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1-1-2010

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#### Recommended Citation

Herold, Marc W., "An Excess of Corruption and a Deficit of Toilets: American and Karzai's Successes in Afghanistan," *Revista Espaço Acadêmico (Brazil)* Vol. 10, No. 113 (2010): 130-140 at <http://periodicos.uem.br/ojs/index.php/EspacoAcademico/article/view/11354/6154> and at <http://www.rawa.org/temp/runews/2010/09/28/an-excess-of-corruption-and-a-deficit-of-toilets-american-and-karzai-s-successes-in-afghanistan.html> and in Spanish at <http://www.rebellion.org/docs/113965.pdf>

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## An excess of corruption and a deficit of toilets: american and Karzai's 'successes' in Afghanistan

by Marc W. Herold\*

*“Are we to decide the importance of issues by asking how fashionable or glamorous they are? Or by asking how seriously they affect how many?” - Nelson Mandela, 2002<sup>1</sup>*

*“The preservation of the wealth and welfare of nations, and advances in culture and civilization depend upon how the sewage question is resolved” - Karl Kautsky, 1899<sup>2</sup>*

*“The triumphs of sanitary reforms are perhaps the brightest page in the history of our century” - William Allen, 1903<sup>3</sup>*

Afghanistan might be characterized as having a paucity of toilets and an excess of corruption. These two aspects capture the post-Taliban essence of the country. The “achievements” of Hamid Karzai the de facto mayor of Kabul, the United States and NATO in Afghanistan after more than eight years of U.S. occupation and approximately \$25 billion in disbursed (2001-9) non-military aid,<sup>4</sup> include Afghanistan being ranked as the worst place in the world for sanitation (per UNICEF data) and in 2009 posting 179<sup>th</sup> (out of 180 countries) in Transparency International's corruption-perceptions index.<sup>5</sup> The latter figure for 2005 showed Afghanistan ranking 117<sup>th</sup> out of 159 countries.

But as I have pointed out many times beginning in early 2002, for some in Kabul and a few other islands in the Afghan sea, *life is jolly-well* in Afghanistan's post-Taliban, bifurcated economy.<sup>6</sup> Limousines roll, ostentatious

villas sprout up, western fashion swirls, four cell phone companies operate, and imported foreign Thai masseuses at the luxury Mustafa Hotel tended to the weary and bored at the rate of \$25 an hour.<sup>7</sup>

Kabul has turned into a two-tiered city. With billions of dollars in aid pouring in, some Afghans have found well-paying jobs with international companies or in the bloated community of non-governmental organization – often businesses dressed-up as Mother Teresa.<sup>8</sup> But most labor for only a dollar or two a day and live in mud-brick homes with no water and sporadic electricity. An average police officer or teacher is lucky to earn \$60 a month. A hospital nurse earns \$40 a month...International groups willing to pay Manhattan-level rents, (pricing) many Afghans out of the market. Before the Taliban fell, Abdul Fatah, 24, paid about \$13 a month to rent a house. Now an international aid agency pays \$2,500

for the building.<sup>9</sup> The monstrous waste and utter futility was summed up recently in a *German magazine*,

Defense expert Amy Belasco estimates total US expenditure (in Afghanistan) by 2011 to be \$445 billion. To put that into perspective, that's more than three times what all the OECD nations together spent on development aid around the globe in 2009. Estimates suggest that up to 80 percent of American money flows right back into the US through consultancy fees, corporate contracts and exported goods.<sup>10</sup>

The outlines of Karzai's "Intercontinental model" of development were already visible during the spring of 2002.<sup>11</sup> As I wrote eight years ago,

A bi-furcated, externally-driven, spatially segregated economic system, managed by foreign 'trained' and foreign-backed elite is the image of tomorrow's 'successful' Afghanistan, representing the limit of development possibilities [and imagination] under the Intercontinental model of Karzai & Associates. The Kabul Intercontinental Hotel serves as a powerful metaphor of this 'vision.' The 'vision' must be driven by certain hard facts: a 'demand profile' determined by social class and income realities; a particular 'insertion' of the Karzai regime in the international politico-economic order; and a specific emerging post-Taliban class and power structure. Very descriptive attributes of this 'vision' include spatial segregation (Kabul and the 'Rest'); utter irrelevance to the masses of impoverished Afghans; the co-existence of the Intercontinental Hotel 'model' alongside and separate from a huge traditional,

subsistence, nomadic and vibrant marketplace economy in the informal sector; and a dependence upon outside 'dollars' as the necessary fuel for economic prosperity in the Intercontinental. Such international funds be disbursed in cash form, history strongly suggests the kleptocracy in place will first line its pockets. The Karzai vision is, thus, consumptionist, western, and international trade-oriented (incl. heavy import dependence and earning foreign exchange from services whether oil pipeline fees or tourism, and traditional Afghan exports like carpets and fruits).<sup>12</sup>

The only thing which needed to be added is the huge poppy/opium export cash economy which flourishes under the reign of Hamid Karzai, famously known as the "Gucci guerrilla" hanging out in the lobby of the Holiday Inn in Islamabad during the late 1980's. The director-general of the Afghan government's main anti-corruption agency, a Mr. Wasifi, *a childhood friend of Karzai*, is an ex-con who spent over three years in a Nevada state prison for trying to sell \$65,000 of heroin to an undercover agent.<sup>13</sup> His wife, who had stood as lookout in the Las Vegas' Caesar's Palace hotel corridor, received a probationary sentence.<sup>14</sup> The brother of Hamid Karzai living in Kandahar is reputed to be one of the country's drug king-pins. But the limousines roll, no doubt another indicator – along with a luxury construction boom – of civilization restored in post-Taliban Kabul. Well-healed Kabulis ride in one of the new limousines offered by a recently opened rental service, Shams Limousine, owned by Afghan, Said Maqsud.<sup>15</sup> The service operated three albeit used, stretch Lincolns shipped in from Los Angeles. The number has since increased to six. The Kabul City Center

mall could be in a large American city, e.g., the Pentagon City Mall in

Washington D.C.



On the left, the Kabul City Center (Source: <http://themoderatevoice.com/30687/kabuls-new-elite-the-foreign-consultants/>) and on the right, the Pentagon City Mall in 2003 (Source: [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pentagon\\_city\\_mall.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pentagon_city_mall.jpg))

A vast largely empirical academic literature exists on the effects of corruption upon societies.<sup>16</sup> Most of it decries the adverse economic consequences from an alleged retarding effect upon economic growth, though this remains disputed. Others point to the negative effects of corruption upon allocative efficiency and innovation. Far less emphasis is devoted to studying the implications of corruption for income inequality which seems to be the primary effect in Afghanistan with its high degree of economic openness (import dependence, vast capital inflows) and, of course, huge underground drug economy.<sup>17</sup>

The detrimental effects of corruption and drugs upon Afghanistan's society and economy are widely recognized.<sup>18</sup> Some go so far as to note nostalgia exists for the Taliban insofar as at least under their clock, crime, corruption and drugs were absent. A culture of impunity reigns in Afghanistan. Police and the notorious Directorate of Intelligence regularly torture and kill with no consequences.<sup>19</sup> Corruption thrives at all levels of Afghan society,

from the need to bribe an electrician to secure a connection to Kabul's electrical grid, to extortion by gun-toting city traffic policemen, to corrupt judges, to the buying of government positions including those of senior police positions<sup>20</sup>, embezzlement by high-level employees of enterprises (such as at Ariana Airlines<sup>21</sup>), to the highest levels of government including ministers. An electronics shop owner in Karzai's Kabul laments, "Even robbery victims won't go to the courts because you have to pay a bribe."<sup>22</sup> A report published in 2008 by the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief (ACBAR) noted that a full one-third of the \$15 billion aid monies disbursed to Afghanistan follow obscure channels, sucked up in the "black holes" of corruption.<sup>23</sup> Another forty percent of it – or \$6 billion – goes back to donor countries in corporate profits and inflated consultant salaries.<sup>24</sup>

The other side of the coin is rampant poverty and extreme inequality, precisely what is expected in the bifurcated economy constructed by the western puppet, Hamid Karzai. Much could be written about this.<sup>25</sup> The poor

masses live existentially differentiated from the better-off strata in society by being permanent carriers of parasites in their bodies and by “living in shit” to use the apt words of Mike Davis (to this need be added that they also live in very crowded spaces).<sup>26</sup> Under very conservative assumptions, some 230 million kilos (or 230,000 tons) of non-disposed shit accumulate in Kabul per year.<sup>27</sup> The origins of the global Third World sanitation crisis lie in the practices of colonialism when European empires simply refused to provide modern sanitation and water infrastructures in their colonies’ native neighborhoods<sup>28</sup> – explaining incidentally why Latin America which overthrew the colonial yoke during the Bolivarian revolutions of the early nineteenth century fares relatively better as regards sanitation than Africa and much of Asia. British troops in India were stationed in clean and hygienic conditions whereas the natives serving these colonial personnel were kept far away from these settlements.<sup>29</sup>

"The triumphs of sanitary reforms are perhaps the brightest page in the history of our century" wrote sociologist Allen (1903) quoting an historian William Lecky referring to the American and European sanitary reforms that had taken place earlier.<sup>30</sup> As natural as this statement may seem, it is interesting to note the date when this wisdom was published: it was 1903. He continued, "The limits to sanitary programs are not to be sought in sanitary science ... not in paucity of remedies, but the *unwillingness* to justify them theoretically and pay for their application"<sup>31</sup> (emphasis added). Thus the establishment of this wisdom is not a recent phenomenon. While earlier instances of the Black Plague in Europe or Yellow Fever in South America have been exemplars of the havoc that

epidemics spread due to poor sanitation among other reasons, similar threatening conditions persist in Third World countries today. Easterlin has *argued that rather than the market, it was public policy initiatives* based upon new knowledge of diseases and new institutions during the nineteenth century which were essential to the improvement of human life expectancy both in the growing cities and nationwide in the United States.<sup>32</sup> In other words, local government action on sanitation is called-for.

Technologies providing either dry or wet low-cost sanitation exist in numerous Third World countries.<sup>33</sup> Improved provision of sanitation can be thought of as a sanitation ladder going from very cheap basic pit latrines to improved pit latrines, pour-flush facilities using water and septic tanks, up to connection to conventional sewers.<sup>34</sup> Estimated cost per person of these options (2005) was: \$30, \$50, \$60-160, \$300.

I will focus here only upon Afghanistan being ranked as the worst place in the world for sanitation in 2007 in the “State of the World’s Toilets” report published by the British non-governmental organization, Water Aid.<sup>35</sup> *Only 8% of the country’s 26.6 million people have access to proper toilets* (the worldwide figure is 58% and for Africa it is 40%). In urban areas the figure is 16%. A deficit of proper sanitation forms part of the environmental problems facing Third World countries especially in the growing slums of the world’s mega cities.<sup>36</sup> In the late 1990’s, of some 4.4 billion people in the Third World, three-fifths lacked access to safe sewers, two-thirds lacked toilets, one-third lacked access to clean water, and one-fifth lacked any kind of modern health care.<sup>37</sup> *More than twice as many people worldwide lack sanitation as lack safe*

*drinking water*, yet spending on sanitation is a fraction of spending on water.<sup>38</sup> Research on the effects of improved water, sanitation, and hygiene on diarrheal diseases suggest that improving the quality of water cuts the risk of diarrhea by only 16%, making water more available reduces the risk by 20%, installing adequate facilities to dispose of bodily excretions and promoting hygiene, however, are twice as effective.<sup>39</sup> Such a result is confirmed in an analysis of a Kabul latrines construction and improvement project undertaken in August 1996 by the International Committee of the Red Cross.<sup>40</sup> Major consequences of non-existent toilets and/or open sewers include water pollution and water-borne diseases, exacerbated air-borne diseases severely affecting infants and children. Poor sanitation impacts peoples' ability to work or attend school, reducing their income earning potential.<sup>41</sup>

Sanitation simply is not an official priority; spending on sanitation is a fraction of spending on water worldwide and especially in Afghanistan.<sup>42</sup> In 2007, the United Nations reported that

Over 25 per cent of the developing world's urban population, or 560 million residents, lack adequate sanitation. Asia accounts for over 70 per cent, mainly because of the large urban populations of China and India. UN-HABITAT's analysis shows that while cities in southeastern and southern Asia have made significant progress to improve sanitation coverage in urban areas, in cities in sub-Saharan Africa and eastern Asia, 45 per cent and 31 per cent, respectively, of the urban population still lack access. However, *some countries in southern Asia have extremely low coverage, notably Afghanistan, where only 16 per cent of the urban*

*population has access to a proper toilet.* Hundreds of thousands of people die every year as a result of unhealthy living conditions due to lack of clean water and sanitation. The number of deaths attributable to poor sanitation and hygiene alone may be as high as 1.6 million a year. A disproportionate share of the labour and health burden of inadequate sanitation falls on women who, for instance, have to wait for long periods to gain access to public toilets. Inadequate sanitation is something of a "silent tsunami", causing waves of illness and death, especially among women and children.<sup>43</sup>

During 1990-96, only 8% of Afghans according to the WHO had access to adequate sanitation.<sup>44</sup> An Australian general practitioner who worked with Medecins Sans Frontieres in 1999 for almost a year reported that in Afghanistan at the time 5% of the rural population had access to safe water and only 1% had access to adequate sanitation.<sup>45</sup> He noted that the very high rates of child mortality were primarily related to poor sanitation and the absence of safe water. In 2003, the United Nations Environment Program reported that open sewers were the rule in cities across Afghanistan. Kabul's sanitation system during the twentieth century consisted of dry vault latrines emptying into underground storage vaults which would be periodically emptied by donkey carts which would carry the wastes out of town. Pit latrines and septic tanks were not an option because the water can easily leach into the soil containing groundwater and has done that. By the twenty-first century, the Kabul River once famed for its sparkling, snow-fed waters had been turned into an open sewer.<sup>46</sup> Only one city (Kabul) collected wastewater in just

two of its twenty districts.<sup>47</sup> Some larger cities possess septic tanks.

IRIN Asia gave concrete meaning to the situation in rural regions of Afghanistan where over 80% of Afghans reside,

Saliha still mourns the death of her three-year-old daughter, Halima, who died due to severe diarrhea at a hospital in Kunar Province, eastern Afghanistan, on 11 January. The child had drunk contaminated water which Saliha's family collects from a nearby river and uses for all

purposes, including drinking, cooking and washing. About 200 meters away from where households in Spinkay village, Asmar District, collect water, is a mosque built across the river where dozens of men gather for prayer five times a day. Men who come to the mosque often perform their ablutions (washing their hands, arms, face, head and feet) with river water. Some even urinate and/or defecate near the riverbanks, and refresh afterwards with the river water.<sup>48</sup>



Moises Saman for *The New York Times* A boy riding a donkey carries water home from a public pump located amid an open sewage canal in Kabul (Source: Rubin, 2009 at <http://atwar.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/10/28/kabul-echoes-of-saigon/>).

The lack of sanitation kills far more people every year than do wars. United Nations agencies estimate that the persistent lack of toilets and sewage treatment leads to the deaths of some 700,000 children a year from particularly diarrhea and other avoidable ailments linked to fecal contamination.<sup>49</sup> In Afghanistan, according to the United Nations' Children Fund about 600 under-five children *perish every day* from preventable diseases such as diarrhea, cholera, dysentery, typhoid, parasitic

worms and pneumonia.<sup>50</sup> Data abounds demonstrating that investments in sanitation have major effects. For example, data from favelas in Salvador, Brazil (1989-90) show that the incidence of often deadly diarrhea is twice as high among children in poor households without toilets as among households with sanitation. It is three times greater for children in *communities* without sanitation infrastructure than in those with drains and sewers, demonstrating the importance of building community sanitation infrastructure.<sup>51</sup>

Lack of adequate sanitation in urban areas particularly affects women – especially poor urban women, making defecating a feminist issue<sup>52</sup> – another reason why in patriarchal Afghanistan few resources are devoted to correcting this situation (though women’s beauty salons catering to upper middle class urban women abound in post-Taliban Kabul and are extolled in the West as a sign of civilization restored in post-Taliban Afghanistan).<sup>53</sup> Devoting resources to improving sanitation for the Afghan masses ranks very low in the priorities of the limousine-driving, restaurant and conference-chasing crowd hanging-out at the luxury Serena Hotel in Kabul (a 5-star hotel, costing \$35 million to build, inaugurated by Karzai in November 2005, where one of the 177 luxury rooms costs \$250 a night<sup>54</sup>) or living in Sherpur. How can building toilets for the poor compete for resources with constructing such glamour, high visibility projects as luxury hotels, malls, mansions as in the Sherpur neighborhood of Kabul, highways (e.g., the Kabul to Kandahar asphalt strip), etc.?

The solution to the problem of seas of Third World shit as conceived by mainstream economists from Chicago and Boston is predictably to turn urban defecation into a global business, i.e. making toilets cash cows by charging user fees.<sup>55</sup> A small effort to build public Sulabh latrines in Kabul was undertaken in 2005-6 with \$1 million of Indian financial assistance.<sup>56</sup> Sulabh’s twin pit system uses very little water. The two pits are used alternatively and an attached biogas digester produces methane from the waste that can be burned for lighting and heating. The system generates no waste. Sulabh built five twenty-seat toilet complexes in the busiest areas of Kabul and by 2007 these served 5,000 people on an average

day. The complexes generated \$220 a day making them totally self-paying.<sup>57</sup>

User fees amounting to U.S 5 cents per visit covered the cost of running them. The problem is, of course, that most impoverished Third World city dwellers simply cannot afford such fees of 5-6 U.S. cents per visit.<sup>58</sup> For example, a recent report mentioned

Gul Ahmad and his eight-member family live in a two-room shack in slums up on a hill in the north of Kabul city. Ahmad does not own a house. His monthly government salary is about US\$60, half of which goes on rent. There is no electricity, drainage, tap water, school, clinic or other facility in the area.<sup>59</sup>

In other words, Gul Ahmad has a post-rent family income of \$30.00. Assuming each of his eight family members pays one visit per day to the public latrine, he would be paying \$12.00 per month for use of the public toilet. In Kabul a day laborer who works on a construction site or hauls goods can expect to make only \$3 a day. Gul Ahmed is one of the 1.4 billion people without access to sanitation who live on less than \$2 a day. As the UNDP underscores (and the Boston-Chicago crowd don’t “see”) for most of them, even low-cost improved sanitation technology may be beyond financial reach.<sup>60</sup>

### Conclusion

*“To be reasonable, before the advent of Enlightenment rationality, meant to think morally on a problem. (But) for bourgeois thought, ‘the double entry account book would be the infallible index of human reason’...(bourgeois) economics measures only that which can be expressed in terms of quantifiable indices (Karl Kapp, 1963)... In order to account for the irregularity with which social phenomena are quantified,*



*economists invoke a theory of social costs and social damages. Dumping sewage in watercourses and the poor living conditions of workers are not quantified; in the social damages column of the accounts book, such costs earn a zero value. An approach which only values quantified variables cannot adequately address the problem of refuse removal, particularly given the approach's propensity to externalize costs (as social damages) without making the necessary political changes necessary to internalize social costs. Municipalities, like firms, attempt to minimize their internal costs by shifting the external or social costs unevenly onto society. To transfer costs unevenly means that the total society does not enjoy the external costs equally and the ill effects are distributed generously to working class neighborhoods in Euro-America and to the native enclaves of colonial cities, while the beneficial effects are bestowed upon the dominant classes in both instances... ”<sup>61</sup>*

and upon the neo-colonial elites in Karzai's Afghanistan.

The Indian-made Sulabh public latrine (used mostly in urban areas) costs as little as \$10 a piece, but an evening rental of a white stretch limousine in Kabul cost at least 50 pounds in 2007 (or \$ 100).<sup>62</sup> A day of U.S. military war-related outlays in Afghanistan could purchase 10 million Sulabh toilets for Afghanistan, meaning almost every other Afghan would have her/his own toilet thereby eradicating major causes of death.<sup>63</sup> Rampant corruption in Karzai's Afghanistan has two direct links with the country's deplorable

sanitation condition. The first involves simply reducing the available resources at the macro level which might be devoted to improving the deplorable deficit of toilets (with its attendant consequences). The second is that it concentrates disposable incomes in the hands of the westernized elites who have little incentive for remedying the situation. Their spending priorities are upon shopping malls, beauty salons, mansions even on the coast of Dubai, imported luxuries, etc. The United Nations Development Programme lists six major inter-connected barriers which explain why sanitation investment lags so far behind that in water provision: the national policy barrier, the behavior barrier, the perception barrier, the poverty barrier, the gender barrier, and the supply barrier.<sup>64</sup>

Under Chairman Mao, socialist China had made considerable progress in sanitation improvement.<sup>65</sup> We know that every dollar invested in sanitation improvement yields multiple dollars' worth of productive activity, e.g., outlays on sanitation bring roughly a \$9 return on an investment of \$1.<sup>66</sup> But spending resources upon high cost, mammoth glamour projects like the Kandahar-Kabul highway, the Serena Hotel, or the Kabul city center shopping mall was more in tune with the class priorities of Karzai, his friends and western backers. As a result by 2006, for many common Afghans, the new Afghanistan was a myth and it was “time to go and get a job abroad.”<sup>67</sup> *Not only U.S “precision” bombs and midnight raids by U.S Special Operations forces but simple excreta are dangerous to the survival of poor Afghans.*<sup>68</sup>



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I have benefited from valuable research provided by my Economics graduate assistant, Tiksha Kaul, during the academic year of 2008-9.

<sup>1</sup> From World Health Organization, "Hurry up in the Toilet: 2.4 Billion are Waiting," at [www.who.int/water\\_sanitation\\_health/en/poster5.pdf](http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/en/poster5.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Karl Kautsky, *On the Agrarian Question* (1899)

<sup>3</sup> William H. Allen, "Sanitation and Social Progress," *The American Journal of Sociology* 8, 5 (March 1903): 631

<sup>4</sup> Figure extrapolated from "Afghan Disenchantment," *Le Monde* (March 26, 2008) at [http://www.truthout.org/docs\\_2006/032708G.shtml](http://www.truthout.org/docs_2006/032708G.shtml)

<sup>5</sup> On April Fool's Day 2008, two articles appeared decrying these two aspects of Afghanistan: "Afghanistan Ranked as the Worst Place in the World for Sanitation," *The Real Truth* (April 1, 2008) at <http://www.e-ariana.com/ariana/eariana.nsf/allDocs/B08EF8EC8247DEE98725741E00568AA9?OpenDocument> and

Aryn Baker, "Afghan Corruption a Growing Concern," *Time* (April 1, 2008) at <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1726620,00.html?xid=rss-world>. See "Transparency International: Afghanistan 2<sup>nd</sup> Most Corrupt Nation," *Pahjwok Afghan News* (November 17, 2009) at <http://www.rawa.org/temp/runews/2009/11/17/transparency-international-afghanistan-2nd-most-corrupt-nation.phtml>

<sup>6</sup> See my "AfghaniScam. Livin' Large inside Karzai's Reconstruction Bubble," *Cursor.org* (September 2003) at <http://www.cursor.org/stories/afghaniscam.html>

<sup>7</sup> Stephen Lendman, "Afghanistan: The Other Lost War," *Global Research.org* (September 28, 2006) at <http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=3352> and especially Marc W. Herold, "An Island Named Kabul. Trickle-Up Economics and Westernization in Karzai's Afghanistan," *Cursor.org* (December 6, 2004) at <http://www.cursor.org/stories/kabul.html>

<sup>8</sup> Walter Mayr, "Exotic Birds in a Cage: Criticism Grows of Afghanistan's Bloated NGO Industry," *Der Spiegel* (September 22, 2010) at <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,718656,00.html>

<sup>9</sup> Quoted in an excellent first-hand account by Aaron Rockett, "The Party's in Kabul," *The FullMonte New World Media* (September 19, 2006) at <http://www.thefullmonte.com/kabul.htm> citing Kim Barker, "Afghan Riot may have been an Accident Waiting to Happen," *Chicago Tribune* (June 3, 2006).

<sup>10</sup> Mayr, op. cit

<sup>11</sup> See my essay "Karzai & Associates' Trickle-Down Reconstruction," *Cursor.org* (May 12, 2002) at <http://www.cursor.org/stories/karzai.htm>

<sup>12</sup> Herold (2002), op. cit.

<sup>13</sup> Justin Huggler, "Afghan Anti-Corruption Chief is Drug Dealer," *The Independent* (March 10, 2007)

<sup>14</sup> Sharon Weinberger, "Vegas Drug Pusher Turned Afghan Anti-Corruption Czar," *Wired Blog* (August 2008) at <http://blog.wired.com/defense/2007/08/vegas-drug-push.html>

<sup>15</sup> "Planes, Trains and Limousines: Growth in Afghan Transport Sector," The Embassy of Afghanistan (Washington D.C.) (July 10, 2007) at <http://www.embassyofafghanistan.org/07.10.2007investplanes.html> and Declan Walsh, "Afghan Weddings Bring Limos and Bling," *The Guardian* (August 20, 2007) at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2007/aug/20/afghanistan.declanwalsh>

<sup>16</sup> Corruption might lower economic growth by reducing investment as argued in Paulo Mauro, "Corruption and Growth," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 110, 3 (August 1995): 681-712. On the other hand, Nathaniel Leff makes the case that bureaucratic corruption might raise economic growth insofar as it enables individuals to bypass bureaucratic delays and/or government employees allowed to levy bribes might work harder (especially if bribes act as piece rates), in his "Economic Development Through Bureaucratic Corruption," in Arnold J. Heidenheimer and Michael Johnston (eds), *Political Corruption & Contexts* (Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 2002): 307-320. For a nice survey, see also Pranab Bardhan, "Corruption and Development: A Review of the Issues," in Heidenheimer (2002), op. cit.: 321-338.

<sup>17</sup> Exceptions include Sanjeev Gupta, Hamid Davoodi and Rosa Alonso-Terme, "Does Corruption Affect Income Inequality and Poverty?" *Economics of Governance* 3, 1 (March 2002): 23-45 and Jong-Sung You and Sanjeev Khagram, "A Comparative Study of Inequality and Corruption" (Cambridge, Mass.: John F. Kennedy School of Government Faculty Research Working Papers Series RWP04-001, January 2004) at <http://ksgnotes1.harvard.edu/Research/wpaper.nsf/rwp/RWP04-001>

<sup>18</sup> Bilal Sarwary, "New Scourge of Afghan Society," *BBC News* (August 6, 2007) at [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/6928144.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/6928144.stm) and in Asian Development Bank, World Bank, et. al., *Fighting Corruption in Afghanistan A Roadmap for Strategy and Action* (Manila: informal discussion paper by staff of Asian Development Bank, February 16, 2007), 32 pp at [www.unodc.org/pdf/afg/anti\\_corruption\\_roadmap.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/pdf/afg/anti_corruption_roadmap.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> as is Chris Sands, "Corruption, Impunity Pervade Afghan Government," *Dominion Paper* (January 23, 2007) at <http://www.dominionpaper.ca/articles/954>

<sup>20</sup> See Anthony Lloyd, "Corruption, Bribes and Trafficking: a Cancer that is Engulfing Afghanistan," *The Times* (November 24, 2007) at <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/asia/article2933472.ece>

<sup>21</sup> Jawad Sameemi, "Corruption in Afghanistan Ariana Airlines," *BBC Persian* (May 10, 2007) at <http://www.rawa.org/temp/runews/2007/05/10/corruption-in-afghanistan-ariana-airlines.html>

<sup>22</sup> Baker (2008), op. cit.

<sup>23</sup> "Afghan Disenchantment," *Le Monde* (March 26, 2008)

<sup>24</sup> Rahim Faiez, "Afghanistan Economy Grew Nearly 14 Percent in 2007, New Report Says," *Associated Press* (April 2, 2008)

<sup>25</sup> For example see my "Pulling the Rug out: Pseudo-development in Karzai's Afghanistan," *Cursor.org* (March 7, 2006) at <http://www.cursor.org/stories/emtpyspace2.html>

<sup>26</sup> Mike Davis, *Planet of Slums* (London and New York: Verso, 2006): 137-38

<sup>27</sup> The literature on bio-gas reveals that an adult on an ordinary diet produces 100-200 grams feces per day (but one on a vegetarian diet produces 300-400 grams/day). Assuming that the average Kabuli mixes ordinary with vegetables equally, results in 250 grams/day. Assuming the population of Kabul is 3 million and that only 16% have access to proper toilets, means that 230 million kilos of shit accumulate in Kabul per year.

<sup>28</sup> Davis (2006), op. cit.: 139

<sup>29</sup> Robert Stock, "Environmental Sanitation in Nigeria: Colonial and Contemporary," *Review of African Political Economy* no. 42 (1988): 20-21.

<sup>30</sup> Allen, op. cit.: 631

<sup>31</sup> *ibid*: 632

<sup>32</sup> Richard A. Easterlin, "How Beneficent is the Market? A Look at the Modern History of Mortality," *European Review of Economic History* 3, 3 (1999): 257-294.

<sup>33</sup> Details in Alicia Hope Herron, "Low-Cost Sanitation: An Overview of Available Methods" (Washington D.C.: Environmental Change and Security Program, Wilson Center for Scholars, paper, no date): 59-69, available at <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/topics/pubs/WaterStoriesSanitation.pdf>

<sup>34</sup> UNDP, op. cit.: 113

<sup>35</sup> An excellent analysis of sanitation and development is provided in Oliver Cumming, *Trackling the Silent Killer. The Case for Sanitation* (London: WaterAid report, 2008) at [http://www.wateraidamerica.org/includes/documents/cm\\_docs/2008/t/tacking\\_the\\_silent\\_killer\\_the\\_case\\_for\\_sanitation\\_1.pdf](http://www.wateraidamerica.org/includes/documents/cm_docs/2008/t/tacking_the_silent_killer_the_case_for_sanitation_1.pdf) and also United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), "The Vast Deficit in Sanitation," in its *Human Development Report 2006* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006): 110-129.

<sup>36</sup> See Jorge E. Hardoy, Diana Mitlin and David Satterthwaite, *Environmental Problems in Third World Cities* (London: Earthscan Publications Limited, 1992).

<sup>37</sup> From Bruce Cummins, "The American Century and the Third World," in Michael J. Hogan (ed), *The Ambiguous Legacy. U.S. Foreign Relations in the "American Century"* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999): 295. These figures come from United Nations' *Human Development Report 1998*.

<sup>38</sup> WaterAid, "Dying for the Toilet. The Cost of Missing the Sanitation Millennium Development Goal?" *WaterAid.org* (2007) at [www.un-ngls.org/un-summit-wateraid.pdf](http://www.un-ngls.org/un-summit-wateraid.pdf) and UNDP, op. cit.: 111.

<sup>39</sup> Val Curtis and Sandy Cairncross, "Editorial: Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene at Kyoto. Hand washing and sanitation need to be marketed as if they were consumer products," *British Journal of Medicine* vol. 327 (July 5, 2003): 3-4. The complex links between these variables is explored in Annette Pruss, David Kay, Lorna Fewtrell and Jamies Bartram, "Estimating the Burden of Disease from Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene at a Global Level," *Environmental Health Perspectives* 110, 5 (May 2002): 537-542.

- <sup>40</sup> D.R. Meddings, L.A. Ronald, J.F. Pinera and A. Opplinger, "Cost Effectiveness of ac Latrine Revision Programme in Kabul, Afghanistan," *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* 82, 4 (April 2004) at [http://www.scielo.org/scielo.php?pid=S0042-96862004000400010&script=sci\\_arttext&tlng=en](http://www.scielo.org/scielo.php?pid=S0042-96862004000400010&script=sci_arttext&tlng=en)
- <sup>41</sup> WaterAid (2007), op. cit.
- <sup>42</sup> ibid
- <sup>43</sup> Eduardo Lopez Moreno and Rasna Warah, "Urban and Slum Trends in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," *UN Chronicle* 2 (2006) at <http://www.un.org/Pubs/chronicle/2006/issue2/0206p24.htm> . Emphasis added by the author.
- <sup>44</sup> Cited in Anthony C. Gatrell, *Geographies of Health An Introduction* (London: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 2002); 145
- <sup>45</sup> Robert A. Simpson, "North West Frontier Mission in Afghanistan," *Medical Journal of Australia* 177 (December 2002): 633-637.
- <sup>46</sup> Aparna Srivastana Reddy, "Goodbye Stinky, Dry Latrines," *Inter Press Service* (September 28, 2007) at <http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=39442>
- <sup>47</sup> United Nations Environment Programme, *Afghanistan Post-Conflict Environmental Assessment* (Geneva: UNEP, 2003): 32
- <sup>48</sup> "Afghanistan: Poor Sanitation, Bad Toilets Cause Deaths, Misery," *IRIN NEWS.ORG* (March 5, 2008) at <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=77122>
- <sup>49</sup> Celia W. Dugger, "Toilets Underused to Fight Disease, U.N. Study Finds," *New York Times* (November 10, 2006) at <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/10/world/10toilet.html>
- <sup>50</sup> "Afghanistan: Poor Sanitation...", op. cit.
- <sup>51</sup> UNDP, op. cit.: 115
- <sup>52</sup> Davis (2006), op. cit.: 140-41
- <sup>53</sup> Rasna Warah, "Access to Toilets, a Gender Problem," *Habitat Debate* 11, 1 (March 2005) at <http://ww2.unhabitat.org/hd/hdv11n1/11.asp>
- <sup>54</sup> Andrew North, "Top-end Hotel fills gap in Kabul," *BBC News* (November 8, 2005)
- <sup>55</sup> Davis (2006), op. cit.: 142
- <sup>56</sup> Matt Dupee, "Reconstruction: Enhancing Kabul's Sanitation Needs," *Afgaha.com* (April 11, 2007) at <http://www.afgha.com/?q=node/4838>
- <sup>57</sup> The above is from Reddy, op. cit.
- <sup>58</sup> In Kenya's Mathare slum in larger Nairobi, one of the worst and largest in Africa, a visit costs \$.06 (Davis, op. cit.: 142)
- <sup>59</sup> "Afghanistan: Kabul Facing 'Unregulated' Urbanization," *IRIN News* (November 26, 2007) at <http://www.irinnews.org/PrintReport.aspx?ReportId=75508>
- <sup>60</sup> UNDP, op. cit.: 119.
- <sup>61</sup> Vijay Prashad, "The Technology of Sanitation in Colonial Delhi," *Modern Asian Quarterly* 35, 1 (February 2001): 116-117 and Dr. P.K. Jha, "Sustainable Technologies for On-Site Human Waste and Wastewater Management: Sulabh Experience" (Manila: paper presented at the Hands-On Workshop on Sanitation and Wastewater Management, Asian Development Bank, 2005) at <http://www.adb.org/documents/events/2005/sanitation-wastewater-management/paper-jha.pdf>
- <sup>62</sup> Walsh, op. cit
- <sup>63</sup> Americans alone spend \$100 million a day in Afghanistan just for carrying out war and occupation. From "Afghan Disenchantment," *Le Monde* (March 26, 2008)
- <sup>64</sup> Details provided in UNDP, op. cit.: 118-120
- <sup>65</sup> Described in Leo A. Orleans and Richard P. Suttmeier, "The Mao Ethic and Environmental Quality," *Science* 170, 3963 (December 11, 1970): 1173-76.
- <sup>66</sup> Figure from Water Aid, *The State of the World's Toilet 2007* (London: WaterAid Report 2, 2007) at [www.wateraid.org/documents/the\\_state\\_of\\_the\\_worlds\\_toilets\\_2007\\_1.pdf](http://www.wateraid.org/documents/the_state_of_the_worlds_toilets_2007_1.pdf). For a concrete example of how investment in sewer connections in the city of Salvador, Brazil, led to a steep decline in diarrhea, a major killer of children, see Jon Cohen, "Pipe Dreams Come True," *Science* Vol. 319, No. 5864 (February 8, 2008): 745-46.
- <sup>67</sup> Dan McDougall, "The New Afghanistan is a myth. It's time to go and get a job abroad," *The Guardian* (February 5, 2006) at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2006/feb/05/afghanistan.theobserver> . See also Lendman, op. cit.
- <sup>68</sup> On the former see my "Matrix of Death. A New Dossier on the (Im)precision of U.S. Bombing and the (Under)valuation of Afghan Lives," *Frontline India's National Magazine* 25, 21 (October 11-24, 2008) at <http://www.hinduonnet.com/fline/fl2521/stories/20081024252100400.htm>