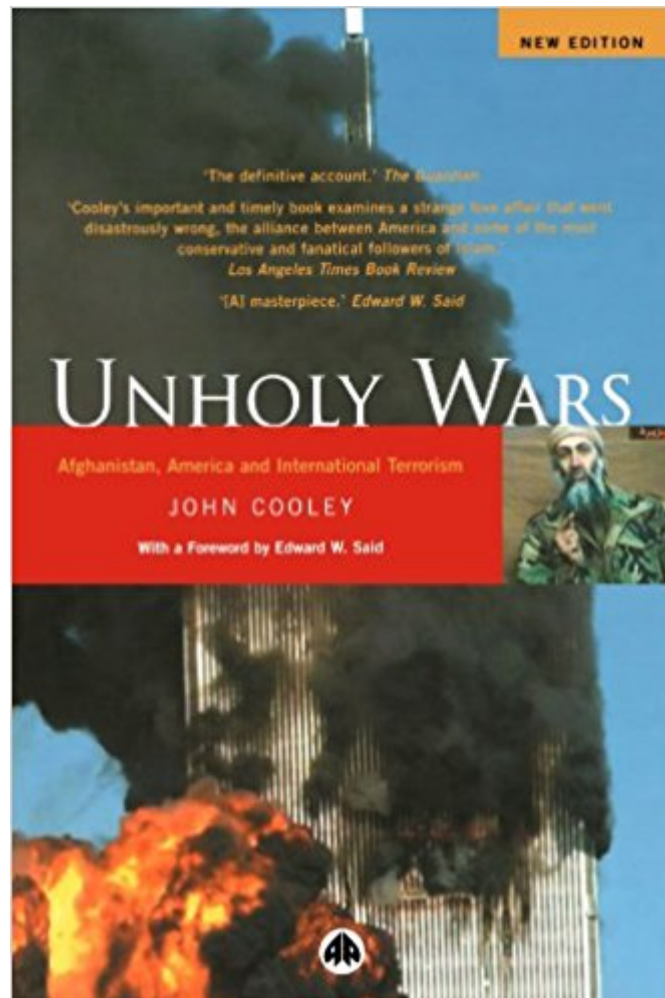




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Unholy Wars: Afghanistan, America And International Terrorism



Synopsis

'[A] masterpiece of reportorial thoroughness, painstaking research, and serious reflection.' Edward W. Said 'Cooley's important and timely book examines a strange love affair that went disastrously wrong, the alliance between America and some of the most conservative and fanatical followers of Islam.' Los Angeles Times Book Review 'The devil of John Cooley's unsettling book is in the detail . . . A persuasive argument against one-night stands in international alliances and makes clear that there will be an intolerable price to pay if Islam replaces communism as the next 'Satanic foe'".

Independent on Sunday This completely revised edition examines the events of September 11th 2001, Osama bin Laden's role and the complex working of the Al Qa'ida terror network. This is the classic book on the history of the USA's involvement with Afghanistan that explains the devastating consequences of the alliance between the US government and radical Islam. Essential reading for anyone who wants to understand the roots of the current international crisis. Cooley marshals a wealth of evidence - from the assassination of Sadat, the destabilisation of Algeria and Chechnya and the emergence of the Taliban, to the bombings of the World Trade Center and the US embassies in Africa. He examines the crucial role of Pakistan's military intelligence organisation; uncovers China's involvement and its aftermath; the extent of Saudi financial support; the role of 'America's most wanted man' Osama bin Laden; the BCCI connection; the CIA's cynical promotion of drug traffic in the Golden Crescent; the events in Pakistan since the military coup of October 1999; and, finally, the events of September 11th 2001 and their continuing impact on world affairs.

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Customer Reviews

Cooley, an ABC correspondent who has spent many years in the Middle East, calls his book a "narration," and indeed it reads more like a conversation than a traditional book. He focuses on the numerous riots, uprisings, and terrorist acts in the Arabic-speaking parts of the Middle East over the last two decades, which began when freedom fighters in Afghanistan returned to their home countries after the Afghan war. Cooley carries such ties even to the World Trade Center and Kenyan and Tanzanian embassy bombings. Since the CIA (and others) funded the fighters in Afghanistan, we are reaping a strange harvest for our efforts. Although there are minor factual errors and some of the movements may have fewer ties to Afghanistan than Cooley implies in his more sweeping statements, this provocative book certainly will provide insight into many events in the Middle East for the general reader.

ADonald Johnson, Univ. of Minnesota Lib., Minneapolis
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'[A] masterpiece of reportorial thoroughness, painstaking research, and serious reflection.' --Edward W. Said 'Cooley's important and timely book examines a strange love affair that went disastrously wrong, the alliance between America and some of the most conservative and fanatical followers of Islam.' --Los Angeles Times Book Review 'The devil of John Cooley's unsettling book is in the detail ... A persuasive argument against one-night stands in international alliances and makes clear that there will be an intolerable price to pay if Islam replaces communism as the next Satanic foe.' --Independent on Sunday

When given the choice of a number of books to read for a class on the law of war and terror, I chose this one, and I was not disappointed. Primarily concerned with US action in Afghanistan and the rise of the Taliban and later Osama bin Laden in the mire left by the Soviet occupation in the 1980s. Cooley has an incredible amount of information and relies on interviews he conducted with key players over the last 30 years. He sees the rise of terror in that state as largely a result of the unchecked flow of weapons and money to the mujaheddin from the United States to support the guerrilla war against the Soviets. With the exodus of Soviet tanks from Afghanistan, the US left also, closing, almost overnight, intelligence operations and diplomatic presence. The result was a disastrous civil war between warlords and religious fanatics that allowed the rise of the Taliban. Citing the US as a culprit in the quagmire, a significant amount of responsibility is placed on the actions of the Pakistani intelligence services. Controlled by religious ideologues, the Pakistani intelligence services operated nearly autonomously from other Pakistani government branches, and

often in opposition to stated policy. It's ostensible purpose was create a religiously friendly state on Pakistan's western border so as to take weight off of pressure created by the often contentious, and occasionally violent, relationship with India on it's other side. Eventually, it leads to the exportation of the "holy warriors" around the world, and followed later by opium as a cash crop supporting the somewhat outcast Taliban government. In short, a must read. The book suffers from a lack of editing and a somewhat choppy organization. However, the sheer volume of information easily makes the difficulty following the reading well worth the challenge.

This book should be read by everyone who wants to understand Afghanistan and what US policy should be regarding the current civil war going on in that country. The new edition was published in 2000. If more had read it then we might have been able to head off the 9/11/2001 attack. What a mess we have made in that country, and in the world, as the Guerrillas that we armed and trained to defeat the Soviets in the 1979-89, became the core of the terrorists that have terrorised the world ever since.

This is a comprehensive and detailed account of the Islamic rebellion against the West. John K. Cooley's reports reach many different countries including Afghanistan, the West Bank, Egypt and Algeria and certainly the United States, but as you assemble them in your mind, there emerges, like in a mosaic, the history and compelling forces of the clash of Islam with the Christian West. It began perhaps in 1928, when the Moslem Brotherhood was founded in Egypt and soon reached its first peak at the time of the creation of the State of Israel in 1948. From the beginning, it was a hostile reaction, the response of the Islamic civilization, awakening from long dormancy, to the clash with the intrusive, advanced, imperialistic and alien Western world. It was their retreat into the protective castle of what was good and eternal in their history, their God, their Prophet and His ancient law. Their level of belligerence had reached a level high enough in 1979 to bring about the power grab of Khomeini and the Iran hostage crisis, but these were promptly compounded, in a seminal and cataclysmic way, by the Soviet invasion into Moslem Afghanistan. At that point, Islam declared all-out war on atheistic Russia and the pagan West, as the mujahedin arrived in Afghanistan from many Arab countries. It was a pivotal event, because the same mujahedin fighters, after achieving victory, returned to Egypt, Palestine, Algeria, Bosnia and elsewhere, carrying with them their newly learned martial skills and fanatical religious ideology, in order to light the torch of jihad in their home countries. There was a long row of aftershocks after the outbreak of the Afghan Jihad. Anwar Sadat paid for his peace mission with Israel in his assassination in 1981. Hezbollah bombed the US

Marine Barracks and Beirut Embassy in 1982 and 1984. Abu Yassaf began his Islamic resistance work on the island of Mindanao. The civil war between the Islamic Salvation Front and the Algerian government forces raged from 1994 to 1996. US installations in Saudi Arabia were bombed in 1995 and 1996, and so it went on to the more recent armed attacks and exchanges we all know. The author goes into the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, itself the earliest and most offensive crisis in Moslem conscienceless, only after the HAMAS organization was formed at the end of the Afghan war. Perhaps this was, because up until then the Palestinian guerilla war, raging for decades, was still chiefly a secular and territorial conflict, whereas with HAMAS it was one waged by religious fundamentalists, who refused to cooperate with Arafat's PLO. For those who look for an in-depth and factual textbook about this ongoing clash of civilizations, its origins, motives and complications, Unholy Wars is an excellent choice.

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