



THERE'S MONEY IN THIRST

What is the connection between water availability and jihadist movements?

Is marketing water a sustainable solution for the global water crisis? How is climate change shifting the way we think about water?

These are some of the questions addressed in *The Price of Thirst: Global Water Inequality and the Coming Chaos* by Karen Piper—who argues that water inequality is creating social unrest around the world. *The Price of Thirst* ominously predicted what occurred within weeks of its release, including the ISIS invasion of Iraq, California's emergency drought conditions, and Egypt's military rule. But the book also provides solutions for on-going global social crises, ultimately claiming they are inseparable from the global water crises.

CALIFORNIA

California is one of the most at-risk regions in the world for catastrophic drought. The state has implemented a system of "water banking" that has only led to greater water inequity. Allocating more water rights than it can supply, the State of California has inadvertently created a new category: "water debt," which might in fact bankrupt the state. *The Price of Thirst* examines how and why massive amounts of water have been granted to the wealthiest people in the state, while the rest of its population goes dry.

CHILE

Chile was the first country to privatize 100% of its water supplies. One company with close connections to president Augusto Pinochet was gifted monopoly control over Chile's water supplies in what is now called "the theft of the century." *The Price of Thirst* explores the impact this monopoly has had on Northern Patagonia, following a growing international protest movement against large dams and monopoly water control in this region.



SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa became a tinderbox when foreign private water companies introduced water payment meters in the country's black townships and informal areas, cutting off water for thousands of people who could not pay. *The Price of Thirst* looks at how the anti-Apartheid movement morphed into an anti-privatization movement fighting against the racist distribution of water. It also reveals how the IMF and World Bank ignored the history of racism in creating a nationwide economic model for the country, and how this process backfired.



EGYPT

The continuing state of unrest in Egypt is predicated upon unequal water access. In the wealthy suburbs, water is considered a sign of opulence, but in informal areas, drinking dirty water is often the only solution. In 2011, the country exploded into revolution due to this inequality. Yet today, water continues to flow to luxury, golf course-themed, gated communities in the suburbs after being gifted to property developers by a corrupt regime. Meanwhile, downtown Cairo has declared "a revolution of the thirsty." Until water is distributed more equitably in the country, unrest will continue, making governance unsustainable and necessitating military rule.

IRAQ

ISIS's invasion in Iraq raises questions about the vulnerability of Iraq's water systems. What will happen if Iraq's dams are taken over by jihadists? The very rise of ISIS can be linked to the reduced flow of water into Syria and Iraq caused by Turkey's Greater Anatolia Project. *The Price of Thirst* looks at the events leading up to the ISIS invasion in Iraq, including problems with water availability in both Iraq and Syria. During the coalition-led Gulf War of 1991, water facilities were attacked in Iraq and to this day have not been repaired, causing a humanitarian crisis in the country. *The Price of Thirst* examines the long history of fraud and corruption in the U.S.-led reconstruction, as well as Turkey's intransigent position on water, which have both led to the current situation.

INDIA

India is plagued with deforestation, landslides, and flooding on the one hand, and growing drought on the other. Farmers have been committing suicide at an epidemic rate due to drought, while thousands of people are killed by floods every year. Its solution has been to link all the rivers in the country through the River Interlinking Project, moving water around the country like chess pieces. *The Price of Thirst* reveals how this project will not only create an environmental refugee crisis, but also contribute to the already devastating health and water crises in India's urban areas.



The Price of Thirst: Global Water Inequality and the Coming Chaos by Karen Piper is available from University of Minnesota Press. www.upress.umn.edu • Available at better bookstores or to order call 1-800-621-2736.