

Suggestions for Further Reading

A number of works are available for those interested in going deeper into the study of war in Afghanistan. General history should be the first stop. I am partial to Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics*, published by Harper Perennial, 2002. A well-regarded more recent work from the Princeton University Press, 2010, is Thomas Barfield's *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*. Barfield is both an area expert and an anthropologist, and these qualifications add a unique perspective to his work. The political economy of Afghanistan is also important. The premier source for this sort of enquiry is Barnett Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System*, Yale University Press, 1995 and 2001. Larry Goodson's *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban*, University of Washington Press, 2001, covers a good bit of history and puts Afghanistan's problems as a failed state in a broader theoretical context. The 9-hour series of plays by the United Kingdom's Tricycle Theater Company entitled *The Great Game*, directed by Nicolas Kent and Indhu Rubasingham, is a moving educational experience that will enlighten viewers on a broad range of historical problems from 19th-century wars through 21st-century problems. The plays also help viewers to see local issues through Afghan eyes. On the Soviet-Afghan war, see Henry Bradsher, *Afghanistan and the Soviet Union*, from Duke University Press, 1983, and Lester Grau, *The Bear Went Over the Mountain*, NDU Press, 1995. Diego Cordovez and Selig Harrison's *Out of Afghanistan*, Oxford University Press, 1995, does an excellent job of covering peacemaking in that war.

Understanding the lives of contemporary Afghans would be a fruitful second step. Sarah Chayes, *Punishment of Virtue: Inside Afghanistan After the Taliban*, Penguin Press, 2006, is the story of an American journalist living, working, and observing tribal politics among the Kandaharis in the early post-Taliban years. Asne Seierstad's *The Bookseller of Kabul* from Back Bay Books, 2004, is concerned with traditional family life as experienced by a progressive Kabuli. The popular novels by Khaled Hosseini, *The Kite Runner* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, are both entertaining and educational for Western audiences.

Those interested in the current fighting should first learn more about the Taliban. Steve Coll's encyclopedic *Ghost Wars*, Penguin Press, 2004, covers the waterfront from the late 1970s to 2001. Pakistani author Ahmed Rashid's *Taliban*, originally published in 2000 by Yale University Press, and its sequel *Descent into Chaos: The United States and the Failure of Nation Building in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia*, from Viking-Penguin, 2008, are both topnotch. A more up-to-date analysis of the Taliban can be found in an anthology edited by Antonio Giustozzi, *Decoding the New Taliban: Insights from the Afghan Field*, published by Columbia University Press, 2009. Also published by Columbia, Abdul Salam Zaeff, a former Taliban ambassador and current peace activist, wrote *My Life with the Taliban*, translated and edited by Alex Strick van Linschoten and Felix Kuehn. If the reader can wade through the propaganda, exaggeration, and omissions, he can gain insight into how senior Taliban officials think. One of the best treatments of al Qaeda's strategy in Afghanistan is Bruce Reidel's *The Search for Al Qaeda*, 2008 and 2010, Brookings Institution Press. Reidel is a former CIA executive who is now a scholar at the Brookings Institution in Washington, DC.

For more about the current conflict, two “graveyard of empires” books are among the best out there: Seth Jones, *In the Graveyard of Empires: America’s War in Afghanistan* from Current Affairs-Norton, 2009, and David Isby, *Afghanistan, Graveyard of Empires: A New History of the Borderlands* from Pegasus Books, 2010. The current conflict is fueled by the growth, distribution, sales, and “taxes” from illegal narcotics, particularly opium and hashish. No student should go forth to this war zone, literally or virtually, without having read Gretchen Peters’s *Seeds of Terror: How Heroin Is Bankrolling the Taliban and Al Qaeda*, published by Thomas Dunne–St. Martin’s, 2009. On the diplomacy of this war, James Dobbins’s *After the Taliban, Nation-Building in Afghanistan*, Potomac Books, 2008, gives the inside story of the formation of the new Afghan state. On pre-surge diplomacy, Ronald Neumann’s *The Other War: Winning and Losing in Afghanistan*, Potomac Books, 2009, provides an invaluable record from one of America’s most seasoned diplomats. For those with a yen for metrics, the first stop should be Brookings’s *Afghanistan Index*, published quarterly on their Web site, <<http://www.brookings.edu/foreign-policy/afghanistan-index.aspx>>, under the direction of Ian Livingston, Heather Messera, and Michael E. O’Hanlon. For day-to-day reporting, don’t miss The New America Foundation’s *Af-Pak Channel Daily Brief*, edited by Katherine Tidemann and available on the *Foreign Policy* Web site, <<http://afpak.foreignpolicy.com/dailybrief>>.

There is a rich and important literature on Pakistan. In addition to the books by Coll and Rashid, noted above, I would recommend Pakistani Ambassador to the United States Husain Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military*, published by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005. Marvin Weinbaum and Shuja Nawaz are also leaders in Pakistan studies. For our purposes, two of their essential

works are Marvin Weinbaum's *Afghanistan and Its Neighbors*, published by United States Institute of Peace in 2006, and Shuja Nawaz's *Crossed Swords: Pakistan, Its Army, and the Wars Within*, published by Oxford University Press in 2008. Bruce Reidel's *Deadly Embrace: Pakistan, America, and the Future of the Global Jihad*, Brookings Institution Press, 2011, is short and insightful.

The functional areas of counterinsurgency and nation-building should not be neglected. On counterinsurgency, the U.S. Army/Marine Corps *Counterinsurgency Field Manual*, published by the University of Chicago Press, 2007, should be a first reference. T.X. Hammes's *The Sling and the Stone*, published by Zenith Press, 2006, and David Kilcullen's *Accidental Guerrilla*, published by Oxford University Press, 2009, are both excellent and bring classical notions of insurgency into the 21st century. Also important is the Army's new field manual on the softer side of counterinsurgency, FM 3-07, *Stability Operations*, published by the University of Michigan Press, 2009. The origins of the Army's efforts to learn about COIN and stability operations are explored in Janine Davidson, *Lifting the Fog of Peace: How Americans Learned to Fight Modern War*, University of Michigan Press, 2010. Experts in counterinsurgency also speak well of *Counterinsurgency in Modern Warfare*, a recent volume edited by Daniel Marston and Carter Malkasian. The dozen or so cases in the Marston-Malkasian volume present a deep set of lessons and analogies for the practitioner to draw on. Last but not least, those interested in COIN may wish to dig into the literature on current fighting in Afghanistan. Two books stand head and shoulders above the rest. Sebastian Junger's *War*, published by Hachette Book Group in 2010, covers fierce fighting in the Korengal Valley and is the basis for the award-winning film *Restrepo*. Bing West's *The*

Wrong War: Grit, Strategy, and the Way Out of Afghanistan (Random House, 2011), like Junger's book, is an eyewitness account of infantry combat in Afghanistan. West is a former combat Marine and former senior Pentagon official, and his book is a must for military people.

On the trials and tribulations of nation-building, a good first stop would be the series of RAND publications, done under the supervision of Ambassador James Dobbins. Novices will find two of them very useful: James Dobbins et al., *The Beginner's Guide to Nation-Building*, 2007; and James Dobbins et al., *America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq*, 2003.

Dov Zakheim covers the politics of budgets and resources in Washington in *A Vulcan's Tale: How the Bush Administration Mismanaged the Reconstruction of Afghanistan* (Brookings Institution, 2011).

Beyond these books noted above, the reader will find many interesting sources in the notes for this volume.