

BRIAN GLYN WILLIAMS. *Afghanistan Declassified: A Guide to America's Longest War*. Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 2012. 239 pages, preface, index, and acknowledgments. Cloth US\$34.95 ISBN 978-0-8122-4403.

Afghanistan Declassified conjures up visions of an exposé of American participation in Afghanistan on the scale of Daniel Ellsberg and the *Pentagon Papers*. This is not the author's intention; he is not exposing American involvement in Afghanistan as something nefarious and secretive, like Ellsberg's disclosures about Viet Nam.

The author is associate professor of Islamic history at the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth. His academic endeavors have focused on Central Asia and include numerous trips to the area to study the languages, cultures, religions, and history of the region that includes Afghanistan. His scholarly background made him a candidate for assignment by the Joint Information Operations Warfare Command in 2008 to write a field manual on the history, culture, and tribes for use by American and allied forces. This included thoughtful analysis of the ongoing conflict there. The result was a classified handbook on Afghan history and geography, languages, ethnic groups,

geography, and religious beliefs. This book is a declassified version of that manual, hence the title *Afghanistan Declassified*.

Williams divides his work into two sections and five chapters, all based on his extensive academic work on Central Asia as well as his duties developing the handbook. The first section is "The Basics" and has chapters on ethnicity and geography. The first introduces us to the various ethnic communities in Afghanistan. This is particularly useful for American military and civilian personnel posted to the area. Many personnel assigned to Afghanistan fall into the easy trap of generalizing notions about unfamiliar places. The author does a very good job of presenting the great variety of peoples in the area, also noting that current borders arbitrarily split ethnic groups among those in Afghanistan from the same peoples in other nations. Just the list of ethnic groups discussed is adequate for emphasizing that generalization is not a useful tool regarding Afghanistan. Besides the Pashtuns, the largest group, but not a majority, there are Tajiks, Uzbeks, Hazaras, Turkmen, Aimaqs, Nuristanis, Kizil Bash, Baluchis, Kirghiz, Jats, Pamiris, and Arabs. The latter are descendants of Arabs who conquered the area in the eighth century, not recent Mujahadin from the Arab Middle east. These groups represent languages from the Indo-European, Ural-Altaic, and Semitic language groups. About 80% are Sunni Muslims, 20% Shi'a. Within the groups are various clans and tribes, as well as nomads, periodical nomads, settled agriculturalists and urban dwellers. In short, all Afghans cannot be painted with the same brush, and that also goes for each group. Chapter 2 deals with the variety of geographical areas, from mountains connected to the Himalayas to lush river valleys, and desserts. An area the size of Texas, Afghanistan has just as varied geography without access to the sea. These two chapters are very important for understanding the complexities that challenge American involvement in Afghanistan.

The next three chapters are "History Lessons" and address how Afghanistan became what it is and the American involvement there. All three combine his academic understanding of Afghan history with his experiences there, including details of contacts with leading personalities. These chapters do not flow in a neat timeline depicting Afghan history, but take Williams' experiences there and relates them to the old and recent past as well as very current affairs. These are a travelogue, but not in chronological sequence and incorporate observations from history with each event described. This makes the narrative difficult to follow, but the overall impact is a good commentary on Afghan possibilities for the future, especially the role of the United States.

Of particular value are observations on the great diversity of Afghanistan throughout history and the need to avoid facile generalizations. One such is the

belief that Afghanistan has never been conquered. Williams cites the conquests of the Persians, Greeks, Arabs, Turks and Mongols over time. He notes that British failures in the nineteenth century were followed by British victories and the agreement between Britain and Russia to define Afghan borders to establish a buffer between their empires. He discusses Afghan history from the nineteenth century to the present in detail.

Afghanistan Declassified is a useful source for anyone interested in understanding current events in Afghanistan. Especially useful are Williams' accounts of contacts with important actors in Afghanistan as well as his views on leading personalities like Ahmad Shah Massoud, Jalaluddin Haqqani, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, Osama bin Laden, Abdul Rashid Dostum, Mullah Omar, and many others. It is, however, difficult to follow as the author bounces from this to that in no set order. The book does not have citations that could lead to verification of events described. That would have been useful, as would an annotated bibliography on the growing body of work on this topic. ✖

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SÜBİDEY TOĞAN. *Economic Liberalization and Turkey*. Abington and New York: Routledge, 2010. xiii+322 pages. Cloth US\$168.00 ISBN 978-0-415-49595-0.

This book consists of three parts, dealing with liberalization of trade in goods in part 1 (two chapters), liberalization in services in part 2 (six chapters), and an attempt to quantify the impact of economic liberalization in a single chapter in part 3. All chapters but one are written jointly by the author and one or two leading experts in the field. After covering liberalization attempts in foreign trade and technical barriers to trade in part 1, nearly two thirds of the book is devoted in part 2 to liberalization in services in spheres as diverse as telecommunications, electricity, and banking on the one hand and natural gas and maritime and road freight transport, on the other.

The chapters are well organized and structured along a common pattern. The brief survey of international developments and developments in the European Union (EU) on and around the subject matter of each chapter under separate headings is followed by a somewhat shorter description of developments in Turkey. The book carefully documents the considerable progress made in the direction of liberalization in all these spheres and takes up the painstaking task of tracing the changes in rules and regulations over time, especially in the EU and Turkey at a fine level of detail, drawing attention to the variety of experience

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