

Central Eurasian Studies

Post-Taliban Afghanistan and the Future of War on Global Terror

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The unprecedented terrorist attacks on September 11th, 2001 aimed at targets within the United States prompted the coalition "War on Terrorism" against the Taliban controlled Afghanistan—regarded as the virtual headquarters of global terrorism led by Osama bin Laden and his Al Qaeda terrorist network who have been implicated in carrying out the attacks. The war on global terror has been waged now for well over four years in Afghanistan, has spawned into the invasion of Iraq and greater instability in the Middle East and beyond without an end in sight. Why the attacks on New York city, Pentagon and Pennsylvania? Who did it and Why? Why and how did Afghanistan become a Global Terrorism Inc.? Is the rise of Taliban movement in Afghanistan, as a contemporary phenomena unique? How is the problem of terrorism conceptualized and explained by the government officials and media experts in the U.S.? What are the root causes of the problem of terrorism? What role, if any, does religion/civilization, especially Islamic "fundamentalism" play in the current tensions? Has the "War on Terrorism" worked? Why or why not? What are some alternative solutions to the problem of terrorism which are not being considered and why? What lessons are learned from the war on global terror so far? Will continuation of the war make America and the world more secure? If not, how can we re-conceptualize our concept of security in a manner that could be obtained? This course will critically examine these and related questions by focusing on the history, society, economy and political culture of Afghanistan as a multi-ethnic modern nation-state which has been ravaged by a century of internal colonialism, and most recently by foreign invasions, proxy wars and global terrorism.

Required Texts (Some titles may vary):

Gabriel Kolko *Another Century of War?*. The New Press

Peter Marsden, *The Taliban: War and Religion in Afghanistan* (Revised Edition). Zed Books

Steve Coll, *Ghost Wars: the secret history of the CIA, Afghanistan, and bib Laden, from the Soviet invasion to September 10, 2001.*

Course Requirements (may vary a little):

There will be two examinations. All exams will be of the essay type, consisting of short-answer questions and longer essays. Each examination will be worth 50 points and course grade will be based on 100 cumulative points. Graduate students are also required to write a 10-15 pages (double-spaced type written) long term paper.