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Notes From Ground Zero: Power, Equity and Postwar Reconstruction in Two Eras

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Notes From Ground Zero: Power, Equity and Postwar Reconstruction in Two Eras

by Mark Selden

President George W. Bush has repeatedly presented the American occupation of Japan as the model for Iraq's democratization. Does the Japanese occupation really illuminate contemporary reconstructions in Iraq, Afghanistan and other contemporary war-torn societies? Certain similarities do stand out: as in Japan half a century earlier, the U.S. has proclaimed its intention to return "sovereignty" to a democratic Iraq and assure a democratic transition in Afghanistan while preserving a dominant American military presence in both the Middle East and Central Asia. Yet beyond this obvious similarity lie profound differences in American strategy, goals and commitments, as well as in the nations and peoples it seeks to "reconstruct" and the problems encountered in the two regions and two eras.

By June 16, 2004, U.S. and coalition deaths in Iraq were rapidly approaching 1,000: 952 deaths included 836 Americans, 59 Britons, and nationals of 12 other nations. 694 of these deaths occurred after Bush proclaimed victory in Iraq on May 1, 2003, with the largest numbers occurring in April and May, 2004 when 138 Americans died. Since May 1, 2003, 5,134 U.S. troops have been wounded in combat, but including non-combat injuries, the total was 16,000. Yet these figures do not begin to convey the scale of U.S. and coalition casualties or the range and depth of military conflicts that continue in both Afghanistan and Iraq, and that provide one important reason for an American preoccupation with military affairs to the detriment of reform, reconstruction and development.

Since 2001, the Landestuhl Regional Military Center in Germany has treated 11,754 soldiers from the "War on Terror" (including Iraq and Afghanistan) including more than 1,000 for mental problems.These figures exclude numerous "non-combat" injuries. The number of Iraqis killed by U.S. forces since the beginning of the Iraq War is far greater, but fearing a Vietnam-type backlash, the U.S. occupation authorities provide no figures. A November 2003 report by MEDACT, the British affiliate of Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War and Physicians for Social Responsibility estimated the number of Iraqis killed since the March 2003 invasion at between 20,000 and 55,000. Iraq Body Count placed the numbers of Iraqis killed by June 16, 2004 at between 9,436 and 11,317. All informed observers agree that many of the dead are children. Neither of these estimates includes much larger numbers of Iraqis who have died from such mundane causes as the collapse of nutritional and medical systems prior to and subsequent to the war. The numbers of combat-related deaths soared in spring 2004 with American attacks in Fallujah, Mosul and other Iraqi cities.

In Afghanistan, the U.S.-appointed government of Hamid Karzai exercises little influence beyond the capital of Kabul. Warlords control most of the country while fierce fighting pits U.S. and Pakistani forces against a resurgent Taliban and domestic armed groups. In

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contrast to Iraq, U.S. authority in Afghanistan is largely limited to the military sphere while the United Nations, World Bank and various non-governmental organizations attempt rebuilding with slender resources and a narrow vision of reconstruction.

The Japanese case offers a stark comparison. In six years of occupation (1945-51), not a single member of the occupying forces was killed and issues of security were quickly turned over to Japanese police, allowing the occupation authorities to concentrate on political and social reform, economic restructuring, reconstruction, and development. Nor were Japanese the victims of American attacks.

We can translate the language of security into another set of critical issues. The Bush administration views Afghanistan and Iraq as the front lines in its "war on terror," the central slogan that masks the U.S. conflict with the Islamic world. That conflict coincides with efforts to assure U.S. military control over the world's richest oil fields and to shore up the Israeli state, factors that exacerbate anti-American feelings in both Afghanistan and Iraq as well as throughout the entire zone of conflict in Central Asia and the Middle East. The occupation and reconstruction of Japan also provoked regional conflicts, but those were enacted externally in Korea and Vietnam and, far from undermining the reconstruction and reform agenda, may have contributed to both.

World War II, Postcolonialism, and the Cold War: The historical origins of postwar reconstruction

Ground Zero is a powerful metaphor for a world in ruins in the wake of the atomic bombings that brought down the curtain on the most devastating war in human history. Hiroshima and Nagasaki invite reflection on the nature of that wider carnage that was the product, in Michael Sherry's phrase, of a "technological fanaticism" shared by major powers. That fanaticism reached new heights in World War II in the run up to Hiroshima with the triumph of strategic bombing that targeted urban populations for destruction. In the final year of World War II, following the lead of Germany and Britain, the U.S. systematically destroyed scores of German and Japanese cities from the air, killing hundreds of thousands of civilians. The strategy was perfected under the command of Curtis LeMay in the course of incinerating sixty-four Japanese cities prior to the annihilation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The scale of the carnage, and the strategic lessons that U.S. military planners would subsequently apply in Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan and Iraq, allow us to extend the metaphor of Ground Zero to entire nations.

World War II enshrined and normalized what is best described as terror bombing because of its deliberate targeting of civilians, a doctrine that would be extended and adapted by the U.S. to other terrains and applied with new weapons such as the destruction of dams and dikes in North Korea, the use of Agent Orange as a defoliant in Vietnam, and depleted uranium weapons and cluster bombs in the Gulf War.

Yet World War II also positioned the U.S. to frame and legitimate three humanitarian principles that have been at the heart of postwar efforts to refashion the international legal and human rights order. These were the Nuremberg principles, the legitimation of anti-colonial struggles, and postwar reconstruction.

A key Nuremberg principle holds individuals, notably important political and military leaders, personally accountable for crimes of war and crimes against humanity, and declares that perpetrators of these crimes should be formally tried rather than summarily executed or excused. These constitute the foundations for a new international human rights regime enshrined and subsequently extended through the United Nations and the Declaration of Human Rights. However, as the dominant

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power behind the Nuremberg, Tokyo, and subsequent tribunals, and as the protagonist in many of the major wars conducted since 1945, the U.S. has consistently excluded its own acts and those of its allies from examination or punishment while invoking the right to prosecute and execute its enemies. Moreover, as Edward Herman and others have documented, in Vietnam and subsequent wars, the U.S. systematically tortured and abused prisoners and civilians in wartime, and over many decades it trained military and intelligence personnel among its allies to do likewise in violation of international human rights norms. With the George W. Bush administration it went even further: Defense Department lawyers, with an eye to Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse atrocities and other war crimes, elaborated a strategy that explicitly claimed presidential immunity from such treaties as the Geneva Convention on torture.

Finally, the U.S. articulated practices of postwar reconstruction in which the victor contributed to the rehabilitation of the vanquished as well as of its own allies. The result was to reverse the dominant logic of war reparations in which the defeated were customarily further bled by the victors. Nevertheless, postwar reconstruction of defeated industrialized nations became one pillar of a hegemonic strategy designed to accelerate restoration of international trade and investment while subordinating others militarily. The creation of a network of permanent U.S. military bases and the stationing abroad of U.S. forces provided the sinews for this vision. In short, U.S. global power and legitimacy rested in part on the framing of international human rights principles and new approaches to postwar reconstruction and in part on military primacy.

Postwar reconstruction after 1945 was attuned to American strategic priorities. The U.S. aided in the relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction of defeated enemies, notably Germany and Japan, while providing assistance to selected European allies whose recovery was central to rebuilding the world economy in line with American interests. By contrast, former colonies, including many in ruins at war's end, were largely excluded from reconstruction agendas and left to their own devices. Reconstruction of a U.S.-centered world order pivoting on core nations contributed to the prosperity of the nations restored even as it served U.S. interests in global trade.

The U.S. entered the Japanese occupation with almost as little familiarity with Japanese culture and society as it does in Iraq and Afghanistan, but with far more careful preplanning and a staff that included educated and dedicated professionals in a wide variety of fields. The immediate issues confronting the occupying forces then as now included guaranteeing security, insuring peace, and providing relief for a nation in ruins. But in Japan the victors were able to immediately turn their attention to structural issues.

Three factors were critical in eliminating internal resistance to the occupation, thereby making possible immediate focus on relief, rehabilitation, reform and reconstruction. First was Japanese war-weariness after protracted mobilization, the experience of aerial pounding of the homeland, and the loss of two to three million soldiers in the course of the fifteen-year war. Second, the U.S. decision to rule indirectly through a Japanese government that retained the emperor as a symbolic ruler left in place the primary institutions of governance and structures of authority, however circumscribed by U.S. power. Third, key occupation programs were widely embraced by the Japanese people.

Historical factors facilitated the swift implementation, popular response, and positive results of many key reconstruction measures. These included the advantages of rebuilding a technologically advanced nation whose physical infrastructure had been destroyed, but which

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retained largely intact institutional, cultural, educational and technological foundations; the discrediting of a political and military leadership that had led the country to ruin and defeat; and shared Japanese and U.S. interest in Japan's economic resurgence, an interest that was soon strengthened by the Cold War. Japan's postwar reconstruction and democratization could also build on a tradition of active state initiatives in charting major economic directions, while experiments with democracy from the Meiji era forward similarly paved the way for postwar democracy.

A consensus between Japan and the U.S. emerged in the early occupation years on a reform agenda that included the Peace Constitution, demilitarization, land reform, labor reform, democratization, and women's rights. Democratization was premised on New Deal-inspired social reforms. Land reform broke the power of the rural elite and gave large numbers of formerly landless and land-poor farmers a material stake in the new order. The percentage of owner-cultivated land increased from 54 percent to more than 90 percent as former tenants gained access to land at low occupation-imposed prices, stimulating the rural economy and providing social foundations for a democratic order in the countryside. Independent cultivators then farmed 90 percent of all land and the number of landless tenants fell to just 7 percent of farmers. Organized labor, crushed by the previous military regime, emerged in force, empowered by new labor laws. Women, too, won important rights, including the vote and economic and social rights.

In Iraq and Afghanistan, by contrast, social reform of all kinds, including land, labor and gender, are strikingly absent from the agenda, and in fact are anathema to the supply-siders running the occupation, leaving a rhetorical emphasis on democracy and a real emphasis on military control, privatization, and war profiteering. In the absence of a reform agenda that addresses the social crises in Iraq and Afghanistan, democracy and reconstruction remain hollow promises.

Yet for all its achievements in relief, rehabilitation, reform and reconstruction, the Japanese occupation embodied contradictory elements whose legacy, both positive and negative, continues to this day

Studies of postwar Japan have paid insufficient attention to the intimate relationship between military power and the reconstruction and reform processes that were the hallmark of the occupation. The U.S. monopolized military power, including nuclear weapons, as well as the military colonization of Okinawa and the permanent basing of U.S. forces in a Japan that was constitutionally barred from resuming a militaristic course. The bonanza of Korean War procurements that fueled Japan's economy from 1950 was critical to reconstruction. With the U.S. assuring Japan's security, domestic investment could be concentrated on economic, infrastructure and social reconstruction. The occupation gave rise to a shared U.S.-Japan vision of an economically robust and democratic Japan within the ambit of American power in a post-colonial Asia divided along Cold War lines.

Not all Japanese occupation programs proceeded smoothly, of course. Deadlock between different sections of the occupation, and at times between the occupation and the Japanese administration, meant that programs designed to dismantle the zaibatsu, the large economic-financial combines that dominated the prewar economy and that occupation authorities initially identified as the driving force behind Japanese militarism and colonialism, were stillborn. Likewise, the occupation's reverse course of 1947, driven by mounting Cold War concerns and the anticipation of a Third World War, led to an attack on labor and progressive forces generally. By contrast, programs that enjoyed

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strong popular support including the peace constitution, land reform, the vote for women, and numerous health and welfare measures, not only were fully implemented but were sustained following the formal end of the occupation in 1952, despite U.S. pressures to scale back some of the most far-reaching reforms.

In the immediate postwar years both the U.S. and Soviet leadership were persuaded of the efficacy of social reform and the capacity of the developmental state to heal the wounds of war and guide nations on the path to economic growth and prosperity. Indeed, one element of the Cold War was the competition between them to promote reform. Consequently, land reform was implemented not only in revolutionary China, Vietnam and North Korea, but also in Japan, Taiwan and even, albeit limited in scope, South Korea. Throughout much of postwar East Asia, strong states emerged that controlled the workings of capital and the market.

The U.S. occupation profoundly shaped the postwar Japanese order. Japanese colonialism and militarism were eliminated, basic reforms implemented, and recovery, development and democracy concentrated the national energies for the next five decades.

These gains were won at a price that included Japan's dependency, involving its acquiescence in and support for all U.S. wars and Cold War designs in the Asia-Pacific and beyond. The occupation also perpetuated, albeit in a weakened form, Japan's imperial system, thereby restricting the scope of democracy and impeding efforts to fully come to terms with that nation's wartime and colonial atrocities.

In sum, broad congruence of Japanese and American interests in reform and reconstruction made possible achievements of Japan's postwar reconstruction while Japan became a keystone of American military power in East Asia.

Postwar Reconstruction in Central Asia and Iraq in the Early Twenty-First Century

Following the immediate postwar experiences of reconstruction centered on Japan and Western Europe, four decades went by during which postwar reconstruction disappeared from international discourse. Neither the Korean War nor the Vietnam War, neither the Iran-Iraq War nor any number of African wars, occasioned international efforts at postwar reconstruction. Since the breakup of the Soviet Union, however, the U.S. has repeatedly mobilized other nations and international organizations, notably the United Nations and the World Bank, to support reconstruction projects. The varied experiences of Kosovo, Somalia, East Timor, Kampuchea, Afghanistan, and Iraq indicate that postwar reconstruction has become an international norm, with the goal of stabilizing zones of conflict. This is a component of late twentieth century global processes that merits closer analysis. Postwar reconstruction is, of course, intimately bound up with the fact that the U.S. has been involved as a major player in six wars and occupations in a twelve year span, five of them involving Muslim countries.

The Bush administration has presented the Japanese success story wedding democratization and development as a model for current reconstruction efforts. However, as John Dower, Kang Sangjung and others, have noted, recent experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan bear closer analogy to the outcomes of Japan's occupation following its 1931 military seizure of Manchuria, leading to the creation of the puppet state of Manchuguo (Manchukuo) and fifteen years of war. Manchuguo, in contrast to Japan's earlier colonization of Taiwan and Korea, may be viewed as an early initiative toward a post-colonial world. However, Japan's failed effort to quell forces pressing for independence in

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Manchuguo, which became a major reason for extending the war to all China and eventually to Pearl Harbor, brought militarization, repression at home and in the colonies and war zones, and eventually military defeat, dismantling of the empire and occupation of Japan.

Japanese efforts to divide Chinese, Mongols, Manchus and Muslims, and to suppress indigenous language, culture and religions through Manchuguo's assimilationist linguistic, educational and cultural policies provoked resistance. So too did the migration of millions of Koreans and Japanese farmers, resulting in the transfer of extensive land title from local people to Japanese and Korean landowners, essentially land theft. From Tokyo's perspective, there were also successes. Japanese rule stimulated industrialization and natural resources development, much of it dominated by the new and old zaibatsu. Manchuguo well exemplifies the failure to gain support for the secret but comprehensive policy directions from within that produced certain economic results but simultaneously fueled intense resistance. We will note that in certain respects the role of the U.S. and the international community in postwar Afghanistan and Iraq more closely resembles Japanese approaches in Manchuguo than it does U.S.-led postwar reconstruction of Japan, but with none of the programs promoting industry and agriculture that Japan pioneered.

Other critical differences distinguish the immediate postwar period and contemporary approaches to postwar reconstruction. In the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union, the U.S. became the sole superpower, with overwhelming weapons superiority not only over any potential challenger but also over any plausible combination of challengers. Nevertheless, almost immediately the limitations of its power and vulnerability to attack became clear, most spectacularly with the attack on the twin symbols of American power on September 11, 2001. In the wake of 9/11, the U.S. proclaimed its right and intention to effect preemptive regime change at times and places of its own choosing. This was the central tenet in a wider shift from hegemony to empire, from a strategy that appealed to allies to support U.S. policies on the basis of common interests to one that insisted on subordination to U.S. power, even if in violation of widely recognized international norms. Important steps in this direction included the U.S. dismissal of the Kyoto protocol on the environment, its renunciation of arms control agreements, and the U.S.-led invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq in the absence of United Nations support and in the teeth of opposition from major powers. The designation of an "axis of evil," singling out the improbable trio of Iraq, Iran and North Korea in the wake of 9/11, was emblematic of the wide-ranging scope of the projected American global order and its belligerent stance.

The new strategy required an expanded network of bases as well as strategic redeployment of U.S. forces to reposition American power in the face of what Washington views as the Islamic challenge. To be sure, as Chalmers Johnson has documented, a distinguishing feature of the post-World War II expansion of American power has been its global base structure as opposed to a territorial empire predicated on direct rule. What was new in the 1990s was the fact that bases proliferated in volatile regions that were previously beyond direct exercise of American power, notably those within the former Soviet sphere of influence and including both Central Asia and the Middle East. At the same time, the old justification for such bases—the Soviet threat—had evaporated.

In both Afghanistan and Iraq the Bush administration has proved incapable of assuring a peace that could bring stability, democracy and reconstruction to the conquered areas, despite having committed

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vast resources to the pursuit of war and military primacy. This is particularly evident in the electorally-driven 'transfer of power' to a handpicked administration of Iraqi exiles that formally took place on June 28, 2004, despite the fact that none of the material and financial foundations, not to speak of administrative institutions, are in place for an independent Iraq and with U.S. forces occupying the country under sustained attack. Instead, a pseudostate, comprised of exiles imposed by the U.S., with control of no significant military force, is now subject to U.S. control through the long-term stationing of 138,000 U.S. forces, 20,000 coalition forces, and thousands of privately employed mercenaries in bases across the country while decisions emanate from the world's largest embassy. As Michael Schwartz observed, the post-handover Iraq will have none of the conditions of sovereignty: "a monopoly on the legitimate means of coercion; the material capacity to sustain a country's social and economic infrastructure; and an administrative apparatus capable of overseeing and administering policy." It will also, as a creature of the U.S., lack the legitimacy of, for example, the Japanese government under occupation after 1945. It reproduces instead most of the worst features of a puppet state adapted from Japan's ill-fated imperial days.

The contemporary U.S. approach to reconstruction is striking in its rejection not only of social reform but of the very state-centered approaches that were critical to the reconstruction and subsequent economic growth in postwar Japan and Germany. The U.S. authorities have taken steps in advance to enfeeble a future Iraq government by dismantling the Iraqi tax system along neoliberal tax lines, and handcuffing the pseudostate through 97 "legal orders" crafted by the occupation administration under Paul Bremer, while ruling out fundamental social reforms and privatizing the economy in ways that turn over many of its most lucrative sectors to American corporations.

With relief and reconstruction efforts sputtering, and the Bremer administration allocating just $3.2 billion of the $18.4 billion in funds allocated by Congress for Iraq's reconstruction, it is small wonder that efforts to create even the façade of a sovereign Iraq appear empty. The same is true, in essence, for an Afghanistan that has been even more starved for resources.

A September, 2003 report by the U.S. relief organization CARE pointed out that Afghanistan's stability and reconstruction continue to be challenged by a combination of military attacks, inability of the Karzai administration to control much of the country, and widespread opium-trafficking by powerful regional warlords. A year and a half after U.S. forces overthrew the Taliban regime, projects worth just $192 million, approximately 1 percent of estimated reconstruction needs, had been completed. The situation seems, if anything, to have worsened since then.

The fate of rural Afghanistan, home to the great majority of Afghans, most sharply shows the fundamental difference between the contemporary postwar reconstruction of Afghanistan and post-World War II Japan. Although the issues of land rights and refugees are central to the economic, social and political life of the nation, the Afghan government and its UN, World Bank and NGO advisors, have systematically ignored them.

Two years after declaring victory in the Afghan war, there is no indication that programs have begun to address the acute problems confronting the countryside and the needs of those whose livelihood depends predominantly on animal husbandry and secondarily on agriculture. Those problems include:

• Clashes over land rights among ethnic groups, resulting in the loss of land by many, particularly nomads, whose vulnerability is increased by the long-distance cycle required

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for pastoral herding.

• Emigration of 4.6 million Afghans in the final years of Taliban rule and the subsequent war, mainly to Pakistan or Iran.

• The return of 2.1 million refugees, most of whom have no access to land and little or no planning or assistance in resettlement.

• Afghanistan's re-emergence as the world's number one supplier of opium after the crop and the traffic were virtually eliminated in the final years of Taliban rule.

• Ethnic conflicts that have deprived numerous farmers and herders of historic rights to land.

In short, the fundamental problems of postwar reconstruction have barely been addressed. The problems in the countryside have been worsened by five years of crippling drought.

In one respect, however, the new government of Afghanistan acted quickly: by passing legislation to insure land rights for international corporations investing in the region. Nothing better showed its priorities and those of the power that installed it. Yet agrarian issues are of the highest relevance to returning Afghan refugees, and to herders and farmers displaced by ethnic conflict, immigration, and drought. And they are integral to broader issues of social equity and the ability to create viable communities and consensus on rehabilitation and development issues against a historical background of intense social conflict among ethnic groups over land rights.

Issues of land are particularly fraught in Afghanistan given the abortive Soviet-era land reform. The Karzai government, the United Nations Aid Mission and the World Bank share the view that land reform in all of its variants is not an active option in Afghanistan. Indeed, it is a sign of the profound changes in development priorities since the 1940s that land reform is utterly neglected in all contemporary postwar reconstruction efforts with which the United States or the United Nations is associated. The end of the Cold War and the triumph of neoliberal ideologies have eliminated land reform and other reforms from the international agenda.

No blueprint imposed from outside can resolve the complex problems of Afghanistan's herding and agricultural communities. Solutions will have to emerge out of careful study of local problems and possibilities, and the needs and conflicting interests of the multiple ethnicities that comprise its complex social structure. As Takemae Eiji has documented, many of the ideas for Japan's land reform emerged from Japanese scholars and officials, with other important contributions made by Australian and Soviet representatives, while American officials were initially reticent. After General MacArthur threw his support behind land reform, however, the process moved forward. Extensive negotiations involving Japanese and occupation authorities eventually hammered out an approach through which Japan's chronic tenancy problem was eliminated and foundations laid for economic development.

In Afghanistan, the government and its international advisors have yet to craft any significant program to address land ownership, refugee resettlement, water conservancy, or agrarian and pastoral development programs that can provide alternatives to landlessness, starvation or the return of opium growing, the latter again reminiscent of a Manchuguo awash in opium.

The Afghan case differs from the postwar reconstructions of Japan and Western Europe in other respects. Afghanistan, like Iraq, was long subject to foreign conquest and confronts deep ethnic and religious division. It seeks to reinvent itself after decades of crippling wars and famines, and in the face of deep communal

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and ethnic divisions that have important implications for both resistance to foreign power and attempts by local administrations to consolidate unified rule. The Afghan Constitution takes some steps towards recognizing the salience of ethnic divisions, but deep ethnic and tribal divisions mirror warlord fragmentation and the issues remain volatile.

Solution to such complex issues is undermined by the frenzy of American politics to display dramatic "results", notably the fastest possible reduction in U.S. casualties in Afghanistan and especially in Iraq where the "handover" to a regime with no legitimacy and few resources barely masks the American abandonment of all hopes for reconstruction. Postwar reconstruction is not a project to be measured in months, least of all under conditions of extreme unrest.

The solution to security problems, both national and regional, is a precondition for the solution of humanitarian crises and the possibilities for sound reconstruction and reform. But a reconstruction and reform agenda serving the needs and interests of the people of these war-torn countries is equally a precondition for progress in solving security problems. Ultimately, a viable reconstruction program for Afghanistan will have to include equitable programs for the repatriation and settlement of refugees, the provision of food, and the settling of land tenure questions that are at the heart of ethnic and tribal divisions as well as those between pastoral and agrarian people.

Conclusion

U.S. approaches to postwar reconstruction in Japan and Europe (under the Marshall Plan) following World War II differ fundamentally from those adopted in the wake of the Cold War, 9-11, and subsequent wars. In both eras, postwar reconstruction programs were designed to serve American interests, and involved the establishment of permanent military bases and the stationing of U.S. forces. Nevertheless, the fundamental character and outcomes of U.S.-designed postwar reconstruction has changed over time and space.

Since the Cold War and, particularly since 9/11, the U.S. preoccupation with military issues appears to have blinded it to the fact that security is intimately bound up with matters of livelihood, dignity and equity. Approaches to rehabilitation, reform, and reconstruction in Japan and Germany were conducted through strong governments that enjoyed broad legitimacy, in contrast to the carpet-bag administrations that the U.S. has constructed predominantly from Afghani and Iraqi exiles, regimes that have little legitimacy within or beyond their nations. The reform agendas that created democratic foundations through land reform, labor reform, and women's rights have been replaced by a hard, ideological insistence on the sanctity of the market in general and on preferential rights for U.S. capital in particular. Indeed, state institutions that earlier and elsewhere provided the strength necessary for economic recovery and development have been deliberately weakened. The "transfer of power" to an interim Iraqi-administration with none of the resources required to achieve autonomy makes plain the bankruptcy of the U.S. vision for postwar Iraq. The result can only be continued U.S. rule from behind the scenes, continued slaughter of Iraqi civilians by U.S. forces, and failure to provide direction or resources essential for the reconstruction and independence of that country.

Where the U.S. sought to recreate foundations of strong Japanese and German governments half a century ago, its contemporary obsession with military power underlines the likelihood of a continued cycle of violence and conflict in Afghanistan and Iraq, one likely to extend throughout a region that controls the world's critical oil resources and pits the U.S. against Islamic societies.

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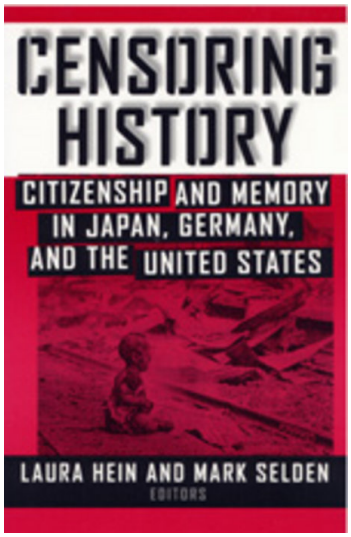
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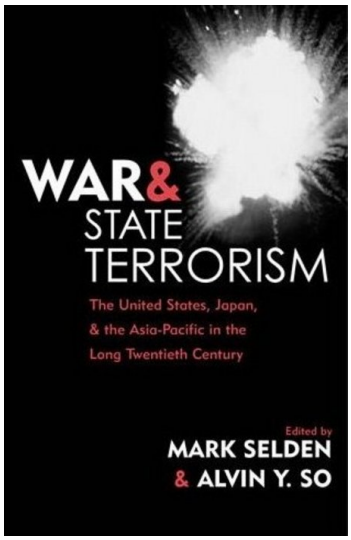
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