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**“Engendering Post Conflict Afghanistan:
Critical Perspectives in the Aftermath of War”
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This paper argues that a key impact of globalization has been the reconfiguration of international relations, and the enabling of international state and non-state actors to exert greater influence and authority over the restructuring and reconstruction of “Other” societies. The transnational women’s movement represents a case in point as it attempts to maintain an entrenched and strategic presence in non-western societies in the interest of advancing the rights of women. In recent years, this movement has made staggering and unprecedented inroads in influencing international law and the foreign policies and practices of powerful states. This paper critically examines the role and impact of the international women’s movement in Afghanistan leading up to the war, in terms of combining western foreign policy interests with the agenda to “liberate” Afghan women, and the subsequent project to restructure Afghanistan’s state and civil society to be more inclusive and responsive to women’s needs. This paper argues that the interventionist strategies have had mixed results. Although many gains for women have been achieved, the ownership and agency of an indigenous Afghan women’s movement may have been compromised in the process. This paper claims that intervention in Afghanistan has led to furthering the urban/rural divide and has created a stark distinction between formal and informal sectors of women’s organizing, with the former benefiting to the detriment of the latter. This fragmentation of women’s organizing is exacerbated by western donor agenda’s and interests to recreate cultural and religious practices and attitudes. It is argued that the failure to fully incorporate Afghan women in the design and implementation of programs and to inculcate sociocultural and religious sensitivities into the conceptual framework of international intervention can, and for the most part, already has inadvertently lead to disengagement.