

Review of: "American Mission in Afghanistan: Geopolitical Interests, Strategies and Reasons of Failure"

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This article offers a thoughtful and original analysis of Afghanistan's geostrategic importance to the US, especially in the context of resource and energy politics.

Elements of the argument are inconsistent however. If the US has been so thoroughly invested in the country's geostrategic significance then why did it, as the author notes, lose interest after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989?

The author asserts that the US tacitly supported the Taliban during the 1990s, but offers no evidence to back up this claim. The second significant loss of interest - under Biden in 2021 - is scarcely mentioned at all, being confined to one line at the very end.

I detect a tension in the argument between analysing Afghanistan as the venue for a modern version of a geostrategic 'Great Game' on the one hand, and the focus for a resource-hungry US on the other. I'm not sure it can be both. Indeed the latter line of argument seems to peter out as the article progresses. If the US were focused on Afghanistan's resources, surely it would not have turned its back on it in 1989 and again in 2021, in favour of strategic priorities elsewhere?

I suggest that the author clarifies and makes more consistent their core argument. Has Afghanistan been of merely *episodic* interest to the US as part of a Great Game, or of more *durable and consistent* interest because of its resources/role as a key transit route? Or have both drivers been in play simultaneously, thus perhaps accounting for the inconsistencies in US policy?

In peer-review terms, at present I would grade this article as a Revise & Resubmit.