies dividing people by race, gender, religion, and even regional identity – with white masculinity reigning supreme” (p. 9). The next four chapters discuss the emergence of a neo-Nazi Order; the events leading to the 1988 Fort Smith trial, the expansion of the militia movement in the early 1990s, the watershed 1995 bombing attack by Timothy McVeigh of the federal building in Oklahoma City, and the presidency of Barack Obama (2009-2016), which mobilised the far-right militants into greater political violence. Chapters 7 and 8 assess the impact of the role of Donald Trump and his presidency in mobilising the far-right into violent action on his behalf, which culminated in the January 6, 2021 violent takeover of the US Capitol Building in an attempt to prevent the Senate from certifying the results of his defeat in November 2020 presidential election.

To counter far-right terrorism, the authors propose a three-prong strategy, based on short-term, medium-term, and long-term measures. These include legislating domestic terrorism laws to formally criminalise hate-filled plots and violence against various minority communities, lengthening prison terms for those convicted of such crimes, and establishing programs to counter violent extremism that would rehabilitate them to become more accepting of the tenets of American democracy.

This book is extensively researched, with the 254-page text accompanied by 96 pages of endnotes, making it a valuable analytic and reference resource for academics and policy-makers.

Bruce Hoffman is the Shelby Cullom and Kathryn W. Davis Senior Fellow for Counterterrorism and Homeland Security at the Council on Foreign Relations. He is also a professor at Georgetown University’s Walsh School of Foreign Service. Jacob Ware is a research fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations and an adjunct professor at Georgetown University’s Walsh School of Foreign Service and at DeSales University

Paul Jackson, *Pride in Prejudice: Understanding Britain’s Extreme Right* (Manchester, England, UK: Manchester University Press, 2022), 248 pp., US \$ 21.95 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-5261-5672-3.

This is a terrifically written concise introduction to understanding the origins and current dynamics of Britain’s extreme right militant movements. The first part surveys the extreme right’s origins in the early 1900s, including their support of fascism and Nazism during the post-World War One period. It eventually led to the establishment of the British Union of Fascists (formed in 1932 by Oswald Mosley), the British National Party (established in 1982) and the English Defence League (founded in 2009). The book’s second part examines the nature of the far-right organisation and the people who joined them. The author explains that they appealed to people “searching for an alternate sense of meaning and purpose” by offering “them an

emotional sense of home” (p. 11). In the current period, the author notes, issues such as mass migration from countries such as Pakistan, the Middle East, and other regions, have served to rally the right-wing into violent action. Interestingly, over the years, not only have they appealed to disaffected men seeking “hypermasculinity ideals,” but there were also “examples of LGBTQ forms of extreme right activism” (p. 11). The emergence of the Internet and social media was exploited by the far-right militant groups, who were early adopters of digital communications. Right-wing militants also include lone actors, who have engaged in violent attacks. To mitigate right-wing militancy, the author recommends that the responses “need to be based on the principles of strengthening multicultural liberal democracy...” (p. 198). The author is Professor in the History of Radicalism and Extremism at the University of Northampton, England, United Kingdom.

Lee Jarvis and Tim Legrand, *Banning Them, Securing Us?: Terrorism, Parliament and the Ritual of Proscription* (Manchester, England, UK: Manchester University Press, 2020), 256 pp., US \$ 130.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-5261-4492-8.

This is an authoritative and detailed legal account of the origins, evolution, and current legal practice of the British legal instrument to proscribe (e.g., ban) organisations that are considered to be terrorist in order to mitigate the threat of terrorism facing the United Kingdom. To examine these issues, the book’s chapters discuss the historical, geographical, and political dynamics involved in proscribing terrorist organisations, the debates, especially in the British Parliament over the balance of the need for security while maintaining civil liberties in a liberal democracy, and the effectiveness of its use in decreasing the terrorist threat facing the country. The authors conclude that one needs to take into account that banning a group as terrorist can also prevent “dialogue or negotiation with banned organisations; alternative ways of countering terrorism; and, different conceptions of terrorism itself...” (p. 216). Such nuanced analysis makes this book an important contribution to the legal literature on proscribing terrorist groups. Lee Jarvis is Professor of International Politics at the University of East Anglia. Tim Legrand is Associate Professor of International Security at the University of Adelaide.

Thomas Martin, *Counter-Radicalisation Policy and the Securing of British Identity: The Politics of Prevent* (Manchester, England, UK: Manchester University Press, 2019), 208 pp., US \$ 120.00 [Hardcover], US \$ 30.95 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-5261-5611-2.

Written from the perspective of Critical Terrorism Studies, the author utilises a post-structuralist framework, drawing on the work of Michel Foucault (p. 10), to argue that the British government’s Prevent policy, which was first introduced in 2003, has failed to prevent the radicalisation of individuals to terrorism. Instead, the author argues, Prevent has merely succeeded in setting “a boundary of who can securely express their identity, and who, in being deemed alienated, cannot, due to the threat such identity is seen to potentially contain” (p. 172). The author’s over-use of such “post-structuralist” jargon makes the volume analysis difficult to follow. The author is a Lecturer in International Studies at the Open University, Milton Keynes, England, UK.

Eamonn O’Kane, *The Northern Ireland Peace Process: From Armed Conflict to Brexit* (Manchester, England, UK: Manchester University Press, 2021), 248 pp., US \$ 130.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-0-7910-9083-7.

This is a highly authoritative, comprehensive, detailed, and up-to-date account of the Northern Ireland peace process. Drawing on interviews with key participants in the peace process, newly released archival material, and latest scholarship, it provides a new context for understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the 1998 peace agreement and how it has evolved since then. With new developments affecting Northern Ireland, such as the Brexit decision by the British government to leave the European Union, which was unpopular with the province, given its role as a trade route to Europe, the author concludes that “On its own terms, the peace process has been largely successful” (p. 225). With “significant political violence” eliminated, nevertheless, “some of the underlying problems that faced the region in the 1990s are still apparent today” (p. 223). Societal divisions along ethnonational divisions and political inequities and discrimination continue, the author adds, with the sectarian basis for society and politics still prevalent (p. 224). On a positive note, the author concludes that today Northern Ireland is “far more peaceful and more equitably governed and egalitarian than it once was. The glass is at least half full” (p. 225). This is an indispensable account for those interested in understanding how the conflict in Northern Ireland was resolved and its current status. The author is a Reader in Conflict Studies at the University of Wolverhampton, England, UK.

Sean R. Roberts, *The War on the Uyghurs: China’s Campaign Against a Muslim Minority* (Manchester, England, UK: Manchester University Press/Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020), 328 pp., US \$ 42.00 [Hardcover], US \$ 20.95 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-6912-3449-6.

This is a highly informed account of the history, nature, and magnitude of the Chinese government’s counter-terrorism campaign against its Uyghur and other related Turkic Muslim minority in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. The author argues that the “assertions about the alleged ‘terrorist threat’ posed by the Uyghurs have greatly assisted the PRC in deflecting international criticism of its actions and has helped inform how it could carry out cultural genocide with impunity” (p. 244). The author is associate professor of the practice of international affairs and director of the International Development Studies Program at George Washington University’s Elliott School of International Affairs, Washington, DC.

Scott N. Romaniuk and Emeka Thaddues Njoku (Eds.), *Counter-Terrorism and Civil Society: Post-911 Progress and Challenges* (Manchester, England, UK: Manchester University Press, 2021), 344 pp., US \$ 130.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-5261-5792-8.

The contributors to this edited volume comprehensively examine the interplay between governments’ counter-terrorism measures (CTMs) vis-à-vis civil society operations (CSOs) in their respective societies. Many CSOs are subject to government counter-terrorism regulatory oversight, the editors point out, because of suspicions they might serve as channels for terrorist financing (p. 2). To examine these issues, the volume is divided into six parts: a conceptual framework and five regional case studies in the Americas, Europe, Africa, North Africa, the Middle East, and Central and South Asia, and the Asia-Pacific region. One of the volume’s findings is that “the enforcement of counter-terrorism policies is rapidly closing civic spaces

and changing civil society or associational life” (p. 9). Scott Romaniuk is a Visiting Fellow at the University of South Wales, Australia. Emeka Thaddues Njoku is a Newton International Fellow in the International Development Department at the University of Birmingham, England, UK.

Abdulkader H. Sinno, *Organisations at War in Afghanistan and Beyond* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008), 352 pp., US \$ 56.99 [Hardcover], US \$ 30.95 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-0-8014-7578-8.

This is a conceptually innovative account of the impact of the organisation of insurgent guerrilla combatants on the course and outcome of such conflicts with their more powerful government adversaries. This conceptual framework is applied to the case study of the Taliban’s insurgency in Afghanistan. Although the book was published in 2008, its conceptual framework still highly relevant to the current period, especially given that the Taliban flexible and decentralised organisational formation succeeded in overtaking the more hierarchically organised Afghan government and the supporting American forces in August 2021. The final chapter, entitled “Organizational Theory Beyond Afghanistan,” applies the author’s organisational theory’s empirical framework of group conflict to predict the effectiveness of the adversarial organisations in winning those conflicts. At the time of the book’s publication, the author was Assistant Professor of Political Science and Middle Eastern Studies at Indiana University, Bloomington.

Anne Speckhard, *Homegrown Hate: Inside the Minds of Domestic Violent Extremists* (McLean, VA: Advances Press, LLC, 2023), 404 pp., US \$ 29.95 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-9358-6680-0.

This is an excellently analysed account, by a leading expert on psychologically profiling violent extremists, of the detailed stories of fifteen American domestic violent extremists about their processes of radicalisation and motivations for engaging in violent activities. Their stories were drawn from more than 50 in-depth interviews with current and former members of domestic extremist groups. Some of the author’s findings include the insight that radicalisation “often has nothing to do with actual experiences with minority groups. Learning to hate is often the consequences of joining an extremist group, not the cause” (p. 347) and that “hate could genuinely feel like pride and patriotism; and shared racial and ethnic hatred can bond group members and create identity fusion with hate and purpose when one believes their actions support their own people” (p. 347). A separate chapter discusses the factors promoting disengagement and deradicalisation from violent extremist groups and their reintegration into society. The Epilogue provides updated capsule accounts of the fifteen individuals profiled in the book. The author’s vast experience in interviewing hundreds of violent extremists around the world and developing countering violent extremism treatment programmes informs this account, which is an indispensable handbook for practitioners in the field. The author is Director of the International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism (ICSVE), which is based in McLean, VA.

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About

Perspectives on Terrorism

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