

## ENGLISH SUMMARIES

*Afghanistan. The need for new leaders*, by Giandomenico Picco

Afghan history has always been deeply influenced by the expansionist ambitions of other countries, which have used Afghanistan as a buffer state, a terrain of religious or tribal conflict and a Cold War battlefield. The emergence of the Taleban was the result of decades of conflict and the destruction of the traditional tribal structure, both triggered by the policies enacted by the Soviet Union, Pakistan the United States, India and their respective allies. Having become a territory of conquest and contrasting claims, the country lost its national identity. Now Afghanistan has a chance to plan a new national project, but this requires on the one hand a new balance between its neighbouring states (a new dialogue between India and Pakistan, for instance, facilitated by the United States and an international coalition) and on the other a drive for unification within the country itself which can identify leaders able to overcome religious and ideological divisions for the sake of what may be the region's first project for a post-Westphalian state.

*Afghanistan, the Taleban and the "great game"*, by Matteo Piacentini

Afghanistan has often been a setting in which micro-players have played a "Great Game". In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Great Game was played by Russia and Britain, with central Asian countries and Afghanistan as the pawns. In the 1980s Soviet Russia tried to end the game on its own by assimilating Afghanistan to central Asia. But two of the other big players came into the game: Pakistan and the United States drove the Russians from Afghanistan by using local forces. These groups, the Mujahideen and then the Taleban, were strongly supported by Pakistan and driven by fervent (Sunni) religious convictions. This Great Game, however, is really about oil, and since the fall of the Soviet Union an important role in it has been taken on by the central Asian countries, especially Turkmenistan. In this perspective Afghanistan has become a connecting stretch of the pipeline between the former Soviet countries in central Asia and Pakistan, which enjoys the support of the United States and Saudi Arabia. Pakistan's position in the Game is weakened by the religious fundamentalism of the Taleban and their links to Al Qaeda terrorism in western Pakistan and some central Asian countries. Besides the United States, the Game now includes Russia, China and India. What is primarily at stake in this Great Game is access to the oil in the central Asian countries and, secondarily, the common fight against Al Qaeda-linked terrorism.

*The Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Fata), Afghan refugees and peace in Afghanistan and Pakistan*, by Nicolò Gasparini

The Author analyses a border area which is at once a state division and an ethnic and cultural union. The Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Fata) are in Pakistan on its border with Afghanistan. The description highlights their political, legal, economic, productive and commercial characteristics, placing special emphasis on their ethnic unity with the neighbouring part of Afghanistan. The area has always played a key role, but especially since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, which produced a flood of Afghan refugees and the establishment of a series of refugee camps in Pakistan. But above all this area, and its capital Peshawar, became the centre for new Islamic fundamentalist groups which formed around the madrassas and enjoyed the support of powers such as the United States, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan itself. Having defeated the Soviets and subsequently becoming known as the Taleban, these groups then allied themselves to Al Qaeda and terrorism. The Author's analysis of relations between the refugees and native Pashtun in the Tribal Areas highlights efforts to induce the three million refugees to return to Afghanistan, in which major roles are played by the United States, political changes in Pakistan, the Ngos and the Unhcr. The analysis also focuses on the tribes' organisational features, especially the overlapping of *jirgas* from family to regional level, and the social characteristics of the population. It concludes with a look at the future.

*The Fergana valley poisoned by nationalism*, by Isabella Damiani

In June 2010 post-Soviet Asia, considered the gateway between East and West, was the scene of yet another episode of ethnic violence. The stage in this case was the Fergana valley, a fertile region divided politically between Uzbekistan, Tadjikistan and Kirghizstan and since time immemorial a focus of the territorial ambitions of regional powers. Following a brief review of expert analyses of the event, the Author presents her own interpretation in the light of the valley's history. The economic, political and social factors taken into account include the Afghan drug trade centred on the Kirghiz town of Osh, where the violence took place. The above underlying factors have been concealed, especially by the mass media, which resulted in the presentation of the clash as an ethnic pogrom.

*"Cooperation for peace" in Afghanistan. Civilian-military cooperation and international best-practices*, by Manoela Lussi

The article deals with peace-building in Afghanistan, analysing the dynamics, potential and problems of civilian-military cooperation. After a brief theoretical introduction on the role of civilian organisations and individuals in peace-building and reconstruction, it outlines the state of play in civilian-military cooperation in Afghanistan, looking at the specific features of the Italian approach to this type of peace-building. In the second part of the article the case of Lebanon is presented as a possible instance of best practice in Italian civilian-military cooperation, highlighting the features which may be exportable to places such as Afghanistan.

*Tea in Afghanistan*, by Niccolò Rinaldi

The Author highlights how knowledge, openness and mutual awareness through dialogue are required for a real understanding of the Afghans and Afghan values. And these things are what is lacking in the foreigners involved in the country. Diplomats, soldiers, officials, doctors and volunteers come to Afghanistan thinking they can solve its problems and quickly return home to a pay rise and better career prospects. By contrast, the Author cites the examples of people who have come to know the Afghan soul. Foremost among them is Alberto Cairo, distinguished by his work on the ground and the books in which he tells of his relationship with everyday life and Afghan identity. The Author concludes with a first-hand account of his own experience, centred on an encounter with a melon-seller called Abdullah, with whom he spends several hours sipping tea and talking of everyday life and politics, starting with president Karzai.

*Women's health in Afghanistan*, by Giampaolo Mezzabotta

The health of women in Afghanistan is considerably more parlous than that of men, partly owing to factors related to maternity and partly because of their social position of confinement to the home and being a burden – primarily financial – to their families. The vulnerability of women's health depends largely on whether they live in the country or in towns, access to private or public healthcare, their position in the family and the weakness of married women living not only with their husbands but with older relatives, brothers and sisters. This portrait of women's health is based on research as well as official statistics. There is a range of causes of female death and illness, but the main factors are tuberculosis, depression in young married women leading to a cyclothymic syndrome and death in pregnancy and childbirth, which often claims the child as well as the mother. All of these causes are rooted in social factors: the structure of the family, distance from healthcare centres, the inability to use public health services, modest though they are, and a private system which in some cases is costly and of a decent standard but is more often manned by staff whose expertise and equipment is highly rudimentary.

*The language of the veil*, by Ariane Baghai

From a variety of angles this article looks at the question of the veil in tradition (including Western, but particularly Islamic), its meaning and its political-colonial use. The first part discusses how the use of the veil was codified in the Asiatic world – Arab, Zoroastrian and Byzantine. It is then shown how the wearing of the veil, whether Islamic or not, was later interpreted by Western colonial powers as a legitimisation of their superiority and power. The Author then looks at the semantics of the veil, from the *hijab* to the *burq'a*, in which names and meaning often overlap and diverge from one country to another. The third part analyses the role of the *burq'a* in Afghanistan, but emphasises that what is actually most important is the position of women, determined above all by marriage, in Afghan society.

*The mass media in Western Afghanistan (Herat)*, by Andrea Romoli

The Author's description of the mass media in western Afghanistan explains how the radio, television and newspapers try to play their part in the country's democratic and social development. His detailing of the programmes and schedules of the various broadcasters helps to understand how they organise their work in an attempt to find an Afghan way in mass communication. This article is the result of lengthy field research conducted by the Author as a Psyops analyst with the Italian contingent in Herat.

*The jirga and informal justice in Paktia*, by Antonio Luigi Palmisano

In the context of the general relationship between informal and formal law, that is to say between the law of the community and the values and laws of the state, the Author analyses informal justice as directly administered by the Pashtun *jirga* and the punishments laid down by informal law for crimes committed. A *jirga* is a form of council of elders operating at local level in parallel to the courts of first and second instance and the court of appeal in Kabul. Following an explanation of the composition and operation of *jirgas*, the Author analyses the penalties laid down for every crime in accordance with the juridical categories of *poor*, *sharm* and *nanawati*. If the parties involved do not accept the judgement of the *jirga*, the matter passes to the official justice system. The Author concludes that the *jirga* and state justice represent an equilibrium between local communities and the state, which takes its cue from the discussion of disputes in the *jirga* and is thereby configured as a form of justice of the peace.

*Juridical globalisation and the Afghan constitution*, by Domenico Coccopalmerio

The Author outlines the characteristics and significance of the various constitutions drawn up by kings and presidents of Afghanistan, focusing on the most recent, adopted in 2004, which seeks to accommodate tradition and modernity in Afghan society. The first Afghan constitution, promulgated in 1923 by King Amanullah, contemplated a monarchic state. It was followed by the 1931 constitution, which was promulgated by Mohammad Khan, named *Usulmana-a asasi* and began with the invocation "In the name of Allah the most merciful...". The third constitution, a more modern document adopted in 1964 and entitled *Qamu-e asasi*, set itself up as the "state law". Another constitution was discussed and adopted in 1977 as a result of a resolution to that effect by President Daoud, who was supported by the army and Marxist political parties. Its linchpin was the President of the Republic. As an example of "juridical globalisation", the 2004 constitution is constructed in three layers. The basis contained in the frontispiece is theological in character – the state religion is Islam and no law may run counter to its tenets. The second layer is the institutional framework, founded on the Enlightenment and Gallican principles of Western constitutions. The third layer sets out to regulate civil society. Of the three models the first, the religious one, is the predominant element. It is on this constitution that President Hamid Karzai's power is based.

*The crisis of the civilian option in the Afghan quagmire*, by Emanuele Giordana

The resignation of Kai Eide, head of the UN mission in Afghanistan, the vitiation of the presidential election by manifest fraud and rigging, and above all Barack Obama's decision to send more troops to the country seem to imply only one thing: despite hopes for a change that would combine the presence of Nato forces with a new strategy that took greater account of the population's needs, the Afghan conflict remains a hostage to the military option and no other. Obama's decision to send 30,000 marines, followed by Nato's commitment to find another 10,000 troops in Europe (including 1,000 Italians), has not only not been accompanied by any thought of a greater civilian commitment to reconstruction and the meeting of basic needs, it also seems to imply that the international community is unable to formulate any alternative to military action. Apart, that is, from a generic call for a better quality of government in Kabul. The last few months have been highly significant in this regard and are worth careful analysis. The article concludes with a few suggestions which would, first and foremost, entail a change of strategy on the part of the Italian government.