

2006

## Asian Security Handbook: Terrorism and the New Security Environment

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### Recommended Citation

Castle, Timothy N. (2006) "Asian Security Handbook: Terrorism and the New Security Environment," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 59 : No. 1 , Article 15.  
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol59/iss1/15>

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are also sections in which such figures as Fidel Castro, Ted Koppel, and Theodore Roosevelt speak in their own words, as well as many useful graphs and tables that clearly illustrate important developments in world politics. The extensive glossary should prove very helpful.

No book, alas, is without its shortfalls, and I offer two. First, Hook works with a theme; he puts forth an argument about the current state of American affairs and shapes his textbook around it. It is an interesting theme and a good tool for learning, but because textbooks are often devoid of editorial comment, in this one argument may pass as fact. Overall, the approach is effective, but teachers will need to emphasize to their students that the book is thematic.

Second, the scholarship needs updating in certain sections—for instance, in the discussion of cognitive psychology and decision making. It is true that much of the important literature in this area is dated, and that a book of this kind should not overwhelm the student. However, more could have been done to incorporate new work.

Overall, this is one of the best texts on American foreign policy. Hook, an associate professor of political science at Kent State University, has a strong record of publication on this subject and is a veteran textbook author. This work will be of interest not only to college students but also to members of the Naval War College community. While it is not yet clear that the United States is caught in a grand paradox the likes of which Hook addresses, it is certainly a vital, even defining, theme to consider, and one that he frames effectively. Certainly, it is an issue with which

students, scholars, and policy makers will be grappling in the coming years.

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Carpenter, William M., and David G. Wienczek, eds. *Asian Security Handbook: Terrorism and the New Security Environment*. 3rd edition. New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2005. 365pp. \$84.95

In March 2005 Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld released *The National Defense Strategy of the United States of America*. In the foreword Rumsfeld sends a clear message about America's security concerns: "We live in a time of unconventional challenges and strategic uncertainty. We are confronting fundamentally different challenges from those faced by the American defense establishment in the Cold War and previous eras. The war on terrorism has exposed new challenges, but also unprecedented strategic opportunities to work at home and with allies and partners abroad to create conditions favorable to a secure international order." Indeed, as witnessed by the summer terrorist bombings in London and earlier attacks in Madrid and Bali, countering these deadly "unconventional challenges" requires imaginative thinking and expert geopolitical knowledge. *The Asian Security Handbook: Terrorism and the New Security Environment* aims to assist in meeting these challenges in the Asian setting.

*The Asian Security Handbook*, strongly reflecting the post-9/11 environment, presents a series of political and security assessments of twenty-three Asian countries. True to its subtitle, the editors

begin with an excellent chapter on terrorism, which includes thought-provoking photos, maps, and a figure depicting the “Southeast Asia terror network.” Noting that today’s threats come in a myriad of identities, Carpenter and Wiencek include insightful discussions on “security issues and trends independent of the events of September 11.” This section includes well crafted assessments on piracy, U.S.-Chinese strategic competition, and weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The detailed tables on piracy and WMD developments in Asia are also very helpful.

Our electronic media, the latest information erupting fast and furious from computers, radio, and television, create relevance and timeliness issues for any traditionally published reference material. Lengthy publication time lines and the ever-changing international situation exacerbate the problem. Here, the *Asian Security Handbook* shows both value and weakness. The chapter on terrorism addresses events well into 2004. The authors ask the right questions and present thoughtful arguments that should stand the test of time. The information in many of the country-profile chapters, written by a wide range of government, academic, and private-sector specialists, is more dated. Indeed, a quick review discloses that most of these articles are supported by sources written no later than 2003. The section on Japan has a mere two endnotes, citing publications of 2001 and 2002. Perhaps more alarming is the coverage on Singapore, which consists of only five pages of text (Brunei is allotted thirteen pages), no endnotes, and just three dated suggested readings. Surely Singapore deserves much more attention. Also, the seventeen contributing

authors, while most welcome for their diverse viewpoints, represent a wide range of writing and research abilities. The coverage on China, for example, is divided into brief, mostly unsupported statements of questionable consideration and depth. Subtitles range from “Spies” to “Farmers, Rural Areas.” (The introductory chapter’s discussion on China, although brief, is much more useful.) The style is similar to that of a U.S. Army area handbook, and there are but three endnotes; two are official U.S. government publications, the other a Chinese government website. Other country profiles, such as that on India, are more polished, scholarly, and thorough.

Is the *Asian Security Handbook* a useful reference? The U.S. national defense strategy sets forth a plan to defeat America’s adversaries by “countering ideological support for terrorism,” or CIST. CIST—and how it can be used—has quickly become a hot topic within Department of Defense professional military education circles. Clearly, academic courses that provide students with a greater knowledge of our incredibly diverse world, including relevant languages, culture, economic, and political factors, are key components in the building of sorely needed understanding and expertise. Unquestionably, Asia is a critical area for study and assessment, and the *Asian Security Handbook* provides the nonspecialist with a single reference for most of it. While the writing and timeliness are uneven, the *Asian Security Handbook* presents a starting point for those interested in studying this critically important region.

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