

Alicja Stańco-Wawrzyńska

War Studies University in Warsaw

& Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń (Poland)

## Can Poland Respond to the Terrorist Menace?

**Book Review: Krzysztof Masiul, *Bezpieczeństwo Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej wobec współczesnego zagrożenia terroryzmem*. Szczytno: Wydział Wydawnictw i Poligrafii Wyższej Szkoły Policji 2014 (pp. 292). ISBN 978–83–7462–414–5. Price: PLN 38.00.**

There is a great number of publications on state's security. In last years, there were few dozens of books, papers and presentations on Poland's security and the terrorism. However, part of them is based on invalid data and sources or even is not based on empirical sources at all. Moreover, there is also a group of publications which are a result of comparison of mainstream papers that offers insight into international debate with shallow critical discussion. Krzysztof Masiul's book belong to other group of publications on security issues in Poland; he not only analysed mainstream works on terrorist menaces and state's security (including Jakub Jałoszyński's, Brunon Hołyst's, Krzysztof Lidel's and Jarosław Tomaszewicz's works) but he also discussed less popular analyses. Masiul referred to both Polish and international authors who investigated Polish security from different academic perspectives: history, political science, international studies, education science, law, security and defence studies, sociology and philosophy. As a result he established an interdisciplinary and educated academic study of the issue; what is more significant – the book not only discussed scientific publications, but it also included analyses of media debates, domestic and international law, and sources published in the Internet (e.g. governmental websites, IGOs websites, professional portals and politicians' profiles in social media).

Masiul opened his book with theoretical aspects of the issue. He introduced basic terminology and typologies in security studies, what enabled him to define theoretical frameworks of factors influencing state's security policy. The author also presented the role of intergovernmental organizations and the impact of globalisation of threats. The first chapter includes also an assessment of Poland's security which discusses political, military, economic and social aspects of it.

The second chapter has a similar construction of contents. The author presented in it basic dilemmas related to defining the terrorism, its origins and classifications. This part of the book can be recognized as a reliable and critical comparison of approaches to the terrorism. However, while the part on definitions of terrorism includes both mainstream and less recognized definitions, the discussion of classifications lacks references to commonly used typologies – e.g. the author mentioned Paul Wilkinson's definition, but he did not offer his classification of terrorism. The additional value of the chapter are comments, explanatory remarks and case studies that supports the general lecture. But the most valuable part of it is analysis how the decomposition of the bipolar international system has influenced development of contemporary terrorism – yet, it is surprising that in this part the author did not refer to well-known book *Terroryzm w świecie podwubiegunowym. Przewartościowania i kontynuacje* (Bolechów, 2003). The chapter also includes an analysis of real and possible (future) terrorist menaces in Poland, but it mostly focuses on international terrorism as Poland is the part of anti-terrorist coalition and the member of Western political alliances. The last part of it is brief information on attempts of terrorist attacks in Poland and suspicions of terrorist activities in the country.

The third chapter discusses international aspects of the war on terrorism. The author deeply analysed how membership in the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the European Union, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe shaped conditions of struggle against terrorist organizations. The study is mostly based on original sources: international agreements and acts, leaders' public speeches, documents published on websites and professional reports (including legal analyses). Moreover, the author presented few valuable case studies of anti-terrorist operations in other countries. This analysis is also frameworks for the last chapter of book which discusses involvement of Poland in the struggle against international terrorism.

The last chapter is a detailed and educated analysis of Poland's role in the war on terror. At the very beginning of it, Masiul specified levels on which a government is able to conduct anti-terrorist operations; he discussed strategic level, operational level, tactical level, application of legal instruments and an education as a counteraction.

The last aspect of it is currently recognized as a reason for changing educational curricula. In this context, the author referred to Jerzy Szafrński's study on a stage of preparation of Polish forces' officials to respond to anti-terrorist threats. However, as the author stated the study did not delivered expected results, but it only showed future fields of improvement. The chapter also includes a part on the role of Poland in the international security system, in which Masiul described political statement of the government, participation in the international anti-terrorist coalition and possible impact of international actions on internal security of Poland. Finally, in the conclusion the author discussed various aspects of state's security and he offered guidelines for policy-makers which may improve Poland's security and increase protection against terrorist menaces in practice.

The book shows practical approach of the author who cooperates with the Polish Police Academy in Szczytno. His theoretical analyses were always supported by empirical data and valuable case studies. Masiul often discussed weak spots of security system, threats which are results of specific actions (as the membership in the NATO) or necessities of changes and improvements. In this context, the position has to be recognised as interesting, valuable and more informative than purely theoretical studies. Moreover, the author presented deepened knowledge of the subject and professional approach to analyses and comparisons. As a result the book is an interdisciplinary discussion which offers various insights into the issue of terrorist menaces in Poland. Also, the author tried to establish prognoses and forecasts with reference to experiences of other countries. On the one hand, it is one of the most valuable aspects of the position, but on the other hand, we should question if political, military and economic situation of Poland and discussed countries allows researchers to draw similarities.

The reviewed book is one of the most valid Polish positions of the nation's security in the specific context of the terrorism. It offers different academic and professional perspectives, it presents actual problems and challenges in security policy-making. Moreover, it discusses foreign cases and on their bases it compares Polish system with national systems in countries more experienced in the struggle against terrorist organizations. The book is useful and valuable source for academics interested in Poland's security, but – what is even more important – it is a priceless handbook for university students with different majors: security and defence studies, political science or law. And it should be strongly suggested for all who are (or will be) responsible for the nation's security, including servicemen and police officers.

**References:**

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**Author**

Mrs Alicja Stańco-Wawrzyńska

War Studies University in Warsaw, Department of Information Security & Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Department of Journalism and Social Communication. Contact details: ul. S. Batorego 39L, 87–100 Toruń, Poland; e-mail: stanco.wawrzynska@gmail.com.