



NAJAF MAZARI was born in 1971 in a small village near Mazar-e-Sharif in northern Afghanistan. At the age of 12, he left school and, unbeknown to his parents, apprenticed himself to a master rugmaker. Thus began his love affair with rugs.

He fled Afghanistan in 2001 after being tortured, narrowly escaping certain death during the genocide of Hazara men and boys in Mazar-e-Sharif carried out by the Taliban. Reluctantly leaving behind a young wife and six-month-old baby, he made the dangerous journey overland, eventually crossing the ocean in a leaky boat to the shores of Australia, where he ended up in the Woomera Detention Centre. After his release, he settled in Melbourne where he now owns a rug shop, selling traditional Afghan rugs.

His wife and daughter were finally given permission by the Australian government to join him in 2006 after almost six years' separation. In April 2007, he was granted Australian citizenship.

ROBERT HILLMAN is a Melbourne-based writer of fiction and biography. His most recent biography, *My Life as a Traitor*, written with Zarha Ghahramani, came out in 2007 and appeared in numerous overseas editions the following year. His 2004 autobiography, *The Boy in the Green Suit*, won the Australian National Biography Award for 2005.

His collaboration with Najaf Mazari on *The Rugmaker of Mazar-e-Sharif* grew out of an abiding interest in the hardships and triumphs of refugees.

THE RUGMAKER OF MAZAR-E-SHARIF

Najaf Mazari & Robert Hillman

*But the real and lasting victories
are those of peace, and not of war.*

Emerson



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Published by Insight Publications
219 Glenhuntly Road
Elsternwick Victoria 3185
Australia.

Tel: +61 3 9523 0044
Fax: +61 3 9523 2044
Email: books@insightpublications.com.au
www.insightpublications.com.au

ABN 57 005 102 983

First published by Insight Publications in 2008, reprinted 2008, 2009
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Cover and text design: Susannah Low
Authors' photo: Tim Mullane
Front cover photo of Najaf Mazari: Lara McKinley
Maps: Dimitrios Propokis
Editing: Catharine Retter, Robert Beardwood & Iris Breuer
Printed in Australia by Ligare Book Printer

National Library of Australia
Cataloguing-in-Publication data:

Mazari, Najaf, 1971-

The rugmaker of Mazar-e-Sharif / a memoir
of Najaf Mazari written by Robert Hillman.
Elsternwick, Vic.: Insight Publications, 2008.
9781921088551 (pbk.)

Mazari, Najaf.
Woomera Immigration Reception and Processing Centre.
Refugees--Australia--Biography.
Afghans--Australia--Biography.

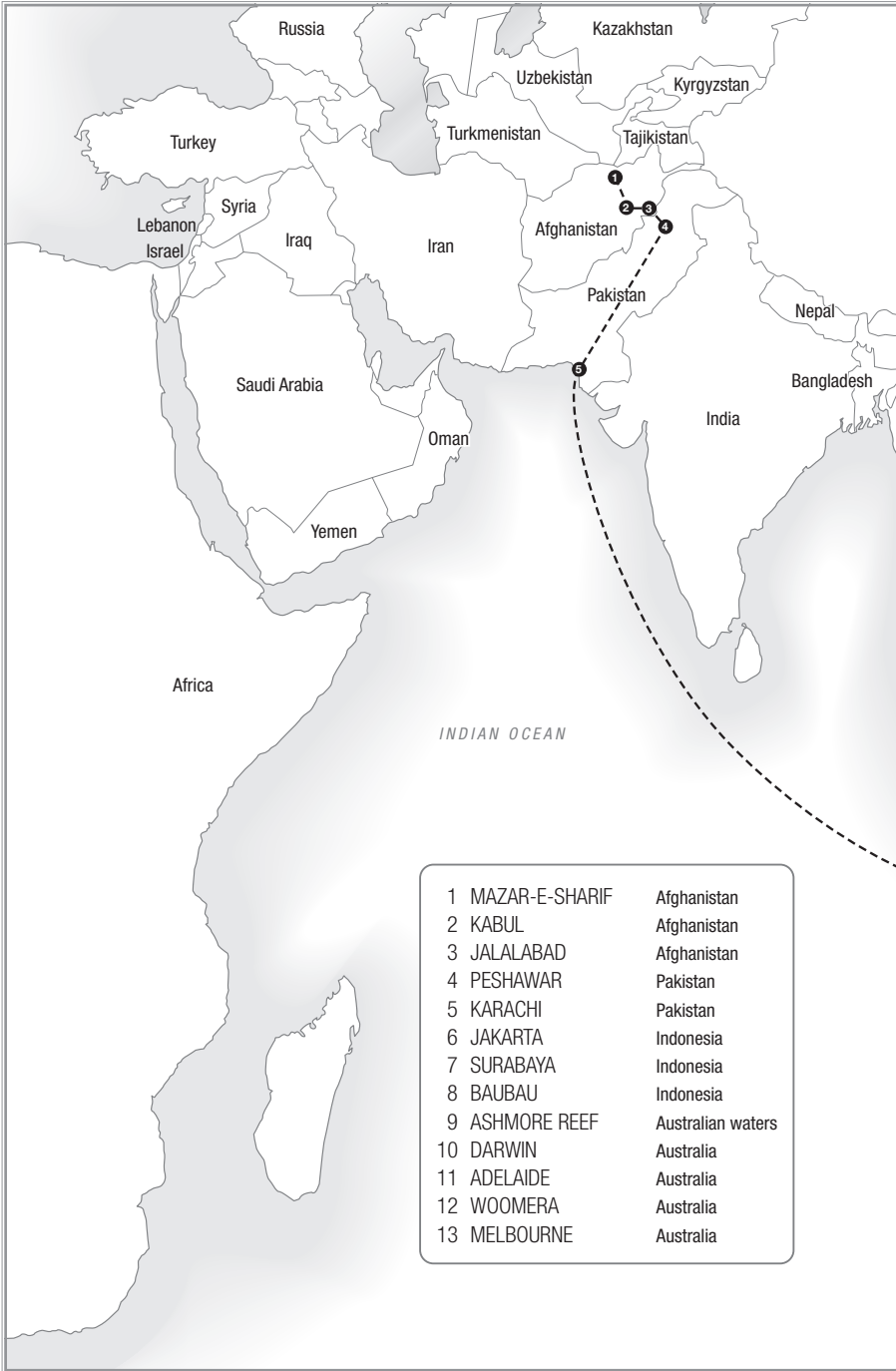
Hillman, Robert, 1948-

325.2109581

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to all those people of Afghanistan who have lost so much in wars – their houses, their limbs and their lives – and to all people working for peace throughout the world.

NAJAF'S JOURNEY





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DISCLAIMER

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