

«Central Asian Studies World Wide»
Course Syllabi for the Study of Central Eurasia
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Afghanistan Background (Public Policy 2270)
Syllabus for the course offered in Spring 2002
University of California, Los Angeles
Dept. of Political Science

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POLITICAL SCIENCE 139A

AFGHANISTAN BACKGROUND

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This is a liberal-arts course directed at an audience whose future involvement with Afghanistan may be confined to that of interested observers, but could be much greater, and is in any case now indeterminate. Although as a political science course its prime focus will be politics, and as an IR course its narrower focus will be on Afghanistan as seen by Americans observing the US involvement, it is not designed to require or to create a high degree of specialization. Its aim is an increase in the students' general knowledge about a specific subject, and in their future ability to enlarge that knowledge.

The course also has a definite constructive task which, if successfully completed, will make it unnecessary for it to be offered again in the near future: to create, primarily for the future benefit of its students, but secondarily for any others who care to avail themselves of the product, a critical bibliography, sited in the UCLA Classweb but downloadable to viewers' own drives and disks, of books and (perhaps) of articles on Afghanistan, with emphasis on the substantively political (works about parties, factions, wars, policies) or politically relevant (works about actual or potential issue-areas). You (plural) will collectively create this bibliography as you (singular) individually post your reviews.

At the end of the course, as a result of your readings, writings, posted reports, and posted discussions, it is hoped that each student will be able to take away a cooperative product, a "briefing book" called Afghanistan Background: A Critical Bibliography, entirely constructed in the course and by the students of the course, consisting of a set of reviews of books on Afghanistan. In the process of selecting, reading, thinking about and reviewing these books, each student should also have acquired a personal "Afghanistan Background."

As a comparison, or a mark beyond which we propose to go, examine M. Jamil Hanafi, Annotated Bibliography of Afghanistan, 4th ed., New Haven:HRAF, 1982 (YRL Reference, Z3016.H36 1982). To my knowledge, this work achieves the result closest to the objective of our enterprise, but has the following limitations: it is well out of date, there being an enormous literature since 1982; most annotations are very brief; most citations are not in fact annotated at all. Even so, its substantive entries do exemplify the style and substance you should try to include in your own (considerably longer) reviews and oral summaries.

For preparatory background reading, the course has two or (with luck) three texts (necessarily but regrettably all predating the US-Qaeeda war):

1) Amanda Roraback, Afghanistan in a Nutshell (Sept. 2001).
People, policies, situation, background in 24 pages.

2) Edward Girardet and Jonathan Walter, eds., Essential Field Guide to Humanitarian and Conflict Zones: Afghanistan (Crosslines, 1998). The "Essnetial Field Guides" are especially intended to provide background information for relief and aid workers. Read chapters I-II, examine relevant parts of III and VI; the others are mainly for travelers.

With luck, 3) Afghanistan: A Country Study (Area Handbook Series) will be available. By comparison with (2), the Area Handbook series was generated by the information needs of the US Army. The 1986 version may still be in print; a 2001 edition is available at

<http://memory.loc.gov/frd/cs/aftoc.html>

As a course requirement, not to be disregarded: please secure a Bruin OnLine e-mail address for receiving course announcements and communicating with the instructor (hotmail won't do as it has a nuisance incompatibility with BOL's Eudora).

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Your individual assignments, due one per week from the second week of the course through exam week, are as follows:

Ten book reviews, each 1-2 pages, and totaling at least 15 pages, of books on Afghanistan's history, politics, warfare, cities, ethnicities, sects, topography, biography, factions, etc. A list of eighty such books, preapproved, is appended; you may also propose to the instructor (by e-mail) other books which you locate in the bibliography of Girardet and Walter (pp. 496 ff.) or in one of the bibliographies they cite (p.502), or by searching MELVYL, library shelves, bookstores, Amazon.com, etc.

Propose one or more books for review per week to the instructor, via BOL e-mail, between the Tuesday and Thursday classes; you should have located and skimmed the book before proposing it. First proposal in gets the book for next week's review, so provide a priority list. Only one book will be assigned per person at any time, i.e. you can have only one review in the works at any given moment; request the next only after posting your current review.

Submit one review per week to the instructor in hardcopy at the Tuesday class. Also, before that class, post your review to the class website's discussion board (headed "Review of [author, title]"). Please also post the review to the Amazon.com page for that book. Be prepared to give a one or two-minute oral summary of your review to the class in the week of your posting.

You will be graded only on the 7 best reviews submitted. This is not an invitation to submit only the last 7 reviews. Lateness will be penalized, as will nonsubmission, at the instructor's discretion. If you plan to be away during part of the course, arrange for an early submission instead of a late one. As one of the course objectives is to allow students to take away a complete bibliography at the end of the course, no incompletes can be given.

May books for which reviews are already posted on the class website be re-reviewed? Yes indeed, but only if your review has something materially different to say about the content, quality, specialization, viewpoint, and/or value of the book than reviews posted by the time you e-mail your own; and re-reviews should be posted as replies to the original review. Some works on Afghanistan are, not surprisingly, controversial, and academically competent controversy is perfectly permissible within the review context, and indeed desirable. You may in fact both look for and initiate controversies, especially ones with political significance.

May books be reviewed in part? Yes. With advance clearance from the instructor (use e-mail, as usual BOL's Eudora only), a review may focus on a single chapter of a book; this may be done only for books with a very dense or highly analytic substantive content, for which an overall review has already been posted but does not exhaust the important material in the book, or for books which are actually anthologies of articles.

May articles be reviewed? Yes, with advance clearance, in some cases, articles in scholarly journals (locate via e.g. the Searchlight tool at

<http://searchlight.cdlib.org/cgi-bin/searchlight>

may also be accepted as subjects for reviews--make your case by e-mail to the instructor, arguing for the great, better still the unique, value of the article in question, such that in any anthology of articles about Afghanistan it would be an important item.

STRUCTURE OF BOOK REVIEWS AND ORAL SUMMARIES

Book reviews: Begin with a bibliographic entry in the form:

Author, Title (Publisher, Place, Date). Give the number of pages in the front matter and text, as for instance: xiv+322. If there are illustrations, maps, an index, show them, as for instance: 3 ill. 10 maps. Index. End with the ISBN, or for older books the LC catalog number.

In the body of your review, describe the book, in terms of subject, style, author's expertise, author's viewpoint. What does the author claim to have done that is new, unique, better? (Here you may quote claims made for the book in the blurbs on the dust jacket.) Then evaluate the book, with particular reference to its value to general readers seeking a general understanding of Afghanistan; to political science students aiming at an understanding of the politics of contemporary Afghanistan, its relations present, past and future with the US and international agencies; and to persons who may travel to Afghanistan in various roles. As you read more and more books, you may want to make comparisons between books covering the same subject differently. Short quotes of pertinent material from the book, clearly so indicated, are in order. By the end of the review, the reader should know your judgement of who will gain what from reading this book, and whether it is in your current "Afghanistan top 10," top 100, top 1000

Your name should appear at the end of the review.

(If after examining or reading a book you can find no connection between it and any of the purposes cited above--and the book is not even in your top million--start over again and review some other book instead!!) At what audience should you aim your reviews? Your fellow students, whom you should assume to have no prior knowledge of Afghanistan other than what they have acquired in passing since 9/11/01, and to have a general interest in politics, international relations and foreign policy. For all you know, your classmates, who will each collect the posted reviews they consider most interesting and helpful, might in future relate to Afghanistan as journalists, researchers, soldiers, relief workers, missionaries, development workers, tourists, contractors, pilgrims, investors, journalists, agitators, administrators, or simply passive spectators; still, aim at for an audience of educated and generally interested citizen generalists.

What form should an oral summary of a review take? Author and title; description of subject, style, expertise, slant; brief evaluation. Here, avoid quotes from the book or the jacket copy.

ENCYCLOPEDIA ARTICLE OPTION

If you feel more creatively ambitious than the review format permits, you may replace up to three reviews with articles, each 2-3 pages, written in an "average" encyclopedic style, possibly but not necessarily drawing upon the books you reviewed for assignment 1-5, upon some subject having to do with Afghanistan. You may attempt to update any of the sections in Girardet and Walter chs. I-III, e.g. war (11-22), Taliban (23-29, 255-260), Aid (30-39, 117-120, 149, 239-254, 261-266), refugees (40-47, 237-238), media (48-53), women (54-60, 267-273), human rights (61-67), landmines (68-77, 227), ethnology (78-92, 185-187), abbreviated history (92-101), agriculture (106-116), children (121-128), culture (129-143, 228-230), disability (144-148), drugs (150-156), economics (157-169), education (170-178), conservation (179-184), forestry (188-191), health (192-210), elites (211-226), regions (274-351). (Note that the updates promised on p. 7 by Girardet and Walter don't in fact yet exist, and someone else now occupies the ICHR webspace whose address is given there.) Possible topics in addition to these would include religious sects, ethnicities, cities, foreign relations (e.g. with Persia/Iran, India, Pakistan, Russia, Britain, USA), and biographies of significant present and still-significant former figures in Afghan history, culture, politics, literature, religion.

Secure advance approval of your topic from the instructor by e-mail. Provide a hardcopy to the instructor and a posting for the class on Tuesday. Also post the article on the evolving, open-source online encyclopedia "Wikipedia":

<http://www.wikipedia.com/>

Possible article topics can be found in the several reference works of Ludwig W. Adamec, e.g. his Dictionary of Afghan Wars, Revolutions and Insurgencies (1996), Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan (2nd ed. 1997), Biographical Dictionary of Contemporary Afghanistan (1987), Historical and Political Who's Who of Afghanistan (1975), First Supplement to the Who's Who of Afghanistan: Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (1979), all on reserve in Powell, or in reference at Powell or the YRL. Also, Wikipedia contains a code (the questionmark) that indicates "article wanted" for given subjects: use its search engine to find existing articles on Afghanistan, and read them to find "article wanted" requests.

What is "average" encyclopedic style? Less simple than the typical Encyclopedia Americana article, simpler than the typical Encyclopedia Britannica 11th edition article (its article on Afghanistan is reproduced in the Wikipedia entry for "Afghanistan: from an old 1911 Encyclopedia"), much simpler than the current Macropedia section of the Britannica; closest to the style of the 1960s Britannica or the current Micropedia section of the Britannica.

BOOKS OK TO REVIEW

Any of the following histories, polemics, novels, autobiographies, biographies, travelogues, strategic analyses, etc. is acceptable for review; you may propose others. UCLA owns more than a thousand books on Afghanistan. Dozens of new works are already in the pipeline; be alert for them. Most of the books below have been requested for 3-day reserve, but none will be ordered for the course at the bookstore.

You may wish to consult the existing reviews of any of these books which are covered on the Amazon.com website, in order to get a better sense of their subject matter and standpoint before making your choices of books to review; you might also look up any reviews of them in the Book Review Digest (College Library Reference Room, Z1219.B64) to get a sense of the issues relating to each seen by more professional reviewers, which you might want to address in your own review.

GENERAL BACKGROUND

Louis Dupree, Afghanistan.

Main factors in Afghan history, ethnology, geography, culture.

POLITICAL SCIENCE

Larry P. Goodson, Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban (2001)

Academic analysis of complexity, chaos, and chronic collapse

Ali Banauzizi and Myron Weiner, eds., The State, Religion, and Ethnic Politics: Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan (1988)

Myron Weiner and Ali Banauzizi, eds., The Politics of Social Transformation in Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan (1994)

Islam, fragmented societies, and would-be monolithic states.

Barnett R. Rubin, The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System

1978-1992: from late Cold War conflict to post-Cold War state

failure.

Barnett R. Rubin, *The Search for Peace in Afghanistan: From Buffer State to Failed State*
International politics' interplay with internal politics
produces state failure.

Nighat Chishti, *Constitutional Development in Afghanistan*

GREAT POWER POLITICS

Peter Hopkirk, *The Great Game: The Struggle for Empire in Central Asia*
Journalist's illustrated adventure-intrigue narrative of the Anglo-Russian struggle to 1917.

Karl E. Meyer and Shareen Blair Breisac, *Tournament of Shadows: The Great Game and the Race for Empire in Central Asia*
Meyer (a journalist) and Breisac (a filmmaker) do a lively update of Hopkirk on the characters and intrigues of Britain vs. Russia in Afghanistan, India and Tibet in the 19th century, with earlier and later references through World War II.

Col. G.D. Bakshi, *Afghanistan, The First Fault-Line War*
Great power politics in Afghanistan from an Indian point of view.

P. Stobdan, *The Afghanistan Conflict and India*
Indocentric strategic analysis.

Kenneth Weisbrode, *Central Eurasia: Prize or Quicksand?*

Azmat Hayat Khan, *The Durand Line*

Ludwig W. Adamec, *Afghanistan 1900-1923: A Diplomatic History*

Ludwig W. Adamec, *Afghanistan's Foreign Affairs to the Mid-Twentieth Century: Relations with the USSR, Germany and Britain*

Edward E. Oliver, *Across the Border*

Mahendra Ved Shreedan, *Afghan Buzkashi*

HUMAN RIGHTS

Human Rights Watch, *Massacres of Hazaras in Afghanistan*

Musa Khan Jalalzai, *Sectarian Violence in Pakistan and Afghanistan*

Human Rights Watch, *Afghanistan: Crisis of Impunity*

WOMEN

Rosemarie Skaine, *The Women of Afghanistan under the Taliban*
History and interviews on ordeal and resistance.

Deborah Ellis, *Women of the Afghan War*
Women's oral histories of the Soviet war and Taliban rule.

Physicians for Human Rights, The Taliban's War on Women

Anna M. Pont, *Blind Chickens & Social Animals: Creating Spaces for Afghan Women's Narratives Under the Taliban*

218 interviews 1998-2000: Afghan women discuss their lives.

HISTORY

Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A New History*

The land, the peoples, the power struggles, to the rise of the "Taliban." This book would have been a text for this course, except that it costs \$75.00.

Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans (Peoples of Asia series)*

History of the land and its peoples by a journalist-researcher.

Ralph S. Magnus and Eden Naby, *Afghanistan: Mullah, Marx and Mujahid*

Analysis of internal and external forces behind recent Afghan history.

Senzil Nawid, *Religious Response to Social Change in Afghanistan, 1919-1929: King Aman-Allah and the Afghan Ulama*

Royal modernization meets Islamic support (for independentist jihad) and resistance (to changes in women's status)

Mir Gholam Mohammed Ghojar, *Afghanistan in the Course of History.*

A 20th century oppositionist historian's critique of the monarchy.

SOVIET-AFGHAN WAR 1979-1989

Rosanne Klaas, ed., *Afghanistan*

The Soviet invasion and withdrawal.

Nasir Shansab, *Soviet Expansion in the Third World: Afghanistan, a Case Study*

Prelude, invasion, resistance--written during the Soviet-Afghan war.

Antonio Giustozzi, *War, Politics and Society in Afghanistan, 1978-1992*

The war as viewed from the pro-Soviet Afghan side.

Svetlana Aleksievich et al., *Zinky Boys: Soviet Voices from the Afghanistan War*

The war as remembered by Soviet soldiers.

Abdul Hakim Tabibi, *Afghanistan: A Nation in Love with Freedom*

Robert D. Kaplan, *Soldiers of God: With Islamic Warriors in Afghanistan and Pakistan*

Sandy Gall, *Behind Russian Lines: An Afghan Journal.*

Rob Schultheis, *Night Letter: Inside Wartime Afghanistan*

Reporters' travels and memoirs on different sides during the Soviet-Mujahedin war.

Diego Cordovez, *Out of Afghanistan: The Inside Story of the Soviet Withdrawal*

Detailed account by a shuttle diplomat.

Artem (Artyom) Borovik, *The Hidden War: A Russian Journalist's Account of the Soviet War in Afghanistan*

Views of interviewed Soviet officers, soldiers, statesmen, deserters about the war.

Vladislav Tamarov, *Afghanistan, A Russian Soldier's Story*

Photo-memoir of two years' service endured by a young Russian soldier.

Mohammed Yousaf and Mark Adkin, *Afghanistan The Bear Trap: The Defeat of a Superpower*

US and Pakistani covert work against the USSR as told by a high-level Pakistani covert operations specialist.

Vladimir Grigoriev, *Afghanistan's Unknown War: Memoirs of Russian War Veterans*

Collected stories of survivors of Russia's 1979-1989 Afghan war.

Lester Grau, ed., *The Bear Went Over the Mountain: Soviet Combat Tactics in Afghanistan*

Short accounts of small-unit tactics, and military-academic analysis of their success and failure.

Ali Ahmad Jalali and Lester W. Grau, *Afghan Guerilla Warfare: In the Words of the Mujahidin Fighters*
(same as Jalali and Grau, *The Other Side of the Mountain: Mujahidin Tactics in the Soviet-Afghan War*)

Tactical analysis of mujahidin success based on more than 100 first-hand reports.

George Robert Elford, *Kizilkar=Red Snow*

A tactical tale of anti-Soviet guerrilla warfare.

M. Hassan Kakar, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion and the Afghan Response*

Detailed, partisan personal and documentary account of the Soviet era by an Afghan professor and prisoner.

Sandy Gall, *Afghanistan: Agony of a Nation*

Journalism on the Soviet-Afghan war.

TALIBAN PERIOD

Michael Griffin, *Reaping the Whirlwind: The Taliban Movement in Afghanistan*

Detailed narrative of the rise of the Taliban from news accounts.

M.J. Gohari, *The Taliban: Ascent to Power*

Kamal Matinuddin and Sahibzadeh Yaqub Khan, *The Taliban Phenomenon: Afghanistan, 1994-1997*

Origin, rise, reasons for success, objectives and impact of the Taliban.

William Maley, ed., *Fundamentalism Reborn? Afghanistan and the Taliban*

Expert essays on the roots, rise and strengths of the Taliban 1994-1998.

John K. Cooley, *Unholy Wars: Afghanistan, America and International Terrorism*

A journalist's account of how US-sponsored mujahedin turned into enemies.

Peter Marsden, *The Taliban : War, Religion and the New Order in Afghanistan*

Values, views, Wahhabi roots, relations, of Taliban and Talibanism.

ANALYTIC JOURNALISM

Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia*

Analysis by a liberal Pakistani journalist with wide acquaintance with the Taliban.

Eric S. Margolis, *War at the Top of the World: The Struggle for Afghanistan, Kashmir and Tibet*

Journalist's tales + geopolitical analyses of fighting in mountainous Central Asia.

Arthur Bonner, *Among the Afghans* (Central Asia Book Series)

Travels of a New York Times reporter during the Russo-Afghan war: vignettes and analysis.

Henry S. Bradsher, *Afghan Communism and Soviet Intervention*

A Moscow correspondent with access to Soviet sources treats the politics of the Afghan Communist movement from the 1950s to 1992.

MEMOIRS AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Morag Murray Abdullah, *My Khyber Marriage*

Morag Murray Abdullah, *Valley of the Giant Buddhas*

The adventurous autobiography of a Scotswoman who married an Afghan prince and moved to Afghanistan.

Amir Habibullah, *My Life: From Brigand to King*

The man who would be king, and was. A dictator seen through his own eyes: the autobiography of the "son of a water carrier," from murder to tyranny to the firing squad.

Vladislav Tamarov, *Afghanistan: A Russian Soldier's Story* (2nd ed. 2001)

Memoir of a Soviet conscript and photographer.

Raja Anwar, *The Tragedy of Afghanistan*.

A Pakistani Marxist learns about Afghan problems while imprisoned in Kabul.

ETHNOLOGY

Sirdar Iqbal Ali Shah, *Afghanistan of the Afghans*

Classic standard ethnology--religion, history, geography, folklore, customs.

Olaf Caroe, *The Pathans: 500 B.C.--A.D. 1957*

Hassan Poladi, *Hazaras*

H.W. Bellew, *The Races of Afghanistan*

S. Itfikhhar Hussain, *Some Major Pakhtoon Tribes*

Sayed Askar Mousavi, *The Hazaras of Afghanistan: An Historical, Cultural, Economic and Political Study*

Ethnologies of some of the peoples of Afghanistan.

CULTURE

David B. Edwards, *Heroes of the Age: Moral Fault Lines on the Afghan Frontier*

"Moral incoherence" and Afghan culture via discourse analysis of conflicting narratives.

HUMANITIES REVIEWS

Reviews of folklore, travelogues, novels etc. should be done only if you can maintain a connection with the purposes of the course; it is easy to become distracted and to review them for themselves alone, as works of art; but you cannot stop there.

FOLKLORE

Safia Shah and Idries Shah, Afghan Caravan Amina Shah, Tales of Afghanistan
Collections of Afghan stories and folktales.

TRAVELOGUES

Freya Stark, The Minaret of Djam: An excursion in Afghanistan.
An archaeological journey to Ghor.

Peter Levi, The Light Garden of the Angel King: Travels in Afghanistan
1960's travels in search of the Greek past of Afghanistan.

Jason Elliott, An Unexpected Light
Romantic travelogue of two journeys to war-torn Afghanistan: mujahidin, Taliban, Sufism.

David Chaffetz, A Journey Through Afghanistan: A Memorial
Urban and nomadic Afghans seen before and during the Soviet period.

Peregrine Hodson, Under a Sickle Moon: A Journey through Afghanistan
Travels during the Soviet war: people, landscape, and resistance

Fazal Sheikh, The Victor Weeps: Afghanistan
A photographer-journalist documents the endless war.

David C. Isby, War in a Distant Country: Afghanistan--Invasion and Resistance
Illustrated commentary on the Soviet war by a military observer.

Kurt Lohbeck (and Dan Rather), Holy War, Unholy Victory: Eyewitness to the CIA's Secret war in
Afghanistan
Encounters and experiences of an American TV-journalist with the mujahidin and others.

Louis Palmer, Adventures in Afghanistan
In pursuit of Sufism: a narrative? an allegory?

Robert Byron, The Road to Oxiana
Eccentric Beirut-to-Afghanistan travelogue of 1933 by a misadventurer fond of mosques and ruins.

FICTION

George Macdonald Fraser, Flashman
Picaresque antiheroic novel of the exploits of a scoundrel in the first Anglo-Afghan War

Rudyard Kipling, The Man Who Would Be King and Other Stories
Title story only: two adventurers in "Kafiristan" that was.

James A. Michener, Caravans
An American man searches for an American woman missing in 1940s Afghanistan.

Charles Edward Varney and Abdullah Akbar, The Jewel Carriers
Novelized tale of resistance, corruption, treachery, jewel smuggling during the Soviet war.

Y.L. Harris, Hindu Kush
A political-romance-thriller: mujahidin leader and ambassador's daughter

Daniel Bolger, Feast of Bones

A novel about a Russian paratrooper in Afghanistan.

Idries Shah, Kara Kush: A Novel

Mujahidin-Sufi novel of the Soviet epoch.

Milt Bearden, The Black Tulip

A novel of US covert operations by a lead operator.