

The Rise of the Afghans' National Awakening and the Achievement of their Independence (1880s-1921)

**Dr.Mehdani Miloud and Dr.Ghomri Tedj,
Tahri Mohamed University (Bechar)**

Abstract

Of the wars that Britain waged in Central Asia, the Anglo-Afghan wars were the ones which deserve attention. The latter went through three stages: the First Anglo-Afghan War (1838-1842), the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878-1880) and the Third Anglo-Afghan War (May, August 1919). The British intervened militarily in Afghanistan as part of the Conservatives' forward policy to pre-empt a potential Russian invasion of India, then a British colony. Due the asymmetric nature of these wars and the difficulty to unite the Afghan mosaic ethnic groups to fight for a national cause, Afghanistan independence was delayed for years, when all the prerequisites for it were fulfilled notably, the Afghan national consciousness.

Key words: Anglo-Afghan wars, national consciousness, independence

Introduction

Amir Abdurrahman's triumph in centralizing political power in Kabul was to clear the ground for the building of a modern Afghan state. Such achievement would not have been possible in a country, where the provinces tribal chiefs had more power than their amir in Kabul. The amirs who preceded Abdurrahman were required to secure the tribal chiefs' loyalty in order to pretend to the tax revenues that enabled them to ensure the smooth operation of their government machinery. Thus, national awakening, and thenceforth independence achievement would be at stake in a 'country' that housed an aggregation of multi-linguistic ethnic groups,

The Afghan national consciousness was the result of the interplay of three major historical facts: Pan-Islamism, the after-effects of the injurious demarcation of the Durand line, and the role of the Afghan nationalists. So, how did these four historical facts combine to promote the Afghans' national consciousness? How did a country with multi-ethnic and multi-linguistic groups manage to form a nation? Did the Afghans maintain friendly or antagonistic relations with Britain after their independence? An attempt to answer these questions is the object of this article.

The Emergence of Afghan Nationalism

Before dealing with the term 'nationalism,' it is first worth defining the term 'nation,' and the derived word 'nationalism.' The light here will be shed on the definition of both words in their broader sense. A nation entails three main components: a territory, a people and a government. In order to form a nation this people must have a territory and a government which not only serves it but also coerce it into observing the law that govern the members of this nation.

In *the International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*, the term 'nation' is defined as "the largest self-defined collectivity of people whose members believe that they share some form of territorial association and that they are genealogically related."¹

Professor Steven Grosby defines the term as "a social relation with both temporal depth and bounded territory."² He explains that a nation is a large group of people, occupying a geographical area and sharing memories about the past. He adds that these memories are transmitted through stories, myths and history, and that these memories make a difference between a nation and another.³ He further asserts that the ties that bind these individuals and the language they share constitute their collective consciousness.⁴ He also calls the notion of time that links these individuals' past and present and makes a given nation different from another, the 'temporal depth.'⁵

Benedict Anderson sees a nation as 'an imagined political community , imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign'⁶By 'imagined, he means that the members of the community are parts of such a community without even knowing one another or having met before. It is limited because there are other communities beyond the frontiers of this community, and sovereign because the concept of nation came into existence as the result of the Enlightenment whose aim was to free people from the government unrestricted power.⁷

The term 'nationalism' denotes the complete devoutness and full allegiance to one's nation. Anthony D. Smith defines it as 'an ideological movement aiming to attain or maintain autonomy, unity and identity for a social group which is deemed to constitute a nation.'⁸So, in the case of Afghanistan, this ideological movement which led to Afghanistan independence was resultant of three main ingredients: Pan-Islamism and its effects on the Afghan elite, the aftershocks of the Durand Line (1893) on Afghanistan, the repercussions of the 1907 Anglo-Russian Convention on the Afghans, and the Young Afghans' Reformist movements' contribution to the Afghans' awakening.

Pan-Islamism and its Effects on the Afghan Elite

Pan-Islamism is a political and religious movement that emerged in the 19th century as a reaction to European colonialism. The encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslims defines it as 'a transethnic and

transnational movement that started in the 19th century.⁹ *The Historical Dictionary of Islam* explains the term as ‘the political unification of the Islamic world to gain strength for defence against European imperialism.’¹⁰ Therefore, Pan-Islamism goes beyond the ethnic group and the national borders without downplaying the importance of ethnicity and nationalism.¹¹ On the contrary, Pan-Islamists argued that they must be reinforced. Two key figures were behind the advocacy of Pan-Islamism: Sayyid Jamal al-Din-al Afghani (1838 - 1897) and his disciple Muhammad Abduh (1849 - 1905).

These latter reformers assumed that Pan-Islamism could be attained through reforms that would enable the Muslims to borrow Western technology and administration and adapt them to meet the Muslims’ needs. They also insisted on the terms ‘identity and solidarity,’ two essential elements for the achievement of independence from the colonizers’ chains.¹² Pan-Islamism overlooked Muslims’ race, language and ethnicity, and instead stressed the term *umma* (nation),¹³ which united all the Muslims all around the world, then counting 250,000,000.¹⁴ Hence, the term ‘Muslim community’ came to displace that of individual Muslim countries. Besides, it is not surprising that Pan-Islamism emerged in the Ottoman state in the 19th century, for the European powers constituted an increasing threat to the Ottoman Empire, then under Sultan Abdulhamid II (b. 1842-d.1918).¹⁵ Then, the Ottoman state had to face serious challenges because it could no longer finance the possession of its Christian and Muslim dominions which constituted one of the origins of unrest within these dominions.

Equally, the European powers’ interference in the aforementioned dominions was to foment discontent which affected the Ottoman Empire stability and drove the Empire political elite to react to such interference. To gain strength and ally the Muslims to the Ottomans’ cause, Sultan Abdulhamid II succeeded in rousing the Muslims’ religious consciousness. He, then, managed to involve the Muslim merchants, whose trading interests were jeopardized by the European capitalists’ hegemony.¹⁶ The Ottoman intellectuals’ call for unity had a great effect on the Muslims, who were under the western and Russian colonialism, namely in Asia and Africa. Outstanding Muslim reformers were to aid the vulgarization of the Ottoman intellectuals’ ideology, and therefore had a great effect on the colonized Muslim countries.

As a result of the Ottoman intellectuals’ sensitizing efforts, Pan-Islamist sentiment increased within these countries and mobilized them for common cause. For example, Indian Muslims, among others, adhered to the Pashtuns’ plight in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP);¹⁷ which condition resulted from the British forward policy that bisected the Pashtuns by means of the Durand line in 1893.¹⁸ In consequence, of the growing anti-British sentiment, the tribes in the NWFP, with the Afghans’ instigation, rose in rebellion in 1897.¹⁹ Even though the British forces managed to crush the malcontents, the latter could make their cause known globally to gain the Muslim world sympathy. In addition, the

NWFP tribal resistance inspired Muslims. Most prominent among these were the Indian Muslims who expressed their sympathy with the NWFP tribes and endorsed anti-British sentiment.²⁰

All in all, Pan-Islamism had a great echo on Muslims as the latter were receptive to the Pan-Islamists' ideology. This receptivity further increased their collective consciousness that they belonged to a Muslim community, and their job was to join forces to free themselves from the infidels' yoke. Afghanistan, like other Muslim countries, was affected by Pan-Islamist movements. If the Afghans expressed their animosity vis-à-vis the British, anti-British sentiment was to intensify in consequence of the injurious Durand line that bisected the Pashtuns.

The Durand Line and its Effects on Afghanistan

The sovereignty of nineteenth century Afghanistan was more at stake than ever because it had to face two diametrically expanding colonial powers as part of the Great Game: Tsarist Russia in the north and British India in the south. For Russia, reaching the warm waters of the Indian Ocean was imperative²¹ while, for Victorian Britain protecting India from a potential Russian invasion through Afghanistan was vital. Hence, Afghanistan ran the risk of being caught up between both powers. So, the ideal solution that the British came up with was twofold: to make of Afghanistan a barrier state to check the Russian advance towards India through Afghanistan and to contain the Afghan 'turbulent' tribes in proximity with the Afghan-India frontier.

To make of Afghanistan a barrier state, the British were to define Afghanistan's both northern frontier with the Russian spheres of influence in Central Asia and the southern frontier with Britain. To achieve their purpose, the British had to obtain Amir Abdurrahman's approval, the amir of Afghanistan. However, if the Afghans accepted the demarcation line with the Russians, they held deep reservations about British-India frontier with Afghanistan, for such a line confirmed the Gandamak Treaty (1880) that allowed the annexation of Afghan territories in contiguity with British-India frontier, notably the Kurram Valley and the Khyber Pass whose incorporation to the British Empire not only made the Anglo-Afghan relations strained but also made of Afghanistan frontier with British-India a turbulent one. What equally caused the Afghans' resentment was that the demarcation line split the Afghan Pashtuns causing an enduring issue with Afghanistan and today's Pakistan.

In fact, in the North-eastern Indian Frontier, in proximity of the Khyber Pass, the British were concerned with the Afridi tribesmen who repeatedly attacked the British positions near the pass. Equally, Amir Abdurrahman's attempts to renew relationship with the Afridis and his claim that he was their sovereign was to increase British worries.²²

In southern Afghanistan, what made the British at variance with the Afghan amir was the Kurram Valley. Given the strategic importance of the Kurram as it constituted an alternative route into

Afghanistan, and also a gateway to Kabul, Amir Abdurrahman repeatedly delivered retaliatory attacks on the Turis Shi'a who took the side of the enemy during the Second Anglo-Afghan War.²³ As a result, the Anglo-Indian forces had to intervene in there to pacify the tumultuous frontier. (see map 1 below)

Map 1: Afghan State with Modern Boundary Highlighting Durand Line with Pakistan



Source: Thomas, Bartfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, U.S.A., Princeton University Press, 2010., p.156

In view of defining their sphere of influence and that of Afghanistan, the British set out demarcating the Indian-Afghan turbulent frontier by a commission headed by a British officer named Mortimer Durand²⁴ who was to negotiate the boundary settlement with the amir of Afghanistan. The negotiation of the agreement started during the tenure of the Liberal Party, headed respectively by William Ewart Gladstone (1892-1894). It was concluded in 1895, during the tenure of the Conservative Party that was headed by Robert Gascoyne-Cecil (1895-1902). The demarcation of the Durand line was completed in 1896.

On November 12, 1893, Sir Durand Mortimer, foreign secretary of the government of India and the Amir Abdurrahman of Afghanistan met at Kabul to agree upon the definition of the border between Afghanistan and British India and ultimately sign an agreement.²⁵ The amir who could not rule Afghanistan without the subsidies that he regularly got as a result of the Gandamak Treaty (1879) was to relinquish his control over bordering territories to British India in consequence of the British forward policy.²⁶ Among these were: the Pashtun territories of Bajaur, Mohmand, Kurram, and north and south Waziristan. However, the mass of land in the west of the Khyber Pass was left undemarcated due to the uncompromising stance the British and the Afghans adopted. The border demarcation by means of a 2,444 km long line was to split the Pashtun ethnic group from their kinsmen in Afghanistan.²⁷

Because of the inherent geographical difficulties of the NWFP that made the border inaccessible to the British Indian forces on the one hand, and the bellicosity of the frontier tribesmen on the other, the region dwelt beyond the British colonial administrators though under their sovereignty. Therefore, these frontier tribesmen enjoyed some sort of self-government, in which the elders of the tribes attempted to establish peace and stability in the region with the assistance of armed militias.

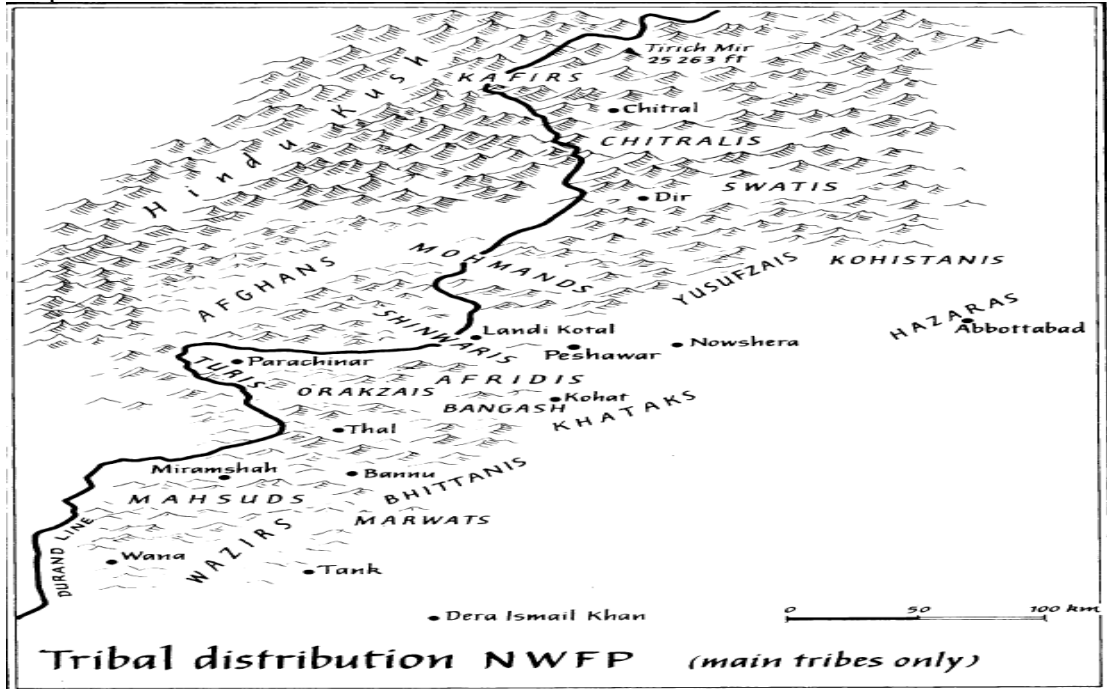
Amir Abdurrahman had an uneasy conscience that developed into apprehension with regard to his people because of his relinquishment of territories to the enemy pursuant to the Gandamak Treaty.²⁸ And now with the British pressure under which he had been since 1888, he was about to lose other territories that bordered British India. Hassan Kakar, a native of Afghanistan and professor of history at the University of California at San Diego, argues that it was the apprehension that the amir felt vis-à-vis his subjects that drove him to negotiate the Durand agreement in secrecy,²⁹ contenting himself with the invitation of the elders and courtiers of his choice to tell them about the outcomes of the agreement.

However, the possibility that Amir Abdurrahman had endorsed the Durand agreement remains controversial. Professor Hassan Kakar objects to the use of the term 'treaty' because a treaty, he explains, entails the signatories' state bodies of a given formal document. He adds that state bodies are deemed to represent the people for whom they negotiate. There ensues that the so-called treaty is not valid since the parties involved in the negotiation were an official of a foreign state (Durand Mortimer) on the one hand, and a ruler on the other. Professor Hassan Kakar adds that the agreement was personal, not dynastic; therefore, it was neither permanent nor binding. He also raises some doubts as to the existence of such a treaty. He reveals such doubts in the following paragraph:

Now, the pertinent question is to ask where is the text, which the amir had signed, whereas he had the habit of putting his signature on all kinds of documents after he had approved of them? In the archival centers in Kabul, New Delhi and London where I have carried on research I have not come across the text of the agreement signed by him. In all probability there had been no text of the agreement signed jointly by the amir and Durand.³⁰

Upon the delimitation of the Durand agreement, the British opted for a systematic bisection of the 'troublesome' Afghan tribes that had become under their jurisdiction. These tribes, among others, were the Tarkanalays, the Wazirs, the Mohmands, the shinwarys, the Nurzays, the Achakzays, the Bereches and the Baluches.³¹ (See map 2, below)

Map 2 : Tribal Distribution in the North West Frontier Province



Source: Victoria, Schofield, *Afghan Frontier: Feuding and Fighting in Central Asia*, London, Taurisparke Paperbacks, 2003, p.122

In the effort to pacify the threatening tribes the British frequently resorted to corruption. Nevertheless, the aforementioned tribes and others, all numbering 200,000 fighting men rose in rebellion in 1897 against British political control,³² but they were overwhelmed by the Anglo-Indian forces.

All in all, the Durand line was primarily designed, as part of the British forward policy to serve British interests in protecting India against a potential Russian expansion. In this respect, Percy Sykes noted the benefits that Britain reaped from the demarcation of the Durand line.

Durand secured for the Indian Empire its most important achievement of external policy during the nineteenth century. He not only materially helped to end the long advance of Russia towards India, but removed a constant misunderstanding with that Empire.³³

Equally, in his book, *A History of Afghanistan*, Percy Sykes argued that thanks to the Durand line agreement, the British managed to reach a negotiated settlement with Russia, which eventually paved the way for the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, which in its turn cleared the ground for the coalition of both empires in the First World War to face their common enemy: the German Empire.³⁴

What is more, the Durand line agreement was catastrophic for Afghanistan as well as the tribes between the Afghan-Pakistani frontier, and for Afghanistan-Pakistan relations after the creation of Pakistan in 1947. It was to raise a contentious enduring issue for the tribes who had been enclosed in a strip that Professor Kakar describes as ‘a no-man’s land’ that was backward economically and in permanent instability.³⁵

Equally, the Durand line had bisected the Afghan warrior tribes, those who had always fought the invader courageously; most prominent of these tribes were the Pashtuns. The Afghans, either inland, or those in the NWFP, laid the blame upon Amir Abdurrahman, who believing that he was saving Afghanistan from the British, actually helped in its fragmentation.³⁶ The Durand line agreement has affected Afghanistan-Pakistan relations, particularly after the creation of Pakistan in 1947. Today, the Afghans contend that the Durand line has no *raison d'être* because it has severed the Pashtuns in the NWFP from their kinsmen in Afghanistan.³⁷ Among the Pashtun tribes which were bisected there were the Afridis, the Mahsuds, the Wazirs and the Swat.³⁸ The Afghans support their arguments by the fact that as long as one negotiating party of the Durand agreement is no longer occupying India (alluding to the British colonial administration), then the agreement has no binding power.³⁹ The Pakistanis, on the other hand, hold that the Durand line is an international border between two states,⁴⁰ a claim the Afghans have always rejected. The Pakistanis assert that the NWFP people must be given the option to choose either to coalesce with Afghanistan or Pakistan.⁴¹ In view of the uncompromising positions of either party, the issue remains unsettled, which impacts both countries' relations.

To sum up, the demarcation of the Durand Line was achieved under Amir Abdurrahman's rule during which (1880-1901). During these years, he tried hard to preserve amicable relations with the British government of India and honour his commitment vis-à-vis the British, even though he was unable to contain the frontier tribes' hostility vis-à-vis them

Mahmud Tarzi and the Young Afghans' Reformist Movement

The conclusion of the Second Afghan War (1880) and the Afghan endorsement of the Gandamak Treaty legitimized the British authority over the Afghan foreign policy. It also allowed the British to lay hold over the Khyber Pass and the Kurram. In consequence, the Gandamak Treaty aroused the Afghans' resentment, and some like the Young Afghans began to voice their discontent.⁴² The Young Afghans' main objective was to militate in order to bring about political, social and religious reforms that would lead to Afghanistan full independence; thenceforth, they were called the 'reformists.'⁴³ Politically, the achievement of Afghanistan territorial sovereignty and the vulgarization of anti-colonialism notions through Siraj al-Akhbar Afghanyah newspaper were two main principles to which the Young Afghans adhered. Socially, the Young Afghans conceived that education would play a key role in forging an Afghan identity that went beyond the loyalty to the tribe, and that contributed to the rise of Afghans' consciousness of belonging to a nation.⁴⁴ Religiously, they attempted to convince the religious and conservative people that there was no conflict between Islam and nationalism, and to support their claim they resorted to a hadith that asserts, 'Hubb al watan minal-iman' (the love of the fatherland is embodied in faith).⁴⁵ They believed that the religious institution had failed in its mission; therefore, it must be

reformed so it would enlighten and increase people's awareness. Because Amir Abdurrahman thought that the Young Afghans were a threat to his government, they were persecuted. Therefore, they were compelled to operate underground waiting for the opportune moment to start anew their political activism. That opportune moment arrived under Amir Abdurrahman's successor, Amir Habibullah.

In fact, unlike Amir Abdurrahman, Amir Habibullah assumed the Afghan throne without significant rivals, apart from his brother Nasrullah Khan whom he managed to pacify by appointing him to the post of Commander in Chief of the Army and President of the State Council.⁴⁶ Once securing his brother's loyalty, he initiated some internal reforms that empowered the local provinces and the clergy to restore the authorities they had once assumed before they were confiscated by his father, Amir Abdurrahman.⁴⁷ These institutions i.e., the tribal and the clerical institutions, were to provide the amir with invaluable service in that the first one would contribute to the insurance of military draft, whereas the second sanctioned the amir's divine right over his subjects.⁴⁸

In addition to the above reforms, Amir Habibullah granted the Afghan exiles permission to enter the country. These were those who had been banished from the country by Amir Abdurrahman, for he believed that they constituted a threat to his polity. The amir was astute enough to increase his popularity with his subjects by granting permission to the exiles to return to Afghanistan, among whom Mahmud Beg Tarzi (1869-1933).⁴⁹ In fact, the amir's initiative gave a great impetus to his government because the exiles comprised educated men who bore new political and religious conceptions which proved helpful in a country which had been isolated from the outer world for years. The American historian Thomas Barfield illustrates this idea in the following words.

The exiles had direct experience with the outside world that their resident Afghan counterparts lacked. They were products of new movements in India and the Ottoman Empire that were now shaping politics throughout the Muslim world, but from which Afghanistan had been isolated.⁵⁰

In fact, the exiles' residence abroad enabled them to 'rub shoulders' with modernists and nationalists who subscribed to ideals such as anti colonial resistance and national independence, precisely upon Japan's defeat of Russia in 1905.⁵¹ In order to rival with the West, these nationalists contended that Muslims would have to unite, hence the notion of Pan-Islamism.

Important facts contributed to the rise of the Afghans' consciousness and their nationalism that led to the full independence of Afghanistan. Among these facts was Amir Habibullah's receptivity to reforms and the technological achievements that were allowed by applied sciences.⁵² Secondly, Afghanistan had no option but to adhere to the reformist and nationalist wave that the Muslim world was then

experiencing. There were also eminent men without whose contribution the rise of Afghan consciousness would have been at stake. One of these outstanding men was Mahmud Beg Tarzi, an enlightened precursor of reforms in Afghanistan, who is credited to be the father of Afghan journalism and poetry. The latter's exile in Damascus and Constantinople in the late 1880s gave him a good education, as he had the opportunity to get in touch with the European and Arab cultures. His return to Afghanistan in 1902 under Amir Habibullah, who unlike his predecessor, was open to modernity, helped him initiate some political and socio-economic reforms that aided the birth of Afghan nationalism, and thence to independence. Believing in the high value of Mahmud Tarzi, Amir Habibullah appointed him as Chief of the Bureau of translation of the Royal Court. In fact, Amir Habibullah's openness to modernity and his curiosity to know what was happening beyond the Afghan frontier mainly in the Arab and European worlds, aided the foundation of *Siraj-ol-Akhbar*, a periodical whose editing job was given to Mahmud Tarzi.⁵³

At its outset, *Siraj-ol-Akhbar* served three purposes: to provide people with local and international news, to translate printed material from Persian, Urdu and other languages into Pashtu and to reproduce articles from Persian newspapers. But as the Afghan readership increased, the Young Afghans directed their efforts towards educating people about the notions: nation and nationalism. Sensing that Afghanistan could not get rid of its backwardness without the welfare of the individual, Amir Habibullah, with the influence of the Afghan educated elite, founded a college, named *Habibya*, whose teaching staff included Turks, Indians and Germans. Along with *Habibya* College, he established a school for girls so that it would impart knowledge.⁵⁴ This educational institution was followed by the establishment of the first modern Afghan hospital and the first telephone line in 1910.⁵⁵ If the reforms in the field of education were to some extent a take off, Mahmud Tarzi and the Young Afghans had to face some social and political challenges.

Like his predecessor, Amir Habibullah was afraid that the European powers might harbor ambitions to spread their military power to Afghanistan, if the country witnessed some economic progress. This explains why the aforementioned amirs objected to Afghanistan's economic headway.⁵⁶ The socio-religious challenge was not in the least minor. As a matter of fact, because of Afghanistan's multiethnic social groups, which most of whom were Sunni Muslims, it was hard for the Afghan elite to unite them. Therefore, in his periodical, Mahmud Tarzi relied on the religious faith in which the majority of the Afghans identified themselves, i.e., Islam. He then emphasized that all people are equal in Islam, thus overlooking the ethnic differences.⁵⁷

As for the economic reforms, Mahmud Tarzi persuaded Amir Habibullah that the economic progress of the realm would not only ensure its stability but also consolidate its central authority.⁵⁸ In addition, to maintain social cohesion, he had to assure the Shia Muslims that modernity would not reduce

their power.⁵⁹ Sensing that such a social cohesion would fail without the allegiance of the tribal chieftains, Mahmud Tarzi and the Young Afghans promised that the government would safeguard their rights.

According to Mahmud Tarzi, four factors underlay Afghanistan's tardiness. These were religious, educational and socio-political. In the field of education only the religious leaders could benefit from knowledge. In schools, sciences that could inculcate to the Afghan youths scientific and logical reasoning, like maths and geometry were unknown.⁶⁰ Therefore, the limitation of people's knowledge left room for witchcraft and fanaticism.⁶¹ Additionally, the religious leaders' monopoly over knowledge and the absence of scientific learning was to impact the political and social unity of the country.

In religious matters, the coexistence of mosaic ethnic groups holding different religious beliefs was not to aid the cohabitation of these groups. Moreover, though the Mullah could benefit from some religious knowledge that was supposed to give them the ability to argue in favour of their faith, they were incapable of putting an end to the Christian missionaries' conjecture that the origin of the Afghans' backwardness lay in Islam.⁶² The failure of the Mullahs and the schools to accomplish their missions compelled the Afghan elite to consider the initiation of social, educational and religious reforms. Along with the aforementioned issues, the political one caused the reformists' deep concern.

To understand the political issue, it is crucial to refer to Amir Abdurrahman's rule. In his effort to centralize political power in Kabul, the amir was to deprive the provinces governors of theirs. He also quelled political dissenters who would challenge his authority. Additionally, to ensure the stability of the state, he suppressed dynastic rivalries and compelled his subjects in the provinces to pledge the oath of allegiance to him first, and then to their governors, not the other way round.⁶³ Furthermore, he managed to create educated political elite that grew more influential within the central government. The amir selected this elite mainly from the Muhammadzai dynasty and the urbanized Tajiks and other minorities who lived in Kabul.⁶⁴

The creation of this educated political elite that was concentrated in Kabul contrasted with the illiterate social groups in the countryside. This contrast was to produce long-term effects under Habibullah, the succeeding amir, because it contributed to oppose those holding liberal convictions and the ones with conservative ones. Whereas the former wanted to pursue Amir Abdurrahman's reforms, the latter resisted any change.⁶⁵ Given these aforementioned facts, it was in the nature of things that communication between an urban literate entity and a rural uneducated one was hard, which made the disparity between both entities more profound as the educated elite grew isolated from the masses in rural Afghanistan.

A further challenge with which the Afghan elite had to contend was the language issue, due to the prevalence of two languages: Pashto and Dari. Whereas Pashtuns speak Pashto, non-Pashtun social

groups like the Tajiks and Turks speak Dari. The coexistence of Dari next to Pashto can be explained by the cultural contact due to the contiguity of Afghanistan with Persia, now Iran, and Tajikistan, where Persian is spoken. It can also be explained by the fact that historically, Western Afghanistan, namely Kandahar, was a part of the Safavid and the Shaibanid Empires.⁶⁶ Given these facts, these multiethnic linguistic social groups posed a cultural problem, for the Pashtuns who were in majority wanted to make Pashto the official language that all Afghans would have to use. However, this attempt failed owing to the complexity of Pashto in comparison with Dari on the one hand, and the fact that Pashto was stereotyped as the language of the uncivilized people.⁶⁷ Equally, what made these Dari speaking people more influential was their intermarriage, which explained the succeeding governments' inability to make Pashto the official language in Afghanistan.⁶⁸

Being aware of the low level of his readership, and particularly the illiteracy that was rife in the countryside, Mahmud Tarzi resorted to a simple poetic style and gradual process that the uneducated people understood and ultimately master the notions of 'fatherland' and 'nation.'⁶⁹ He also resorted to religious precepts and parables to promote national consciousness.⁷⁰ In his Periodical, *Siraj ol akhbar*, Mahmud Tarzi defined the term fatherland as a 'territory with fixed boundaries to the North, South, East and West.'⁷¹ As far as the term nation is concerned, he defined it as 'group of people living in a specific state'.⁷² Believing that the reforms could not be effectual without the active involvement of the amir and his government, he asserted that the leader should look after the well-being of his subjects and ensure that the latter should get an appropriate education to secure their allegiance.⁷³

Conclusion

Afghanistan independence was achieved owing to the correlation of four factors: Nationalism, Pan-Islamism, the Afghans' response to the injurious Durand Line, and the 1907 Anglo-Russian Convention.

In fact, the Young Afghans' movement that Mahmud Beg Tarzi led was to play a crucial role in sensitizing the Afghans. The Afghans' mobilization was achieved through *Siraj-ol-Akhbar*, a periodical which emphasized the importance of the notion of fatherland and the devotion to it. To attain such an ideal, the Afghan elite laid great emphasis on education. Equally, the Afghan exiles that Amir Habibullah permitted to enter the country were to give a great impetus to this nationalist movement, as they adhered to anti-colonial resistance and independence.

Pan-Islamist movement in the Muslim world also affected the Afghans, for it increased their awareness that they belonged to a nation, and they, therefore, had to unite to free their country from the

colonial domination. What is noteworthy is that without an enlightened amir such as, Amir Habibullah, these two movements would not gain strength and ultimately flourish.

The injurious Durand Line was also to add to the Afghans' resentment towards the British, for the line bisected the Pashtun tribes, leaving the ones beyond the Afghan border in some sort of 'no-man's land'.

Notes:

¹-Rob, Kitchin and Nigel, Thrift (eds), *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*, Oxford, Elsevier, 2009

²Steven, Grosby, *Nationalism: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005, p.11

³Ibid., pp.10-11

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Benedict, Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London, Verso, 1983, p.6

⁷Ibid., pp.6-7

⁸Anthony D., Smith, *National Identity*, London, Penguin Books, 1991, p.;51

⁹Richard C., Martin (Ed. in Chief), *Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslims World*, U.S.A., Macmillan Reference, 2004

¹⁰Ludwig W., Adamec, *Historical Dictionary of Islam* (2nd. Edition), UK., The Scarecrow Press, 2009

¹¹Richard C., Martin ,op.cit

¹²Abdul Rauf, *Pan-Islamism and the North West Frontier Province of British India(1897-1918)*, <http://sam.gov.tr/pan-islamism-and-the-north-west-frontier-province-of-british-india-1897-1918/>.Accessed: September 19, 2014

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Valentine, Chirol,*Pan-Islamism:Proceedings of the Central Asian Society*, London, Billing and Sons, 1906, p.1.,www.archive.org, Accessed December 23, 2013

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Richard C., Martin, op.cit.

¹⁷The NWFP refers to the tract of land that is located east of the foregoing Durrani Empire tht comprises the valley of Peshawar that the Sikh managed to seize in 1823 as a result of the Afghan Sikh war, and which the British in turn annexed in 1849. Schofield, Victoria, *Afghan Frontier: Feuding and fighting in Central Asia*, U.S.A., Tauris Parke Paperbacks, 2003, p.37

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Nabi, Misdaq, *Afghanistan:Political Frailty and External Interference*, London, Routledge, 2006,p.289

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid.

²⁴The phrase 'Durand line' was given to the demarcation line drawn by a commission which was headed by Durand Mortimer in 1893. Ludwig W. Adamec, op.cit.

²⁵Adamec, W. Ludwig, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, Oxford, the Scarecrow Press, 2003.

²⁶Rouland, Michael R., *Great Game to 9/11:A Concise History of Afghanistan's International Relations*, Washington, Air Force History and Museums Program, 2014, p.12

²⁷[www.bu.edu/aisas /report](http://www.bu.edu/aisas/report).Accessed November 9, 2011

²⁸Kakar, M. Hassan, *A Political And Diplomatic History of Afghanistan (1863-1901)*, U.S.A., Brill –Leiden, 2006, p.182

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Ibid., p.183

³¹Ibid., p.187

³²Ibid.

- ³³Sykes, Percy, *A History of Afghanistan*, London, Mac Millan & Co, LTD, 1940, p.177, www.archive.org. Accessed: July 8, 2011.
- ³⁴Ibid.
- ³⁵Ibid., p.188
- ³⁶Ibid., p.190
- ³⁷Amy, Hawthorne (ed), *The Durand Line, History, Consequences, and Future*, Report of a Conference Organised in July 2007, by the American Institute of Afghanistan Studies and the Hollings Center in Istanbul, Turkey, www.bu.edu/aisas/report. Accessed: November 9, 2013
- ³⁸James, Wynbrandt, *A Brief history of Pakistan*, New York. Facts on File, 2009, p.133
- ³⁹Ibid.
- ⁴⁰Ali Mehtab, Shah, *The Foreign Policy of Afghanistan: Ethnic Impacts on Diplomacy*, New York, I.B.Tauris, 1997, p.108.
- ⁴¹Amy, Hawthorne (ed), *op cit.*
- ⁴²The Young Afghans are a group of Afghan intellectuals and nobles with ambitions for reform and independence. Amin Saikal, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival*, U.S.A., I.B. Tauris, 2004, p.41
- ⁴³Thomas, Ruttig, *Afghanistan's Early Reformists*, www.afghanist an-analyst.org. Accessed: May 25, 2014
- ⁴⁴Ibid.
- ⁴⁵Ibid.
- ⁴⁶Amin, Saikal, *op.cit.*, p.45
- ⁴⁷Wahab Saicha and Barry Yougerman , *A Brief History of Afghanistan*, New York , Fact of File, 2007, p.98
- ⁴⁸Ibid.
- ⁴⁹Willem, Vogelsang, *The Afghans*, London, Wiley & Blackwell, 2008, p.272
- ⁵⁰Thomas, Barfield, *op.cit.*, p.176
- ⁵¹Ibid., p.175
- ⁵²Amin, Saikal., *op.cit.*, p.41
- ⁵³Siraj-ol-Akhbar (the Torch of News) was a newspaper that was published in Kabul twice a month. It was the means through which Mahmud Tarzi expressed and conveyed his vision as to politics, literature, education and gender. It was also the medium through which he inculcated the Afghans with the nation of nationalism. Senzil Nawid, *Tarzi and the Emergence of Afghan Nationalism: Formation of a National Ideology*, www.bu.edu/aias/nawid_article Accessed: May 29, 2014
- ⁵⁴Huma Ahmed, Gosh, *A History of Women in Afghanistan: Lesson Learnt for the Future or Yesterdays and Tomorrow: Women in Afghanistan*, Journal of International Women's Studies, 2003, 4(3), 14, <http://vc.bridgew.edu/jiws/vol.4/iss3/1>. Accessed: May 27, 2014
- ⁵⁵Willem, Vogelsang, *The Afghans*, London, Wiley & Blackwell, 2008, p.272, p. 2
- ⁵⁶Vartan, Gregorian, "Mahmud Tarzi and Saraj-ol-Akhbar: Ideology of Nationalism and Modernization in Afghanistan," *Middle East Journal*, Vol.21. (Summer, 1967), pp.345-368.
- ⁵⁷Ibid.
- ⁵⁸Ibid.
- ⁵⁹Ibid.
- ⁶⁰Ibid.
- ⁶¹Ibid.
- ⁶²Ibid.
- ⁶³Thomas, Barfield, *op.cit.*, p.166
- ⁶⁴Ibid.
- ⁶⁵Ibid.
- ⁶⁶Anthony, Hymann, "Nationalism in Afghanistan: Nationalism and the Colonial Legacy in the Middle East and Central Asia," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol.34, No2, (May, 2002), pp. 299-315
- ⁶⁷Jadwiga, Pstrusinka, *Afghanistan 1989*. Cited in Anthony, Hymann, "Nationalism in Afghanistan", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol.34, No.2, Asia, (May, 2002), pp.299-315
- ⁶⁸Ibid.
- ⁶⁹Ibid.
- ⁷⁰Ibid.
- ⁷¹Ibid.
- ⁷²Ibid.

73Ibid

Bibliography

1. Adamec, Ludwig W., *Historical Dictionary of Islam*(2nd. Edition), UK., The Scarecrow Press, 2009
2. Adamec, Ludwig W., *The Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*,(3rd. Edition) The Scarecrow Press, 2003
3. Bartfield, Thomas, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, U.S.A.,Princeton University Press, 2010.
4. Benedict, Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London, Verso, 1983
5. Coy, Jason P., *A Brief History of Germany*, New York, Facts on File, 2011
6. Gess Imanuel, (ed.), *The Outbreak of the First World War*. Cited in Sneh Mahjan, *British Foreign Policy (1874-1914): The Role of India*, London, Routledge, 2002
7. Gregorian, Vartan, “ Mahmud Tarzi and Saraj-ol-Akhbar: Ideology of Nationalism and Modernization in Afghanistan,” *Middle East Journal*, Vol.21. (Summer,1967), pp.345-368
8. Grosby Steven, *Nationalism: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005
9. Huma Ahmed, Gosh, *A History of Women in Afghanistan: Lesson Learnt for the Future or Yesterdays and Tomorrow: Women in Afghanistan*, Journal of International Women’s Studies, 2003,4(3)
10. Ian H, Nish, *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance: The Diplomacy of two Island Empires (1894-1907)*, London, Athlone Press, 1966,
11. John Albert, White, *Transition to Global Rivalry: Alliance Diplomacy and the Quadruple Entente;1895-1907*, United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, 1995
12. Kakar, M. Hassan, *A Political And Diplomatic History of Afghanistan (1863-1901)*, U.S.A., Brill –Leiden, 2006
13. Kitchen, Martin, *A History of Modern Germany*, U.S.A.,Wiley, Blackwell, 2012
14. L.C.B., Seaman, *Post-Victorian Britain (1902-1951)*, London, Methuan, 1966
15. Mehtab Ali, Shah, *The Foreign Policy of Afghanistan: Ethnic Impacts on Diplomacy*, New York, I.B.Tauris, 1997
16. Misdaq, Nabi, *Afghanistan:Political Frailty and External Interference*, London, Routledge, 2006.
17. O'Brien, Phillip, (ed.),*The Anglo-Japanese Alliance (1902-1922)*, London, Routledge Curzon, 2004
18. Premen Addy, *Tibet on the Imperial Chessboard*. Cited in Sneh Mahjan, *British Foreign Policy (1874-1914):The Role of India*, London, Routledge, 2002
19. Psttrusinka, Jadwiga, *Afghanistan 1989*. Cited in Anthony, Hymann, “Nationalism in Afghanistan”, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol.34, No.2, Asia, (May, 2002), pp.299-315
20. R, Berghah V., *Germany and the Approach of War in 1914*.Cited in Sneh Mahajan, *British Foreign Policy (1874-1914):The Role of India*, London, Routledge, 2002
21. Raffael, Scheck, *Germany (1871-1945): A Concise History*, Oxford, Berg, 2008
22. Richard C., Martin (Ed. in Chief), *Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslims World*, U.S.A., Macmillan Reference, 2004
23. Rob, Kitchin and Nigel, Thrift (eds), *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*, Oxford, Elsevier, 2009
24. Roulard,Michael R.,*Great Gameto 9/11:A ConciseHistory of Afghanistan’s International Relations*,Washington Air Force History and Museums Program, 2014
25. Saicha Wahab and Yougerman Barry , *A Brief History of Afghanistan*, New York, Fact of File, 2007
26. Sam, Mustapha A., *Germany in the Modern World: A New History*, New York, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2001
27. Schofield, Victoria, *Afghan Frontier: Feuding and fighting in Central Asia*, U.S.A., Tauris Parke Paperbacks, 2003
28. Smith, Anthony D., *National Identity*,London, Penguin Books,1991
29. Sykes, Percy, *A History of Afghanistan*, London, Mac Millan & Co, LTD, 1940, www.archive.org. Accessed: July 8, 2011.
30. *The Hutchinson Encyclopedia of Modern Political Biography*. United Kingdom, Helicon , 2005
31. Valentine, Chirol,*Pan-Islamism:Proceedings of the Central Asian Society*, London, Billing and Sons, 1906, p.1.,www.archive.org, Accessed December 23, 2013
32. Vogelsang, Willem, *The Afghans*, London, Wiley & Blackwell, 2008
33. Wyatt Christopher, , *Afghanistan and the Defence of the Empire: Diplomacy and Strategy during the Great Game*, London, 2011
34. Wynbrandt James, *A Brief history of Pakistan*, New York. Facts on File, 2009

Websites

- www.bu.edu/aias/nawid_article Accessed: May 29,2014
- www.afghanistan-analyst.org. Accessed: May 25, 2014
- <http://vc.bridgew.edu/jiws/vol.4/iss3/1> Accessed: May 27, 2014