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Military, Scientific, and Technological**Treading on Hallowed Ground: Counterinsurgency Operations in Sacred Spaces**

Treading on Hallowed Ground: Counterinsurgency Operations in Sacred
Spaces

Edited by C. Christine Fair and Sumit Ganguly

Oxford University Press, 2008, 240 pp. \$99.00 (paper, \$24.95)

This is a fascinating collection of case studies of instances in which regular forces have found themselves trying to cope with armed groups that have occupied holy places, mainly mosques (in Iraq, Islamabad, Kashmir, Mecca, and Thailand) but also one church (in Bethlehem) and a temple (in Amritsar, India). Because these sites are special to the local communities, putting them under siege, let alone forcing entry, is problematic. But so is allowing them to be used as sanctuaries and symbols of hostility to the regime. The case studies confirm that the authorities are obliged to show restraint, but in the end, what makes the real difference are those same basic factors of popular support and tactical acuity on which successful counter-insurgency more generally depends.

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By Lawrence D. Freedman

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