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God's Terrorists: The Wahhabi Cult and the Hidden Roots of Modern Jihad

Charles Allen

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In today's post-9/11 world, the everyday news shows us images of fanatic fighters and suicide bombers willing to die in holy war, martyrs for jihad. But what are the roots of this militant fundamentalism in the Muslim world? In this insightful and wide-ranging history, Charles Allen finds an answer in the eighteenth-century reform movement of Muhammed ibn Abd al-Wahhab and his followers--the Wahhabi--who sought the restoration of Islamic purity and declared violent jihad on all who opposed them, Moslems and pagans alike. As the Wahhabi teaching spread in the nineteenth century, first, to the Arabian peninsula, and then, to the region around the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, their followers brought with them a vicious brand of political ideology and militant conflict. The Wahhabi deeply influenced the rulers of modern Saudi Arabia and their establishment of a strict Islamic code. A more militant expression of Wahhabism took root in the mountains of Afghanistan and Pakistan, where fierce tribes have waged holy war for almost two hundred years. The ranks of the Taliban and al-Qaeda today are filled with young men who were taught the Wahhabi theology of Islamic purity while rifles were pressed into their hands for the sake of jihad. *God's Terrorists* sheds shocking light on the historical roots of modern terrorism and shows how this dangerous theology lives on today.

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