

Roads and Rivals

THE POLITICS OF ACCESS
IN THE BORDERLANDS OF ASIA

Mahnaz Z. Ispahani

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ROADS AND RIVALS

The Politics of Access in
the Borderlands of Asia

MAHNAZ Z. ISPAHANI

"What Ispahani has done is to integrate historical and contemporary theories of geopolitics, economics and sociology using the example of Southwest Asia, but drawing upon concepts pioneered by historians such as Fernand Braudel . . . I strongly recommend this book."

Geoffrey Kemp, Carnegie Endowment for
International Peace

What has happened to the "great game" in the twentieth century?

Communications—or the absence of them—have played a critical part in Central Asia's politics and development. This book looks at how land routes in some of the most inaccessible parts of Central Asia have influenced both regional and internal politics, state security and economic development across a huge swathe of territory from Afghanistan, Baluchistan and Pakistan, to the Soviet Union and China. The author offers insights into the subtle and complex interrelationship between geography, technology and the evolution of political interests and national identity. This is a book that breaks new ground.

Roads and Rivals is highly topical in today's international climate. It concerns an area of great strategic importance about which little is known. It adopts a radical new approach to an area where tension is high: because of the conflict in Afghanistan, because of Pakistan's move to acquire nuclear weapons, because of the traditional hostility between India and Pakistan, and because of the potentially volatile ethnic and sociological divisions within the region.