

AID AGENCIES AND AFGHANISTAN: THE END OF AN AFFAIR?

By Antonio Donini and Alessandro Monsutti

On a world map, Afghanistan—a country evoking images of conflict, violence, poverty, mass migration, and religious extremism to a Western audience—would appear as a somehow marginal place if it were not a focus of the global war on terror. However, it is also the destination of thousands of experts who conceive their endeavor as a struggle between the values of modernity (democracy, human rights, women’s empowerment, secular education, and accountability) and those of archaic traditions and government corruption. Such an international involvement is reminiscent in some ways of the Soviet occupation of the country in the 1980s. In addition to their harsh military occupation, the Soviets implemented a modernization policy consisting of female emancipation, literacy campaigns, and land reform. Indeed, the presence of aid agencies in Afghanistan—the United Nations, the Red Cross movement, and hundreds of nongovernmental organizations, large and small—has been a constant in the past few decades and now has widespread societal impact. Since the 1978 Communist coup and the 1979 Soviet intervention, aid organizations have channeled assistance and generated power structures that constitute a crucial element of the social and political landscapes in urban and rural Afghanistan. Throughout years of conflict and forced displacement, ministers and members of parliament, traffickers and commanders, human rights activists and Islamic militants, security guards and taxi drivers, shopkeepers and farmers, every Afghan—woman, man, and child—has somehow been affected by the activities of a humanitarian organization.

The international intervention of a US-led military coalition that rapidly ousted the Taliban in late 2001 marked an era of optimism. The democratization process conducted under the guidance of the international community resulted in two *loya jirgas*, or Grand Assemblies, modeled on traditional tribal councils in June 2002 and December 2003 to January 2004. Presidential and legislative elections in October 2004, September 2005, August 2009, and September 2010 followed the assemblies. However, these formal successes did not prevent further deterioration of the

situation on the ground. Afghan government mismanagement and corruption, the inefficiency of reconstruction projects, Taliban resurgence, rampant criminality, and the explosion of drug production and trafficking are regularly invoked to explain these developments. Many observers are haunted by the question, “What went wrong?” Most consider that the recent success of the insurgency is a corollary of the failure of the reconstruction process. Many humanitarian actors have denounced the use of aid as a political tool in support of a stabilization agenda aimed at rallying the population’s support for counterinsurgency objectives. In any case, the contract of trust that bound the aid agency personnel and the Afghan population seems to have deteriorated. After the “heroic” years of the 1980s and 1990s, are we witnessing the end of an affair?

Before the December 1979 Soviet intervention, Afghans witnessed peaceful competition between Western and socialist donors. Afghanistan was geographically situated on the fault lines of the two opposing Cold War blocs, and each vied for influence through aid. Such state-to-state cooperation focused on infrastructure, such as roads, dams, and improving the nascent education system. The US and USSR, and to a lesser extent East and West Germany and France, built major roads and established and staffed university departments. The Soviets built large factories, model urban neighborhoods, and engineering schools. The Americans and even the Chinese constructed airports, large dams, and irrigation schemes. The huge Helmand Valley Authority irrigation scheme was conceptualized based upon Tennessee Valley Authority projects. Afghan students were funded to attend Western and Eastern universities. The 1960s and 1970s were a period of relatively rapid growth, during which Afghan elites capitalized on the country’s borderland status and on competition between its major sponsors. Aid was state to state, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) were largely absent, with the exception of a few small medical organizations.

All this dramatically changed after Soviet intervention and the ensuing proxy war. Although Soviet support for some infrastructure projects



Delegates to Afghanistan’s 2002 Loya Jirga, or Grand Assembly, applaud and cheer after hearing the news that Interim Authority Chairman Hamid Karzai had been elected as the country’s president. Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Loya_Jirga_2002.jpg.



Focus group with village elders, Shomali, Kabul Province, 2005. Photo by Antonio Donini.

continued, the focus shifted rapidly to fighting what proved to be an unwinnable war through a combination of military force and an attempt to win “hearts and minds,” reminiscent in some respects of today’s US-led military intervention. In response to Soviet intervention, US policy shifted to what was then called “plausible deniability,” i.e., the channeling of military support via a number of proxies (such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, or Pakistan) to the nascent anti-Soviet *mujahideen* groups whose guerilla tactics and popular support were instrumental in pinning down the Soviet forces and their Kabul-based allies.

The war triggered a massive population movement: Some 3.5 million refugees flowed into Pakistan and perhaps two million into Iran. No Western NGOs were allowed into Iran, but in Pakistan, a cottage industry of humanitarian organizations animated by the “Afghan cause” and supported by donors and the public in the West sprang up in the areas with high refugee concentrations. Some worked as implementing partners for various UN agencies, such as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) or the World Food Programme (WFP), providing food and shelter to Afghan refugees who were concentrated into sprawling camps. More activist NGOs openly took sides with the *mujahideen* and established medical and other activities inside Afghanistan, working directly with local commanders.

During the mid-to late-1980s, the US and its allies used humanitarian assistance as a tool to serve political and military objectives that would give the Soviet Union “its Việt Nam.” The context was the Cold War, and overt manipulation was the norm. An array of NGOs, sponsored largely by the US and other Western governments, provided so-called humanitarian assistance to resistance commanders. Both sides of the Afghan border were rife with politicization and manipulation of relief efforts. In order to receive assistance, refugees had to be affiliated with one of the resistance political parties. UNHCR failed in attempts to enumerate refugees and ensure that individual families received direct assistance. UN workers had to accept that more or less legitimate tribal leaders acted as the conduits for food aid. These leaders controlled the food distributions and siphoned off a portion to feed *mujahideen* combatants sheltering in the camps.¹ Beneficiary lists were inflated, and one person might control several hundred ration books.² Working in tandem with Pakistani camp managers, these leaders and their political patrons developed an effective system for creaming off international assistance. Given the Cold War context and the presence of the Red Army in Afghanistan, donors, NGOs, and even the UN had taken sides and were not too concerned with the diversion of aid by the anti-Soviet factions.

Many NGOs started with refugee programs and then extended across the border. Others were created to provide assistance inside Afghanistan, and they usually operated under a veil of secrecy. The inept often combined with the unscrupulous. Cash was taken across the border and distributed liberally. Compromises with unsavory commanders were made, which became very difficult to disentangle. Not all NGOs were incompetent or indifferent to humanitarian principles and the importance of providing assistance on the basis of need. Some did good technical work, particularly medical NGOs. But in the NGO community in Peshawar and Quetta—the rear bases of the “cross-border” effort—neutrality was a dirty word. Access to the border was controlled by the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence Agency (ISI), which had gained ample experience in manipulating UN and NGO assistance to refugees in Pakistan. It was difficult, if not impossible, to work with groups that were not “blessed” by the ISI. This meant that Pashtun commanders and the political parties that represented them received the lion’s share of NGO assistance, to the detriment of Tajik or Hazara groups that were less connected to the ISI’s command structure.

Encounters between well-meaning but amateurish outsiders and local communities in tribal Afghanistan were not always easy. Different logics



Antonio Donini discussing the setting up of a mine action program with *mujahideen* Commander Ahmad Shah Massoud, Taloqan, Northern Afghanistan, 1991. Photo by Antonio Donini.

and agendas were at play. NGOs arrived with Western conceptual models of access to services and social change that clashed with the patronage inherent in tribal structures where the *khan* (village or tribal leader) privileged the well-being of his own people rather than the larger society. Similarly, the commander drew his legitimacy from the resources, including aid that he could attract—or pilfer. Naïve outsiders with grand ideas for health clinics or vaccination programs had to contend with power relations and allegiances based on a leopard-skin patchwork of tribal or political networks. Providing services for all tribes in a particular valley was not necessarily acceptable to all local commanders, as they vied for the presence of an NGO base in order to attract resources and increase legitimacy. The relief provided could easily become a stake in competition with neighboring commanders and, to a lesser extent, among NGOs. Instances of commanders stealing each other’s relief supplies, much as they did with weapons, were common. Frequently, NGO staff were taken hostage or forced to accept work in particular areas, regardless of actual need.

Matters were complicated by the fact that commanders sent their representatives to Peshawar and Quetta to proposition NGOs, and later UN agencies, with assurances of the agreement of the local *shura* (tribal or village council) and guarantees of security if they opened up shop in their area. It was often difficult for inexperienced outsiders to judge the veracity of such claims that, if readily accepted, could lead to unsavory consequences. In one such instance, upon the invitation of the *shura* of Paktika Province in eastern Afghanistan, the UN agreed to establish a base in Urgun to initiate mine clearance and other humanitarian programs. All seemed fine until, after a few weeks on the ground, the UN team was stopped at a checkpoint and forced to have an extended tea-drinking session with an angry commander who was incensed that the UN had set up base “with those miscreants up in Urgun.” He was the leader of the *real* Paktika *shura*, and the UN should be dealing with him, or so he claimed. Aid agencies learned the hard way that overlapping *shuras* were the norm



A health center in central Afghanistan. The Afghan state and some external donors (in this case, the US) deliver most social services jointly. Photo by Alessandro Monsutti.



This workshop is a typical setting where subjectivities are negotiated and where Afghan participants learn the terminology and code of conduct promoted by the humanitarian organizations and their donors. Photo by Alessandro Monsutti.

in many areas. This incident, fortunately without consequence, illustrates the lack of understanding of local culture that many outsiders displayed, a fact compounded by the rapid turnover of aid workers and the absence of collective memory.

In some cases, the consequences of limited understanding of local power realities were more serious. Attracting an aid presence was often an incentive for commander expansionist schemes. In Wardak Province (southeast of Kabul), for example, a senior commander utilized the presence of an NGO vaccination program to intrude into the political space of another armed group in the mid-1980s. The NGO vaccinators were accompanied by the commander's armed guards as they entered areas controlled by a rival commander. This led to a number of violent incidents, and the program had to be aborted.³ A similar incident, which resulted in the assassination of a Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) medical worker, occurred in 1990 in Badakhshan Province.

NGOs faced two complex situations. Not only were they subjected to the manipulation of the commanders they worked with and their Pakistani ISI minders, but they promoted their own agendas by choosing particular political alignments over others. NGOs were jockeying for position to get into the “good areas” under the “good commanders.” At a minimum, cross-border assistance projects and NGO offices in Pakistan suffered from political pressures and often from what can best be described as Mafia terror tactics. Such pressures led to frequent tribal squabbles among NGOs. As

one commander put it, mirroring what the NGOs said about the resistance parties, “It’s so hard for the mujahideen to deal with the NGOs because there are so many different ones. They are so fragmented, and they are always fighting among themselves.”⁴

With the benefit of hindsight, even some of the most reputable NGOs now recognize the partisan nature of their activities. MSF, for example, rationalizes this retrospectively as an “anti-totalitarian” stance.⁵ Many NGOs—and key donors such as the US—had a clear anti-Communist position that in some cases went as far as embracing the totalitarian Islamist mirror image of the Communists represented by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar’s Hezbi Islami party. The consequence of the politicization of the cross-border effort was that ideology trumped accountability to those in need. Donors were not particularly concerned with cost-effectiveness because one of the major objectives of their support was to assuage public opinion back home and embarrass the Soviets. Certain countries, the US in particular, prohibited their citizens from traveling inside the country, and some donors discouraged cross-border missions. These were difficult to organize and sometimes dangerous, given the risks of land mines, intertribal mujahideen conflict, and Soviet or Afghan army offensives.

As a result, project activities were seldom monitored, and when they were, it was often by Afghan staff, afraid to go on record as being critical of local commanders. Delivery was affected by conflicts among groups and by widespread corruption both in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Food aid, medical supplies, and agricultural equipment often were looted or hijacked for ransom. One observer estimated that “less than half of the overall assistance designated for Afghanistan is believed to have gotten through to the intended recipients.”⁶ Although this assertion is impossible to verify, a complicated web of complicity existed among resistance party leaders, the ISI, Pakistani border guards, bona fide mujahideen, and bearded bandits, and it resulted in the siphoning of large quantities of commodities, especially food aid, which was easier to sell for a profit. Corruption was not just limited to pilfering food. Spot-checks by one of the authors of this article in Qandahar Province in the summer of 1989 indicated that several Western-funded education projects existed only on paper.

Although its limitations became progressively clear, the assistance provided by NGOs, and to a lesser extent the UN, during and after the period of the Soviet presence did perform an important and lasting function. The presence of foreign aid workers, often young and dedicated, and the crackling radio programs of the BBC and Voice of America represented the only available windows on the outside world for rural Afghans from the mid-1980s to the fall of the pro-Soviet regime in 1992, during the 1992–1996 intertribal conflict, and the subsequent Taliban period until September 2001. It has been said that no rural Afghan has been left untouched by the presence of NGOs. However small-scale, intermittent, or amateurish the activities, the presence of NGOs has either meant change or at least the possibility of social change for the vast majority of Afghans. Even if their way of operating was often a radical departure from engrained traditional norms, local communities generally welcomed, respected, and protected NGOs.⁷

NGOs, and later the UN, provided basic health services and improved seed, fertilizer, and opportunities to work on food-for-work projects, especially welcome in times of conflict and crisis. More importantly, in terms of potential for promoting ideas of change and modernization, NGOs such as the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan or Save the Children promoted education for both genders in rural areas where there had been few or no schools before the war. Education programs were fuelled by community demand. Even under the Taliban regime, notoriously restrictive of girls’ education, schools continued to function in many rural areas if communities were vocal in demanding them. In fact, never before had so many girls gone to school in rural Afghanistan as during the Taliban period.⁸ The impact of these assistance activities may well have been small in terms of

actual economic and social development but immeasurable in terms of attitudes toward change and opening up Afghanistan to the outside world.

Only migration and the production and trade of narcotics have had similar transformational impacts on Afghan society. Afghans have had a long history of migration in its various forms: seasonal movements of nomads who bring herds to better pasture lands and also take the opportunity to trade with sedentary farmers, mountain people who go to urban centers or lowlands in order to find menial jobs, soldiers, refugees, pilgrims, and traveling merchants. The war, which tore Afghanistan apart after the April 1978 Communist coup and the 1979 Soviet invasion, has, however, given a more dramatic and massive dimension to these movements of people. A large part of the population fled from violence in the last decades and went mostly to neighboring countries and also to the Arabian Peninsula and the West.

A striking feature of this mobility is the significant amount of remittances—money, commodities, information—sent by migrants to their families in Afghanistan. This contributes to some stability and social relations despite war and dispersion. Migration has not only been a traumatic consequence of war and poverty, but a planned choice by which members of family groups diversified their livelihoods and thus spread risks. These risks were caused by the insecurity that dominates their lives as much as by the persistent violence in Afghanistan or the police pressure and waves of immigrant expulsion characteristic in many of their destinations. These multidirectional, cross-border movements are a crucial contribution to the economy of many Afghan families. They constitute a very efficient coping strategy, an omnipresent but overlooked companion to humanitarian action.⁹

If we fast-forward to 2012, the love affair between Afghans and aid agencies has soured, often bitterly. In general, NGOs and aid agencies have worn out their welcome. Afghan's expectations in late 2001, already high, were made worse by the rhetoric of donors who championed Western democracy, empowerment of women, nation-building, and the pronouncements of wildly optimistic Afghan elites. In 2002, President Karzai is reported to have said to the ex-king Zahir Shah on his return to Kabul from exile: "Your Majesty, in ten years Kabul will be like Dubai!" Even if apocryphal, this is an indication of the disconnect between lofty expectations and current reality.

Afghanistan is plagued by massive corruption, a perverse development system that funnels expatriate salaries and leaves little behind, a military quagmire, and the prospect of a return to all-out civil war when foreign troops depart. Because many of the visible current aid-funded development projects are similar to what Afghans had been accustomed to seeing implemented by NGOs, the stain of failure extends to them as well. Afghan MP Ramazan Bashedost is famous for repeating that "NGOs are worse than warlords." A frequent refrain among Afghans today is, "Why do all these young people come here? Is it because they can't find work in their own country?" A deeply rooted perception exists that the whole aid enterprise is flawed, corrupt, inefficient, and mainly serves foreigners. Many Afghans feel that there has been inadequate consultation and that what they have received (many would claim they have received nothing) is not what they needed. There is even increasing nostalgia for the Soviet period, as reflected in such sentiments as, "At least they built factories and were not corrupt."

The zeitgeist has changed. If a few years ago local NGOs blossomed in an effort to tap the resources of outside aid, a new model has emerged: consortia of private companies active in the building, logistics, transportation, or agricultural production sectors that may include an NGO. Entrepreneurs and politicians join forces and adopt a division of tasks, with the former making profits and the latter gaining revenues and providing contracts.

Many Afghans are cynical, sometimes despondent, and, above all, worried for the future. The perception of the role of outsiders has become

President Karzai is reported to have said to the ex-king Zahir Shah on his return to Kabul from exile: "Your Majesty, in ten years Kabul will be like Dubai!"



King Mohammad Zahir Shah walks with President Hamid Karzai to the first Afghanistan presidential inauguration ceremony at Salaam Khana Palace, Dec. 7, 2004. Photo by Capt. Lindy I. White, 105th MPAD. Source: <http://tiny.cc/dbkxgw>.



Dr. Ramazan Bashedost outside of his tent in Kabul. Source: His presidential campaign website at <http://tiny.cc/8ekxgw>.

increasingly negative. This explains why Afghans downplay even the most visible positive changes that have occurred, such as the massive increase in schooling, some advances in health, a vibrant and relatively free media, and the penetration of mobile phones even in the remotest areas. Indeed, a rising generation—educated people in their twenties and thirties—appear progressively disenchanted with the work of NGOs, and more generally, the contribution of humanitarian aid and development to the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Stuck between the historic figures of the *jihad*, who control the means of coercion, and the technocrats coming back from the West, who occupy many influential positions within the government, they are trying to find a third way. Afghan Fulbright alumni, for instance, cross ethnic boundaries to form a loose network of young educated women and men. They seem convinced that they will play a future political role and wait for a more favorable time.

Association for Asian Studies, Inc.



Enjoy the benefits!

With membership comes:

- Fellowship and intellectual stimulation of your peers
- Networking opportunities with almost 8,000 scholars across all disciplines
- Reduced Annual Conference registration fee
- Annual subscriptions to the *Asian Studies Newsletter* and *The Journal of Asian Studies* (print and online)
- Discounts on all AAS and Cambridge University Press publications, including **Education About Asia**
- Eligibility for grant programs
- Access to the "Member Only" sections of the AAS website. Features include:
 - AAS Member Directory – search and contact all current AAS members
 - *Journal of Asian Studies* online



www.asian-studies.org

JOIN TODAY
LOW FEES FOR STUDENTS!



Formed in 1941, AAS is a scholarly, non-political, and non-profit professional association open to all persons interested in Asia and the study of Asia.



Kids playing in front of the Darulaman Palace destroyed during the internal conflict (Kabul, 2009). Photo by Antonio Donini.

The demographic trend supports significant generational changes, because 42.3 percent of the Afghan population is fourteen years old or younger and did not directly experience the Taliban regime.¹⁰ According to the UN's Population Fund (UNFPA), the country's population growth, averaging 3.5 percent between 2005 and 2010, with a fertility rate of 6.9 per woman, is one of the world's highest.¹¹ The population of Afghanistan is set to triple by 2050. Kabul has become a huge third-world metropolis. Like other Afghan cities, it is overpopulated, polluted, without proper urban infrastructure, congested by the chaotic traffic, dusty in the sun, and muddy in the rain.

Although Western media and Afghan political elites present a picture of failed intervention and botched reconstruction, there is far more change underway than meets the eye. Thirty years of war and its corollaries of external assistance and migration have brought deep currents of transformation to Afghan society. Outlooks and expectations have changed even in the remotest rural areas. Urban social life is more vibrant than it appears at a first glance. Although small, a middle class exists. Its members often seek to avoid the north of the capital, where expatriates stick together, and prefer quieter neighborhoods, like Kart-e Seh or Kart-e Chahar. In these areas rarely visited by Westerners, the international presence is not overwhelming. Cafés and restaurants flourish. They impose no security checks and provide many meeting points for youth. In places such as the Afghanistan National Institute of Music, one may catch the flirting contacts of teenage couples listening to a North American violinist accompanying a Bangladeshi grandmaster who plays the sitar. Many *Iranigak* ("Little Iranians") who grew up and were sometimes born in Tehran, Mashhad, or Shiraz—before being deported with their families—bring back subtle ways of subverting the social and political order. These youth are dating via SMS and reinventing social life. They teach us that better futures are not only in the hands of humanitarian organizations and that hope is never lost. ■

NOTES

1. Pierre Centlivres and Micheline Centlivres-Demont, "État, islam et tribus face aux organisations internationales. Le cas de l'Afghanistan, 1978-1998" ("States, Islam and Tribes in Front of International Organizations: The Case of Afghanistan"), *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 54, no.4 (1999): 951.
2. Antonio Donini, "The Policies of Mercy: UN Coordination in Afghanistan, Mozambique and Rwanda," *Occasional Paper #22*, no. 27 (Providence, RI: Thomas J. Watson Institute for International Studies, 1996), 45, fn 27.



A guesthouse for expatriates in Kabul. These are places of relative luxury where Afghans do not have access, in stark contrast with the poor neighborhoods just outside the guest complex where displaced people live without electricity and running water.

Photo courtesy of Alessandro Monsutti.

3. Gilles Dorransoro, "Les enjeux de l'aide en Afghanistan" ("The Stakes of Aid in Afghanistan"), *Cultures & Conflicts* 11 (1993): 7.
4. Antonio Donini, *The Policies of Mercy: UN Coordination in Afghanistan, Mozambique and Rwanda, Occasional Paper #22* (Providence, RI: Thomas J. Watson Institute for International Studies, 1996), 46.
5. Interviews by Antonio Donini with former MSF staff who worked in Afghanistan in the 1990s.
6. Marvin Weinbaum, *Pakistan and Afghanistan, Resistance and Reconstruction* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994), 70.
7. Until 2005, when the Taliban insurgency regained momentum, there had been only a handful of security incidents involving expatriate aid workers.
8. Interview with Swedish Committee for Afghanistan country director.
9. Elca Stigter and Alessandro Monsutti, *Transnational Networks: Recognising a Regional Reality* (Kabul: AREU [Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit], April 2005).
10. With a median age of 18.2 years; see the CIA World Factbook at www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/af.html.
11. "Fact Sheet: Reproductive Health Indicators for Afghanistan," *Humanitarian Crisis in Afghanistan*, UNFPA, accessed April 5, 2012, <http://www.unfpa.org/emergencies/afghanistan/factsheet.htm>.

ANTONIO DONINI is a Senior Researcher at the Feinstein International Center (FIC) at Tufts University, where he works on issues relating to humanitarianism and the future of humanitarian action. He has worked for twenty-six years in the United Nations in research, evaluation, and humanitarian capacities. His last post was as Director of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan (1999–2002). He has published widely on evaluation, humanitarian, and UN reform issues, as well as on Afghanistan. He coedited the volume *Nation-Building Unraveled? Aid, Peace, and Justice in Afghanistan* (Kumarian Press, 2004). He coordinated the Humanitarian Agenda 2015 research project at FIC that analyzed local perceptions of humanitarian action in thirteen crisis countries, including Afghanistan.

ALESSANDRO MONSUTTI is Associate Professor at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva, where he teaches Anthropology of Development, Middle East Studies, Migration Studies, and Methods in the Social Sciences. He is also Research Associate at the Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford. He has been Research Associate and Lecturer at Yale University (2008–2010). Monsutti has carried out extensive fieldwork in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iran since 1993, and more recently in the Western countries among Afghan refugees and migrants, thanks to a grant from the MacArthur Foundation (Chicago, 2004–2006). He is the author of *War and Migration: Social Networks and Economic Strategies of the Hazaras of Afghanistan* (Routledge, 2005).

subscribe to
Historically Speaking

or become a member of
the Historical Society

"*Historically Speaking* is the most interesting historical journal that is being published today."
- David Hackett Fischer, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Washington's Crossing*

"*Historically Speaking* is the *New York Review of Books* for history."
- Joseph Miller, T. Cary Johnson Professor of History, University of Virginia and past president of the American Historical Association

Membership includes subscriptions to the *Journal of the Historical Society* (4 issues/yr) and *Historically Speaking: The Bulletin of the Historical Society* (5 issues/yr). The Society hosts a biennial conference and other talks and seminars.

Become a Historical Society member:
www.bu.edu/historic/forms/ssub.html

Subscribe to *Historically Speaking*
www.press.jhu.edu/cgi-bin/order.cgi?oc_id=1706