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Authors	Ventura, André Claro Amaral
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The main objective of this thesis is the critical analysis of the evolution of the criminal justice systems throughout the past decade, with special attention to the fight against transnational terrorism.

It is evident – for any observer - that such threats and the associated risk that terrorism entails, has changed significantly throughout the past decade. This perception has generated answers – many times radical ones – by States, as they have committed themselves to warrant the safety of their populations and to ease a growing sentiment of social panic.

This thesis seeks to analyse the characteristics of this new threat and the responses that States have developed in the fight against terrorism since 9/11, which have questioned some of the essential principles and values in place in their own legal systems. In such sense, freedom and security are placed into perspective throughout the analysis of the specific antiterrorist legal reforms of five different States: Israel, Portugal, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

On the other hand, in light of those antiterrorist reforms, it will be questioned if it is possible to speak of the emergence of a new system of criminal justice (and of a process of a convergence between common law and civil law systems), built upon a control and preventive security framework, significantly different from traditional models.

Finally, this research project has the fundamental objective to contribute to a better understanding on the economic, social and civilization costs of those legal reforms regarding human rights, the rule of law and democracy in modern States