



DOCTORAL THESIS

A Critical Study of the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars Interests, Motives, Actions and the Makings of a Culture of Violence

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A Critical Study of the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars

Interests, Motives, Actions and the Makings of a Culture of Violence

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Summary

This submission includes two studies, based primarily on the use of historical archives, of the Afghan wars from 1978 and the Iraq War from 2003. *Breeding Ground: Afghanistan and the Origins of Islamist Terrorism* (2011) is a study of various layers of the Afghan conflict: the 1978 communist coup; the 1979 Soviet invasion and America's proxy war against the Soviet occupying forces in the 1980s; and the rise of the Taliban in the 1990s. It shows how Islamist groups allied to the West against Soviet and Afghan communism turned into enemies of the United States, with consequences including the September 11, 2001 attacks, President George W. Bush's retaliation against the Taliban in Afghanistan, and the invasion of Iraq. *Overcoming the Bush Legacy in Iraq and Afghanistan* (2010) is an analysis of the George W. Bush presidency in terms of its "war on terror." The books thus study the Afghan and Iraqi conflicts in the context of United States foreign policy, with particular emphasis on the interests, actions and motives of actors in the conflicts and the interactions between internal and external actors. The central argument is that these factors contributed to the development of a "culture of violence," defined as that "condition in which violence permeates all levels of society and becomes part of human thinking, behavior and way of life," and how this provided space for "terrorist" groups to operate.

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Title of Submission:

A Critical Study of the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars: interests, motives, actions and the makings of a culture of violence

Note on Style and Spellings:

The two books accompanying this submission are published in the United States. This report follows the same style and spellings. Citations, where a specific chapter is already mentioned in a sentence, refer to the relevant page (or pages); where not the chapter numbers are in parentheses. Closing quotation marks are after punctuation rather than before. To conform with the style of the books, it is “terrorism,” ... instead of “terrorism” , ... and “culture of violence.” rather than “culture of violence”. Otherwise, Chicago-style citations are used throughout.

Introduction:

The two books in this submission study the Afghan wars (from 1978) and the Iraq War (from 2003) and seek to address the following themes:

- The Afghan and Iraq conflicts in the context of U.S. foreign policy during and after the Cold War
- How the internal and external players interacted in each country and the wider consequences of their interactions
- How the Afghan and Iraq wars created a “culture of violence” providing the conditions in which violent groups including “terrorists” could operate

The submission examines the interests of great powers and possible motives behind their actions; how they contributed to conditions that turned Islamist forces previously allied to the West against Soviet communism into enemies of the United States; and the consequences—the September 11, 2001 attacks on America, President George W. Bush’s retaliation against Afghanistan and the 2003 U.S.-led invasion of Iraq.

I examine three main approaches which scholars have used one of to explain terrorism. The first is the rational choice approach, which argues that terrorist behavior is driven by deliberate, strategic choices made after the actor has considered a number of options. The second involves psychological analysis, emphasizing emotional forces that cause people to commit terrorist acts. Finally, structural analysis focuses on external causes such as economic, political and cultural factors.

I argue that all three are valid methods of inquiry. It is possible to study the causes of terrorism by taking any of these routes, and I acknowledge scholars who have done so. However my attempt in this submission is to examine terrorism by emphasizing an additional dimension—that of how a “culture of violence” operates in a country affected by sustained conflict. As I discuss later in this statement, other scholars have interpreted the idea of a culture of violence in various ways. My proposition is that a long war often begins as a low-level (internal or regional) conflict. It then leads to great power involvement and escalation of

violence, causing the breakdown of state institutions and thereby creating a power vacuum. Other violent players come forward to fill the void that leads to the rise of extremism. The concept of a “culture of violence” which I have tried to develop provides a more comprehensive approach to study war and its consequences in terms of terrorism.

I define a culture of violence as that “condition in which violence permeates all levels of society and becomes part of human thinking, behavior, and way of life.” My chosen route of inquiry does not exclude any of the three main approaches mentioned above. It takes into account the interests, motives and actions of all players involved, avoiding difficulties posed by the contested nature of the terms “terrorism” and “terrorist”—terms frequently employed as words of abuse against the enemy.

Publications:

Breeding Ground: Afghanistan and the Origins of Islamist Terrorism (Potomac Books, Incorporated, Washington, D.C., 2011). Foreword: Richard Falk (Princeton University and the University of California, Santa Barbara); approximately 80000 words excluding the foreword.

Overcoming the Bush Legacy in Iraq and Afghanistan (Potomac, 2010). Foreword: John Tirman (Massachusetts Institute of Technology); approximately 60000 words excluding the foreword.

The total length of the books is about 140000 words. This Supporting Statement is approximately 13700 words long.

Breeding Ground is a study of Afghan wars since 1978—the year of the first Communist coup in Kabul. The book examines the period between the 1978 coup through the Soviet invasion and occupation of the country in the 1980s to the Soviet forces’ retreat in 1989; the civil war between Afghan factions and the rise of the Taliban as the most powerful force in the 1990s; and how these wars created conditions which led to the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States. “Afterword” is a brief look at the aftermath—events from the American-led invasion in October 2001 to late 2010. However, the main focus of *Breeding Ground* is on the U.S.-led proxy war against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan in the 1980s and the rise of the Taliban and al Qaeda in the 1990s.

In historical terms, *Overcoming the Bush Legacy in Iraq and Afghanistan* is the sequel to *Breeding Ground*, starting with the events of September 11 and providing an analysis of President George W. Bush’s response. This book evaluates the Afghan conflict following the return of the United States in late 2001, the Iraq War from 2003 and the wider campaign known as the “global war on terror” against suspected Islamist militants.

Genesis of the Publications:

These books have come at the end of a long personal journey for me, more than three decades in fact. Early in my 23-year career in the British Broadcasting Corporation in London, I became interested in Afghanistan after the 1978 communist coup. I have since kept a close eye on the historical development of Afghanistan; and Iraq, particularly following the U.S.-

led invasion in March 2003. I retired from the BBC in 2000, but my work continued at the University of Sussex (2002–2007).

I also developed an interest in U.S. foreign policy when I worked for the federal government in Washington (1974–1977). These interests have continued to date. In the early 1990s, I set up the BBC bureau in Kabul and served as the corporation’s resident correspondent in Afghanistan following the Soviet Union’s military withdrawal from the country. It was an opportunity to gain first-hand experience in the field. Throughout my BBC career, I tried to understand events unfold and continued to gather information.

During the fifteen month period as BBC Afghanistan correspondent, I was privileged to meet numerous ordinary Afghans and many significant players, who gave me the benefit of their knowledge in private conversations, often in very difficult circumstances and at considerable risks to themselves. In Kabul, I walked to places every day. I routinely met shopkeepers and traders, students and soldiers, and a disturbingly large number of severely wounded and disabled men, women and children, sometimes begging in the streets. A surprising number of them came from what we would consider “good” or “respectable” backgrounds in the Afghan context.

Apart from my daily reporting job, I met ministers and officials, diplomats and intellectuals for off-the-record conversations that were most useful. They helped me absorb their thinking, fears and hopes. In one private meeting, President Najibullah acknowledged that the communist regime made serious mistakes, forcing Afghan people to take up arms and fight the government from the mountains (91).

Reflected in the bibliography at the end of *Breeding Ground* (208), such conversations have contributed to the context for my books. As Afghanistan correspondent, my responsibility was to file daily reports about the war. Writing a book was not on my mind. My private conversations were frequent, sometimes on the general situation, sometimes about specific information. Where that information has been used to strengthen the text, I have mentioned it in the notes.¹ It constitutes a useful, but not essential, part of my works.

After the events of September 11, 2001, I spent five years as a DPhil student in the American Studies department at the University of Sussex (2002–2007). I conducted historical research in archives, mainly of Soviet and U.S. documents from the early 1970s to 2000s, declassified in recent years. Focusing on these archives extensively, the analysis attempts to explain the interests and motives of many of the actors in the Afghan and Iraq wars and the broader “war on terror;” their actions and possible factors behind; and consequences in terms of a “culture of violence.” The findings of my research on Afghanistan were first published by one of India’s leading think tanks, the Observer Research Foundation in New Delhi, in Occasional Paper #8, *Dialectics of the Afghanistan Conflict: How the country became a terrorist haven*, March 2008.

¹For example, chapter 4, note 10, page 34; note 19, page 35. Chapter 10, note 3, page 88; note 9, page 90; note 11, page 91.

Although the books are based on academic research, their presentation is for the informed general reader. Their academic standing is reflected in the WorldCat list of libraries which have acquired the books. Most of them are university and college libraries in the United States, Canada, Britain and France. *Breeding Ground* looks at how Afghanistan became, and may remain, a haven for terrorism. *Overcoming the Bush Legacy in Iraq and Afghanistan* evaluates the legacy of the George W. Bush presidency in terms of the “war on terror.” It relies on a range of materials, with a more limited volume of official documents compared to *Breeding Ground*, but supplemented with evidence gathered by non-governmental and human rights organizations and official statements reported in the broadcast and print media.

The Nature of the Research and the Research Methodology:

The object of any research depends on factors such as knowledge in the existing literature on the chosen topic, identification of gaps in that knowledge and selection of any gaps to be filled. The nature of the problem influences the choice of the method of investigation. Simply put, taking an overview of the existing literature, finding gaps, deciding which gaps the researcher wants to fill and then attempting to do so is what a research exercise is about.

Breeding Ground: Afghanistan and the Origins of Islamist Terrorism and *Overcoming the Bush Legacy in Iraq and Afghanistan* are the end result of work that follows this path.

Research design:

In studying these wars, my attempt was to understand the interests and possible motives of actors, their actions and consequences that led to the ethos of terror on all sides. For this, I have made extensive use of primary archival material that includes official Soviet documents on Afghanistan (The Cold War International History Project, a major project at the Smithsonian Institute’s Woodrow Wilson Center of Scholars, Washington, D.C.) and U.S. documents (The National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.).²

My research for these books is qualitative, for I have analyzed words rather than quantitative data to understand and analyze the thinking and actions of various actors (Bryman 2008, 366–399). Through archival analysis, I have attempted to explore how violence over a long period becomes a habit, part of the pattern of human thinking and the primary means of settling issues. In my research, the documents are analyzed gradually to construct a narrative that explains the evolution of a culture of violence as I have defined it—“a condition in which violence permeates all levels of society and becomes part of human thinking, behavior, and way of life.” Further, my research is inductive because it has a theory-generating property, explaining how in a culture of violence, where there are weak, ineffective or no institutions, terrorist groups find sanctuaries.

Archival analysis appeared to me the most suitable route for my works. As mentioned before, my primary responsibility as correspondent in Afghanistan was to report news and writing a book was not on my mind. An attempt to conduct interviews afterward to research the topic would have been unlikely to be fruitful, not least because many of the actors mentioned in my works are no longer living; those who are living are few, living in different places and old. I

² See Appendix A.

recognize that archives (official documents) may be embellished by their originators to suit their argument. However, it remains my view that even then these documents do reflect the interests, motives and actions of the parties concerned. They serve the purpose of my research well.

The sources used in each book complete a triangle. *Breeding Ground* is an analysis of primary, secondary and tertiary sources. When I began researching, U.S. documents from the last two decades of the Cold War were available with the National Security Archive in Washington under the title “Afghanistan: The Making of U.S. Policy, 19973–1990” (see *Breeding Ground* Preface, xxi–xxiii; Bibliographic Essay, 165–169); Bibliography, 203–216). These documents give an account of the U.S. view of such major events as the overthrow of the last Afghan monarch Zahir Shah in 1973, the communist coup in April 1978 and the subsequent upheaval in the country under an increasingly factionalized, repressive and unpopular regime in Kabul.

The document collection also provides the basis for an account of the American perspective of the December 1979 Soviet military invasion of Afghanistan, President Jimmy Carter’s decision to support the anti-communist Mujahideen groups even before the Soviet invasion of that country and the escalation of the U.S. proxy war under the presidency of Ronald Reagan starting from early 1981. These and other declassified documents, released by the National Security Archive, include embassy cables, situation reports, intelligence biographies, confidential memorandums, official letters and reports on hearings. Further in 2003, the National Security Archive released the “Taliban Files”—documents covering the period from 1994 to 2001, when the Taliban ruled much of Afghanistan. These documents provide insights into President Bill Clinton’s thinking and America’s business dealings with, and concerns about, the Taliban regime. Memoirs of figures such as Zbigniew Brzezinski, Cyrus Vance and Robert Gates, who occupied senior positions in previous American administrations, also provide glimpses of official thinking and the decision-making process.

My aim was to make use of wide-ranging sources. An important part of this effort was the collection “Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan.” Soviet-era documents in this and other collections were acquired from the Russian presidential archive after the dissolution of the USSR in the early 1990s, then translated by a team of experts into English before their publication by the Cold War International History Project of the Smithsonian Institution’s Woodrow Wilson Center in November 2001. The team of experts under the project director, Christian Ostermann, worked for several years to translate the documents before releasing them for use to scholars. The collections on Afghanistan that I have used include minutes of meetings of the Soviet Communist Party. Also, there are diplomatic cables, intelligence and situation reports from Afghanistan. “The KGB in Afghanistan” by Vasili Mitrokhin, the KGB archivist who defected to Britain with personal notes on a vast number of KGB files, was also useful. Mitrokhin’s detailed account informed me about the extent of the Soviet intelligence agency’s penetration into Afghan society and its effects.

The importance of these documents cannot be underestimated for the overall balance of my research material. For the Soviet archives tell the essential version of the Afghan story from the other side during the Cold War’s final phase in the 1970s and 1980s. There is also an

Afghan side of history that is far more complex and is told in many voices, given the fragmented nature of the country. Other resources were useful here, among them: *The Other Side of the Mountain: Mujahideen Tactics in the Soviet-Afghan War*, volume I, II & III, written by Ali Ahmad Jalali with Lester Grau (Sterling, VA: Military Press, 2000); *The Soviet Invasion and the Afghan Response, 1979–1982* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); and my on- and off-the-record conversations with Afghans in the last communist government of President Najibullah and opposition figures in Kabul.

In addition to these primary sources, I used a variety of secondary sources that include scholarly articles, books, commentaries, reports of Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch etc. Among the tertiary sources, there are newspapers and magazines, Al-Jazeera, BBC, CNN and NPR.

Overcoming the Bush Legacy in Iraq and Afghanistan follows the same triangular design and is based on archival analysis. Primary sources such as the neoconservative Republican Project for the New American Century (the basis for George W. Bush’s manifesto in the 2000 presidential campaign), texts of the presidential debates of 2000 and 2004 and some of the most important speeches of President George W. Bush were available when I began writing this book in early 2008 (Bibliographic Essay, 171–174; Notes, 155–170). By the time I had finished the manuscript and it went to press, the Democratic Party candidate Barack Obama had become President in January 2009 and we had his speeches available, too. America’s wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and the broader “war on terrorism” had been going on for several years, but the availability of official U.S. documents faced strict controls. There was, on the other hand, intense 24-hour media coverage, with both serving and former U.S. officials and military and counterterrorism experts offering their views. The Avalon Project of the Yale Law School had brought together official resources that were in the public domain under the title “September 11, 2001: Attack on America.” But from the early stages of the “war on terror,” independent information on civilian deaths, abductions, rendering and torture in custody of suspects was hard to come by.

Some academics, along with non-governmental organizations, created archives that began to fill the information gap. For example, Marc Herold of the University of New Hampshire started the online project Cursor on the loss of life as the U.S.-led bombing of Afghanistan began; the American Civil Liberties Union, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch ensured a steady flow of information on abductions, detention, torture and curtailment of civil liberties; and the work of Reprieve and Clive Stafford Smith, in particular on the Guantanamo Bay detention camp, was also useful.

On the 2003 invasion of Iraq, the most important primary sources were the National Security Archive Briefing Book No. 234, *The Curveball Affair*, revealing details of how Western intelligence was misled into believing claims about Saddam Hussein’s weapons of mass destruction program; Britain’s ambassador to Washington Christopher Meyer’s letter to the Prime Minister’s Office at 10 Downing Street, revealing the ambassador’s conversation with the American deputy defense secretary, Paul Wolfowitz, on how Tony Blair thought he could cooperate with the Bush administration as Washington prepared to invade Iraq; and what is usually called Britain’s Iraq Dossier, “Iraq’s Weapons of Mass Destruction: The Assessment

of the British Government” of September 2002. Among secondary sources, Alan Greenspan and Ian Rutledge on the significance of oil for America; reports of the Federation of American Scientists; on human rights, Amnesty and Human Rights Watch reports. Finally, tertiary sources such as articles in newspapers and magazines, as well as CNN, BBC, Al-Jazeera and PBS.

Review of the Relevant Literature:

The topic of my submission has three component areas: terrorism, Afghanistan and Iraq. Each is old as a subject, but the three have seen a remarkable convergence following the September 11, 2001 attacks on America.

Terrorism:

[See *Breeding Ground*, chapter 1, The Concept of Terrorism, 1–15; and chapter 2, Culture of Violence, 17–21.]

Terrorism and violence for political aims have occurred throughout history. Alexander the Great of Macedon (reign: 336–323 B.C.) and Genghis Khan (1206–1227 A. D.) expanded their empires through conquests using great violence. The Reign of Terror in France (September 1793–July 1794) was supposed to rid the country of enemies of the Revolution. That episode of history gave us the expression “terror.” It has become a widely used term in recent decades, dominating the public debate after September 11, 2001.

In the first chapter titled “The Concept of Terrorism,” in *Breeding Ground* (1–15), I take an overview of the characteristics of the term “terrorism” and difficulties in coming to a consensus on a definition. Use of violence, or the threat of violence, to overthrow a regime or force a change of policy has gone on through the centuries. State violence, or threat of it, to control a population is also not new.

I acknowledge in the first chapter that there is general agreement among scholars on the main properties of terrorism: use or threat of violence for political purposes, involving sudden and dramatic acts targeting civilians to gain maximum publicity and to generate fear and uncertainty far from the scene of violence. However, difficulties begin to arise beyond this point. What about those who exercise their right of self-defense, or who resist occupation and fight for self-determination? Many experts in Western countries emphasize the criminal nature of political violence which targets civilians. Others emphasize the right of self-determination and resistance to occupation as motivating factors.

My objective is to tackle issues such as these, arising from the subjectivity and selectivity of opinions given and actions taken. Following the September 11, 2001 attacks, the United States has carried out offensive operations unilaterally far beyond its borders. American agencies, claiming to be acting under U.S. domestic law, have targeted to kill or capture alleged militant suspects within the jurisdictions of other states. Unmanned drones have been used with increasing frequency for attacks in which not only have people described as terrorists been killed without the normal legal process involving arrest, trial and verdict, but also innocent lives have been lost.

Such unilateral operations in other independent states are *prima facie* violations of the sovereignty of those states. Targeting individuals may undermine the lawfulness of those acts under the established conventions and treaties on human rights and treatment of people. Further, if a powerful state assumes the right to launch offensive operations in another jurisdiction claiming to act under its own legal system, surely that state also has an obligation to provide the same protections that exist under its own system. Otherwise, we have a situation where a state endowed with overwhelming military force will have a license to do what it likes without restraint.

Law, domestic or international, must have the backing of moral force. Or the legitimacy of actions taken is gravely jeopardized and the line separating what is considered lawful in war and terrorism becomes blurred. Law must seek to follow the principle that equals are to be treated equally, with the objective of common wellbeing. Or might becomes right—a state of affairs which humankind has struggled to change.

The question here is not so much about who are designated terrorists and who chooses the “terrorist” and “terrorism” labels. The essential question is about the above-mentioned properties of violence, the manner of its use, and how it affects victims. Terrorism needs to be studied from the viewpoint of victims rather than the viewpoint of those who choose the term to suit their actions. For if the perpetrator is also the judge, the debate will remain inconclusive. These are some of the considerations that guide my works.

In the existing literature, official and academic definitions of terrorism are offered by governments and scholars respectively. There are occasions when these definitions seem to overlap. The American State Department offers the most influential of the many official definitions of terrorism. It describes terrorism as “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience” (U.S. Code; Wilkinson 2011, 3). The definition holds sub-state groups or individuals responsible for terrorist violence. The term “terrorist group” under this definition means “any group practicing, or significant sub-groups that practice, international terrorism.” The Federal Bureau of Investigation defines international terrorism even more broadly as “violent acts or acts dangerous to human life that are a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or any state, or that would be a criminal violation if committed within the jurisdiction of the United States or any state” (FBI 1998, ii).

Following on, the United Kingdom defined terrorism as the use or threat of action designed to influence the government, or an international governmental organization, or against a person or property (UK Terrorism Act 2000, Section I). It includes action in and outside the United Kingdom.

Simply put, the United States, the leader of the industrialized world, and its allies represent the status quo in an increasingly globalized world. They take the view that any source of destabilization of the international environment is dangerous and must be dealt with (Celmer 1987, 1–4). Some countries in the developing world who have gained independence after

liberation wars view political violence as a legitimate means to achieve justice while describing powerful states as adopting terror tactics to suppress people. Hence, terrorism is a weapon of the weak, but it can also be a weapon of the powerful.

Among academics, Paul Wilkinson has said that a significant characteristic of contemporary ethnic insurgencies is “the widespread use of terror both by insurgents and by the counter-insurgent regimes and military and paramilitary forces” (Wilkinson 2011, 8). In theory, this sounds fine, but who is a terrorist, and in what circumstances, is a bone of contention. Walter Laqueur says that “terrorism is violence, but not every form of violence is terrorism. Although difficult to define, terrorism is not a synonym for civil war, banditry or guerrilla warfare” (Laqueur 1999, 8). In fact, banditry, robbery, extortion and blackmail are all tactics which have been used by terrorist groups to finance their activities. Civil war or guerrilla warfare are often associated with tactics described as terrorist acts.

Overall, the balance of argument suggests bias against sub-state insurgent groups and pariah states engaged in suppression at home and aggressive behavior toward outsiders. Two regimes may employ violence that looks similar. However, a friendly regime may not attract the “terrorist” label, the adversary almost certainly will. This makes any discussion highly subjective and political. The maxim “one person’s terrorist is another’s freedom fighter” summarizes the classic dilemma. Since the League of Nations first attempted to find a commonly agreed definition of terrorism in 1937, success has eluded us in finding an internationally agreed definition of the term.

Alex Schmid and Albert Jongman collected 109 different definitions of terrorism (Schmid and Jongman 2005, 5).³ In their database, they identified 22 word categories, so many of the definitions were quite close to each other. The main obstacle in reaching agreement on a common definition is a clash over what is seen as the motivation of actors—terrorism or liberation struggle; criminal act or war; whether it is non-state group or state behavior; in what circumstances; or whether preventive defense is legitimate defense or terrorism—as Israel has used for a long time and the United States has done especially after the September 11, 2001 attacks.

Schmid noted at a conference in 2011 that most of the research in recent years has focused on a fairly narrow base, involving those who have become “terrorists.”⁴ A consequence of this has been that studies of the origins or root causes of terrorism have suffered in the last decade. Tackling terrorism and political violence has become a matter of security and law enforcement, at the expense of looking at the wider environment in which violence can set in. It lends support to the view of terrorism as violent sub-state group activity amounting to

³ Word categories in Alex Schmid and Albert Jongman. 2005. *Political Terrorism*. Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Publishers. Table 1.2. Most frequently used words are: violence, political, fear or terror, threat, effects and reaction, victim-target differentiation, planned, strategy and tactic, extra normality, coercion, publicity, random, civilians, intimidation, innocent civilians, group, symbolic aspect, unpredictability, covert nature, repetitive, criminal and demands made on third parties.

⁴ Alex Schmid gave this lecture at 11th International Conference: World Summit on Counter-Terrorism (Herzliya, Israel, available <http://vimeo.com/29558178>), 17:00 minutes.

criminality that must be dealt with force. In the absence of solutions to political problems like the Palestinian-Israel conflict and Kashmir, such disputes lead to sharper polarization among government and non-government entities and stronger counterterrorism measures, often without serious examination of wider causes.

Although the United Nations has still not agreed on a definition of terrorism, Schmid came out with a revised “consensus” definition arrived at in a group of academics. That definition, nearly 600 words long to accommodate many views, highlights the following:

Direct violent action without legal or moral restraints targeting mainly civilians and non-combatants ... illegal state repression or propagandistic agitation by non-state actors in times of peace or outside conflict zones ... illicit tactic of irregular warfare ... hijacking, kidnapping and hostage-taking ... threat-based communication ... victims not the ultimate target ... immediate intent to terrorize, destabilize, compel, demoralize or provoke ... to redress alleged grievances, revolution, national liberation, or promotion of ideological, political, social, national or religious causes (Schmid 2011, 86–87).

Several problems can be identified even with this definition. It is too long and there is still no international agreement about it. The aspect of fear-generating coercive political violence without legal or moral restraint is not limited to sub-state groups or individuals. Wars of this kind have been fought by states, not only belonging to the outlaw category, but by other states, too. Guerrilla war is essentially irregular warfare, often justified by the groups involved as legitimate resistance, or supported by states for the same reason, though the real motives of those states may be geopolitical. Threat-based communication (for example, the concept of “shock and awe”) is part of modern warfare, which is not fought in trenches, but in populated areas by manned and unmanned aerial vehicles; innocent civilians are victims and communication of fear to wider population not to cooperate with, or support, the other side cannot be separated; there is 24-hour television and online coverage. Dread, panic, chaos and anxiety are part of all organized violence, regular or irregular.

It is said that direct victims are not the ultimate target of terrorism. The same applies to what is described as collateral damage, including dead, wounded, internal and external refugees in regular warfare. Collective punishment can be meted out on large sections of population in both state and non-state violence. So how to separate terrorist violence from “regular” warfare? Not only is there a need to focus on the properties of violence with political motives, but also to ensure that the impact of those properties on victims is taken into account in any definition. Whether the perpetrator of violence had the intention to harm or threaten innocent people raises some of the most complex questions. When, and how many times, is it right to believe the perpetrator’s explanation that harming or threatening the innocent was not the intention? When does believing someone whose violent acts repeatedly cause “collateral damage,” or inflict collective punishment on a population, amount to impunity? And where does a state engaged in war stand with regard to its duty to protect innocent civilians? Then, there is the question of fear generated by modern warfare techniques in the general population. In attempting to define terrorism, our approach has to have moral force and must be applied consistently.

Finally, Gerard Chaliand (Chaliand and Blin 2007, 6) committed himself to the idea of terrorism as something close to a war instrument when he said:

A tool as old as warfare. Today's terrorism is what specialists call 'bottom-up' terrorism, but top-down (state) terrorism has been far more prevalent. In terms of victims, 'top-down' terrorism has taken a vastly higher toll than its 'bottom-up' counterpart.

The continual argument about what constitutes terrorism and the term "terrorist" is discussed in some detail in the first chapter of *Breeding Ground*. I am inclined toward the view that if the aim of violence, real or threatened, is to force an individual, group or state to change their policy, or to surrender, then all violence must involve a degree of terror. But a general acceptance of this principle leaves the right to defend oneself, or to end tyranny, without protection. Some scholars thus maintain that those who assert that all terrorism is the same are wrong (Held 2004). Tyranny or threats to oneself are real in many situations, but in other scenarios, when a threat is perceived, the arguments are far from clear.

I have suggested a carefully worded definition of terrorism (*Breeding Ground*, 14). It seeks to cover the basic properties of political violence involving terror, irrespective of who the actor is—an individual, a non-state group or state.

Terrorism is the premeditated use of violence by an individual, group, or state to achieve political goals; it is intended to generate shock and panic in the short term and long-term uncertainty beyond the actual scene of violence, to compel the existing political order to change policy, or to surrender in the face of sudden and disproportionate force. Once the consequences of violence are established, threat of repeating similar acts can be sufficient to terrorize the target.⁵

Culture of Violence:

The first chapter of *Breeding Ground* also has a review of how scholars have attempted to explain the causes of terrorism. Three principal approaches are examined. They are—rational choice, arguing that actors choose violence after carefully considering a range of available options (Crenshaw 1990); psychological factors (Post 1990); and structural or external causes (Ross 1990).⁶ I agree with other scholars in that it is possible to study terrorism and political violence by one or other of these approaches. However, I argue that the three approaches mentioned above are not suitable for the purposes of my research (14–15). Therefore in the second chapter titled "Culture of Violence" (17–20), I develop a new concept of "culture of violence," defined as follows:

A condition in which violence permeates all levels of society and becomes part of human behavior, thinking and way of life.

⁵ This formulation about the threat of violence in the last sentence is necessary to avoid confusion due to empty threats or pranks and to bring real, credible threats into the definition.

⁶ All in Walter Reich (editor). 1990. *Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, State of Mind*. Washington, D.C: Woodrow Wilson International Center/Cambridge University Press.

I further suggest that once this condition has been established actors have acquired a habit of using force and both perpetrators of violence, and victims, expect solutions to be found through violence. There are advantages in approaching the subject of terrorism in this way. To begin with, provocative language is avoided. It is difficult for one side to blame others—a tendency that too often leads to accusations and counter-accusations and negative debate. It goes beyond the existing approaches to the study of terrorism. Above all, the concept of “culture of violence” I have developed allows a recognition of how all actors contribute to that condition. Although my submission looks at Afghanistan and Iraq, this approach can be helpful in studying other long conflicts, too.

Indeed, other scholars have produced studies on “cultures of violence” that they have explained differently. Christian Gerlach used the term “extremely violent societies” where various population groups become victims of massive political violence, in which diverse social groups, acting together with organs of the state, participate for a variety of reasons (Gerlach 2010, 1–2). The idea has also been invoked to describe societies, for instance the United States, with lax gun laws combined with a high frequency of violent incidents (Zimring and Hawkins 1999; Chasin 2004). Conditions in which a high number of children are raised in single parent families, in many cases due to domestic violence, can result in violent adults who have suffered deprivation and neglect, having been raised in the absence of a role model and without training in how to develop interpersonal relationships (Buzawa and Buzawa 2003) have also been described in these terms. In certain societies where poverty is extreme or the gap between rich and poor is wide, lawlessness and crime are rampant. In others, the state does not have the necessary resources to run effective policing and judicial systems or state officials are corrupt, so there is a sudden loss of confidence and people take matters into their own hands. Insurgencies that challenge the state can break out (Hironaka 2005). Or the state can resort to extreme force to suppress people rising up in opposition. There are communities in which violence against women is endemic. All of these conditions are ones in which cultures of violence have been invoked as explanations.

There can be little doubt that certain basic human requirements, if fulfilled, can keep individuals, groups or nations from violence. Abraham Maslow’s pioneering work offers his famous hierarchy of human needs: from water, food, shelter through safety, job, love and belonging to self-esteem and achieving one’s potential, even reaching higher spiritual levels. Other scholars have followed Maslow, offering their need-based perspectives on violent or peaceful human behavior. Such needs differ according to each situation. Scholars refer to cultures of violence to explain the causes of violent behavior and to propose ways of building cultures of peace in differing scenarios (Staub 2003). In his work, Ervin Staub has focused on security, “positive identity,” and a sense of effectiveness as some of the essential ingredients of a peaceful culture. Other needs he has mentioned are people’s wish for connecting with each other and for transcendence.

Others, however, offer a different perspective. They argue that, in stateless societies, coercion is privately provided rather than by the state system. Violence can be used to engage in, and to defend against, predation (Bates, Grief and Singh 2002). Their main thesis is that where the state does not have a presence, organized violence provides order. Violence can be useful

in protecting people's property rights and agents of coercion are rewarded for fulfilling this role. Bates, Greif and Singh have developed a model of a stateless society, in which "people's rights to the product of their labor are secure only if they possess coercive abilities" (600). To this end, communities in stateless environments are willing to trade off production and protection (624).

Studies on cultures of violence by this or any other name refer to a range of causal factors which can be examined in conjunction with strategic (rational) choice, psychological or structural analysis. Most of these factors have to do with the basic needs of food, water and shelter; or higher psychological requirements of security and job; sense of belonging and self-esteem; self-actualization; and beyond to some higher spiritual levels; or the psychological need for revenge, based on negative ethno-religious emotions. There are more external factors such as availability of weapons, lack of governance due to weak or nonexistent state institutions or excessive state coercion.

In a pioneering work, Kalyvas (2006) examines the causes and micro-dynamics of civil wars and shows that violence in an internal war is neither a product of irrational behavior, nor is it driven by longstanding ideological rivalries. Instead, he sees violence as rational, the end of a process by which political and civilian actors seek to fulfill their interests within their space. Safety and welfare of individuals and close relatives are interests of utmost importance. To ensure these, "many people prefer to join the rival actor" rather than face the prospect of death (160). Armed groups in civil conflicts eventually recognize that indiscriminate violence is against their interests, so they engage in selective violence. It involves rational decision-making on the part of armed actors, but also pushes civilians to make their own strategic choices. For selective violence is based on gathering information.

Hence selective violence becomes a joint process, undertaken together by an armed gang and civilians who cooperate within the space in the armed groups' control (209). The size and strength of each group, as well as the information it receives, usually determines the area it will control. The implication is that when two militias have parity, there will be no selective violence as long as that condition exists. Kalyvas' micro-level analysis helps clear the confusion that often makes it difficult to understand what looks like a "war of all against all." For his study demonstrates that an "internal war" is actually a complex web of many conflicts, each of which has its own players and dynamic. However, his method creates a difficulty in a country like Afghanistan and Iraq, where external powers are involved. Here external intervention (foreign forces or weapons or both) has the effect of changing the balance of power in an "internal war" and escalates the cycle of violence. The question therefore arises whether it is an "internal war" any longer. In Afghanistan and Iraq, there were groups at war with each other, but often they were also proxies of outside powers and sometimes changed their allegiances because of external influence.

In fact, Kalyvas' analysis is tested in Greece when that country was under German occupation during the Second World War (248–249). He acknowledges the lack of reliable fatality figures for the entire period of the Greek civil war (1943–1949), because the civil war was intertwined with foreign occupation (German control did not end until September 1944).

But he asserts that his study does nevertheless fall under the definition of “civil war” (5).⁷ Further, Kalyvas’ focus on “selective violence” suggests that more work would need to be done on large-scale and seemingly indiscriminate violence in territorial entities significantly greater in size and population.

My submission seeks to be a critical study of the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq in a wider context. The two books attempt to show how internal or local conflict attracted great power involvement toward these countries; outside intervention contributed to escalation and led to the breakdown of what state institutions there were; and how internal and external actors interacted to produce a “culture of violence” in which violent groups found sanctuaries. Having prevailed over the Soviet Union in the Cold War, the United States, which had thereby become the world’s only military superpower, returned, seeking to dominate the region after the September 11, 2001 attacks. I attempt to provide a new synthesis of the Afghan and Iraq wars in the context of U.S. foreign policy.

My thesis seeks to demonstrate that in a lengthy war local violence, leading to the involvement of external forces, contributing to an intensification of conflict, and weakening or destroying state mechanisms of public order, creates a “culture of violence” in which violent groups find safe havens.

Afghanistan:

[Also see *Breeding Ground*, Bibliographic Essay, 165–169 and Preface, xvii–xxiii.]

My case is that historically Afghanistan has been a potential breeding ground for conflict due to a number of factors, not least its location. It has formed a buffer between competing empires and great powers in Central and South Asia. From the early eighteenth century until the end of the Second World War in 1945, the competition was between the British and Russian (later Soviet) empires, and then between the Soviet Union and the United States.

Living often in isolated communities lacking in communication and transportation, Afghans have developed an inbuilt distrust of others and a determination to resist outsiders for survival. But Afghanistan is a desperately poor country, dependent on foreign aid. Afghans want help from outsiders, but will not accept external forces controlling their communities. These conflicting interests have caused wars through centuries. But particularly aggressive intervention by the Cold War superpowers, together with internal conflict, beginning in the early 1970s contributed to an increasingly stubborn “culture of violence.” Successive phases of conflict over two decades beginning with the 1973 overthrow of the monarchy with Soviet-oriented Afghan army officers’ support caused the destruction of the state system and its institutions. New forces emerged to fill the vacuum, resulting eventually in the rise of the Taliban, who offered sanctuaries to foreign groups such as al Qaeda. Once established, the culture of violence provided a space for terrorism within and enabled the export of the phenomenon beyond Afghanistan’s borders.

⁷ Kalyvas defines civil war as *armed combat within the boundaries of a recognized sovereign entity between parties subject to a common authority at the outset of the hostilities* (his emphasis). See p. 5.

Scholars have noted the inhospitable mountainous terrain of Afghanistan that is ethnically divided and where an overwhelming majority of the population lives in the countryside. It makes Afghanistan a highly decentralized society, with many independent ethnic and tribal groups. Pashtuns, concentrated in the south and east, are the largest and politically dominant group, organized around tribes. Non-Pashtun ethnic groups are mostly spread over in other parts of the country. Feuds are common (Vayrynen 1980, 93–102; Rubin 2002). As a distinguished American scholar of Afghan history, Louis Dupree, observed way back (1973, 248–251), sustained relations with the outside world have rarely been pleasant. Afghan villagers cannot believe that central and provincial governments, local or foreign technicians will introduce permanent reform. For they know that “modernization” teams have gone after a short period, or abortive attempts, and things have gone back to what they were before.

A scholar with a lifelong commitment to studying Afghanistan, Dupree is accurate and refined in his analysis of the characteristics of Afghan society. What is somewhat missing is a diagnosis of what has consistently played a role in ensuring that the “extractor” leaves eventually. My interest in the country for more than three decades suggests that Afghans are typically generous toward outsiders, but foreigners who try to control them do so at their peril. An outsider making a forced entry, or overstaying Afghan welcome, can expect harsh treatment. It may not be a unique trait, but is quite pronounced among the Afghan people. Past repetitions of history have reinforced this trait.

My argument is that a country that has been subjected to external invasions and which has very limited resources tends to be dependent on outside help and, at the same time, displays an inbuilt quality to resist. That is why the Afghans have accepted foreign aid, resisted overbearing foreign influence and played off external players against one another (Hyman 1992, 39–51; Dil 1977, 468–476; Ramazani 1958, 144–152; Segal 1981, 1158–1174). This was clear in the early period of the Cold War from around the mid-1950s. While Hyman and Segal have emphasized the significance of the race for influence in Afghanistan between Moscow and Washington, a race that the Soviet Union had won by the 1970s, Segal points out that China was not happy with that outcome after the Sino-Soviet split opened up in the late 1950s. Yet bilateral relations remained “positive,” and “limited trade pacts” were signed between Beijing and Kabul (Segal: 1161). But Afghanistan’s significance diminished gradually as China’s ties with Pakistan and the United States grew and their relations with the USSR deteriorated. By the 1979 Soviet invasion, less than two years after the communist takeover in Kabul, China was part of the Western alliance in the Afghan conflict.

Dil’s analysis of the Kabul government’s ways of managing its foreign relations is correct. However, he overstates his conclusion that the 1973 coup by Daud Khan, in which Daud ousted his cousin King Zahir Shah and abolished the Afghan monarchy, was at the “expense of both American and Chinese interests” (476). The United States and China had made a deliberate preference for Pakistan instead of Afghanistan by the early 1970s. While a major reason for Daud Khan to stage the 1973 coup against the king was his humiliation after being removed as prime minister a decade before, the United States had made a clear choice in favor of Pakistan and China as Cold War allies against the Soviet Union well before.

The reasons behind Afghanistan's struggle for much needed assistance, how the Kabul regime went about in its search for foreign aid and friends and what transpired, all leave further scope to study the impact of geopolitics on the Afghan War. Daud's aggressive push for modernization in the Afghan republic alienated communist as well as religious groups. It triggered internal conflict in the country and started a long sequence of violent events involving intervention from outside. The growing body of U.S. and Russian archives from the Soviet era (1991, 2001, 2002, 2003) provided me with useful material to explore how it happened.

Almost four decades after Dupree's seminal work on Afghanistan was first published, a new study of comparable depth has appeared. Its author, Thomas Barfield, a Princeton University anthropologist, has also devoted many years studying the country. Barfield (2010) has provided a general survey of the land now known as Afghanistan, particularly focused on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He has untangled some of the contradictions of Afghan society that outsiders find perplexing: a land repeatedly invaded but known as the "graveyard of empires" after forcing the withdrawal of foreign invaders; how it is easier to topple a regime in Afghanistan than to eliminate resistance and complete the conquest; and the failure of foreigners to introduce change in Afghan politics and social structures.

A country so disparate in its landscape, peoples, their cultures and interests is extremely vulnerable, but it refuses to disintegrate. Barfield's main argument is that coercion from the center has played the principal role in the cohesion of Afghanistan as it is. His assertion is that the right to rule was "established by conquest" that created a "professional" ruling class and a subject population lacking military or "political involvement." Historically, competition for "supreme power" has come from within the dynastic elite or from the invaders. Barfield's thesis is that rulers have found it "easiest to maintain their legitimacy and authority" when the political structure is "least open to competition" and competition comes from a "limited number of contenders."

However, when the political system is more open and there are more contenders for power, the resulting struggles, in the absence of an alternative system, have "threatened to disrupt society." This thesis is useful as a starting point and is helpful in explaining Afghanistan's openly chaotic politics during the "democratic experiment" in the 1960s and after the communist takeover in 1978 (Rubin 1992, 77-99). Nonetheless, Barfield is somewhat sweeping in his assertion in light of the last king Zahir Shah's tenuous reign in Kabul for forty years (1933-1973). Zahir Shah came to the throne, aged 19, after his father, Nadir Shah, was assassinated. King Zahir's cousin, Daud Khan, presided over a republic over a five-year period that was extremely turbulent, with much more turbulence to come after the April 1978 coup in which Daud and several members of his family were assassinated. Through much of the twentieth century at least, large areas of Afghanistan were administered by local chiefs and warlords.

Respected or feared, they managed their communities, but acknowledged the king in whose name formal decisions were made. This system often brought conflicting interests to the fore. The inability of the central government to deliver public goods in a vast country with rugged

mountains, remote and diverse communities, poor communication and transport made it difficult to rule in any case. As Barfield acknowledged elsewhere in the book, when state authority was challenged, the state resorted to a range of weapons short of direct rule. In fact, the center of power left plenty of room for maneuver and accommodation with local chiefs.

Barfield is right, though, in identifying the sources of resistance when governments in Kabul have attempted to introduce social change: rural inhabitants in general and Islamic clerics in particular. Both see change as a “threat to their traditional way of life” (339). Women’s rights, secular education and the primacy of state law over customary law are the most contentious issues. There is a pattern of them returning whenever reform has been tried. The West’s support for Islamist groups after the 1978 communist coup in Kabul and during the Soviet Union’s occupation of Afghanistan in the 1980s is a salutary lesson in how immediate geopolitical considerations can lead to unintended consequences, of which a violent culture is one.

Extremism and violence, once they have taken root, become deeply embedded in a culture. The 1990s phase of the Afghan conflict illustrated this. Since the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States and the Bush administration’s retaliation, the war further illustrated the stubbornness of the “culture of violence.” A prominent characteristic of such a culture reveals that attempts by the dominant international military force to subdue the insurgents by applying greater coercion encounter a higher level of resistance and different tactics by the other side, ensuring continuation of war.

Iraq:

[See *Overcoming the Bush Legacy in Iraq and Afghanistan*, Bibliographic Essay, 171–174.]

In some ways, Iraq in 2003 was a very different country compared to Afghanistan just before invasion in 2001, or even in 1992, when Najibullah’s regime collapsed a few months after the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Nonetheless in some crucial respects, there were also similarities between Afghanistan and Iraq. Both had suffered from years of war; an increasingly ruthless elite with a narrow power base had emerged as a result of internal conflict in each country; power was concentrated around Saddam Hussain and a narrow circle of people he trusted, thereby weakening state institutions. The U.S. administrator Paul Bremer formally disbanded the Iraqi state structure in 2003; there were many disaffected groups; and eagle-eyed external players were important.

These similarities were useful for me to (i) explain the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq in the context of U.S. foreign policy during and after the Cold War, (ii) provide a new analysis of the interaction of internal and external actors, and (iii) explain how these conflicts created a “culture of violence” in which violent groups found refuge and the consequences thereof.

Modern Iraq, like Afghanistan, also has been subjected to repeated invasions. There is a vast amount of literature on the history of Iraq. It was once part of Mesopotamia, including northeastern Syria, southeastern Turkey and southwestern Iran. Situated around the Tigris-Euphrates river system, Mesopotamia was a cradle of civilization whose origins go back

more than six thousand years (Preston e-book). Wealth made it a target for invasions. When the First World War broke out in 1914, Mesopotamia was part of the Ottoman Empire. With its collapse, Britain took over the territory to administer it under a League of Nations mandate. Oil was found in the 1920s. Gareth Stansfield (2007) and Charles Tripp (2007) have written about rebellions and political upheavals thereafter, and the creation of an independent state of Iraq in 1932. The pro-West monarchy was overthrown in a coup d'état in 1958, and Iraq was under dictatorship until Saddam Hussein's regime was toppled in the 2003 U.S.-led invasion. Iraq was involved in two wars before 2003: against Iran (1980–1988) and what is known as the First Gulf War (1990–1991), when Saddam's forces briefly occupied Kuwait, but were evicted by a U.S.-led coalition, authorized by the United Nations (Farouk-Sluglett & Sluglett 2001). Thereafter, Iraq remained under severe international sanctions during the rest of Saddam Hussein's regime (Koshy 1995).

These sanctions were imposed by the UN Security Council (Resolutions 661, August 6, 1990; 687, April 3, 1991). After Iraq's defeat in 1991, it became increasingly clear in subsequent years that the Clinton administration in Washington wanted the sanctions to continue, notwithstanding the progress made by the UN weapons inspectors with regard to Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction program. As Koshy has argued, the objective was achieved by offering differing interpretations of the Security Council resolutions and many new American demands made on Iraq (2985).

In that light, my submission looks at the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq and its consequences in the book *Overcoming the Bush Legacy in Iraq and Afghanistan*. Iraq has been called both an "old and a new nation" (Russell 1955, 72–75). That perceptive observation, made in the mid-twentieth century, continues to be true in the twenty-first (Dawisha 2011). Wealth has brought industrialization. However, the tribal system of Arab Sunnis is alive and well; majority Shi'a communities, of which there are many more in the south, and Kurds in the north, maintain their traditional ways in the vast countryside (Dodge 2005, 101–130).⁸ Iraq continues to draw the attention of great powers and its neighbors.

From the early 1990s until the overthrow of the Saddam Hussein regime in 2003, Iraq was viewed as a threat to U.S. interests. This is in contrast to the 1980s when, although a Soviet ally, Iraq was supported by Washington in the war against Iran, following the Islamic Revolution. It was the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 that brought a fundamental change in America's thinking. For just as the Cold War and the Soviet threat had ended, a new threat had emerged to pro-U.S. oil states, most notably to Saudi Arabia and the wider Gulf region. There could be more challenges to come. For this reason, the course of American policy in the 1990s is an important area of inquiry. My book, *Overcoming the Bush Legacy in Iraq and Afghanistan*, looks at what ultimately transpired in the form of the 2003 invasion of Iraq and its aftermath.

⁸ See, in particular, chapter 6 titled "The Social Meaning of Land: State, Shaikh and Peasant" in Toby Dodge's book *Inventing Iraq: The Failure of Nation Building and a History Denied*.

That Iraq's minority Arab Sunnis had supremacy over the Shi'a majority and the Kurdish minority in the Ottoman period, under the British mandate, and even after, has been widely discussed by scholars (Anderson & Stanfield 2004; Phillips 2006; Tripp 2007). Sunni domination was a fact about the political elite. Anderson and Stanfield have pointed out that Sunni control was even more pronounced at the local level (20) and was always at the cost of Iraq's Shi'a population and ethnic Kurds, who were Sunni but otherwise a people distinct from the Arabs. Tripp and Dodge have both suggested that this was a major structural fault in Iraqi society, posing a continuous challenge to the government's legitimacy. During the British mandate and the monarchy, once Iraq had been granted independence in 1932, violence was increasingly used to deal with such structural faults. This historical background is relevant to study how a culture of violence has developed in Iraq over many decades.

The British, who knew they had neither the money nor soldiers to control the Iraqi population, had resorted to the "coercive power of airplanes," that delivered governance from "two hundred feet, in the shape of regular bombing and machine-gun fire" (Dodge, 158). Under Saddam Hussein's rule, the use of violence reached a new peak. In the thirteen-year period of sanctions and air-exclusion zones, he learned to form a "shadow state" that was the real "nexus of power" formed of "close associates, clients, associates, circles of exclusion and privilege emanating from the office and person of the president" (Tripp, 259).

My case in analyzing Iraq is that by 2003 the Iraqi state stood on a very narrow base, with pressures from outside and internal opposition which was crushed by extreme coercion. Once the Saddam Hussein regime had been overthrown, the dissolution of the Iraqi state structure by the U.S.-led occupying powers destroyed the institutions, left a void and encouraged hitherto suppressed non-state groups, creating new entities to fill the void. Attempts to subdue them only caused those groups to employ more violent means, resulting in escalation in conflict, a much more fragile state, its ability to maintain order diminished.

The Case for the Published Works to be Regarded as a Coherent Body of Work:

Breeding Ground looks at how the actions of internal players, together with regional and great powers, created an environment that turned Afghanistan into a society which would give rise to an extremist group like the Taliban, and provide sanctuary for an extremist network like al Qaeda, and how these contributed to the phenomenon of terrorism. The analysis of the Afghan War in *Breeding Ground* seeks to demonstrate that the phenomenon of terrorism results from an environment of conflict that develops in four distinct, overlapping, phases: (1) internal unrest, (2) great power involvement, (3) state disintegration and (4) foreign indifference and the rise of extremism. I argue that violence replicates through these stages, and, as state institutions disintegrate, new violent players form in the vacuum left. This is what happened in Afghanistan in the 1980s and 1990s, and the United States returned to intervene after the September 11, 2001 attacks—more than a decade after the U.S. proxy war against the Soviet Union had ended. *Breeding Ground* makes the point in conclusion that parallels can be seen in Palestine, Lebanon and other places, where social and institutional frailties, together with foreign intervention, conspire to trigger a cycle of violence that, in time, becomes part of societal culture (141).

Overcoming the Bush Legacy in Iraq and Afghanistan is the sequel to *Breeding Ground* in historical terms. *Overcoming the Bush Legacy* evaluates the Bush administration's foreign policy in terms of the "war on terror." It traces its origins to America's domestic political scene, in particular the neoconservative agenda of the 1990s and inscribed in the Project for the New American Century. America's interests and motives as envisaged during the Bush administration are analyzed; its actions are examined; and an attempt is made to assess their short- and long-term consequences. *Overcoming the Bush Legacy* looks at the extension of war to Iraq and America's militaristic foreign policy using the umbrella of the "war on terrorism."

The two books are linked as explained above, but they were written in different circumstances. *Breeding Ground* is based on my research as a DPhil student at the University of Sussex (2002–2007). My approach in *Breeding Ground* is a result of being in an academic environment, though the presentation is for informed general readers, as well as students of international politics. *Overcoming the Bush Legacy* focuses on a relatively shorter period of less than a decade and evaluates George W. Bush's presidency.

Original and Distinctive Contribution:

Each of the two books in my submission relies heavily on archival material, as explained above and listed in Appendix A. The extent to which these archives have been used is one distinctive aspect of my submission, and has enabled the distinctive features of my argument.

- The first of these is a new synthesis of the Afghan and Iraq wars in the context of U.S. foreign policy during and after the Cold War.

There is a discernible tendency among policymakers and academic scholars to suggest a separation between the Soviet-era and the post-Soviet period in international relations and thus American policy. Walter Russell Mead (2002, 264–309, 335–338) wrote about the rise and retreat of the new world order and claimed that the world of American foreign policy changed again after September 11, 2001. Others (Scott and Crothers 1998, 1–2) have focused on changes in the reference points and purposes of the United States in the post-Soviet world. This leads to inferences that while the Soviet Union was the main threat to the West before the dissolution of the USSR, it was replaced by a new threat posed by radical Islam and rogue states (Litwak 2000, 238–255). Such interpretations have been used to justify American policy during the "war on terror" after September 11, 2001 in particular.

My published works, in particular *Overcoming the Bush Legacy*, show this to be an overly simplistic approach. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, and the first Gulf War thereafter, demonstrated to the Americans the threat posed by Arab nationalism, largely secular in character, although that nationalism overlapped with Islamist opposition. It was not new. The U.S.-Islamist alliance went back to the Carter-Reagan presidencies (even before), whose politics were themselves influenced by America's Christian Right. I have described al Qaeda's and the Taliban's anti-Western ideology as a "grotesque mirror image" of the Carter and Reagan-George H.W. Bush administrations' anti-Soviet policy (*Breeding Ground*, 128).

America's close alliance with Saudi Arabia, a fundamentalist Islamic kingdom, continues, and Sunni Islamist groups have fought regimes in Libya, Syria and Iran with U.S. support.

The American response to the challenge began with the 1992 Wolfowitz document, a neo-Reaganite version of U.S. policy adapted to the post-Soviet international environment, with objectives similar to those during the Cold War. It became the foundation for the Project for the New American Century in the late 1990s and the George W. Bush administration's policy.

- Explains how these wars created a “culture of violence” providing sanctuaries for violent groups.

I have explained in *Breeding Ground* how a “culture of violence” evolves in stages (17–20). It begins with internal or local unrest (the 1978 communist coup in Afghanistan; the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait). In the next stage, great powers become involved on behalf of one local actor or another. In Afghanistan, it began in the form of a prolonged race for influence between the Soviet Union and the United States well before 1978. After the communist takeover in April 1978, and to a larger extent upon the Soviet invasion in December 1979, Afghanistan became a theater for a bitter Cold War conflict. By the early 1990s, the Soviet state had collapsed, the last Afghan communist leader, Najibullah, had fallen and the state institutions had disintegrated. It signified the phase of state disintegration, followed by the final stage in the evolution of a “culture of violence”—foreign indifference and rise of extremism. The United States switched its attention to other parts of the world, but returned to Afghanistan after September 11, 2001. Other regional actors—Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Iran, India—remained involved. The level of violence continued to be high after America removed the Taliban regime in Kabul.

- Provides a new analysis of interactions between internal and external players and their wider consequences.

Interactions between actors are driven by their interests and motives. Afghanistan had been a buffer between Russian and Western interests in Pakistan and the Indian Ocean. With the Soviet Union coming to dominate Afghanistan in the last phase of the Cold War and the United States' determination to challenge the Soviets, Afghanistan was transformed into a battleground. The scene was set for alliances between Islamist groups and the United States, particularly during the presidency of Ronald Reagan, whose own political base included America's powerful Christian Right. In the 1980s, hostility to the Soviet Union was all important for the coalition of Islamic fundamentalists and rightwing Christians. A number of anti-Soviet leaders in the Arab world, Pakistan and China, joined the U.S.-led alliance against the Soviets in the Afghan War.

As the Soviet military retreated, so did the American interest in Afghanistan decline. Other concerns, such as managing the aftermath of the Soviet Union's collapse and neutralizing the threat from Saddam Hussein, turned America's attention elsewhere. That shift generated a domino effect. Many in the Arab and Muslim world began to view the United States as using, then abandoning the Mujahideen in Afghanistan, and then turning against Saddam Hussein,

with whom many Muslims sympathized for standing up to the West. While support for Saddam among Muslim rulers was scant, it was significant in the population in general. Afghan and foreign Mujahideen and their Taliban successors felt betrayed. The damage to any good will and empathy for the West was a key factor contributing to the “culture of violence.” Once Iraq’s state institutions had been dismantled immediately and suddenly following the U.S.-led invasion, there was little sympathy for the occupying forces among the country’s powerful groups. There was a long history to remind them of foreign invasions and resistance against occupation forces.

My analysis of Afghanistan and Iraq suggests that in both countries, indeed elsewhere in the region, actors have a tendency to make the most of great power interventions. Local players let external powers remove authoritarian rulers (who may have been propped up by foreign players) and pay a high price in conditions they cannot do much to control. In the end, intervening foreign forces encounter resistance which makes permanent control of a country difficult.

Scholarly Endorsements and Reviews:

The two books have attracted comment from scholars and reviews have been published in academic journals. In his foreword to *Breeding Ground*, Richard Falk writes that the book “incisively narrates the several generations of recent Afghan conflict and turmoil, and calls our attention to several crucial features of the Afghan reality often disregarded by past foreign intervenors” (Foreword, xiv). Falk observes that Tripathi offers a “non-ideological” assessment of the overall situation in Afghanistan, including its regional setting; and depicts the manner by which the cumulative effects of foreign intervention have generated “a culture of violence” in the country. It represents an “ethos of terrorism that has been adopted by all participants in the conflict that constantly blurs the boundaries between warfare and massacre.”

Marjorie Cohn, professor at Thomas Jefferson Law School, is among those who have reviewed *Breeding Ground*. In George Mason University’s History News Network (August 22, 2011), Cohn writes: “*Breeding Ground* makes a significant contribution toward understanding the origins and triggers of terrorism.” She says that the book traces the development of a “culture of violence” in Afghanistan due to resistance against foreign invasions. Without such historical insight, Cohn adds, efforts to make us safe from acts of terror will prove futile.

Cohn’s review goes through the narrative of the final phase of the Cold War (1980s), the rise of the Taliban and al Qaeda (1990s) and the conduct of the “war on terror” in the wake of the September 11, 2001 attacks on America. She concludes that one of the significant things to come out of *Breeding Ground* is an explanation as to how rather than endearing us to the people in the Muslim world, Washington’s policies “incur hatred against the United States.”

Survival, journal of the International Institute of Strategic Studies, says that in his analysis of the 1979–89 Soviet war in Afghanistan and after, Tripathi examines “how the conflict ultimately transformed Afghanistan into a sanctuary for terrorism.” It notes that the book

argues that the West should “abandon its current ‘strong-arm tactics’ and focus on development and reconstruction.” (Brief Notices, *Survival* October-November 2011, 212).

Overcoming the Bush Legacy in Iraq and Afghanistan has a foreword by the MIT political scientist, John Tirman. Tirman comments on the author’s approach to evaluate George W. Bush’s presidency in terms of the “war on terror,” its origins and consequences. “The strategy of war against Iraq and Afghanistan was, as Tripathi rightly focuses on, the centerpiece of his global war on terror,” writes Tirman (Foreword, xi). Calling the book “a terse treatment,” (xii) he concludes: “That now we have Deepak Tripathi’s sharply reasoned account of this catastrophe—its origins, and its consequences—will serve as a powerful warning for generations to come.”

In the *Antigonish Review* (Spring 2011), journal of St. Francis Xavier University in Canada, Wilf Cude looks at *Overcoming the Bush Legacy in Iraq and Afghanistan*, together with *War of Necessity, War of Choice: A Memoir of Two Iraq Wars* (Simon & Schuster, 2009) by the veteran U.S. diplomat Richard N. Haass. Wilf Cude’s review is titled “Insider and Outsider: Converging Views on Iraq and Afghanistan” (103 –107). Cude finds the “definitive insider’s account” by Haass and the “definitive outsider’s assessment” by Tripathi “offering independently of one another a remarkably convergent vision of what is emerging as the worst blunder of American foreign policy since Vietnam.” Cude writes that Tripathi examines the same salient events as Haass (leading to the invasion of Iraq). However, what Cude finds noteworthy is the book’s greater focus upon the “background political and cultural environments generating and exacerbating those events, beginning with the post-Reagan rise of neoconservatives that brought George W. Bush to power.” Cude calls the book “a grim sketch of the Bush Legacy” —with “Afghanistan in ruins, with nominal governments hopelessly ineffective, with hundreds of thousands dead and perhaps millions displaced, and with every prospect of both nations continuing a sinkhole for American and allied military.”

In the *Cambridge Journal of American Studies* (2011, vol. 45 no. 2, 404–405), Jon Roper has reviewed *Overcoming the Bush Legacy*. In Roper’s view, the book is “no less an indictment of the consequences of Bush’s decisions than it is a survey of how his administration came to believe that political problems can be solved by military action.” The book “argues convincingly that their (Bush administration’s) response was not only predictable but also ultimately self-defeating.” And Roper writes that Tripathi is “most at home in describing the complex web of religious and political groups that opposed the United States military as it took action against al Qaeda and the Taliban.”

Appendix A

Use of archival material (documents, information and memoirs included)

See first Breeding Ground endnotes, 171–201 (in order of use):

Discussion on literature and culture of violence: chapters 1 & 2

National Security Archive: chapters 3, 5, 6, 8, 12, Afterword

Cold War International History Project: chapters 4, 5, 6, 10

U.S. Federal Reserve Division: chapter 3

Carter Presidential Library: chapters 7, 11

Robert Gates (CIA Director): chapters 7, 8

Brigadier Mohammad Yousaf (Pakistan ISI): chapters 7, 8, 9

Zbigniew Brzezinski (U.S. National Security Adviser): chapter 7

Reagan Presidential Library: chapters 8, 9

Russian General Staff Postmortem (trans., ed. Lester Grau)/Soviet-Afghan War: chapter 8

Colonel Jalali & Grau/Mujahideen Account (Other Side of the Mountain): chapter 8

NATO-Russia Archive (Berlin Information Center for Transatlantic Security): chapter 11

Private conversations: chapters 4, 10

Project for the New American Century: chapter 11

UK Government Report: “Responsibility for Terrorist Atrocities”: chapter 14

Avalon Project (Yale Law School): chapter 14

See Overcoming the Bush Legacy in Iraq and Afghanistan endnotes, 171–201

Cursor: Dossier on civilian victims of U.S. aerial bombing of Afghanistan: Prologue

Federal Election Commission: 2000 election result: chapter 1

Project for the New American Century: chapter 1

U.S. National Security Council: National Security Strategy 2002: chapter 1

Congressional Research Service: chapters 1, 2, 7

Avalon Project: chapters 2, 3

Bush Presidential Papers: chapter 2

CIA World Factbook 2001: chapter 2

UN: chapters 3, 4

UK Government Report: “Responsibility for Terrorist Atrocities”: chapter 3

Jane’s Intelligence Review: chapter 3

Human Rights Watch: chapters 3, 6

U.S. National Archive: chapters 4, 7

Russian General Staff Postmortem (trans., ed. Lester Grau)/Soviet-Afghan War: chapter 4

Official Account of London Bombing, July 7, 2005: chapter 4

Brigadier Mohammad Yousaf (Pakistan ISI): chapter 4

Iraq’s Weapons of Mass Destruction: British Government Assessment: chapter 5

NSA: Curveball Affair: chapter 5

Iraq Body Count: chapter 5

Dick Marty: Council of Europe Report on Secret Detentions and Illegal Transfers of Detainees Involving Council of Europe Member-States, Second Report: chapter 6

Amnesty : chapter 6

Reprieve: chapter 6

Taguba Report: Investigation of the 800th Military Police Brigade (Abu Ghraib): chapter 6

NATO–Russia Archive: chapter 7

ArmsControl.Org: chapter 7

Strobe Talbott (U.S.): chapter 7

President Barack Obama Speeches (White House): Epilogue

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