

The atrocities demonstrated the Taliban obsession with the notion that the city, with its foreign influences, is the root of all evil. **In the recently published *Taliban* the journalist Ahmed Rashid writes that because many of the Taliban are orphans of war, who have never known the company of women, they have retreated into a male brotherhood reminiscent of the Crusaders. Indeed, the most dangerous movements are often composed of war orphans, who, being unsocialized, are exceptionally brutal (the Khmer Rouge, in Cambodia, and the Revolutionary United Front, in Sierra Leone, are two examples). Of course, the longer wars go on, the more orphans are created.**

The Taliban embody a lethal combination: a primitive tribal creed, a fierce religious ideology, and the sheer **incompetence, naiveté, and cruelty that are begot by isolation from the outside world and growing up amid war without parents. They are also an example of globalization, influenced by imported pan-Islamic ideologies and supported economically by both Osama bin Laden's worldwide terrorist network** (for whom they provide a base) and a multibillion-dollar smuggling industry in which ships and trucks bring consumer goods from the wealthy Arabian Gulf emirate of Dubai (less a state than the world's largest shopping mall) through Iran and Afghanistan and on to Quetta and Karachi.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200009/kaplan-border/2>

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