



Talibanistan: Negotiating the Borders Between Terror, Politics, and Religion

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The longest war the United States has ever fought is the ongoing war in Afghanistan. But when we speak of "Afghanistan," we really mean a conflict that straddles the border with Pakistan--and the reality of Islamic militancy on that border is enormously complicated.

In *Talibanistan*, an unparalleled group of experts offer a nuanced understanding of this critical region. Edited by Peter Bergen, author of the bestselling books *The Longest War* and *The Osama Bin Laden I Know*, and Katherine Tiedemann, these essays examine in detail the embattled territory from Kandahar in Afghanistan to Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province and Federally Administered Tribal Areas. They pull apart the distinctions between the Taliban and al Qaeda--and the fractures within each movement; assess the effectiveness of American and Pakistani counterinsurgency campaigns; and explore the pipeline of militants into and out of the war zone. Throughout, these scrupulously researched studies challenge convenient orthodoxies. Counterterrorism expert Brian Fishman criticizes the customary distinction between an Afghan and Pakistani Taliban as being too neat to describe their fragmented reality. Hassan Abbas paints a subtle portrait of the political and religious forces shaping the insurgency in the Northwest Frontier Province, uncovering poor governance, economic distress, and resentment of foreign troops in nearby Afghanistan. And Peter Bergen and Katherine Tiedemann try to identify the real numbers of drone strikes and victims, both militants and civilians, while disputing claims for their strategic effectiveness.

These and other essays provide profound new insight into this troubled region. They are required reading for anyone seeking a fresh understanding of a central strategic challenge facing the United States today.

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