

IV. Book Reviews

“Counterterrorism Bookshelf” – Eight Books on Terrorism & Counterterrorism Related Subjects

by Joshua Sinai

Note: This column consists of capsule reviews. Future columns will continue to review books by publishers such as Palgrave Macmillan, Routledge, Springer, Stanford University Press, and the University of Chicago Press.

Guy Aviad, *The Politics of Terror: An Essential Hamas Lexicon*. Tel Aviv, Israel: Contento de Semrik, 2014. 686 pages, US\$18.99 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-965-550-282-4.

This comprehensive and authoritative handbook about Hamas is the first book in several years to be published about this important Palestinian militant organization. It is divided into three parts. The first part presents a 40-page historical overview of Hamas's evolution from a Palestinian extension of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood to its current role as the Gaza Strip's ruling party (with the rival Palestinian Authority in control of portions of the West Bank). Also covered are Hamas's historical origins and its organizational structure, which is discussed in great detail, including in a highly informative chart. The second part – and the handbook's longest portion at approximately 570 pages – consists of more than 300 entries about Hamas that are listed in alphabetical order, such as detailed biographies of its leaders and operatives, military units, funding fronts, relations with state sponsors such as Iran. The third part (approximately 60 pages) is composed of four appendices – the movement's charter, a table containing data about its Legislative Council members, and a listing of major terrorist attacks carried out by its operatives against Israeli targets. Also included is a detailed bibliography of books and articles about Hamas. With significant new developments involving Hamas since the book's publication, it is hoped that a new and updated edition will be published that is also better organized with more clearly differentiated sections, including an index. Nevertheless, this handbook is highly recommended as an indispensable reference resource on Hamas. The author has served as an officer and head of training in the Israeli Defense Forces' (IDF) history department.

Tore Bjorgo, *Strategies for Preventing Terrorism*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. 122 pages, US\$57.00 [Hardcover], ISBN-13: 978-1137355072.

A comprehensive examination of effective governmental counter-terrorism strategies to reduce the terrorist threat based on best practices drawn from a crime prevention perspective. This is important, the author points out, because “terrorist violence is a serious form of crime and should be treated as such...” (p. 2) As part of the measures required to reduce the threat of terrorism facing a targeted government, the author has developed a holistic model that integrates what are traditionally viewed as the separate tracks or activities of ‘prevention’ of terrorism and ‘responses’ to terrorism. In this unified model, nine key preventive mechanisms are identified to enable those involved in countering terrorism, whether as governmental action officers or academic analysts, to conceptualise systematically how to prevent and reduce terrorist outbreaks. These nine preventive mechanisms, which are adapted from criminology (and which constitute the book's major portion), consist of (1) establishing normative barriers to committing criminal acts, such as terrorism; (2) reducing recruitment into terrorism, for instance, by reducing the root causes that might drive individuals into such violent activity; (3) employing deterrence measures through the threat of punishment to get potential perpetrators to refrain from engaging in terrorist acts; (4) disrupting potential terrorist acts during their pre-incident phases; (5) protecting potentially vulnerable targets by reducing the opportunities to attack them; (6) reducing the harmful consequences of terrorist attacks; (7) reducing the rewards from terrorist acts;

(8) incapacitating or neutralizing potential perpetrators from being able to carry out terrorist attacks; and (9), where possible, employing desistance, disengagement and rehabilitation measures to facilitate the re-integration of previous terrorists into a 'normal life.' (pp. 11-12)

The author points out that when these nine sub-strategies are applied to actual terrorist threats facing a country at the national and local levels, one needs to determine how the various preventive mechanisms will function to reduce a specific terrorist problem, determine which measures or methods can be used to activate these mechanism, identify the principal actors to implement the various methods, identify the target groups for the various strategies and their measures to apply against, and, in the final two applications, identify the strengths and limitations of the effects of these preventive measures. (p. 24).

The author concludes that in preventing terrorism one of the major challenges is "to find an appropriate balance between short-term and long-term prevention strategies, and between the repressive and constructive measures." (p. 96). To do so, he recommends employing "multiple preventive mechanisms and their pertinent measures instead of focusing on a narrower range of mechanisms and measures [in order to make it] possible to reduce the pressure from each individual measure." (p. 97). By providing such a comprehensive, systematic and integrated framework to identify the components that constitute an effective counter-terrorism campaign, this short book is bound to be considered as one of the classical works in the discipline of counterterrorism studies. Prof. Alex Schmid, this journal's editor, wrote the book's Foreword. This book is part of the publisher's Palgrave Pivot series of books at lengths between a journal article and a monograph. Dr. Bjogo, the author, is Professor of Police Science at the Norwegian Police University College and Adjunct Research Professor at the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs.

Richards J. Heuer Jr. and Randolph H. Pherson, *Structured Analytic Techniques for Intelligence Analysis*. [2nd ed.] Los Angeles, CA: CQ Press/Sage, 2014. 384 pages, US\$66.00 [Spiral Bound Paperback], ISBN-13: 978-1452241517.

This is the second edition of the authors' textbook which was initially published in 2010, when it gained wide acceptance as one of the leading textbooks used by governmental intelligence agencies on structured techniques for intelligence analysis [the first edition was reviewed in a previous column published in the journal's Vol. 7, No. 2013 issue]. In this substantially revised and expanded edition, five new structured analytic techniques were added to the previous edition's 50 techniques. The new techniques consist of AIMS (Audience, Issue, Message, and Storyline), Venn Analysis, Cone of Plausibility, Decision Trees and Impact Matrix, with the previous Quadrant Crunching technique split into two parts – Classic Quadrant Crunching and Foresight Quadrant Crunching. Four other previous techniques were revised – Getting Started Checklist, Customer Checklist, Red Hat Analysis, and Indicators Validator. Also scattered throughout the textbook are new discussions of topics such as intuitive versus analytic approaches to thinking, a discussion of where structured analytic techniques fit in to various intelligence-related topics, and how such techniques can be used to deal with what the authors describe as "cognitive biases and intuitive traps" that might be encountered by intelligence analysts. (p. xviii). The authors also discuss new directions how structured analytic techniques might be employed in the future. The book provides numerous applications and methodologies for effective structured analysis of terrorism- and counterterrorism-related subjects. The authors are former high-ranking CIA officers who had developed some of the analytic methodologies discussed in the volume themselves. Currently, Mr. Heuer is a private consultant and Mr. Pherson is President of Pherson Associates, LLC, of Reston, Virginia, a provider of training on intelligence analytic techniques.

Louis M. Kaiser and Randolph H. Pherson, *Analytic Writing Guide*. Reston, VA: Pherson Associates, 2014.

85 pages, US\$18.97 [Spiral Bound Paperback], ISBN-13: 978-0979888021.

This handbook provides highly useful guidance for writing analytic papers, whether for governmental intelligence, military or law enforcement agencies, public policy research institutes, or other entities such as businesses. Since the objective of effective analytic reports, regardless of their length, is to inform their intended reader audiences – who may be busy or preoccupied with other tasks – it is crucial for writers of such papers to be able to communicate the main points of their ideas, information and recommendations in a clear and concise manner. To accomplish this objective, the handbook's chapters cover topics such as how to organize one's analysis (e.g., creating a mission statement, developing an "analytic line of march," and preparing a detailed outline), writing the first draft (e.g., building paragraphs around important topic sentences, ordering the supporting information, and treating peripheral information separately), and refining the draft (e.g., reviewing paragraphs for analytic coherence, 'economizing' on words, and conducting a final review). A glossary covers commonly used terms, proofreading symbols, and recommended readings. Both authors are former high-ranking CIA officers. Mr. Kaiser is an associate of Pherson Associates, LLC, of which Mr. Pherson is the President.

James Pettifer, *The Kosova Liberation Army: Underground War to Balkan Insurgency, 1948-2001*. London, UK: Hurst & Company/New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014. 379 pages, US\$22.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 9781849043748.

A highly authoritative, extensively researched and richly detailed examination of the origins and evolution of the Kosova Liberation Army (KLA), which was instrumental in the successful insurgency against Serbian rule over Kosovo in the late 1990s. The book's chapters cover topics ranging from its role as an underground guerrilla army during the period 1950 to 1990, its further evolution in the 1990s (in parallel with other insurgent movements in the former Yugoslavia) against what it perceived as the harsh rule of former Serbian dictator Slobodan Milosevic. It deals also with its alliance with NATO and its demobilization once Serbian control ended and the newly independent republics of the former Yugoslavia were established. Also discussed is the situation in Preshevo (the Albanian majority inhabited areas of southern Serbia) and Macedonia in 2000-2001. The book's epilogue updates the discussion through 2010, and includes a terrifically insightful discussion of the strategic and tactical successes and weaknesses of the KLA's insurgency within the larger context of modern insurgencies, whether following the model of Mao Tse-tung or what the author terms "the classic Titoist Partisan" paradigm that was based on the Bolshevik experience. (pp. 251-252) The author teaches Balkan history at St Cross College, Oxford University.

Mark Silinsky, *The Taliban: Afghanistan's Most Lethal Insurgents*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger/ABC-Clio, LLC, 2014. 263 pages, US\$52.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-0-313-39897-1.

This is a highly comprehensive, informative and authoritative examination of the origins and evolution of the Taliban, the main insurgent movement in Afghanistan. Written as a textbook, the book's chapters cover general topics and also provide fascinating capsule biographies of key Taliban leaders, tables that highlight significant issues (such as the traits of a failed or failing state and its applicability to Afghanistan), and chapter summaries. General topics covered range from the landscape of Afghanistan's history, the nature of its population and Islamic religion, the impact of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and the founding of the Taliban in the 1980s (including what the author terms "the mind of the Taliban" in terms of the blend in its religious ideology of Salafism, Deobandism, and Sharia), the nature of the Taliban's rule over Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001, its overthrow by the United States-led coalition following al Qaida's 9/11 attacks (which originated in Afghanistan under Taliban patronage), the reconstitution of the Taliban in Pakistan, the creation of Taliban 'self-governing' institutions in Pakistan's tribal regions, and the launch of its

insurgency campaign against the newly-formed Kabul government. The author's discussion of the Taliban's 'self-governing' structures in Pakistan, as well as its intelligence and security apparatuses and sets of tactics and targeting in its warfare, is one of the best accounts available. Also highly useful is his discussion of what he terms "Taliban Inc." – the vast criminal enterprises run by the Taliban – based on the country's narcotics growing and trafficking trade – that have made it one of the world's wealthiest insurgent movements. The Taliban's affiliated insurgent groups are also covered, with valuable overviews of al Qaida, the Haqqani network, Tehrik i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), as well as the connections between the Taliban and al Qaida and Pakistan's security services.

The final chapter discusses the effectiveness of the U.S.-led counterinsurgency campaign in Afghanistan, which is filled with numerous insights, including an innovative table that outlines the legacy traits of the three epochs of counterinsurgency in the Philippines, Malaya, and Vietnam and their application to Afghanistan. Also highly useful is the author's formulation of seven rules of effectiveness in counterinsurgency in Afghanistan and an additional table that outlines metrics of progress in achieving them. With the United States and its coalition allies scheduled to draw down their involvement in Afghanistan after 2014, this book serves as an indispensable handbook for those interested in understanding the extent of progress made so far and the likely security challenges that lie ahead. The author is a veteran senior analyst in a United States Army intelligence agency with extensive experience in covering Afghan affairs.

Alex Strick van Linschoten and **Felix Kuehn**, *An Enemy We Created: The Myth of the Taliban – Al Qaeda Merger in Afghanistan*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2012. 550 pages, US\$35.00 [Hardcover], US\$24.95 [Paperback], ISBN-13: 978-0199927319.

A well-researched and extensively documented examination of the nature of the ideological and organisational links between the Taliban and al Qaida since the formation of their respective organisations (and their predecessors) more than 40 years ago. To accomplish their objectives, the authors divide the book into discreet historical periods in Afghanistan since 1970 in which the two organisations and their predecessors played significant roles. It is important to study such links, the authors write, because of a prevailing view which they attempt to debunk that the United States-led coalition's involvement in Afghanistan has been predicated on the assumption that defeating the Taliban in Afghanistan would deny al Qaida a sanctuary in Afghanistan in which to plan and launch its attacks worldwide. (p. 334) The authors argue that such an assumption is also faulty because the Afghan Taliban are generally not focused on "internationalist jihadi rhetoric" and, with the exception of Najibullah Zazi, an Afghan immigrant to the United States who had plotted – and subsequently failed – in September 2009 to bomb the New York City subway system, no Afghans have been "involved in an act of international terrorism..." (p. 334) While this contention can be challenged idiomatically as a 'splitting of hairs' since, as demonstrated by the case of Faisal Shahzad, the 'failed' Times Square bomber in May 2009, he was actually dispatched by the Pakistani (and not the Afghani) Taliban, can one really contend, as do the authors, that the warfare aims of the Afghani Taliban and al Qaida "diverge more often than they converge"? It is likely that the Pakistani Taliban and al Qaida's operatives remaining in Pakistan are likely to cooperate in many ventures. Once the Afghani Taliban succeed in increasing the territory under their control in the coming years, al Qaida's influence (and perhaps presence, as well) in those regions will also likely increase. Aside from such quibbling over the actual linkages between the Afghani Taliban, their Pakistani counterparts, and al Qaida in Pakistan, there is much to commend in this important book, which is well-written, well organized, and, based on the authors extensive field work in Afghanistan, reads like a truly inside account of the Afghani Taliban. The authors, who have worked in Afghanistan since 2006, are the founders of AfghanWire, an online research and media-monitoring group that focuses on local Afghan media.

Naunihl Singh, *Seizing Power: The Strategic Logic of Military Coups*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014. 264 pages, US\$59.95 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-4214-1336-5.

A highly innovative conceptually and empirically-based examination of the role of military coups in causing regime changes, including the overthrow, in certain cases, of democratically-elected governments. To develop his theory of coup dynamics and outcomes, the author conducted extensive interviews with previous coup participants, and, as part of the study's empirical component, compiled a dataset of 471 coup attempts worldwide from 1950 to 2000. Based on such data, which is discussed in the book's third chapter, the author finds that it is essential to analyse the role and dynamics of discreet military factions, which he categorizes in terms of three types of coup origination, as coups from top military officers, coups from the middle ranks, and mutinous coups from low level soldiers. One of the author's findings is that successful coups are characterized by a military faction that projects a sense of impending victory at capturing control of their targeted government. The analysis of successful military coup attempts, the author writes, is also applicable to the study of counter-insurgency strategy, as he notes that "During a civil conflict, the side that can gather more popular support is more likely to win, even if civilian support is neither necessary or sufficient." (p. 229) At the same time, he cautions, it is imperative for a new regime to address the expectations and needs of the civilian population because otherwise any popular support will quickly diminish. This was, for instance, the case in Iraq following the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's unpopular regime, when such dissatisfaction led to the breaking out of a new insurgency against the new political order. This study's findings are especially relevant in the current period following successful coups by the militaries in Egypt and Thailand and the many challenges facing these new rulers in addressing the needs of their populations. The author is an Assistant Professor of international security studies at the Air War College in Alabama.

About the Reviewer: **Dr. Joshua Sinai** is the Book Reviews Editor of 'Perspectives on Terrorism'. He can be reached at: Joshua.sinai@comcast.net.