

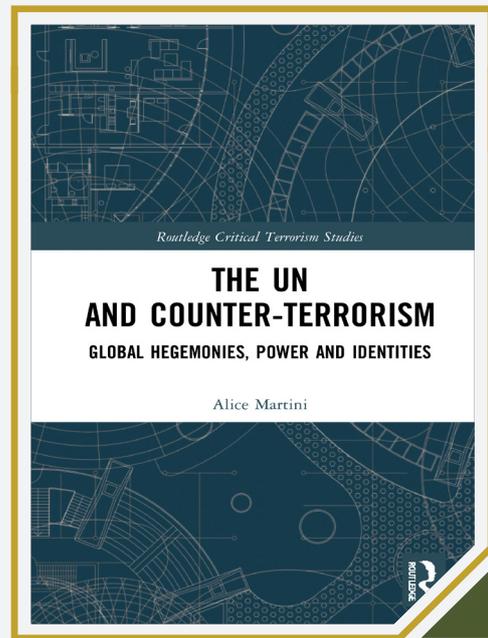
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BOOK REVIEW



THE UN AND COUNTERTERRORISM GLOBAL HEGEMONIES, POWER AND IDENTITIES

ALICE MARTINI

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Book Review

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Book Review

THE UN AND COUNTERTERRORISM GLOBAL HEGEMONIES, POWER AND IDENTITIES

This book examines the Security Council's efforts to combat terrorism and the methods used to eradicate extremism and terrorism as a threat to global peace and security, as well as the extent to which the council's actions have been successful in curbing this phenomenon and its consequences.

Alice Martini objects to the Security Council's definition of terrorism as it reveals the depth of the great powers' global hegemony and the power relations that make up and control the international community. The book aims to demonstrate this hegemony by analytically evaluating the UN organization, starting from the mid-twentieth century as well as its nature, peculiar identity, powers, and recent advancements made to it. Martini therefore explores the Council's war on terrorism as part of a larger international strategy, explaining how legitimization of the new world order, which was announced by former US President George W. Bush Sr., was propagated worldwide.

Comprehensive Outlook

This book is a significant reference for critical and terrorism studies, security studies, global governance, and international relations students. The writer enquires into the conditions that led to the creation of a worldwide “scarecrow”, in the form of terrorism, by the international community as well as the power relationships that produced the common identity of the hegemonic states, demonstrating the globalization of international power. The book presents a full summary and analysis of the United Nations’ legal resolutions on terrorism, as well as a critical reading of these resolutions and how they have contributed to knowledge production, with a view to consideration of the Council’s actual contribution to the battle against terrorism and the challenges it faces.

On September 12, 2001, the United Nations Security Council convened an emergency meeting to discuss the horrific attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon in New York, which killed approximately three thousand people, and the Council announced its intention to use all available means to combat threats to international peace and security, as well as the willingness of member states to take prompt necessary action. All of the decisions reached in this case were documented in an official memorandum signed by the members.

Two months later, the Council met again to declare, in accordance with the United Nations Charter, that the new global terrorism is one of the most dangerous existential threats of the twenty-first century, emphasizing its unequivocal rejection of all terrorist acts and condemnation of criminal practices in any country. This marked the start of the Security Council’s global battle against terrorism.

On September 24, 2014, the Security Council reaffirmed its commitment to “comprehensive efforts to combat this scourge at the global level,” warning that terrorism remains a serious threat to international peace and security. The Council expressed grave concern about the rise in terrorist crimes, which have become more bloody and brutal, particularly with the exacerbation of crises and civil wars in various parts of the world, including crimes provoked by fanaticism, extremism, discrimination and religious and tribal conflicts. The Council emphasized the need of great countries to cooperate in combating all forms of violent extremism that could lead to terrorism, as well as limiting ideological extremism and attempts to recruit people into terrorist groups and bolstering cooperative and serious efforts in this area.

The UN condemned the activities of the so-called terrorist “ISIS” and al-Qaeda organisations in Iraq and Syria, warned against their repeated criminal acts, and expressed grave concern about the spread of extremist and violent ideology around the world, as well as the rise in the number of sympathizers with these groups. ISIS could recruit tens of thousands of people from Europe, America, and Islamic countries in the Middle East. As a result, the Council rejected any and all forms of support given to these suspected organisations or movements, as well as all types of terrorism.

These solemn attitudes and firm resolutions reflect the Security Council’s approach to the issue and its determination to combat the new wave of terrorism since the early 2000s. The international community’s interest in violent extremism, according to the writer, stems from the fact that it poses the biggest threat to international peace and security. It represents the Council’s unwavering commitment to addressing this global menace with all available resources.

Many of the forces that contributed to shaping the battle against violent extremism and terrorism, including the urgent need to be harsh on a number of groups including ISIS and Al-Qaeda, the Somali Youth Movement, and Boko Haram, are revealed in official UN policies and pronouncements. The UN also emphasized the importance of limiting these groups’ activity in the Middle East and Africa, preventing them from launching attacks in other countries or attempting to recruit young people. The Security Council’s statements confirm that terrorist groups have grown more numerous and dangerous in recent years, that the global war on terrorism has not ended, and that terrorism remains a pressing issue, necessitating the full cooperation of all countries in combatting it.

Resolutions of the Security Council have become a crucial founding nucleus in the battle against terrorism, lending international legitimacy to counter-terrorism efforts. The UN has provided cogent understanding of the evolution of global interaction in the fight against terrorism over the years, as terrorism has allured new, broader, and deeper groups involved in extremist and violent ideologies, as well as individuals or groups believing in violence and using it as a means of achieving their goals. The UN resolutions on this matter, on the other hand, illustrate the struggle of the Council’s member states among themselves and with other governments, particularly non-permanent states, which may reject their legislation regarding counter-terrorism.



Over the course of ten years, acts of global terrorism remain the greatest threat to international peace and security, and the Council is still developing its capabilities to meet contemporary and future challenges of this despicable phenomenon.

Contents

The book is divided into six chapters that provide a profound narrative map and an in-depth examination of the ways in which the Security Council addresses the problem of extremism and the developments in its anti-terrorist campaign. The writer focuses on comprehending and analyzing the topic in its entirety, based on a mutual foundational relationship between all parties involved, without overlooking other areas that frame and influence the production of extremism and terrorism-related knowledge.

Martini asserts that the discourse on terrorism is multifaceted, intersecting with a variety of social, political, and legal issues. The Security Council's scholarship in this domain is in a permanent relationship with knowledge developed outside of it; it is a reciprocal and continual process of influence. For example, some governments consider groups and movements like Hamas, Hezbollah, and the erstwhile Irish Republican Army to be terrorists, whereas others consider them liberation or resistance movements.

The first chapter presents a theoretical analysis of official discourses on terrorism and examines the establishment of the identities and power relations that dominate the international community before going into the

historical evolution of the Security Council's war against terrorism. This is essential for experts' understanding of the international community, as well as the codification of counter-terrorism discourses and practices, or what the writer refers to as "the global system for fighting terrorism," emphasizing the importance of establishing concepts and terminology in this fight because laws and decisions are formulated as a result of interactions between the great powers that make up and control the international community and the Security Council.

The **second chapter** examines the techniques used by the international community in its battle against terrorism, as well as the global changes that have influenced the international community's view of terrorist threats and the Council's attempts to resist them. The chapter also explores the international community's class composition and power balances, elucidating the council's possibilities and social, historical, and political options, as well as the impact of conflict of interests and political disagreements on states' perceptions of terrorism.

In the **third chapter**, the writer discusses the evolution of the Security Council's war on terrorism, the emergence of the new world order in the first decade of the twenty-first century, the development of this system, the extent of its cooperation in confronting this destructive phenomenon, the conditions necessary for its success, the Security Council's interpretation of the 11/9 Attacks of 2001 and its constant assertion that it is a new security crisis. The chapter also examines the dialectical relationship between the new threat of international terrorism and the symbolic construction of



political violence; i.e., violence perpetrated by non-governmental activist groups that are motivated by a specific ideology but never fall into the terrorist category. According to Martini, this violence occurs as a result of the international community's power relations and the balances that follow from the hegemonic global power. In the **fourth chapter**, the writer discusses the main concepts of terrorism, their stability, the official policies of the Security Council, the common constitution that governs member states, and the Council's subsequent configuration in its efforts to combat terrorism. The rhetorical aspects of the terrorist threat, the generic reliance of this discourse on violence, which could pose a challenge to world powers, and the proper measures to prevent politicizing or demonizing these judgements and laws are also discussed. In order to legitimate specific international relations, the chapter discusses the forces that influence the creation of the international community and the reasons for this formation.

In the **fifth chapter**, the writer discusses the Security Council's final stage of development in light of the challenges of the twenty-first century, as well as how it deals with new security crises, such as the emergence of the terrorist organisations ISIS and its declaration of an alleged caliphate, the influx of foreign fighters joining it, and the impact of current pressing events on the way the Council responds to these issues, paying particular attention to the impact of current events on the way the Council responds to these issues. The chapter traces the Council members' agreement with its policies, what motivates new members to adopt new visions, ongoing changes in the global order, the political ramifications of developing new strategies to combat terrorism and

prevent fundamentalism and extremism, and the international community's constituent power relationships. The book offers a novel and comprehensive understanding of terrorist threats, as well as how to integrate the global system to countering terrorism at the state's internal and external levels. All political, social, international, and local domains, according to Martini, must be viewed from within the framework of security. Martini wraps up the discussion by reviewing the Security Council's historical development and the significant movements that have emerged throughout its battle against terrorism.

The **sixth chapter** explains the political differences and conflicts surrounding the concept of terrorism, and how some of these conflicts are inherited from the development of different understandings of terrorism, particularly in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks. The chapter demonstrates the inconsistency in describing and understanding terrorism, as well as the impossibility of establishing a unified worldwide system to combat it, in the absence of international agreement on a clear and explicit definition of the threat's nature.

Structural Readings of the Threat

This book attempts to explain the evolution of the UN Security Council's international struggle against extremist organisations from the turn of the century to the year 2019. Through a precise chronological order, it focuses on the contributions of key countries that provided the Security Council with the authority required to fight terrorism on a broad scale. However, the Council was unable to obtain comprehensive consensus on some aspects of terrorism, such as its definition, sanctions, priorities, steps, procedures, and techniques.

Since the late 1990s and the beginning of this century, the international community has decided to combat a common adversary that lacked a clear structure or a definite description but had a catchy name: terrorism. At the time, the international community was unable to provide a clear and accurate description of this enemy, agree on a single approach to combat it, or distinguish between terrorist activities that must be resolutely fought and hostile acts that are not characterized by terrorism. As a result, the book tries to deconstruct the Security Council's understanding of terrorism, with a particular focus on global power relations, before distinguishing between terrorism and binding resolutions on the one hand, and the interests of the international community fighting terrorism on the other. The creation, continuity, and transformation of the Council's global war against terrorism depend on global hegemonic relations, according to the Martini.

Martini highlights the structural and post-structural components of terrorism, particularly the critical features of security and terrorism in international relations. Structuralism is a research method based on the study of the interrelationships between the essential parts that make up abstract, mental, linguistic, social, or cultural structures. It applies to a variety of scientific areas. It refers to a collection of theories in various disciplines and fields, connoting that the structural ties between ideological terms vary depending on language or culture, and that these structural relationships may be exposed and examined. Structuralism is thus an interdisciplinary academic approach that investigates the internal relationships between the fundamental aspects of language, literature, and various components of culture.

It is also characterized as a system made up of various aspects in which each change in one of these elements causes changes in others, thus socially and behaviorally framing the themes, concepts, objects, and interpretative behaviours. Terrorism studies can be examined as social constructs based on actors' perceptions, interpretations, and representations of the risks they confront, thanks to structuralist thinking. The writer seeks to clarify the uncertainty surrounding terrorist research, which can appear objective at times.

Structuralists are interested in the historical processes that produce norms, beliefs, and values, as well as how people perceive these dangers, while studying international terrorism. The writer points out that structuralists revealed the concept of security's subjective nature and entity, both historically and politically, in her study of their methods and how they explain it. For example, Kenneth Waltz emphasized the importance of structuralism and its impact on state behaviour and on

simulating security responses in international politics. Nonetheless, structuralists added to prior assessments by focusing on the structural and contingent nature of threat perception, as well as the historical and political processes that shape it and the intellectual aspects that support it.

The author does not deal with terrorism as a stable and existentially independent phenomenon, but rather as a form of political violence, maintaining that what some countries see as dangerous terrorism that must be combated and eliminated, other countries may see as crime or political violence that does not amount to a security priority. Therefore, understanding terrorism remains linked to historical, social and political causes, and depends on discourses and knowledge that are often politicized.

The book draws on a variety of terrorism research and readings to derive three key approaches to comprehending the phenomenon:

The first is the Security Council's and international community's rhetorical production of terrorist discourse. Martini discusses how violence is portrayed, the amount to which it has evolved over time, and the impact of proactive counter-terrorism efforts, a fact which has resulted in the emergence of practices that reproduce discourses. Politics and the real response to it are inextricably linked, and they cannot be separated.

Second, stabilizing the threat environment within the Council, establishing official bodies, and passing deterrent laws to deal with terrorism, as outlined in the recognized international strategy to combat terrorism. Part of the book looks at state official discourses, intellectual views, and behavioural actions, and tries to figure out how these visions are related.

The rhetorical formulation of terrorist threats is concerned with the international community's identity and state in the first decade of the twenty-first century, as well as the conditions that have been put in place to create stability and combat extremist violence, particularly in relation to religions. The book claims that the international community's interest in extreme religious groups reflects the shared characteristics and priorities of the members who dominate it and are represented by the Security Council. The underlying categories of terrorism and the international community have been established as a result of this structure; they are defined in broad hierarchies, international power relations, and balances between great countries. While some experts believe that a number of Islamic extremist groups provide an international concern, the Council continues to believe that the majority of violent Aryan organisations do not pose a global terrorist threat.

General Threats

This book is highly relevant to international relations and international security studies. The structure of the central concerns in international relations in the twenty-first century, which sparked worries comparable to those that followed the events of the first and second world wars and attracted attention back to the central role of war and peace, is vital to the argument of the book. During the Cold War, the International Space Station and its sub-field were used as a means of balancing forces in the then bipolar world, and the Station's efforts focused on nuclear deterrence, military responses, and strategic moves in order to maintain international peace and balance; it was because of these elements that Stephen Walt defined international security studies as "the study of the global threat to international balance and the use of military force to impose peace."

Studies on international peace and security impacted international relations studies. The absence of direct threats to the state became the definition of security. To begin with, security is limited to the state and its institutions, emphasizing that the state is sovereign and accountable for its inhabitants. Second, all threats are constant occurrences that are unaffected by exterior reality interpretations. This impression is objective, according to the writer, because the struggle against any threat to the state is an objective consequence of the threat's existential status. Specialists failed to predict the collapse of the Soviet Union in the 1990s; they also failed to grapple with the new challenges posing as existential questions, and to respond to the crisis, generating temporary disarray in politics and international affairs.

New global difficulties and movements in numerous domains, such as climate change and international financial instability, are now understood as new security challenges to military and strategic conceptions, and they are classified as terrorist studies. These movements resulted in the formation of new world views, emphasizing the need to deconstruct or reconsider "reality" as an objective reality. As a result, some researchers such as Barry Buzan have thrown light on the subjective aspect of security, emphasizing that it is a multifaceted and controversial term.

The Nature of Terrorism and Security

Physical notions of reality are constructed using intellectual components such as conventions, collective meanings, and identities. Martini claims that the phenomenon of terrorism, our understanding and perception of it, and the behaviors of actors all impact one another, making it impossible to come up with a pre-

cise and agreed-upon definition of terrorism. Because intellectual frameworks are not fixed or predefined as a result of interactions and overlaps between states' policies and their understanding of how collective identities and special interests of states develop, they have an impact on state identities and interests. That is, the interests, priorities, and alliances of governments impact the definitions of terrorism and the laws that govern it. As a result, the threats that states face are subjective; they are the result of a state's or other actor's understanding and perspective.

This perception is socially and politically produced, and it dominates and dictates subsequent policies. As a result, terrorism is viewed as a social construct and development rather than a permanent, ontologically stable fact. It is a linguistic term that reproduces a certain interpretation of political violence based on ideological factors including perception, identity, and beliefs. We all make and understand terrorism because the actors and structures are linked by intellectual elements, which implies that the various definitions of terrorism correspond to the various meanings ascribed to political violence; it also implies that the behaviour of such actors influences the policies, plans, and strategies adopted by states in their fight against terrorism. Most crucially, our understanding of religious and political violence is based on potential political, historical, and social interpretations. The importance of language and official discourse in the establishment of threats, the construction of political violence, and its metamorphosis into an existential threat is underscored by the writer.

This shift creates the groundwork for structural and post-structuralist scholars to better comprehend international security, terrorism, and the social construction of reality in future. As a result of these interpretations, critical security disciplines like Complex Terrorism Studies (CTS) have emerged. The book deconstructs security discourses and practices from several disciplinary and political viewpoints.

Critical Terrorism Studies

Terrorism is a social construct; categorizing the terrorist phenomenon as such is based on state-approved hierarchical systems. Scholars of complex terrorism studies decry the underlying force that dictates a single understanding of terrorism in order to serve the interests of major countries and their dominance in the field of terrorism studies, which leads to symbolic violence against developing countries or non-influential countries, as well as inequality between them and the major countries.

Critical security studies are frequently separated into three categories based on three primary schools: the

Copenhagen, Aberystwyth, and Paris schools, though the writer opts for the Copenhagen school, which is led by prominent researchers such as Barry Buzan and Ole Weaver. Security is seen as a self-discursive process that transcends politics and criminality, detectable in an extraordinary dimension that the writer refers to as “securitization.” Security documentation is described as a discursive process concerned with a politicized occurrence in society that poses an existential threat to the state and is the first and last issue for policymakers.

The study reveals that security is a subjective process influenced by our perceptions of identity and the threats posed by certain identities within and outside society. Because of its identity, beliefs, culture, and history, society perceives an imagined threat. As a result, it repeats the state’s assessment of these concerns, claiming that they jeopardize the state’s survival and legitimacy. Terrorists and society continue to play important roles in shaping citizens’ perceptions of security. While the former conduct terrorist operations that endanger individuals’ safety, the latter maintains a political space for conflict; that is, a place of acceptance or resistance to the state’s perception. Government state entities such as the media, colleges, research centres, and official spokesmen shape the collective idea of security in this way. After society accepts the state’s perspective and its interpretation of events, it becomes easy to impose new policies and stringent regulations restricting freedom of expression and travel under the pretext of combating terrorism, with the stated objective of protecting

citizens. These laws are only passed when society is convinced of their necessity.

Critical terrorism studies are based on critical security studies that deal with the phenomenon; one of their goals is to compensate for the limitations of these studies by linking them to critical structural perspectives. Terrorism, according to experts in critical studies of terrorism, should be seen as an emergency social, political, and historical construct that may be applied to certain sorts of violence and interpreted in a variety of political, legal, and disciplinary ways.

The author argues that current terrorism studies deconstruct the discourse surrounding this phenomenon, suggesting that its restricted presence lies at the heart of legitimizing counter-terrorist measures such as passing emergency laws and enforcing severe restrictions. When someone raises concerns about the ontological and epistemological position of political violence, they are accused of rationalizing and promoting terrorism, or at the very least sympathizing with it and with terrorists.

Scholars such as Priya Dixit and Jacob Stamp, who follow the Copenhagen School’s re-understanding approach, insist on treating terrorism as pure practices, with more focus on “political violence” and everything that has a direct impact on individuals, states, regions, races, ethnicities, and religions. The writer urges the Security Council to make the most of multiple schools of thought, allowing official bodies and academics to investigate the difficulties of defining terrorism, respond-





ing to it, and determining the tools of official governance, as well as how terrorism is used to control peoples.

The UNSC and Counterterrorism

Daesh and Al-Qaeda and their affiliates still pose a significant threat to many countries, necessitating substantial international measures to combat them along established agreed-upon wide lines. Because it is an international, political, and legal body with members from all recognized governments, the UN is the most important international institution with a global presence and capacity to combat terrorism, to discuss and consult on issues that impact everyone, and to discuss and consult on acceptable solutions to such issues. Several critiques have been levelled against the UN's handling of critical topics such as global warming and the crises in Syria and Yemen. There are allegations that the USA is still the most powerful country in the world, controlling Security Council decisions and the seminal Charter of the UN. The International Organization for Migration is given a particularly global character in the founding article of the United Nations Charter, to promote peace, security, and development across the world. This international treaty has a unique status in international law, making it legally powerful in the event of a disagreement with national or regional laws, thereby affirming the UN's global power.

The UNGS, the UNGA, and the UNSC are the three main bodies of the UN. The latter is responsible for maintaining international peace and security and has the authority to determine the existence of a threat to peace and security, and to ask states parties to a conflict to settle

it through peaceful means, and to impose sanctions, up to authorizing the use of force.

The Security Council is regarded by all countries as a watchdog over global security, making it a focal point for counter-terrorism efforts worldwide. It has the authority to establish new committees and to make legally binding international resolutions, such as presidential statements and resolutions. Official declarations made by the president on behalf of the entire body are known as presidential statements. Resolutions are official and legal statements of the wishes of the members of the Security Council, and they are usually directive in character. They are passed by voting. If these resolutions are included in Chapter VII of the Security Council's formal Charter, they constitute normative obligations to be carried out by states.

The Security Council is chaired by one of its members, who selects which topics are placed on the Council's agenda. It represents all member states that agree to UN decisions and are committed to enforcing its laws. Russia, China, France, the UK, and the USA are among the 15 permanent members of the organization. The General Assembly, on the other hand, elects ten members for a two-year tenure. The permanent members also have the right of veto, which allows them to prevent laws from being passed if they contradict their visions, policies, or interests. The UN Charter's Chapter VII allows for the identification of concerns that endanger international peace and security, as well as the determination of the processes that must be implemented to address these threats. Membership in the Security

Council does not confer the authority to grant or deny consent to acts of violence, or to halt efforts aimed at countering these threats. As a result, membership confers specific authority to make binding decisions on behalf of other countries, and the Council allows member states to attend meetings, but not vote, if the state is a party to a dispute under consideration, or if the issue discussed in the body is of particular importance.

This liveliness influenced the meetings to debate terrorism, which drew a significant number of participants, and it was a key component in the fight against it. The Commission may invite the Secretary-General, special rapporteurs, heads of specialized committees, and experts specializing in specific fields, to its meetings. Consider the following scenario: The Counter-Terrorism Meeting Series has 17 significant members. These criteria permitted more activists and actors to be invited, and they were able to contribute to the job of constructing the Council's discursive structure. The large attendance at these meetings provided further legitimacy for the implementation of enforceable norms in the name of collective action, which is a clear manifestation of these countries' and peoples' approval of anti-terrorism laws. The Council's activities are not confined to international standards. This UN body also serves as an international institution that imparts legitimacy on state actions, decisions, and actions, as well as UN policies. There appears to be a unanimous understanding of the collaborative structure of states' outlook on terrorism; the veto is never used against anti-terror decisions, which are frequently passed unanimously. The Council frequently forces its members to make binding judgements to make the fight against terrorism more institutionalized. Under the umbrella of the global system, the Security Council serves as an appropriate model for developing counter-terrorism discourse and tactics. The writer emphasizes that, while not all countries observe the Security Council's official rules and decisions, they give societal knowledge for countries and organisations interested in combating terrorism.

The Security Council has made a significant contribution to developing an international awareness of terrorism and the world's common challenges. This enables it to define global trends and strategies, determine priorities, and direct nations and other actors in the international fight against extremism and terrorism.

The Council relies on a defined normative environment and precise rules to regulate the permissible behaviour of the actors within it, implying a reciprocal and long-term connection between the Council and the actors. Although the procedures and norms are recognized by the international community as soon as they are voted on,

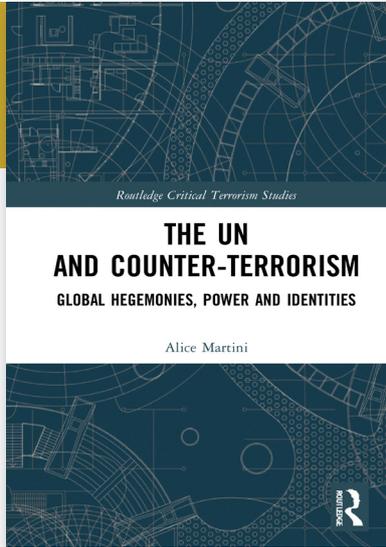
they become legally obligatory since they may restrict state movements and impose particular procedures in dealing with this occurrence. These components provide the normative background for the Security Council, as well as all global politics, allowing countries to assess the quality of other members' behaviour by establishing common horizontal subjective meanings of the Council's tradition.

These standards govern all member states' activities, allow for the evaluation of other actors' actions, and establish their validity as international players, advocates, and participants in combating terrorism. Actors were not totally free to combat terrorism outside of well-established global principles of human rights and international law, or humanitarian law, with some exceptions, such as the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. Once they took action, they had to explain this behaviour so that it would be allowed and acknowledged. However, when some countries (such as America in 2003) attempted to deviate from these rules, the Council resisted. A structural analysis of the international community's behaviour reveals how legal practices are developed, reproduced, and formulated, as well as the primary effort of the Council and the United Nations in producing and justifying them.

Conclusion

Martini opines that the objective of this book has been to draw attention to the political nature of the Security Council's creation of special bodies to combat terrorism, as well as the states contributing to the formation of the international community. Internal political difficulties are highlighted, underscoring the system's strength and adaptability, its success in overcoming internal challenges among member states, and how it has evolved while retaining the dominant states' position and interests. The writer makes the following final recommendations about the book's three key themes:

- ▶ **First**, there is a need to broaden the scope of the battle against terrorism, and for this struggle to be carried out on the ground, with a focus on combating extremism and fundamentalism, as well as potential consequences.
- ▶ **Second**, the necessity of the international community, world powers, and permanent members of the Security Council resolving side disagreements and forming meaningful counter-terrorism sub-committees.
- ▶ **Third**, the Security Council must serve as the sole official representative of the international community as well as the guardian of fundamental power relations.
- ▶ The overall goal of the book is to provide a new understanding of the power dynamics that make up the international mechanisms for combating terrorism.



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