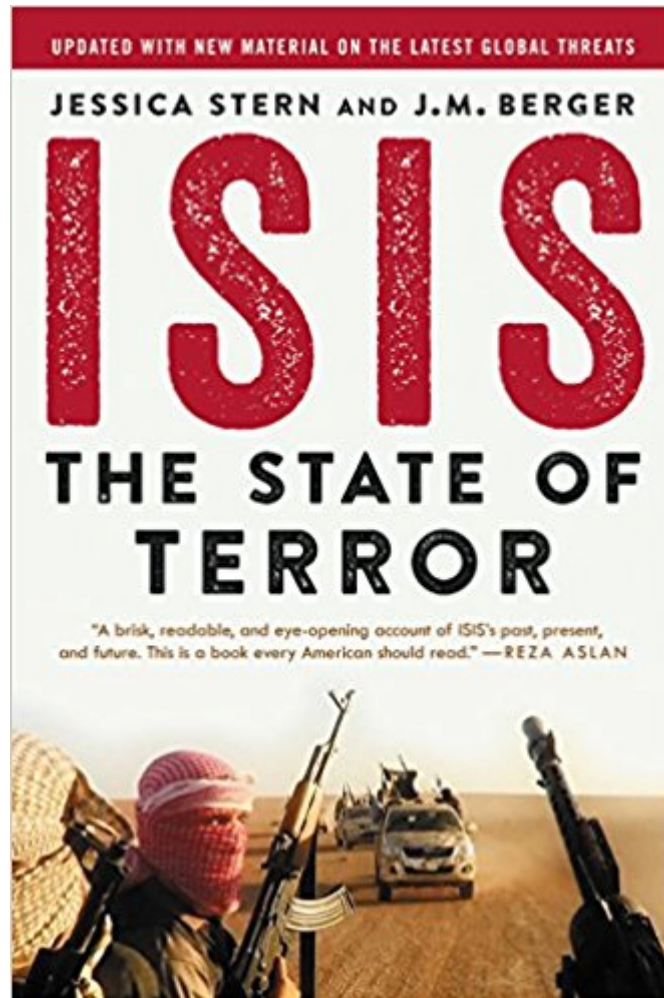




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ISIS: The State Of Terror



Synopsis

The Islamic State, known as ISIS, exploded into the public eye in 2014 with startling speed and shocking brutality. It has captured the imagination of the global jihadist movement, attracting recruits in unprecedented numbers and wreaking bloody destruction with a sadistic glee that has alienated even the hardcore terrorists of its parent organization, al Qaeda. Jessica Stern and J.M. Berger, two of America's leading experts on terrorism, dissect the new model for violent extremism that ISIS has leveraged into an empire of death in Iraq and Syria, and an international network that is rapidly expanding in the Middle East, North Africa and around the world. *ISIS: The State of Terror* traces the ideological innovations that the group deploys to recruit unprecedented numbers of Westerners, the composition of its infamous snuff videos, and the technological tools it exploits on social media to broadcast its atrocities, and its recruiting pitch to the world, including its success at attracting thousands of Western adherents. The authors examine ISIS's predatory abuse of women and children and its use of horror to manipulate world leaders and its own adherents as it builds its twisted society. The authors offer a much-needed perspective on how world leaders should prioritize and respond to ISIS's deliberate and insidious provocations.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Among my frequent, and just as oft dismissed, complaints to my wife has been the lack of a scholarly work on the Islamic State. Jessica Stern and J.M. Berger have filled a significant void in the literature with their impressive and comprehensive offering, *ISIS: The State of Terror* (I loathe

the poor translation this acronym represents, but the authors justify their use of it). Though a bit uneven in the middle, the book begins and ends powerfully and leaves the reader fully informed on the roots and history of the Islamic State (IS). Additionally, they offer a series of suggestions on countering the messaging of the self-styled Caliphate. The book is an impressive collection of sources that will enrich any reader who wants to understand and overcome the phenomenon represented by Al-Qaeda (AQ) and the IS. The authors begin with the beheading of James Foley and subsequent shattering of the â œjayveeâ • reputation of the IS and conclude the introduction with their explanation on the use of ISIS as the acronym throughout the book. Chapter One focuses on Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI). The authors detail the humble and surprising beginnings of Zarqawi through his rise to power and pseudo-alliance with Al-Qaeda Central (AQC) in Afghanistan. The authors outline the ideology behind the group and its takfiri (declaring others apostates) ideology. AQI died with its creator and the IS rose from the ashes. Chapter Two chronicles the rise of the so-called state to include theological influences and the role of the Syrian conflict in solidifying the fledgling insurgency with dreams of claiming the mantle of Caliphate. Chapter Three winds the clock back and details the rise of AQC after the end of the Russian efforts in Afghanistan.

"ISIS: the State of Terror" is a good book about the hideous mutation of al-Qa'ida in Iraq that the so-called "Islamic State" happens to be. This said, I have to disagree with the sentiment of at least one other review-here here that it is an "authoritative" work about this murderous group. Rather, it is a book that is authoritative on certain aspects of ISIS:-the ideology of the group is thoroughly detailed-the millenarian aspects of the group as discussed in the book are very helpful and informative-the social network "marketing strategy" of ISIS is exhaustively covered (almost too much)-there is a very well-written appendix that will provide readers who do not know much about Islam and its relationship to this particular terrorist group with a good grounding about that topic. One thing in particular I thought was thought provoking was the proposition that unlike al-Qa'ida, ISIS does not market itself as the avenger of the weak Islamic community (the "ummah"). Rather, ISIS presents itself and its "caliphate" in war-torn Syria and Iraq as an expression of Muslim strength and victory. But like other reviewers have noted, the book lacks depth on a number of areas:-There is little discussion of events on the battlefield...in particular, the stunning successes the group enjoyed in 2014.-The book lacks substantive discussion of key personalities and leaders in ISIS apart from its self-proclaimed "caliph.

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