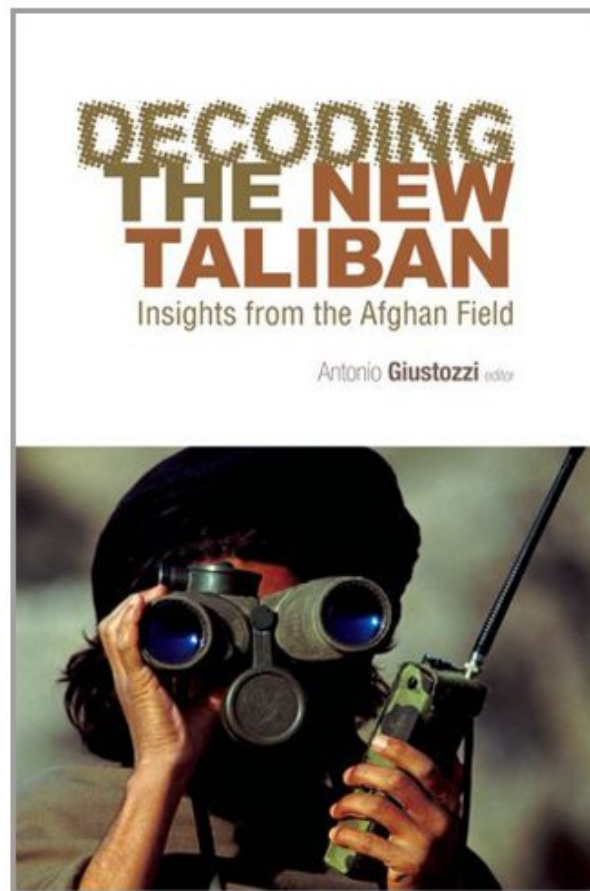


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DECODING THE NEW TALIBAN

Insights from the Afghan Field

Antonio Giustozzi editor



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Review

"An outstanding and important collection-just the sort of locally specific, openly debatable, scholarly analysis...that will be required more and more if the international community is ever to understand the insurgents....As up-to-date as scholarship can be."--Pullitzer Prize-winning journalist Steve Coll in *The New Yorker*

"Far removed from the usual clichés and hasty generalisations, *Decoding the New Taliban* offers the reader a keen, first-hand sense of field research in Afghanistan, with all its uncertainties and contradictions. The authors, working on different regions or themes, offer new data and thought-provoking analyses. This book is an important step in understanding our failure in the current war."--Gilles Dorransoro, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and author of *Revolution Unending: Afghanistan 1979 to the Present*

"Giustozzi has succeeded in drawing together an excellent collection of perceptive essays from eminent and distinguished contributors. The focus on developments in diverse Afghan localities ensures that there is much in the volume that is novel, and instructive for both specialist and general readers."--Professor William Maley, author of *Rescuing Afghanistan*

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About the Author

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While the 'New Taliban' looms large in the global media, little is known about how it functions as an organisation. How united is it? Are its structures relatively strong, or surprisingly brittle? Are personal relations and networking based on traditional ties of kin and ethnicity the sum total of its organisational capabilities, or are efforts underway to build more institutionalised chains of command? How united is the New Taliban, and how does it maintain whatever degree of unity it has, given the attrition it has suffered in the field? And to what extent is its leadership able to impose switches in strategy among the rank-and- file, given Afghanistan's difficult geography and poor communications? These are among the questions answered in this book by a renowned cast of practitioners, journalists and academics, all of whom have long field experience of the latest phase of the New Taliban's insurgency in Afghanistan. Decoding the New Taliban includes a number of detailed studies of specific regions or provinces, which for different reasons are especially significant for the Taliban and for understanding their expansion. Alongside these regional studies, the volume includes thematic analyses of negotiating with the Taliban, the Taliban's propaganda effort and its strategic vision.

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Most helpful customer reviews

7 of 8 people found the following review helpful.

Decoding the New Taliban

By DD Lawrence

This book is unique and brilliant, I haven't been able to thoroughly read the book because so many others have been borrowing the piece to use as analysis.

Anyone serving in the military and/or studying the new emerging Taliban political force, this book is a must. This book is not the same old string information, it offers a descriptive breakdown of factions.

6 of 7 people found the following review helpful.

Afghanistan Taliban 2008

By William Garrison Jr.

"Decoding the New Taliban: Insights from the Afghan Field" by Antonio Giustozzi (editor); (2009), English, hardback, 318 pgs. An anthology of 14 articles by various authors: Introduction by A. Giustozzi; (1) The Taliban and the Opium Trade by G. S. Peters; (2) Reading the Taliban [local magazines, communications, suicide attacks] by J. Nathan; (3) The Resurgence of the Taliban in Kabul: Logar and Wardak [attacks on the 275 schools] by M. O.T. Elias; (4i) Loya Paktia's Insurgency: The Haqqani Network as an Autonomous Entity by T. Ruttig; (4ii) Roots of the insurgency in the Southeast by S. Trives; (5) The Return of the Taliban in Andar District: Ghazni by C. Reuter & B. Younus; (6) the Taliban in Helmand: an oral history by T. Coghlan; (7) Unruly Commanders and Violent Power Struggles: Taliban Networks in Uruzgan by M. van Bijlert; (8) Taliban in Zabul by A.A. Zabolwal; (9) What Kandahar's Taliban Say [how to interview Taliban] by Graeme Smith; (10) The Taliban's Marches: Heart, Farah, Baghdis and Ghor by A. Giustozzi; (11) Taliban and Counter-Insurgency in Kunar by D. Kilcullen; (12) Northern Exposure for the Taliban by S. A. Moghaddam; (13) The Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan by C. Franco; & glossary. Much of the data/discussion in this book is from 2007-2008. Contains a lot of tight, relevant, informative writing - not verbose editorialization.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

A must-read

By Juanelo

I'm currently serving a 12-month tour in Afghanistan, and will return after an 18-month stateside break. I had read a few other books on the Taliban in preparation for this deployment, but this book is the best by far. I

agree with DD Lawrence's comment about it being a good source for analysts hoping to get a better understanding of this group. I wish I could read all of what was left out of the book, but I'm hoping for another one by the time I prepare for my return. I plan on purchasing a few more copies to pass out to some of my colleagues in other provinces. Strongly recommended!

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