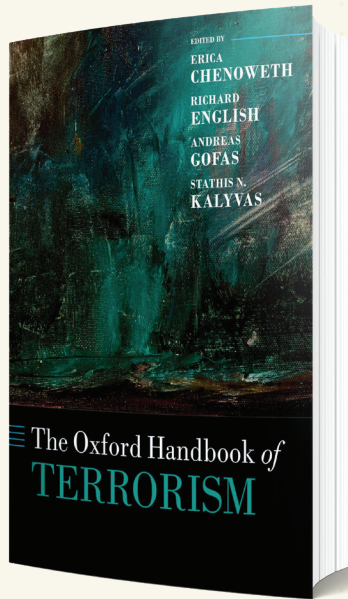




التحالف الإسلامي العسكري لمحاربة الإرهاب
ISLAMIC MILITARY COUNTER TERRORISM COALITION

BOOK REVIEW 15



THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF TERRORISM

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July 2020

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Book Review

Monthly Issue - General Directorate of Planning and Coordination

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Book Review

THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF TERRORISM

The Oxford Handbook of Terrorism falls into ten parts that comprise of 832 pages and integrates a substantial body of scholarship on terrorism and counterterrorism. It introduces scholars and practitioners to state-of-the-art approaches, methods and issues while revisiting these vital phenomena. Going further than most existing collections, this encyclopedic book locates terrorism within the wider spectrum of political violence instead of engaging in the widespread tendency towards treating terrorism as an exceptional act. Moreover, the volume makes a case for studying terrorism within its socio-historical context. Deep inside, the ten-part volume addresses the shortcoming that the study of terrorism suffers from, which is lack of theory, by reviewing and extending the theoretical insights contributed by several relevant and interdisciplinary fields, including political science, political economy, history, sociology, anthropology, criminology, law, geography, and psychology. It showcases the analytical advancements and reflects on the challenges that still remain unaddressed since the emergence of the field in the early 1970s.

The Handbook, which is divided into ten parts with each and every part subdivided into several subsections, features a thorough introduction that investigates terrorism in terms of achievements and challenges awaiting ahead. The introduction highlights the developments in the field of terrorism studies since the fourth quarter of the last century or so. It also revisits the analytical challenges, leading up to the 9/11 Attacks and beyond, shedding fresh light on the loose standards and failures that accompanied such research studies. The following is a brief yet informative rundown of the ten-part volume with the focal points of discussion subsumed therein.

Part One: Concepts and Typologies

This part consists of four chapters. The first chapter, "The Landscape of Political Violence", reviews the diverse and fragmented landscape of research in political violence, and proposes an approach to unifying the study of its various aspects in a consistent, seminal, productive and traceable manner analytically. The chapter discusses eleven patterns of political violence, presents the general characteristics of each and their associated research findings and further explores how they relate to each other.

The second chapter, "Defining Terrorism: A Conceptual Minefield" addresses the legal concepts of terrorism that may be seen as unnecessary; hence terrorist violence can be filed as a criminal crime. However, the legal concept of terrorism can add other elements to make it stand out among other criminal crimes. Furthermore, the legal adaptation of terrorism can lead to more powers, special preventive measures and actions that are not available in ordinary crimes, and international cooperation and extradition can also facilitate bridging gaps in the existing counterterrorism treaties.

The third chapter, entitled "The Evolution of Terrorism Event Databases", discusses the importance of accurate data for studying terrorism and reviews the most comprehensive databases in this field.

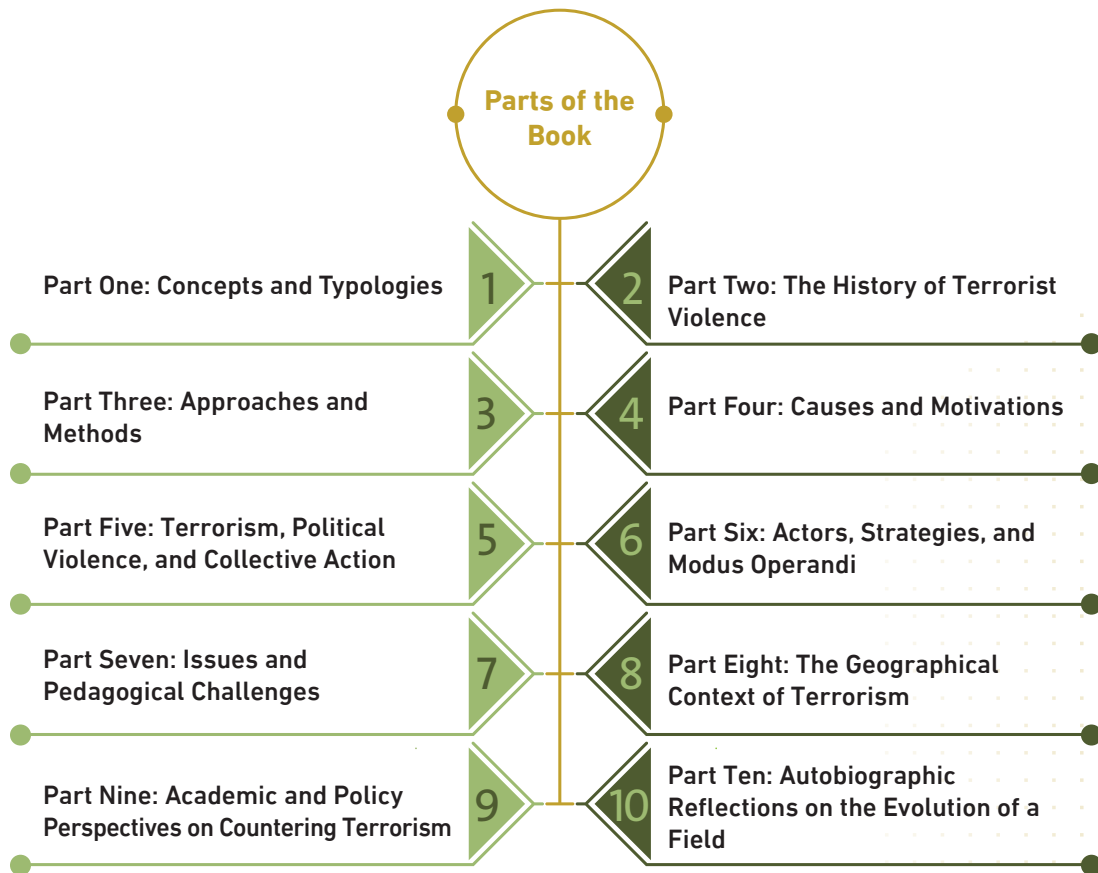
The fourth chapter, "The Moral Dimensions of Terrorism", discusses the objectives when legitimate, as these groups can be enabled in political and legitimate ways, so that groups can learn that the use of violence is not effective in achieving their goals, while inviting the groups that seek self-determination, independence, or other political goals, and the governments and other groups opposing them, are all obliged to make

or resist change through peaceful means, such as protest, demonstration, voting in referendums and the like, and not through violence.

Part Two: The History of Terrorist Violence

The second part discusses the history of terrorist violence in three chapters. The first chapter, "Pre-History of Terrorism", addresses that Europeans in the Middle Ages did not distinguish between the differences on which most modern definitions of terrorism depend, such as the difference between governmental and non-governmental actors, civil and military objectives, civil offences and criminal offences, or political and religious orders. However, the development of modern European ideas paved the way for the emergence of modern terrorism in theory and practice.

The second chapter, "European Political Violence During the Long 19th Century", reveals that there has been no victory for any party in the terrorism wars in the past 100 years in Europe; the countries continued to assert their legal right to monopolize advanced weapons and suppress the dangers posed by their legitimacy vigorously, while their competitors in power continued to assert their moral laws as justifications to necessarily change such regimes using violence. Governments have protected their integrity by creating stronger security bureaucracies, while organizations have sought to develop their own agendas to expose state-driven violence, inefficiency and corruption. The third chapter, "The Long Twentieth Century", discusses the development of terrorist violence throughout the twentieth century, from national and anarchist groups that emerged at the end of the



nineteenth century up to Al-Qaeda terrorist attacks in America spearheaded by the 9/11 Attacks, 2001.

Part Three: Approaches and Methods

The third part consists of eight chapters. The first chapter, “Organizational and Institutional Approaches: Social Movement Studies Perspectives on Political Violence”, takes a closer look at the organizational and institutional approaches that study political violence from the perspective of social movement studies in two parts: the first one discusses the way in which classic methods of studying political violence have been applied; the second one introduces a coherent approach that focuses on organizational and interactive energies between organizations.

The second chapter, entitled “Formal Approaches to the Study of Terrorism”, highlights that formal literature and narratives help to provide logical and coherent interpretations of patterns of addressing terrorism, and further provide useful guidelines for understanding it, such as “terrorism spreads when the economy is bad”, “opposition groups often choose terrorism although it rarely pays off”, and

“bargaining with terrorists rarely ends the conflict”.

The third chapter, “Sociological and Criminological Explanations of Terrorism”, reveals that over the recent years social and criminal theories have been developed to stimulate a set of research that has replaced inaccurate theories of terrorism, and the validation of these theories, analytical developments and more comprehensive data sets has revealed many of the ideas that directed and guided strategies are more effective against terrorism.

The fourth chapter, “Anthropological and Cultural Approaches to the Study of Terrorism”, emphasizes that these approaches make very useful contributions to the study of terrorism, as it is difficult to envisage terrorism without the detailed cultural frameworks, the developed narration of good and evil, and the identification of normative claims aimed at justifying violent actions. Since all terrorist organizations focus on spreading a specific political message, they cannot operate without these cultural symbols and normative texts.

The fifth chapter, “Historical Approaches to Terrorism”, addresses the deep historical roots of terrorism, as

historical analyses can make major contributions to the study of terrorism.

The sixth chapter, "Psychological Approaches to the Study of Terrorism", reviews the history and development of psychological research on terrorism, and calls for the harmonization of psychological analyses with broader areas of social science in such a way as to engineer the future of psychological research on terrorist behavior and make it of more importance.

The seventh chapter, "Critical Approaches to the Study of Terrorism", considers that critical approaches reveal how power, culture and linguistics shaped the concept of terrorism, as they address the social construction of terrorism as a concept that differs in some way from the concept of war, by exploring the method of analyzing terrorist discourse, speech, rhetoric and narrative.

The eighth chapter, "Geographical Approaches in the Study of Terrorism", highlights the increase in quantitative approaches to the study of terrorism, and how the geographical information becomes widely popular and important in the field of terrorism studies, as scientists use geographic information systems and techniques to define patterns and trends of terrorism and explore them at the local and global levels.

Part Four: Causes and Motivations

The fourth part falls into five chapters. The first chapter, "Causes of Terrorism" spells out how terrorism instrumentalizes the killing of non-combatants to intimidate and scare others, making it an important method of warfare, dispute and disagreement for both states and armed groups. It concludes that neither the traditional theories nor extremism that is currently the focal subject-matter of research studies on terrorism can help us to understand why insurgents or states choose to attack and intimidate civilians rather than attack soldiers.

The second chapter, "Nationalism and Terrorism", seeks to show some of the main ways in which nationalism and terrorism have historically overlapped, and reveals that there is little candor in their relationship; These phenomena are very complex, and while some interactions of this relationship tend towards violence, others do not follow suit.

The third chapter, "Religion and Terrorism", addresses the development of "religious terrorism" following the Cold War, its impact on global security, how it deceived many countries to slip into failed foreign political adventures, and how it contributed to the fragility of several other countries.

The fourth chapter, "Ideology and Terrorism"; reveals two correlations between ideology and terrorism; first, terrorist ideologies that incorporate the national side may have a longer life span than those that do not. For instance, ISIS ideology is based on a separatist trend that implies a violent form of nationalism. Second, challenging the terrorist ideology is a necessary step in combating terrorism, but it is by no means sufficient.

The fifth chapter, "Single-Issue Terrorism", explains that the concept of "single-issue terrorism" has received relatively little attention from scholars and counterterrorism practitioners. This chapter discusses the concept of single-issue terrorism as it appears in the extensive literature of terrorism, and whether terrorist groups with a single issue really exist and can continue, or it is just a fleeting stage in the development of terrorist groups. It concludes that understanding this type of terrorism develops our understanding of the stages of the formation of a terrorist ideology.

Part Five: Terrorism, Political Violence, and Collective Action

The fifth part consists of three chapters. The first chapter, "State Terrorism", emphasizes that studies addressing state terrorism have not unduly received enough attention, although state terrorism is a major concern, and some telling and relevant instances have already been explored, such as Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, which are a small part of the historical landscape of the state wider violence.

The second chapter, "Terrorism, Civil War and Insurgency", reveals that most terrorism around the world is local terrorism, which is carried out by rebel groups fighting in civil wars. Nevertheless, many are reluctant to classify local rebellions as terrorist groups, or consider the tactics used as terrorist tactics!

The third chapter, "The Crime-Terror Nexus and Its Fallacies", discusses that in order to design an

effective political response and appropriate external assistance to counter terrorism, it is necessary to stop thinking about terrorism and organized crime as just an anomalous social activity that should be suppressed; rather, they should be considered as activities vying with the role of the state, and the appropriate response here is multifaceted efforts to strengthen ties between the state and marginalized communities, which depend on involvement in organized crime such as drug trafficking and other sources of illicit financing, for reasons of economic adequacy and material insecurity.

Part Six: Actors, Strategies, and Modus Operandi

The sixth part comprises five chapters. The first chapter, "Terrorist Organizational Dynamics", concludes that understanding these organizational dynamics of terrorism can shed light on this type of violence in critically important ways. It discusses definitions of key concepts, and analyzes modern literature on many key topics, such as group internal dynamics and organizational longevity or failure.

The second chapter, "Terrorist Technological Innovation", provides an overview of the causes and consequences of terrorist innovation, and how it has been a major challenge for the armed forces and civil population around the world. It analyzes some of the more well-known innovations that have shaped terrorist operational patterns, and distinguishes between major tactical innovations such as "suicide bombings" and small tactical innovations such as "continuous improvement of primitive detonation devices." It reviews the benefits and drivers of innovation, and the factors that make innovation likely on the spotlight at the community and country level.

The third chapter, "Women and Terrorism", examines how women have participated in political violence historically. Telling examples include Russian political violence before the revolution, leaders of Marxist-Leninist groups in the West in the 1960s, and female suicide bombers in multiple locations. Scholars of terrorist studies emphasize that they cannot consider women participation as merely emotional; rather, it is a complex engagement with multiple causes, connections and drivers.

The fourth chapter, "Suicide Terrorism", describes the trajectory and development of modern suicide terrorism in the early 1980s, and how it has increased exponentially in terms of number and geographical scope. However, there is still no real clear consensus on the main issues. Therefore, the explanations for the phenomenon remain inaccurate and underdeveloped. It outlines some of the major differences in suicide terrorism studies, and highlights the central mystery of the researchers concerned, which is the rationality driving such suicide attacks.

The fifth chapter, "The Strategic Model of Terrorism Revisited", reveals that the prevailing model assumes that the perpetrators of terrorism attack civilians because they constitute an effective means of pressure, par excellence, to wring out some concessions from governments. The strategic model is deeply rooted and ingrained in compromise-concession theory; such theorists should take into account why terrorism reduces and downplays the likelihood of government compliance with their demands despite the credibility of the threats.

Part Seven: Issues and Pedagogical Challenges

The seventh part consists of five chapters. The first chapter, "The Rise and Fall of Terrorism", explains that the rise and fall of terrorism is not an individual phenomenon. It further discusses the ways in which the methodology of data collection can affect understanding the dynamics of terrorism, and how it differs according to time, countries, and terrorist organizations. It analyzes how terrorism levels have changed over time in a number of key regions, such as the United Kingdom, Spain, Colombia, Peru, El Salvador, Iraq and Afghanistan. It supports the view that terrorism occurs in ripple waves, and that the effect of all ripple waves ends.

The second chapter, "Financing Terrorism", reviews the basics of financing terrorism, and identifies successes and failures in the responses of states to this phenomenon in light of the globalization of the economy, which has created new opportunities for terrorist organizations to transfer and funnel their financial resources to finance terrorist attacks, while

participating in illicit economic activities across international borders. Following the 9/11 Attacks of 2001, the responses of the countries produced a new international counterterrorist law that states strict measures against terrorist financing.

The third chapter, "Terrorism and State Sponsorship in World Politics", reviews the risks of state sponsorship of terrorist groups to international security, and analyzes the various aspects of the relationship between terrorist groups and their respective sponsoring states, target state, manifestations of such sponsorship, relevant rationale and their impact on each terrorist group and target country.

The fourth chapter, "Teaching about Terrorism: Methodology and Ethics", discusses a number of ethical foci for teaching about terrorism, strengths and weaknesses in teaching methods, and the use of various methods, including good qualification for the educational team, with a special focus on the four basic methods of teaching; namely, discussion-based engagement, films and teaching aids, case studies and simulations.

The fifth chapter, "New Techniques in Teaching Terrorism", describes classroom experiences with many active learning situations, which can be used to teach strategic concepts in terrorism studies. It suggests several exercises related to terrorism studies, such as the one that includes simulating a hostage crisis; another that discusses the strategic interaction between the government and a hypothetical terrorist group and other exercises that cover various topics such as terrorist financing and the like.

Part Eight: The Geographical Context of Terrorism

The eighth part consists of five chapters. The first chapter, "Terrorism in Western Europe: A Homegrown Trademark", reveals that by the end of the last century, most acts of terrorist violence in Europe had ended after the revolutionary groups were dismantled as they were enfeebled by their inability to recruit and counter successful state

policies. Europe was prepared for lasting internal peace, but new terrorist challenges have emerged, such as Neo-Nazi groups and so-called local jihadists whom the author considers part of a larger plan to force Western governments out of the Middle East.

The second chapter, "Terrorism in Latin America", shows that researching into terrorism in Latin America faces a special challenge, as there are a few sources of violence comparative data at the national level, and it is difficult to distinguish between terrorism and other types of violence, as violent actors are often classified into multiple categories of gangs.

The third chapter, "Terrorism in the Middle East", examines terrorism in the Middle East from a historical perspective, and emphasizes that the changes triggered in the Middle East as a result of the "Arab Spring" and the collapse of traditional regimes fueled breeding grounds for terrorist organizations to snowball into reality. It expects that the Middle East will still be a hotbed of terrorism and an epicenter for exporting instability, violence and terrorism to other regions of the world.

The fourth chapter, "Terrorism in Asia: Rapidly Growing Scourge Testing the Waters of the Region", discusses the factors that catalyze terrorism in Asia, including the borders drawn up by colonizers or re-demarcating post-colonial borders by military or other means to the spread of militant ideologies, and the increase of socio-economic differences related to poor governance. It emphasizes that today Asia is facing a serious and continued challenge triggered by terrorism, and the war on terrorism will drag on.

The fifth chapter, "Terrorism in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Recapitulation of Causes and Consequences", provides an overview of terrorism and associated consequences, and explanations for its ubiquity in Sub-Saharan Africa, and calls for further research studies on the causes of terrorism in Africa.

Part Nine: Academic and Policy Perspectives on Countering Terrorism

The ninth part consists of five chapters. The first chapter, "Counterterrorism Strategies", presents a

comparative description of eight counterterrorism strategies and tools. It further discusses the strengths and weaknesses of each approach and identifies some of the preconditions that make any of these approaches and tools more effective.

The second chapter, "Terrorism and Counterterrorism: A Political Perspective", provides a flash of insights that the greatest challenge in policies to combat violent extremism is to build trust between governments and non-governmental sectors. It concludes that such deep changes cannot be expected to strike a society-based balance in the short time.

The third chapter, "Terrorism and International Law", attempts to assess the comprehensive response provided by the international community, and the strategies followed by international law in countering international terrorism. It emphasizes that respect for human rights and the rule of law play a central role in this process.

The fourth chapter, "Torture and the War on Terrorism", discusses the relationship between terrorism and torture, and calls for a discussion of the literature on political violence and behavioral incentives and disincentives faced by government authorities when using torture as a counterterrorism strategy.

The fifth chapter, "Academic Research and the Intelligence Community: Some Reflections", is written by a retired intelligence officer, who believes that pressure exercised on the government led to an understanding of the context of Al-Qaeda terrorism following the 9/11 Attacks, 2001; not only were studies on terrorism recognized, supplementary specialties, such as behavioral and technical sciences, were also recognized as relevant to counterterrorism.

Part Ten: Autobiographic Reflections on the Evolution of a Field

The tenth part consists of three chapters. The first chapter, "Constructing the Field of Terrorism", reviews the research approaches of terrorism from the 1960s to the present time. It provides in-depth analyses of the causes and ends of terrorism, individual motivations, strategies of terrorist groups, organizational strength, political contexts of terrorism, state-driven responses and the consequences of counterterrorism policies.

The second chapter, "Institutionalizing the Field of Terrorism", provides a 40-year body of research into terrorism. It explains that the growth of research since the 1970s has remarkably increased as terrorism has become a difficult subject for academic analyses; researchers in the field of terrorism studies are still struggling to provide compelling answers to the same questions posed forty years ago, despite a bulky body of data and information is made available. Equally important, attempts are still made to arrive at an integrated causal theory that can be applied across different contexts and levels.

The third chapter, "Revising the Field of Terrorism", presents a detailed and close examination by one of the key founding scholars of Critical Terrorism Studies, Richard Jackson. The chapter is enriched by his vicarious and first-hand experience in this field. Jackson created an ad hoc workshop at the British International Studies Association (BISA), published a new magazine and published a series of books and articles defining the approach to critical studies of terrorism.

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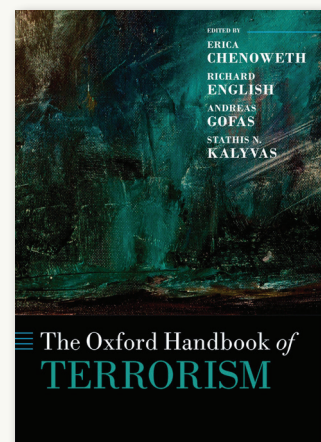
The Oxford Handbook of Terrorism

Edited by: Erica Chenoweth, Richard English, Andreas Gofas, and Stathis N. Kalyvas.

Hardcover: 832 pages.

Publisher: Oxford University Press (May 2019 ,14).

ISBN: 9780198732914









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