

## IV. Book Reviews

### Counterterrorism Bookshelf:

#### 21 Books on Terrorism & Counter-Terrorism-Related Subjects

*This column consists of capsule reviews of books from various publishers. It is divided into three sections: general, legal aspects, and the Middle East (i.e., books that provide a regional basis for understanding a wider context for terrorism and counterterrorism in such areas).*

**Reviewed by Joshua Sinai**

#### General

Anne Aly, Stuart Macdonald, Lee Jarvis and Thomas Chen, Eds., *Violent Extremism Online: New Perspectives on Terrorism and the Internet* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2016), 194 pp., US \$ 155.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-13891-229-8.

This highly informative and well-organized edited volume resulted from a symposium on terrorists' use of the Internet that was hosted by Swansea University, Wales, United Kingdom, in June 2014. It was organized under the auspices of the Cyberterrorism Project ([www.cyberterrorism-project.org/team/](http://www.cyberterrorism-project.org/team/)), which brings together experts from multi-disciplines to examine terrorists' use of the Internet. This is expressed in the volume's chapters which cover four central themes: how terrorist propaganda is disseminated on the Internet, how terrorist radicalization is conducted on the Internet, the nature and effectiveness of the affected governments' counter-terrorism campaigns approaches to disrupting such Internet radicalization, and future directions in academic approaches to researching and analyzing these issues. The volume's chapters, written by prominent academic experts, include Martin Rudner's article on al Qaida's use of the Internet as a force multiplier in its global jihad; Angela Gendron's analysis of the role and influence of charismatic preachers on the Internet, which is complemented by Anne Aly's discussion of how academic research is required to focus on the nature of the audience of such preachers; Gabriel Weimann's examination of the appeal of the Internet's social media to terrorists; David Mair's discussion of how al-Shabaab used Twitter during its Westgate terrorist attack in September 2013; Keiren Hardy's examination of how the downloading and dissemination of extremist propaganda is used in the prosecution of such suspected terrorists; Sarah Logan's discussion of the approaches by the governments of the United Kingdom and the United States to counter terrorist narratives online; Halim Rane's analysis of Islamist narratives online and how to counter them; and Maura Conway's suggestions for further research on the role of the Internet in promoting violent extremism and terrorism. The volume's focus on approaches and methodologies to analyze terrorists' use of the Internet and effective response measures make it a highly useful text for courses on terrorism and counterterrorism studies.

Edwin Bakker, *Terrorism and Counterterrorism Studies: Comparing Theory and Practice* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Leiden University Press/Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 192 pp., US \$ 39.50 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-90-8728-221-9.

This excellent, comprehensive, and concisely written textbook is "the product of and linked to the Massive Open Online Course on *Coursera*: "Terrorism and Counterterrorism: Comparing Theory & Practice," which is taught by the author and his team at Leiden University's Centre for Terrorism and Counterterrorism (CTC). It is organized into six sections: (1) "Definition and nature of terrorism" (the impact of terrorism

as a worldwide phenomenon, and the controversies over how the term terrorism is used and defined); (2) the “History of terrorism: a constantly changing phenomenon” (a discussion of David Rapoport’s notion of the four historical waves of modern terrorism, including the possibility for a new fifth wave of terrorism, although it is not defined); (3) “Terrorism studies” (a discussion of the history of terrorism studies, key approaches and experts, and the current state of the art); (4) “Assumptions about terrorism” (e.g., is terrorism caused by poverty, do terrorists suffer from psychological disorders, is terrorism becoming increasingly lethal, is terrorism primarily anti-Western, and is terrorism successful in achieving its objectives); (5) “Assumptions about counterterrorism” (e.g., is it possible to profile a terrorist, can terrorists be de-radicalized, can the killing of terrorist leaders result in the defeat of such organizations, is it ultimately impossible to defeat terrorism, and is a “holistic or wide approach” the most effective method to defeat terrorism); and (6) “Future research topics in terrorism studies” (e.g., what the author considers as 50 “un- and under-researched topics,” which are listed in the Appendix, such as terrorists’ targeting tactics, methodologies and techniques to measure and evaluate the effectiveness of counterterrorism measures, how to minimize the boomerang effects of certain counterterrorism measures, best practices and lessons learned in de-mobilizing guerrilla and terrorist groups, and other valuable topics); and how to minimize fear of terrorism while upgrading a population’s resilience to such threats through a better understanding of the nature of the terrorist threat). As a textbook, each chapter is accompanied by key points, recommended readings, discussion questions, and examples of significant terrorist incidents, leaders, and documents.

William J. Brenner, *Confounding Powers: Anarchy and International Society From the Assassins to Al Qaeda* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 290 pp., US \$ 99.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-107-10945-2.

This theoretical study argues that “the decline of once-dominant powers enables expanded agency for marginal political organizations [such as terrorist groups] to exert themselves as systemic actors rather than subsystemic adjuncts.” (p. 2). The new “systemic actors” highlighted in this study include the Nizari Ismailis (Assassins), Mongols, Barbary powers, and al Qaeda. These case studies are expertly written and highly interesting. While an academic study of the role of such insurgent actors in disrupting the prevailing international systems of their respective periods would be highly interesting and conceptually innovative, the author’s over-use of academic jargon ends up producing what are largely pedantic arguments or findings, such as the following: “The overarching emphasis in this study, how systemic developments rooted in the logics of anarchy may engender international society is one opening for a progressive inter-paradigmatic exchange between neorealists and members of the English school,” (p. 10); “Al Qaeda’s severe aberration in form and behavior rather than its clear deviation from Islamic tenets best explains its trajectory as a systemic actor,” (p. 241); “Judgments and actions based on shallow foundations, contesting with a civilization rather than an outgrowth of international systemic and societal deviation, are most likely to extend it,” (p. 242); and, in the book’s concluding sentence, “These insights demonstrate the necessity for both intra- and inter-paradigmatic pathways to theoretical progress, opening the possibility of understanding a broader range of historical experiences and, in turn, aiding in comprehending future theoretical and policy challenges.” (p. 267) Despite its excellent case studies, such a largely theoretical study is not likely to find a receptive audience among practitioner experts in terrorism and counterterrorism studies, whether in academia or government who seek clearer and more informed thinking on these issues. The author is a national security analyst based in Washington, DC.

Anna Cento Bull and Philip Cooke, *Ending Terrorism in Italy* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2016), 248 pp., US \$ 145.00 [Hardcover], US \$ 54.95 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-138-67620-6.

This is a highly interesting and conceptually useful examination of the legislative, law enforcement, and penal measures employed by the Italian government to terminate the far-left terrorist threats facing it in the late

1960s and 1970s. As discussed by the authors, these ultimately employed a conciliation and reconciliation process that resulted in the de-radicalization and disengagement of such operatives from terrorist activity. The volume's second objective is to analyze the legacy of such terrorism on Italian society from the perspective of the "victims" as well as the "former terrorists." (p. xiii) The authors conclude that while terrorist activity was terminated through the re-integration of many of these former terrorists, the "process of 'reconciliation proper' has not been embarked upon and that the preferred strategy by the political class and the government has been one of collective amnesia." (p. 210) Anna Cento Bull is Professor of Italian History and Politics, University of Bath, UK, and Philip Cooke is Professor of Italian History and Culture at the University of Strathclyde, UK.

Emma Gilligan, *Terror in Chechnya: Russia and the Tragedy of Civilians in War* (Princeton, NJ: 2010), 288 pp., US \$ 21.95 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-0-691-13079-8.

This is an interesting and disturbing account of the magnitude of the human rights crisis in Chechnya caused by the politically-related violent crimes committed by the various combatants during the second war in the period 1999-2005. The volume is divided into two parts: "Part One – The Crimes," discusses the 1990-2000 Russian bombing assault on Chechnya, what is known as the "Zachistka" massacres in 2000-2002, the 'disappearances' of Chechen insurgents in 2002-2005, and the ensuing refugee crisis caused by the mass displacement of Chechens. The second part, "The Response," examines the violent retaliation by the Chechen insurgents, the reactions by civil society in Russia and Chechnya, what the author considers as the failure by the international community to effectively respond to the human rights crisis in Chechnya, and the attempts by Chechens to seek justice through the European Court of Human Rights. The author is assistant professor of Russian history and human rights at the University of Connecticut.

Jutta Lindert and Itzhak Levav, Eds., *Violence and Mental Health: Its Manifold Faces* (New York, NY: Springer, 2015), 423 pp., US \$ 159.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-94-017-8998-1.

The contributors to this important and empirically-based edited volume examine the spectrum of the phenomenon of violence in societies, including at the levels of communities, families, and "even acted against oneself." (p. v) The volume's primary emphasis is on the "emotional and psychopathological outcomes" of such violence, which is investigated "using epidemiologic approaches." (p. v) It is divided into six parts: (1) "General Issues in Violence and Mental Health," (2) "Self-Inflicted Violence," (3) "Violence in Families," (4) "Violence in Communities," (5) "Violence in Societies," and (6) "Facing the Challenge of Violence." In examining violence in societies, of particular interest are the chapters on "Terrorism and Its Impact on Mental Health" "Political Violence in the German Democratic Republic Between 1949 and 1989 and Its Consequences for Mental and Physical Health"; "The Aftermath of the European and Rwandan Genocides" (with the European genocide consisting of the German Holocaust against the Jewish population during the Second World War); and "The New H(5) Model of Refugee Trauma and Recovery," which is based on the five overlapping dimensions essential to trauma recovery: humiliation, healing (self-care), health promotion, habitat and housing, and human rights. (p. 362) Jutta Lindert is a Professor of Public Health at University of Emden, Germany, and at Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts. Itzhak Levav is a Professor of Psychiatry, Public Health, and Psychosomatic Medicine at the University of Haifa, Israel.

Douglas Laux and Ralph Pezzullo, *Left of Boom: How a Young CIA Case Officer Penetrated the Taliban and Al-Qaeda* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2016), 320 pp., US \$ 26.99 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-250-08136-01.

A riveting account by Douglas Laux, a former CIA clandestine operations officer, about his multiple tours in the Middle East and Afghanistan, where he was involved in numerous significant counter-Islamist insurgent activities. The text is heavily redacted due to the largely secretive nature of these military operations.

Malcolm Nance, *Defeating ISIS: Who They Are, How They Fight, What They Believe* (New York, NY: Skyhorse Publishing, 2016), 544 pp., US \$ 27.99 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-5107-1184-6.

This is a comprehensive, authoritative, and detailed compendium on the Islamic State (ISIS). It is divided into four parts: Part I: “Who They Are” (the history of ISIS, its leaders, organizational structure, and members); Part II: “Where They Are” (their geographical locations in the Middle East, Africa, the West, and Afghanistan); Part III: “What They Believe” (the cult of jihad, the use of punishments, violence, and police state methods to control their adherents and populations under control, funding sources, the use of cultural cleansing as a precursor to ethnic cleansing and genocide); and Part IV: “How They Fight” (their global military strategy, types of weapons used in their warfare, involvement in terrorism and hostage taking, their use of social media, and the author’s approach to effectively defeat ISIS). Malcolm Nance, a former U.S. Navy Senior Chief Petty Officer in Naval Cryptology, and the author of several books, including the “*Terrorist Recognition Handbook*,” is the executive director of the counter-ideology think tank the *Terror Asymmetrics Project on Strategy, Tactics and Radical Ideologies* (TAPSTRI), in Hudson, New York.

Patricia Taft and Nate Haken, *Violence in Nigeria: Patterns and Trends* (New York, NY: Springer, 2015), 136 pp., US \$ 99.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-3-319-14935-6.

This is an important and empirically based cataloging of patterns and trends of violence and opportunities for peace in Nigeria at the national, state, and local levels. These empirically derived findings are collected in a web application (<http://www.p4p-nigerdelta.org/peace-building-map>), with data technologies provided by the Gadfly Project, which integrates data on peace and conflict from a wide range of sources. As explained by the authors, the data is coded according to date, indicator, sub-indicator, region, state, and Local Government Area (LGA). The findings are visualized in static, dynamic, and clustered heat maps, including line analysis. The indicators used in the research include conflict indicators, demographic pressures, insecurity, economic pressures, group grievance/collective violence, government/legitimacy, public services, and refugees/internally displaced persons (IDPs). The peace agents indicators include economic development, human rights, governance, education, human security, community development, children, and others. From January 2009 to July 2014, there were more than 13,000 incidents of conflict risk and 400 Agents of Peace mapped to the web application platform, with hundreds of additional incidents added monthly. (p. 4) This massive data is explained and outlined in the book’s chapters which cover all of Nigeria’s geographical regions. In the conclusion, the authors point out that a situational awareness of patterns indicating trajectories towards violence or peace is possible when examined such indicators are examined at multiple levels of granularity. They write: “Stakeholders must examine the patterns and trends, and then undertake a deep qualitative assessment of the social, economic, political, and security drivers to understand the causes. Then they must perform a careful scoping and Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis as part of a planning exercise for the solutions.” (p. 133) The authors are senior analysts at the Washington, DC-based Fund for Peace, which manages this ongoing project, which is based on the authors’ field research in Nigeria.

### **Legal Aspects**

Beatrice de Graaf & Alex P. Schmid, Eds., *Terrorists on Trial: A Performance Perspective* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Leiden University Press/Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 576 pp., US \$ 79.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-9-08728-240-0.

This conceptually important edited volume examines terrorism trials from what the editors term a ‘performance perspective’: trials are viewed as “a site of ongoing communicative struggle.” (p. 11) In this perspective, as explained by the introductory chapter, the court room is “a stage, not of warfare, but *lawfare*

where legal instruments are used (and abused) by prosecution and defense and all kinds of performance acts are executed and (communicative) strategies are adopted to convince the court and audiences outside the courtroom of the validity of their respective narratives of (in)justice.” (p. 11) Thus, “by combining the notion of *lawfare* with that of *performance*,” a new framework is presented “for analyzing terrorism trials as sites of communicative contestation of political, ideological, religious and legal aims, pivoting around the concepts of (in)justice and legitimacy.” (p. 11) This is followed by an overview chapter by Alex Schmid, entitled “Terrorism, Political Crime and Political Justice,” in which he discusses conceptual issues related to terrorism and justice, such as political crime and the political offence exception, how terrorism is defined, the application by governments of the ‘justice’ label to take revenge against terrorist attacks, prosecuting terrorists in ‘fair’ trials, and the possibility “for a political trial to take place without violations of the Rule of Law.” (p. 39)

This framework is then applied to the court trial cases of Vera Zasulich in 1878 (by Alex Schmid), Stalin’s 1936 show trial against the ‘Trotzkyite-Zinovievite Terrorist Centre’ (by Alex Schmid), the trials of the IRA in the 1970s (by Joost Augusteijn), the 1975-1977 Stammheim trial of the Baader-Meinhof Group in Germany (by Jacco Pekelder and Klaus Weinbauer), the case of Zacarias Moussaoui from 2001 to 2006 (by Geert-Jan Knoops), the attempts to prosecute the post-2001 Guantanamo inmates on trial (by Fred L. Borch), the issues involved in the trial of the Hofstad Group (by Beatrice de Graaf), the 2008 trial of Gestoras Pro Amnistia in Spain, and the 2012 trial of Anders Breivik (by Tore Bjorgo, Beatrice de Graaf, Liesbeth van der Heide, Cato Hemmingby and Daan Weggemans).

In the concluding chapter, Beatrice de Graaf observes that “After shocking incidents of terror and destruction, society needs to regain a greater degree of balance. Terrorism trials, well-prepared and properly conducted, can help to repair the damage by offering a secure, communicative space where clashing narratives of justice and injustice can be discussed and balanced, where facts and culpability can be assessed.” (p. 524) Such a balanced analysis and innovative framework that are applied to significant cases of terrorist trials make this volume a valuable contribution to the literature on the legal aspects of countering terrorism.

Aniceto Masferrer and Clive Walker, Eds., *Counter-Terrorism, Human Rights and the Rule of Law: Crossing Legal Boundaries in Defence of the State* (Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2013), 360 pp., US \$ 154.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-78195-446-1.

This edited volume is an outgrowth of a workshop on “Democratic States’ Response to Terrorism under the Rule of Law: A Historical and Comparative Approach to the Protection of Human Rights and Civil Liberties in the Fight Against Terrorism,” which was held in July 2011 at the International Institute for the Sociology of Law, Onati, Spain. It is such a comparative perspective that is pursued by this important volume’s contributors who, as explained by the editors, examine how “new codes of counter-terrorism laws have constantly and often acutely challenged traditional legal concepts. The emergent counter-terrorism legal catalogue thereby transcends traditional ethical, legal and organizational boundaries of legal categorization and poses fundamental questions about the values at the heart of each affected legal system, both in domestic and international law.” (p. 5) To discuss these issues, and with a focus on countries such as the United Kingdom, Australia, and Spain, the volume’s chapters cover topics such as defining terrorism, the relationship between human rights and counterterrorism, terrorism as a criminal offence, counter-terrorism and freedom of expression, the relationship between terrorism and criminal law governing the right to interview suspects and their right to access a lawyer, maintaining human rights in cross-border counter-terrorism, the relationship between counter-terrorism policing and military detentions, and the transformation of domestic security services into intelligence and counter-terrorism agencies.

Clive Walker, Ed., *Contingencies, Resilience and Legal Constitutionalism* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2015), 162 pp., US \$ 160.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-138-89042-8.

With societies facing a spectrum of terrorist threats, the requirement by governments to upgrade their contingency planning to mitigate such risks is a top priority in national security. To address these significant issues, the contributors to this edited volume examine the legal developments in such contingency planning on a comparative basis, which concerns the relationship between law and constitutionalism, as well as relations between public and private, national and local, and civil and military. Following the editor's overview of these issues, the volume's chapters cover topics such as the contingency issues involved in responding to Anders Breivik's July 2011's lone wolf type terrorist attacks in Norway, managing civil contingencies in Australia, Canada's emergency measures legislation, the United Kingdom's Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and the governance of other emergency arrangements, risk management in United States' counterterrorism responses, as well as an assessment of effectiveness in its homeland security program. One weakness in the volume's approach is that while the subjects, as specified in the title, of contingencies and legal constitutionalism are well covered, the topic of resilience is not clearly defined and receives scant coverage. The volume's chapters were originally published as a special issue of *The International Journal of Human Rights* in February 2014. Clive Walker is Professor Emeritus of Criminal Justice Studies in the School of Law at the University of Leeds, UK.

Vicente Medina, *Terrorism Unjustified: The Use and Misuse of Political Violence* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), 280 pp., US \$ 80.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-4422-5351-3.

In this excellent and balanced analysis, the author, an associate professor of philosophy at Seton Hall University, examines the philosophical issues involved in whether it is justified or not to engage in terrorism to achieve one's objectives. He begins by explaining that "For hard-core opponents like me, terrorism is categorically wrong and, therefore, morally and legally unjustified. I view terrorism as either equivalent to murder or manslaughter in domestic law, or equivalent to crimes against humanity or war crimes in international law." (p. xi) By contrast, he adds, "apologists of terrorism, be they hard core or soft core, typically, though not necessarily, espouse a consequentialist or teleological view of morality. For them, terrorism is equivalent to homicide that can, at times, be justified. I argue, however, that apologists' arguments and reasons are insufficient to justify terrorism." (pp. xi-xii) These important issues are examined in the volume's six sections, which discuss the modern history of terrorism based on David Rapoport's four waves typology, how terrorism is defined, the approaches of what the author terms the hard core and soft core opponents and apologists of terrorism, the ambiguity of the expression "whatever it takes" and its relevance for debates about the legitimacy or illegitimacy of the resort to terrorism, and a postscript which sums up the author's views on terrorism. There is much to commend in this insightful account, including the author's working definition of terrorism as "the use of political violence by people who deliberately or recklessly inflict or threaten to inflict substantive undeserved harm on those who can be conceived of as impeccably innocent, aiming at influencing a domestic or an international audience." (p. 204)

### ***Middle East***

Michael Kerr and Craig Larkin, Eds., *The Alawis of Syria: War, Faith and Politics in the Levant* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2015), 384 pp., US \$ 50.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-0-19-045-811-9.

With the Syrian civil war continuing to rage into its fifth year, it is crucial to understand the history and nature of the conflict's warring sides. The contributors to this edited volume shed important light on the

Alawi minority, the country's rulers. The book's chapters, which are written by leading experts, cover topics such as the history of the Alawis during the Ottoman and French Mandatory periods, the role of the Alawis in the ruling Ba'ath Party regime, the conflict between the Alawis and the country's Muslim Brotherhood, the geographical location of the Alawis in the country's coastal and interior regions, patronage and clientelism in Bashar al-Assad's government, the presence of some Alawis in the Syrian opposition, and the Alawi-dominated regime's responses to the current uprising and insurgency against its continued rule. The editors are professors at the Institute of Middle Eastern Studies at King's College London, UK.

Avi Melamed, *Inside the Middle East: Making Sense of the Most Dangerous and Complicated Region on Earth* (New York, NY: Skyhorse Publishing, 2016), 392 pp., US \$ 26.99 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-63450-572-7.

This is an interesting and sweeping account of significant political trends in the Middle East by a former senior official in the Israeli government on Middle East strategic intelligence. The book's chapters cover the drivers of these trends such as the Arab Spring, militant Islam and al Qaida post-Usama bin Laden, the rise of ISIS, the Iranian-Arab power struggle, the war in Syria, the future of the monarchic regimes, the failure of the West to influence developments in the Middle East, the rise of the Internet as a major regional force for change, and future trends in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Among the author's numerous insights is his proposal for an 'out-of-the-box' solution to the current stalemate in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: "the creation of an interim triangular Palestinian-Egyptian-Jordanian confederation that would be a temporary member of the Gulf Cooperation Council and have a seat in the Arab League. The confederation, in conjunction with the GCC, would authorize a representative body to negotiate with Israel." (271) With Saudi Arabia edging closer to Israel in the diplomatic realm, such a proposal might have some geo-strategic weight, although, as the author notes, such an alliance would have to obtain Israeli concessions on further construction of Jewish settlements in the West Bank and "the broadening of Palestinian control in other areas in the West Bank." (p. 272)

Madawi al-Rasheed, *Muted Modernists: The Struggle over Divine Politics in Saudi Arabia* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2015), 224 pp., US \$ 55.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-0-1904-9602-9.

This book aims to highlight what the author characterizes as "a certain intellectual mutation that has been fermenting amongst a minority of Saudi Islamists, referred to here as modernists. This modernism corresponds to what Muhammad Qasim Zaman defines as an attempt to 'rethink Islamic norms, reinterpret foundational Islamic texts, and reform particular Muslim institutions in ways that aim to align them more closely with both the spirit of Islam and current needs and sensibilities of society.'" (p. 1) This is accomplished through an analysis of textual and oral sources produced by a selected number of leading Islamist *ulama* and intellectuals who the author explains "are either in prison, banned from travel, or expecting harsh punishment for thinking and writing," (p. ix) such as members of the Saudi Association for Civil and Political Rights (HASM), Sheikh Salman al-Awdah, Abdullah al-Maliki, Muhammad al-Abd al-Karim, and Muhammad al-Ahmari. Although one may not necessarily agree with the author's position that "readers must be warned that it would be counterproductive to impose Western meaning of modernism on this group of writers," (p. 159) since, at least in this reviewer's opinion, 'Western modernity is modernity' (i.e., secularism, pluralism and democracy) and if one disagrees with it, then they are opposed to such concepts, which is their right, but then they cannot twist this notion out of its original meaning. Nevertheless, this book is a major contribution to understanding the importance of such 'Islamist modernists,' since, at the very least, they are attempting, as the author points out, to propose "real political reform" in Saudi Arabia in contradistinction to the Saudi leadership or the 'Salafi constituency' that have not "produced a reform agenda that is worth considering the future of the country." (p. 163) Madawi al-Rasheed is Visiting Professor at the Middle East Centre, London School of Economics and Political Science and Research Fellow at the Open Society Foundation.

Paul Aarts and Carolien Roelants, *Saudi Arabia: A Kingdom in Peril* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press/London, England, UK: Hurst & Company, 2015), 288 pp., US \$ 35.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-84904-465-3. Please note that a paperback edition is scheduled to be published by Hurst & Company in October 2016.

This is an excellent account of whether the latest political and socio-economic trends affecting the Saudi Arabian monarchy, regionally and internally, are likely to result in peaceful stability or revolutionary change. As the authors write, “The aim of this book is to consider all sides of this question by looking at a number of potential scenarios, ranging from that of business-as-usual to a complete break with the existing order.” (p. 3) This is accomplished by examining the relationship between the country’s clergy and the royal family, the role of oil in the country’s economy and the impact of the drop in oil prices on future economic development programs, whether the ruling elite will be able to manage the “soaring ambitions” of the country’s “new generation” of educated technocrats and professional classes, the changing roles of women in society, the role of social media in exposing younger generations to new ways of thinking, trends in the protest by the country’s marginalized Shiite minority, how the regime has succeeded so far in blunting the impact of the Arab Spring on Saudi society, and likely succession to the country’s aging ruler. In the concluding chapter the authors present five alternative future scenarios: muddling through, social explosion, reforms – the king’s dilemma, severe repression, and total implosion. They conclude that while “total implosion” is “very unlikely...in the long run a combination of factors such as we have described above can easily come about. It is no more unlikely than that the Saudi dynasty will survive forever. Few experts foresaw the fall of the Berlin Wall, or that of the shah of Iran or of Hosni Mubarak. The fall of the House of Saud is certainly no foregone conclusion, but the ingredients for an upheaval of this kind are certainly present.” (pp. 139-140) It is such insights that make this book invaluable for understanding the likely future of the Saudi Kingdom – one of the Middle East’s most significant countries. Paul Aarts teaches International Relations at the University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Carolien Roelants is senior Middle East editor at the Dutch daily newspaper *NRC Handelsblad*.

Yossi Alpher, *Periphery: Israel’s Search for Middle East Allies* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), 196 pp., \$36.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-4422-3101-6.

This is a comprehensive and authoritative examination of what the author terms “the periphery doctrine” in the evolution and implementation of Israel’s overall national security strategy. Within this context, the “periphery” refers to Israel’s dealings with Iran, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Morocco, the Kurds of Northern Iraq, and others. The current ramifications of these dealings include Israel’s response to the Arab Spring, and the reaction by Arab states, such as Jordan (and the Palestinians) towards Israel. The author concludes that while the original periphery doctrine was “broadly successful,” “Today’s challenges require the display of similar capabilities on Israel’s part. Its current performance falls disappointingly short of Ben Gurion’s standard.” (p. 147) Although this book was published prior to Israel’s recent diplomatic re-engagement with Turkey and, at least, what is reported to be a largely behind-the-scenes diplomatic and military engagement with Saudi Arabia, this account provides a valuable context for understanding how Israel’s “periphery doctrine” still plays a significant role in its foreign relations with such nations. The author is a prominent Israeli national security expert.

Ehud Eilam, *Israel’s Way of War: A Strategic and Operational Analysis, 1948-2014* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2015), 208 pp., \$35.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-4766-6382-1.

This is an expert account by a former civilian researcher for the Israeli military of how Israel has dealt with “high-intensity, hybrid and low-intensity wars” since 1948. Beginning with an account of Israel’s national strategy and combat doctrine and how they apply to the different categories of wars it has faced, the chapters cover topics such as Israel’s campaigns in the Gaza Strip in 1956, 1967, 2008-2009, and 2014; Israel’s fight

against the “hybrid” PLO and Hizballah adversaries; and how Israel’s military strategy and doctrine resemble those of Western states. Also discussed is a comparison of the United States intervention in Vietnam and the Israeli-Hizballah war in the 1990s and a comparison between Israel and the Western intervention in Libya in 2011. The author concludes that “Israel survived the era of high intensity wars, but only time will tell if it can deal with the ongoing pressure of hybrid/low-intensity wars, not only in the military arena but also in the political, economic and social ones.” (p. 179)

Gregory S. Mahler, *Politics and Government in Israel: The Maturation of a Modern State* [Third Edition] (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), 496 pp., \$120.00 [Hardback], \$49.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-4422-6536-3.

This is the third edition of the author’s comprehensive and detailed textbook on the origin, evolution, and current situation of Israel’s politics, government, and foreign policy. Beginning with an introductory overview of the study of Israeli politics in a comparative context, the succeeding chapters discuss the historical setting for the country’s political system (including Zionism and the Jewish religion); the roles and functions of the governmental institutions, including political parties and the electoral system; and the nature of the country’s foreign policy, including the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the peace process. The author is Vice President for Academic Affairs, Academic Dean, and Professor of Politics at Earlham College, in Richmond, Indiana.

Avi Shilon, *Ben-Gurion: His Later Years in the Political Wilderness* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), 282 pp., \$45.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-4422-4946-2.

This is an extensively researched, highly detailed, and authoritative examination of the political career of David Ben-Gurion – the dominant political figure, following the First World War, in spearheading Israel’s independence in May 1948, and serving as its prime minister for most of the period until the mid-1960s. The book’s first part focuses on the period that led to his political decline in the years of 1963 to 1970, and, in the second part, on the years from 1970 until his death on December 1, 1973. The author, an Israeli journalist, is also a postdoctoral fellow at the Israel Institute – Taub Center for Israel Studies at New York University.

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