


Book Review

Non-Western Responses to Terrorism

Reviewed by Maximiliano Emanuel Korstanje, University of Palermo, Argentina

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5149-1669>

ABSTRACT

Over the recent years, above all just after 2001, terrorism has been situated as the main object of study for political scientists in English speaking countries. The US and the UK monopolize a whole portion of terrorism-related publications worldwide. Doubtless, terrorism is posited as a great challenge for the West affecting not only its political institutions but also transforming daily life. This editorial project, rather, goes in the opposite direction. It discusses the responses to terrorism in non-Western countries. The book is formed in six parts mainly organized to describe the situation in different geographical continents. Totaling 18 well-versed chapters, the covered geographical areas comprise Russia and Central Asia (part I), Asia (II), South Asia (III), Latin and South America (IV), Middle East and North Africa (V), and Africa (VI).

KEYWORDS

Counterterrorism, Human Right, Non-Western Countries, Terror, Terrorism, Violations

INTRODUCTION

Over the recent years, above all just after 2001, terrorism situated as the main object of study for political scientists in English speaking countries. The US and the UK monopolize a whole portion of terrorism-related publications worldwide. Doubtless, terrorism posited as a great challenge for the West affecting not only its political institutions but also transforming daily life (Korstanje 2017). This editorial project, rather, goes in the opposite direction. It discusses the responses to terrorism in Non-Western countries. The book is formed in six parts mainly organized to describe the situation in different geographical continents. Totalizing 18 well-versed chapters, the covered geographical areas comprise Russia and central Asia (part I), Asia (II), South Asia (III), Latin and South America (IV), Middle East and North Africa (V) and Africa (VI). Further, the introductory and concluding chapters are in charge of the editor, Professor Michael Boyle. The introduction holds that the US declaration of a preventive war ignited a new stage of terror where counter-terrorism occupied a central position in western administrations. Nevertheless this fact, little is known about the reaction of Non-Western countries to stop terrorism. For the US, terrorism is considered an incorrigible threat mainly based on ideological fundamentalism which is pitted against American ideals; a partisan position which is not shared by the rest of the world, as Boyle adheres. Each society particularly responds to terrorism according to its socio-historical background and idiosyncrasy.

The first chapter, which is authored by Katerina Stepanova, discusses the counter-terrorism measures in Russia and Caucasus. She traces back to the US-led invasions to Iraq and Afghanistan as the key factors which facilitated the rise of radicalized cells in post-soviet Russia. Chechen movements passed from ethnic separatism to radicalized jihadism in the question of decades. While Chechen resistance paradoxically adopted a more radicalized discourse, its leaders abandoned the group. At the same time, Putin's administration spent considerable monetary resources to dissuade the Chechen insurgency to lay down the arms. In the second chapter, Irene Chan presents China's legal reform to struggle against terrorism during Xi Jinping's administration. Like the Russian case, China faced acts of political turmoil and terrorism in the pastime mainly associated with claims of separatism. Chinese administrations debated among what Chan dubbed as the *three evils* based on the fear of separatism, religious extremism, and violent terrorism. If these events leave a lesson for China, it reminds us that the coordinated efforts by authorities to introduce legal reformations never suffice to eradicate terrorism while avoiding human right violations. In consonance with this, Chiyuki Aoi & Yee-Kuang Heng (in the third chapter) bring resonating reflections on the Japan case. Per their viewpoint, Japan's reactions to terrorism varied according to three clear-cut stages. The first anarchist state where movements were based on separatist demands, accompanied by a second stage characterized by left-wing groups. Finally, 9/11 marked Japan because more than dozen citizens were killed in the Fuji Bank. To sum, Japan aligned to the Anglo-American alliance and the general policies for the War on Terror. However, Japan keeps out of any formal-legalistic counter-terrorism program. The fourth chapter, in charge of Kamarulnizam Abdulah & Abdul Aziz, explores the counter-terrorism legislation in South East Asia. The dismantling of British law in the region just after the WWII end paved the ways for the rise of a new Guerrilla which confronted directly the local governments. In the 60s decade, the economic difficulties ignited a climate of social frustration and discontent in society. The Briggs' plan reduced the support for the communist parties but it resurrected in the formation of new Islamic interpretations of the Sharia (Islamic Law). As a result of this, the 70s decade witnessed the multiplication of religiously-based militant groups. These groups gradually capitalized the social discontent towards a pan Islamic party. Evan Laksmana and Michael Newell (in the fifth chapter) dissects the reaction of Indonesia in the post 9/11 era. Beyond the Anglo-American alliance, Indonesia reacted according to its historical counter-terror policies, which means a strong focus on internal security threats. Indonesia experienced attempts of separation since 1945. Governments historically devoted considerable efforts to placating internal separatist movements. The post 9/11 period materialized a long-dormant state of contemporary political instability which is repressed violently by Suharto's new order. Doubtless, this was possible given the recently organized security-sector reforms initiated after the 9/11 and Bali bombings. This point captivates partially the essence of the book and the following book chapters. The WWII end marks not only the end of the British Empire but also a new era, known as the Cold War where the US and Soviet Union rivalled. According to this, newly independent states (in Asia) struggle with local radicalized groups to keep order. This state of political instability conditions the efficacy and evolution of governments with deal with an internal enemy. The 9/11 and the successive War on Terror, far from placating these internal tensions, grease the rails of the army machine which starts with unilateral counter-terrorism programs, most of them even violating basic rights. This appears to be the case of the sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth chapters which describe the case of India (Rashmir Singh), Pakistan (Muhammad Feyyaz), Brazil (Jorge Lasmar) and Colombia (Oscar Palma). In all these study cases the same common-thread argumentation remains. States adopts enthusiastically Washington's counter-terrorism program to eradicate what they dubbed as "the hypothesis of the internal enemy". This was not the case of Algeria documented in the tenth chapter by George Joffé. Algeria went through a bloody civil war which produced even after 9/11 low-level residual terrorism.

The rest of the book, orchestrated in the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth chapters, dissect different examples that describe how non-Western administrations deal with terrorism in their respective contexts. Some authors coin the term *securitocracy* to refer to the closest interaction

of security services, military forces and economic elite which plays a significant role to keep the legal status quo. Last but not least, the reactions of African countries are well-documented in the sixteenth (Jennifer Giroux and Michael Nwankpa), seventeenth and eighteenth chapters. Africa, at least, shows an interesting dynamic –probably different to Asia or Latin America. Africa allied directly to Bush’s original declarations while solidifying their autocrat governments. Although undemocratic these regimes were economically successful. By introducing a diffusing definition of terrorism, these autocratic leaders imposed significant economic reforms while persecuted systematically detractors and political opponents to cement their authorities.

Of course, as the editor recognizes, it is very hard to put different ethnicities and historical backgrounds altogether. Likewise, Latin America not only is part of the Western civilization simply because South America inherited its cultural legacies from Spain and Portugal, two European countries, but also mysteriously Israel, which is a country ethnically populated by citizens escaping from Europe, seems not to be discussed in the book as a main study-case. Boyle tries to give a methodological answer to this methodological problem, which punctuates the impossibilities to draw what the West is. Besides, it is important to note that some Asian countries are culturally well-westernized. Most certainly, Boyle adventured to study the counter-terrorism reactions as well as legal issues in countries beyond the influence of the Anglo-American alliance. This begs the question: is the book title appropriate for this case?

Quite aside from the problem involving the title, in this fascinating book, at the best for this reviewer, Professor Michael Boyle offers a high-quality product which contains multifaceted viewpoints and study-cases that give a full description about the different counter-terrorism reactions in Non-Western countries as well as its legal dilemmas. Boyle’s book goes in two directions. On one hand, under the auspices of terrorism, some autocrat administrations fail not only to normalize the situation while laying the foundations towards the decline of check and balance powers. On another, other administrations echo the historical dynamics of earlier civil wars. In this case, countries continue with old legal frameworks, so to speak originally constituted in the colonial period, which far from solving the problem aggravates it. Non-Western Responses to Terrorism situates as more than a pungent book which will surely test the proof of time.

REFERENCES

Korstanje, M. (2017). *Terrorism, Tourism and the end of hospitality in the West*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Maximiliano E. Korstanje is editor in chief of International Journal of Safety and Security in Tourism (UP Argentina) and Editor in Chief Emeritus of International Journal of Cyber Warfare and Terrorism (IGI-Global US). Korstanje is Senior Researchers in the Department of Economics at University of Palermo, Argentina. In 2015 he was awarded as Visiting Research Fellow at School of Sociology and Social Policy, University of Leeds, UK and the University of La Habana Cuba. In 2017 is elected as Foreign Faculty Member of AMIT, Mexican Academy in the study of Tourism, which is the most prominent institutions dedicated to tourism research in Mexico. He had a vast experience in editorial projects working as advisory member of Elsevier, Routledge, Springer, IGI global and Cambridge Scholar publishing. Korstanje had visited and given seminars in many important universities worldwide. He has also recently been selected to take part of the 2018 Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award. a great distinction given by Marquis Who's Who in the world.