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behavior of rebel organizations during civil wars makes precise statistical testing of such arguments challenging. However, the author deftly leverages the comparative method to describe a logic of rebel violence in civil war that is predicated upon the management of both human and material resources. In doing so, Weinstein provides an excellent contribution to the development of the study of violent rebellion and insurgency.

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In my view, *Understanding Terror Networks* by Marc Sageman is one of the best books on terrorism published in the last 20 years. It offers everything one looks for in a serious academic work: important topic, interesting theory, high quality data, rigorous research design, insightful analysis, non-obvious findings, and significant policy implications. Best of all, *Understanding Terror Networks* is written in clear, accessible prose that ensures its message will be heard by students, scholars, and policy makers alike.

Understanding Terror Networks focuses on the development of the global (*Salafi*) Islamic *jihad*, a movement of fanatical Muslims who use violence to establish a worldwide Islamic state. It includes *al-Qaeda*, which has been at the forefront of the movement, alongside less well-known organizations, such as *Jemaah Islamiya*, which operates in Indonesia and Malaysia, and the *Groupe Islamique Armé* based in Algeria. The movement also includes individuals, like Ramzi Yousef (the 1993 World Trade Center bomber), who are not directly connected to particular organizations. The puzzle is how such a wide-ranging network of individuals and groups all committed to the violent overthrow of the international *status quo* came into existence — a significant question not just for those interested in *al-Qaeda* and its related organizations, but also for those generally interested in the origins of terrorist networks.

Sageman's thesis is that ordinary people, many of whom are not especially fervent Muslims, at least initially, are drawn into the global Islamic *jihad* through connections to others who are themselves linked to people in the larger terror network. (The *jihad*'s core emerged from the cauldron of the Afghan-Soviet war during the late 1980s.) The *jihad*'s attraction is that it provides a sense of belonging and purpose to individuals who are alienated and disconnected from their societies of origin and frustrated by continual underemployment. However, the *jihad* is not open to everyone. Only those that through luck, asso-

ciation with the right mosque, or familial bond actually came to know someone with a preexisting relationship with the *jihad* ultimately become members.

In support of this argument, Sageman examines the life-histories of 172 *mujahedin* for whom reliable information exists in the public record. The analysis of these individuals constitutes the core of the book and is where Sageman produces several of his most interesting findings. For instance, while it is widely supposed that terrorists, particularly suicide bombers, are uneducated, parochial dupes, members of the global Islamic *jihad* are frequently better educated than the average citizen and have had extensive travel experience in Western societies. Underscoring the importance of specific connections, Sageman identified only one Afghan in the *Salafi* network. Members of what became *al-Qaeda* apparently did little fraternizing with the local Afghan population during their years in that county. Similarly, despite the *jihad*'s worldwide appeal (it attracted members from five continents) relatively few of its members came from India, Bangladesh, or Turkey, irrespective of their large Muslim populations. Sageman also demolishes the public perception that citizens of Saudi Arabia were disproportionately involved in the 9/11 attacks. In fact, only three members of the leadership cluster that planned the strike were from Saudi Arabia compared with 20 (63 percent) from Egypt. Time and again what matters most is whether prospective militants were able to find a bridge to the *jihad*.

Enthusiastic as I am about this book, *Understanding Terror Networks* has some weaknesses. Although Sageman argues that the global Islamic *jihad* "is a new development in the annals of terrorism" (p. 61), his comparisons between the *jihad* and secular terrorist groups, like the German Red Army Faction, suggest more similarities than differences. Why the global Islamic *jihad* must be viewed as distinct from other terrorist movements is never entirely clear. The data generation process Sageman used to identify members of *jihad* is also a concern. The problem is not so much those he included in the study but those he did not. Many of the people released from US detention have not been subsequently prosecuted by their home governments even though they were initially suspected of being terrorists. Is Sageman's method sensitive enough to identify the members of this set that truly are members of the *jihad*? The answer to this question is unclear but significant since the addition of new case files could easily upset some of Sageman's findings given the relatively small number of jihadists in the original sample.

These issues aside, *Understanding Terror Networks* is a masterful piece of research. It is essential reading for anyone interested in the development of the most dangerous terrorist network threatening Western governments in the twenty-first century.

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