

Book Review

Afghanistan - A New History (2nd Edition)

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Afghanistan, a land-locked country with beautiful landscapes (such as the green valley of Panjshir, ancestral home of Commander Ahmad Shah Massoud) and rich mineral sources (aquamarines, emeralds, lapislazuli, etc.), have witnessed tragic events in the last decades.

The book provides a review of key topics on Afghanistan from a historical perspective, addressing key issues to understand the complexities of contemporary Afghanistan.

The book is structured into 22 chapters that examine from early history of Afghanistan, the first and second Anglo-Afghan Wars, King Amanullah (1892-1960) and the drive for modernization, King Mohammed Zahir Shah (1914-2007) and constitutionalism, to the Soviet invasion and occupation, and the later withdrawal, the role of Commander Ahmad Shah Massoud (1953-2001) (The Lion of Panjshir) and his Northern Alliance group, in the fight against the Soviets, the civil war, the arrival of the Taliban, their regime and fall. The book includes a discussion of drugs and oil in this geostrategic region too.

Due to the year of publication of the first and second edition (2001, 2002) and reprint in 2015, the book does not analyze the period of Hamid Karzai as president of Afghanistan (2004-2014), Afghan presidential elections in 2014 and the current government of president Ashraf Ghani.

The book written by Martin Ewans, former Head of the British Chancery in Kabul, will provide interesting information and insights for academics, researchers, students and general readers interested in history, politics and society of Afghanistan and Central Asia.

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Martin Ewans

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