

Is This Your First War?: Travels Through the Post-9/11 Islamic World

Michael Petrou



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A leading journalist travels through the hot spots of the Middle East and Central Asia, from Pakistan and Afghanistan to Syria and Egypt.

Winner of the Ottawa Book Award for English Non-Fiction, 2013

Less than a year before 9/11, Michael Petrou trekked through al Qaeda's backyard in the Tribal Areas of Pakistan. He was back in Central Asia within weeks of the attacks – this time as a reporter, slipping into Afghanistan as rockets and tracer bullets lit up the night sky, carrying notebooks, stolen blankets, and a satellite phone.

In the decade that followed, Petrou has returned repeatedly to the greater Middle East, where political Islam, liberalism, ethnic and religious nationalism, and Western military intervention shape and batter the lives of those who live there. In the process, Petrou has established himself as one of Canada's premier foreign correspondents.

Petrou details a world in the midst of great turmoil and tells the stories of people who have long been held down by dictatorship and extremism and who are finally beginning to shake themselves free.



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