

## Reviews

TOM CAREW, *Jihad. The Secret War in Afghanistan*. Edinburgh, London: Mainstream Publisher, 2000, reprinted 2001. 282 pages, £ 7.99. ISBN 1-84018-495-7

This personal story of an ex-British paratrooper and SAS-serviceman covers the secret activities of British and U.S. intelligence services in Afghanistan after the Soviet invasion. The main story, biographical notes written after the author's retirement, is followed by a brief description of his youth on a farm in the southwestern countryside of Dorset. A semi-orphan, he spent his youth working on his uncle's farm with the promise of taking it over after the uncle's retirement. However, when his cousins decided to sell the farm, he enlisted with the Royal Army at the age of 17, against his mother's and step-father's will, with the objective of joining the paratroopers. After being selected and completing his training, and after several deployments to Northern Ireland, he joined the SAS, one of the British elite forces, and was sent to Oman. Later he officially left the army, in order to be contracted as a combat trainer for the Sri Lankan Army against the Tamil Tigers.

Eventually, Carew was selected to undertake reconnaissance trips from Pakistan into Afghanistan after the Soviet invasion. He was ordered "to link up with the Afghan Mujaheddin resistance movement inside Pakistan, and then to go into Afghanistan itself, to make an assessment of what training and material help they needed". He was also told to collect first hand information about the Soviet strength and tactics as well as Soviet weaponry. Carew surmises that he is one of the few British soldiers who "have killed Russian soldiers in combat". His secret activities eventually led to his final engagement, implementing a training curriculum and camp for Afghan combatants on Pakistani territory.

The story at hand provides direct insight into the involvement of Western and Pakistani intelligence services, and their often quite different objectives and tactics. As a trained and ambitious soldier, Carew fulfilled the military tasks well: on long reconnaissance trips with combat groups of the Hezb-i-Islami fraction of Hekmatyar, he was engaged in several battles, gave tactical advice for attacking Mujaheddin combat units and eventually won the Mujaheddins' confidence. However, his direct insight, experiences and judgements were not always welcomed and honoured by the headquarters of the new "Great Game". His data and weaponry collection, however, were highly appreciated. Vested interests on higher levels forbade him to share his observations of massive opium trade across the border to Mujaheddin camps within Pakistan. Carew also gathered evidence of the involvement of sections of the Pakistani army intelligence, as well as of intrafractional struggle between Mujaheddin groups, which led to murder and robbery in order to gain control over opium caravans. Thus, he identified the Mujaheddin leadership and different local warlords

as "more interested in jockeying for power and making money from drug sales than in fighting the Russians".

While writing his biographical account – prior to April 2000 – Carew obviously became aware of the seed of terrorism that had been sown by the activities, in which he had been one of the first participants. Later on, the British involvement was fully taken over by their U.S.-counterparts. Being a soldier's biography, this book also contains lots of jargon and abbreviations, scarcely fifty percent of which are explained in a brief glossary list. There are also lots of personal judgements of the army administration, from the combating soldier's perspective together with various stories of sexual affairs with female intelligence personnel.

For the purpose of this book, the author had to fictionalise names and codewords. Most of the locations, however, seem to be authentic, although certain important ones in Europe have been placed in wrong locations, such as the U.S.-airbase Ramstein, which the author locates in the vicinity of Munich, instead of Frankfurt.

This book gains fresh importance after the fight against terrorism on Afghan territory in October 2001, where more secret operations, including those undertaken by the British SAS, have been reported in several newspapers. The publisher advertises this narrative as an "international best-seller". In sum, this book is neither a historical documentation or analysis, nor an award-demanding literature. However, it provides insight from a different perspective, thus supplementing academic analysis and giving more evidence of the broad Western involvement in the guerrilla war and drug sales in Afghanistan.

Jürgen Clemens

HERMANN KREUTZMANN (ed.), *Sharing Water. Irrigation and Water Management in the Hindukush-Karakoram-Himalaya*. Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2000. xxi & 282 pages, PRs 595.-. ISBN: 0-19-579159-2

This compendium on irrigation and water management in the Hindukush-Karakoram-Himalaya is not only a timely contribution to the "International Year of the Mountains, 2002", but also an important addition to a series of international consultations on sustainable water management. The book under review is not a proceedings volume, its objective is to provide a comprehensive presentation of the complex ecological and cultural situation especially of smallholder irrigation systems in mountainous regions. Thus, the focus is purposely diverted from big irrigation projects with government dominance in the lowlands to community-based development approaches, which are often grounded in indigenous knowledge and local traditions of resource management.

The volume starts with a topical paper by H. Kreutzmann, introducing the importance of the "watertowers of mankind" – mountains providing the water supply for adjoining lowlands – as well as the related research and policy approaches throughout the last decades. This is followed by 13 case studies from the huge oases along the Amu Darja in Central Asia to Bhutan in the Eastern Himalayas. Its regional coverage focusses especially on Northern Pakistan (5 papers) as well as on Ladakh and Northwest Nepal (2 papers each). Additional contributions are pre-