



University of Oran 2

Faculty of Foreign Languages

Doctoral Thesis Submitted in British Civilization

Entitled:

***British Interventions in Afghanistan and the Afghans’
Struggle to Achieve Independence (1838-1921)***

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2015-2016

Dedication

To my daughter Nardjes (Nadjet)

Abstract

The British loss of the thirteen colonies upon the American independence in 1783 moved Britain to concentrate her efforts on India. Lying between the British and Russian empires as part of the Great Game, Afghanistan grew important for the Russians, for it constituted a gateway to India. As a result, the British wanted to make of Afghanistan a buffer state to ward off a potential Russian invasion of India. Because British-ruled India government accused the Afghan Amir of duplicity, she intervened in Afghanistan in 1838 to topple the Afghan Amir, Dost Mohammad and re-enthroned an Afghan 'puppet' king named Shah Shuja. The British made their second intervention in Afghanistan (1878-1880) because the Anglo-Russian rivalry persisted. The result was both the annexation of some of the Afghans' territory and the confiscation of their sovereignty over their foreign policy. Unlike the British first and second interventions in Afghanistan, the third one, even though short, was significant because it was instigated by the Afghan resistance. Imbued with nationalist and Pan-Islamist ideologies, the Afghans were able to free their country from the British domination. As a result, Afghanistan got its full independence in 1921.

Key words: Afghanistan, British intervention, India, Great Game

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor Pr. Badra. Lahouel for her kindness, patience, guidance and, above all, for teaching me how to be a 'successful researcher.' Thanks a lot, Madam.

I am thankful to all the members of the jury, namely, the President: Professor Bouhadiba Zoulikha, to Professor Moulfi, Professor Benmoussat Smail, Doctor Dani Fatiha and Doctor Meberbech Fewzia for having devoted their precious time to reading my work.

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List of Acronyms

- CIA: Central Intelligence Agency
- CID: Committee of Imperial Defence
- EIC : The East India Company
- FIC : The French Indian Company
- FATA: The Federally Administered Tribal Areas
- NWFP: The North West Frontier Province
- RAF: Royal Air Force

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Introduction

Conflicts are commonplace. They have always existed between individuals, ethnic groups as well as States. The need for security and self-assertion are, among others, the driving forces that usually underlie disagreements. Conflicts over territory and its resources have always been part of human nature. Because the value of a territory depends on its resources, Man is usually prone to resort to force to expropriate such a territory of his fellow man.

Conflicts can be internal or international. They may arise in a country because its people are unsatisfied with their government; therefore, they rose in rebellion to overthrow it. They may occur because a given ethnic group living in a territory declares secession from a State for political or religious reasons. Equally, They may arise between two or more parties who had formerly fought side by side to rid of the colonizer because they have opposing ideologies.

Conflicts may also be international in that they oppose two or more nations because they have divergent interests or hold conflicting views. Usually a third power intervenes either to arbitrate a dispute or side with either of the contending parties. A powerful State's intervention in a weaker State to extend its authority over it in view of making of it a colony provokes conflicts, too.

To intervene is, according to Merriam-Webster dictionary, to interfere usually by force or threat of force in another nation's internal affairs, especially to compel or prevent an action. The Macmillan dictionary defines it as, 'to become involved in a situation in order to try to stop or change it. In light of these two definitions, it may be noted that interventions are usually made to change the course of things or to make a desired change occur.

Western powers usually intervene militarily in fragile states to protect their interests. These powers usually overthrow other governments and topple a ruler and place another they judge more amenable. In order to justify their intervention, they resort to unpopular means, among which declaring that such a ruler is a dictator who must be deposed. In such circumstances, the media play a crucial role to justify such interventions. A case in point was the French government armed intervention in the Ivory Coast (Côte D'Ivoire) to depose President Laurent Gbagbo in 2011 and place Alassan Watara in power

Occasionally, an international organization (the United Nations Organization) intervenes to arbitrate a dispute. For example, with the collapse of the USSR and the subsequent fragmentation of the Communist Bloc, there ensued a devastating civil war between the various ethnic groups that composed former Yugoslavia, among which the Serbs, the Croats and Albanians. Then, the United Nations forceful intervention was mandatory to stop ethnic cleansing from which the Bosnian Muslims suffered. What should be underscored though is that the powerful states which compose the United Nations Organizations usually have self-interests behind their intervention in other frequently weaker states.

Historically, powerful European states built colonial empires by the end of the 15th century to annex territories of weaker states. A case in point was the English global expansion prior to 1650 and after it. Such global expansion was made possible by means of great military force and formidable naval power to ensure the protection of their colonial possessions.

Owing to the population growth that England knew in a span of seventy years (from 1530 to 1600), on the one hand and, the religious persecutions that England saw under King Charles 1 (r.1603-1649), on the other, a number of people sought to earn their living overseas where they founded settler-plantation colonies. In the Indian subcontinent, these immigrants were under the aegis of the East India Company (EIC) since this primarily trading company possessed a military administration to

ensure the protection of English trade, along with the security of its employees. Such a phenomenon of extending control over foreign countries is better known as imperialism. This term defies definition, for it means different things to different people. Whereas the colonized people associate it with political dominance, economic exploitation and military subservience, the colonizers view it as benign. Within this very respect, Henry Howard Molyneux Herbert, 4th Earl of Carnarvon (1831–1890) maintained in 1878 that imperialism would implement a set of values such as ‘good government, wise laws and freedom from oppression.’ Equally, while the Afghans perceived the Victorian British conservative ‘forward policy’ as an encroachment upon their sovereignty, the adherents to such a policy regarded it as a British vested right to protect India from a potential Russian aggression, just like the American nineteenth century imperialists who saw American intervention in the whole of the North American continent for expansion as a God-given right to spread civilization there, a doctrine better known as the ‘Manifest Destiny.’

A further controversial conception regarding imperialism-related historiography was the Marxists’ conviction that imperialism was due to the growth of capital in some Western countries. However, this argument was refuted because imperialism was prevalent in England before the advent of the Industrial Revolution and, therefore, in the pre-capitalist period.

The motives of empire expansion are manifold: they are economic, political, and religious. Economically, the quest for raw materials overseas to keep their machinery turning, and the pressing need for markets for the manufactured products were two main incentives that underlay the northerly powers to expand overseas. Politically, national pride and prestige along with national security were the driving forces behind these powers' territorial expansion. Religiously, the imperial powers justified their interventions in Africa, South America and Asia on the grounds that they had a duty towards the southerly peoples; which allegation is better known as 'the White Man's Burden. Such duty, they believed, consisted of serving and assisting "wild, angry, and both devilish and childish them." An instance of this was the French motivation that underlay their colonization of Algeria, claiming to undertake a civilizing mission there (une mission civilisatrice)

It is essential to stress the causes and effects of pre-modern imperialism and modern imperialism as it is illustrated in James L. Gelvin's book, *The Modern Middle East* (2011). If both types of imperialism are synonymous of territorial annexation and the subjugation of the local population, modern imperialism denotes a powerful state political and economic domination of a weaker state, usually through different means that include coercive diplomacy and ideological persuasion as Professor, Ronald Robinson (1920-1999) argues, "Imperialism... is a process whereby agents of an expanding society gain inordinate influence or control over the

vitals of weaker societies by... diplomacy, ideological suasion, conquest and rule, or by planting colonies of its own peoples abroad.

Equally, the Industrial Revolution gave birth to modern imperialism as industrialization helped the Northern States to accumulate wealth. As a result, these industrialized states' growing concern for economic and commercial outlets drove them to expand overseas, which had profound effects on the colonized states. Therefore, imperial interventions in southern regions have always been synonymous of cataclysm and consequential instability because of two overlapping political and economic systems of government, along with different cultures, the ones brought by the invaders and the ones which were prevalent in the colonized states prior to the advent of colonialism

Of the deleterious effects of modern imperialism is that it forced newly-independent states to adopt the modern world economy without the availability of three prerequisites: the required means to embrace such a system, the appropriate infrastructure and still less the qualified personnel to adhere to it, which contributed not only to these independent states' economic backwardness, but also their political, cultural and social instability

It is interesting to note Algeria, like other Third World countries, has suffered from such a lingering thorny issue, particularly in the post-

colonial period, due to her forced incorporation into the French political and economic systems, which caused the depopulation of the countryside at the expense of the city because people believed it could afford better job opportunities. There ensued not only the turbulence of the countryside, but also the city's inability to house the rural populations due the government's incapability to provide the required infrastructure.

A further profound imperial country's legacy is the lingering contentious issues that opposed some Third World neighbour countries. An instance of this is the frontier issue that opposes Afghanistan to Pakistan as the result of a 2,444 km long line that imperial Britain arbitrarily drew to demarcate the then Afghan- Indian frontier in 1893 in view of weakening the Pashtuns.

The study of British Interventions in Afghanistan is undertaken through a chronological approach because of the succeeding events that led to Afghanistan nationalism and thenceforth to its independence. While studying the Afghan issue, the author tried hard to report the chain of events that Afghanistan witnessed during British interventions. The author cited British authors as well as Afghan ones. Florentia Sale (1790-1853), who was in Afghanistan with her husband, General Sir Robert Sale during the First Anglo-Afghan War (1838-1842), kept a diary in which in which she recorded major episodes of British First Intervention in Afghanistan. Equally valuable was the book that was left by Lieutenant Vincent (1811–1881) entitled, *Military Operations in Cabul which ended in the*

Destruction of the British Army . The book was, among others, capital as it was a primary source which portrayed the British ordeal while withdrawing from Afghanistan in 1841.

However, the paucity of the Afghan sources in comparison to the Westerns,' was a major challenge for the study of British Interventions in Afghanistan. Nevertheless, the author could find some invaluable Afghan references, namely Kakar, M. Hassan, a native of Afghanistan and professor of history at the University of California at San Diego, whose testimony about the validity of the Durand Line (1893) was striking. Equally precious was Saichta Wahab's and Barry Youngerman's book entitled *A Brief History of Afghanistan* which portrayed, the genealogies of the most influential Pashtun families who at one point of history had ruled Afghanistan: the Sodozais and Barakzais.

In Afghanistan, the British intervened militarily thrice. In the absence of balance of power between the warring parties, the warfare was asymmetric, which complicated the confrontation for both the invader and the invaded. An asymmetric war defies the rules and principles of a symmetric one, for the armed confrontation does not oppose two standing regular armies in which there is some balance of power. Furthermore, the warring parties lack the cognizance of the capacities and logistics of each other; for example, the war brought into opposition a British standing army to an aggregation of multi-ethnic groups headed by their amir. So, given the

nature of this type of armed confrontation, the latter's outcomes were not usually known.

British Interventions in Afghanistan (1838-1921) constitute the theme of the present thesis. The latter is divided into four chapters. The first chapter supplies a historical background to the origins of such interventions. The emphasis in this chapter is placed on the various foreign interventions in Afghanistan, along with the different factors that led the British to intervene militarily three times in Afghanistan, respectively in 1838, 1878 and 1919. The second chapter sheds light on the First Anglo-Afghan armed confrontation. It discusses the battles that pitted the British against the Afghans under Amir Dost Mohammad and British futile efforts to enthrone an amenable Afghan king, which caused their dilemma in Afghanistan. The third chapter focuses on the Second Anglo-Afghan armed confrontation that resulted from the Afghan amir's inability to satisfy neither the British, nor the Russian demands. It equally shows how the Anglo-Russian rivalry for power and influence had a direct effect on the stability of Afghanistan. The fourth chapter sheds light on the Afghan rise of consciousness that led to the Afghan nationalism and thence to Afghanistan independence.

Chapter One

Historical Background to the British Interventions in Afghanistan (Prior to 1838)

Throughout history, present-day Afghanistan has always been an arena for warfare, intestine conflicts as well as conquests, mainly by the Greeks, Persians, Mongols, Arabs, and other peoples. In the nineteenth century, Afghanistan witnessed the invasion of the British through the East India Company (EIC). In fact, as part of their expansion in Asia, the English established the EIC in 1600. That was a company that traded in spice and other exotic commodities. Up to the first years of the nineteenth century, the company's influence in Asia was limited to the Indian subcontinent. Yet, in 1838 Britain invaded Afghanistan. So, how did these conquerors, namely the Greeks, Persians, Mongols and Arabs affect Afghanistan, notably in terms of religion and culture? Equally, if the EIC's motives behind its occupation of India were purely commercial and economic, how crucial was it for the company to lay sway over Afghanistan in 1838? Was such an invasion within the framework of

British imperialism? An attempt to answer these questions is the object of this chapter. But before tackling these questions, an insight into modern Afghanistan and its mosaic ethnic groups is crucial.

I. Modern Afghanistan and the Foreign Conquests of the Country

Afghanistan is a landlocked country whose surface area is 647,500 sq. km. Six countries border it: China (76 km.), Pakistan (2,430 km.), Iran (936 km.), Tajikistan (1,206 km.), Turkmenistan (744 km.) and Uzbekistan (137 km.). It shares its northern border with Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan; its eastern border with China, and its western border with Iran. However, Pakistan shares the largest border with Afghanistan in its southeast. Afghanistan is known for its mountain chains. The Hindu Kush Mountains, which spread over most of Afghanistan, are cut off by the Khyber Pass that links Afghanistan to Pakistan. Afghanistan's harsh geographic setting and its diverse ethnic and religious social groups have for long posed an obstacle for its people to achieve a consensual and coherent sense of nationalism.¹ This geographic setting has also had a determining factor in shaping population distribution as well as the languages and religious denominations of the Afghan people. An instance of this, is that Afghanistan comprises Turkmens, Uzbeks and Tajiks, all having blood relationships with Northern Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

¹Hama Ahmed, Gosh, "A History of Women of Afghanistan," *Journal of British Studies*, Vol.4. No.2, 2003, p.2.

In fact, Afghanistan is a multiethnic country where about twenty ethnic groups have cohabited for years. The Pashtuns and the Tajiks are the largest ethnic groups, as they respectively constitute 42% and 27% of the whole population that numbered 32,738,376 in 2008.² Originally, the Pashtuns were geographically distributed in eastern and western Afghanistan. Today, they are located everywhere within the country and extend to Pakistan, too, where they number 14,000,000.³ The next largest groups are the Hazaras, Uzbeks and Aimaq. According to the Central International Agency World Factbook of 2008, the Hazara constituted 9%, the Uzbeks 9%, and the other ethnic groups 13%⁴(see map 1, p.8) . According to the same source, 84% of the Afghans are Sunni Muslims; 15% are Shiite Muslims, and 1% practise other religions. Afghanistan's multiethnic composition, along with its linguistic plurality, resulted in different names of the country before the nineteenth century. The northern region was given different names: Khurassan, or Zabulistan, or Turkistan while the southern part was named Kabul or Kabulistan.⁵ The term 'Afghan' was one with which the Pashtuns identified themselves, hence, the

²Spencer C.,Tucker (ed), *The Encyclopedia of Middle East Wars*, Santa Barbara, ABC Clio, 2010.

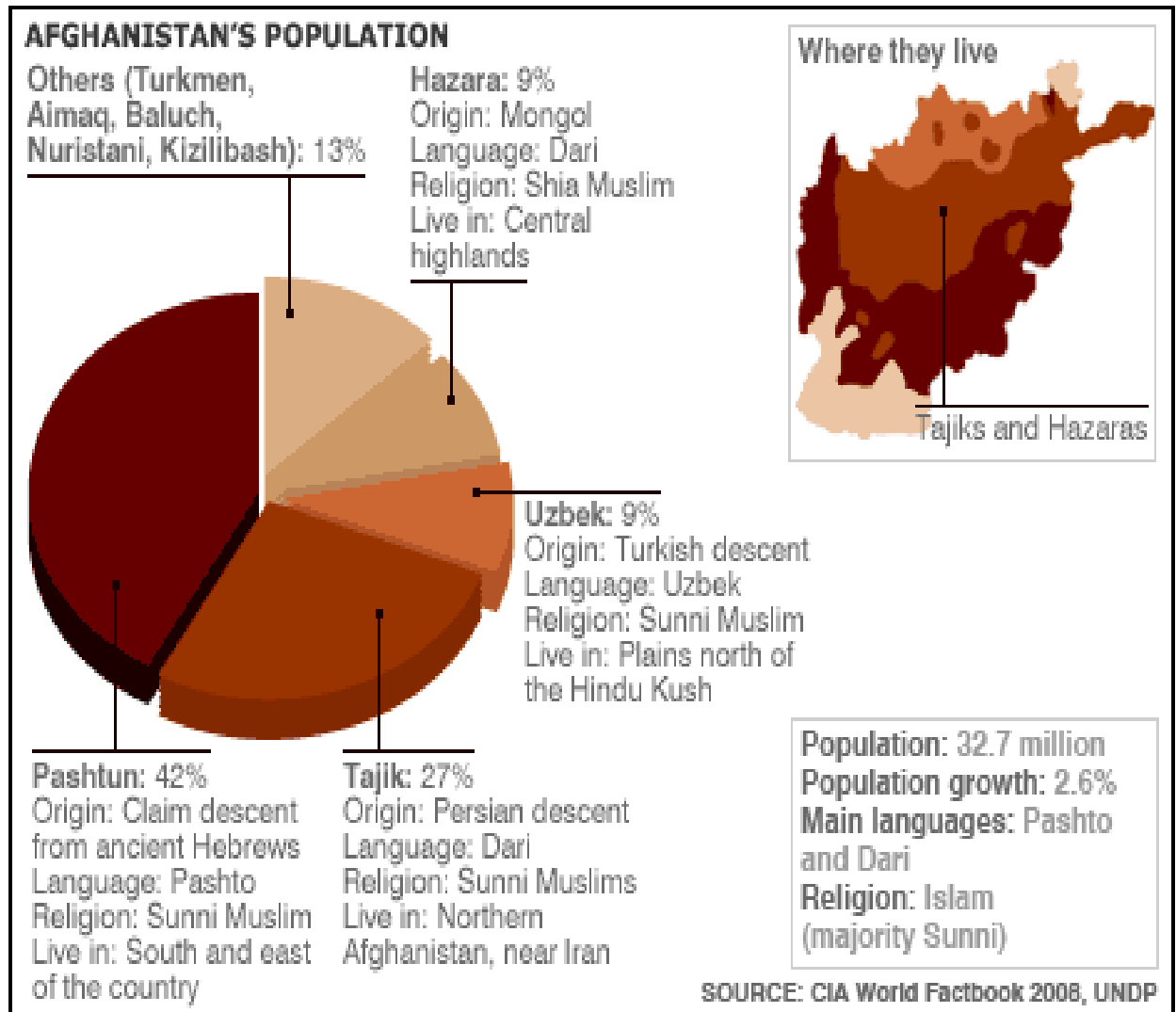
³"*Pashtun*."Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica Ultimate Reference Suite. Chicago, 2011.

⁴Central International Agency World Factbook (2008).Cited in Cory, Gunderson, *Afghanistan's Struggles*, Minnosota, ABDO & Daughter, 2004, p.41.

⁵Anthony, Hyman, "Nationalism in Afghanistan, Nationalism and the Colonial Legacy in the Middle East and Central Asia," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol.34, No.2, 2002, pp.299-315.

name ‘Afghanistan.’⁶In the 19th century, western writers called the country Afghanistan because they accessed it from the South.

Map 1: Ethnic Groups in Afghanistan



Source: CIA World Factbook, 2008, p.48

⁶Anthony, Hyman, op.cit.

The Pashtuns are Sunni Muslims who speak Pashto, a language that belongs to the Indo-Iranian group of Indo-European languages.⁷ They make up 42% of the whole population.⁸ Since 1936, Pashto has become the Afghans' official language.

Politically, the Pashtuns are subject to tribal and sub-tribal divisions. These tribal divisions influence their political loyalties. The Pashtun political organization is governed by the Loya Jirga. The word *Jirga* in Pashto language means 'assembly', council, or gathering. It is occasionally interchangeably used with 'Maraka,' discussion, or dialogue.⁹ This political assembly meets to find solutions to tribal problems or to take important decisions and dissolves when the need for it disappears. For example, it assembled in 1747 to appoint Ahmed Shah Durrani, King of Afghanistan.¹⁰ It also met in 1841 to declare war against Britain. The Loya Jirga epitomizes tribal independence and operates in its traditional setting, on the margins of state government.¹¹ Originally, only the tribal chiefs composed the Loya Jirga. Today, other important personalities, outside the tribes, are summoned to sit in the assembly to have their say in the Loya

⁷Amin, Saikal, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival*, U.S.A., I.B. Tauris, 2004, p. 245

⁸Frank A., Clements, *Conflict in Afghanistan*, A Historical Encyclopedia, California, ABC-CLIO, Inc., 2003

⁹Jamil M., Hanifi, "Editing the Past: Colonial Production of Hegemony through the Loya Jirga in Afghanistan," *Iranian Studies*, Vol. 37, No.2, 2004, p. 296.

¹⁰Thomas, Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2010, p.98.

¹¹Jamil M., Hanifi, op.cit., p.296

Jirga. This latter novelty is due to the political development that Afghanistan witnessed upon the Western invasion in 2003.

The Tajiks are the second largest ethnic group after the Pashtuns. They form 27% of the whole population.¹² Mainly Sunni, this ethnic group dominates northeastern and western Afghanistan and Kabul. The Tajiks, who speak Dari,¹³ are sedentary people with educated elites and great wealth. This comfortable condition makes them rival the Pashtuns in political power as well as prestige. This political rivalry in no way affected the unity of these mosaic ethnic groups, notably when they faced external threats, like those they were to meet in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Political stability, however, has always been disrupted by foreign invaders. Moghadem Valentine, the Iranian scholar, illustrates this idea as follows:

Interference by western countries and countries bordering Afghanistan has contributed to the fragmentation of the Afghan polity. In many instances, tribal politics is still determined by ethnic loyalties to bordering states. Although there have been sporadic attempts to bring dissenting tribes together, at no point has the Afghan nation

¹²Frank A., Clements, op.cit.

¹³Dari is the Persian that is spoken in Afghanistan. Dari and Pashto are the official languages in Afghanistan. Ludwig W. Adamec, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, Oxford, the Scarecrow Press, 2003.

experienced a strong centralized state with a common legal system.¹⁴

Early invasions to modern Afghanistan were to affect it, particularly, in terms of religion, language and culture. The early invaders were the Arians, Bactrians, neighbouring Persians, and Muslims. The outset of the early invasions of modern Afghanistan is a throwback to 1500 B.C., when it was invaded by the Arians, a people from Central Asia. Then, the invaders killed many inhabitants and intermarried with others. In the mid-500 B.C., the Persians invaded Bactria,¹⁵ an area in northern present-day Afghanistan. They had ruled it for about 170 years, before they were defeated by the Greeks who conquered Bactria and much of modern Afghanistan.

The Bactrians' response to the Greeks' invasion came about 246 B.C., as a result of a revolt that enabled them to recapture their country, and other parts of present-day Afghanistan. They formed a kingdom that lasted about 150 years, until the Kushans, composed of five merging tribes, seized the area.¹⁶ The latter formed an empire that controlled most of modern India, Afghanistan and parts of Central Asia. However, their division into

¹⁴Moghadam M.,Valentine, *Nationalist Agendas and Women's Rights: Conflicts in Afghanistan in the Twentieth Century*,1997.Cited in West, Lois A. (ed). *Feminist Nationalism*. New York: Routledge.

¹⁶Bactria was a country in northern Afghanistan. In Antiquity. it was famous for its fierce warriors and its ancient religion, which was founded by the prophet Zarathustra. <http://www.livius.org>.Accessed: February 3, 2010

¹⁶Meredith L., Reunion, *The History of Afghanistan*, London, Greenwood Press, 2007, p.46

small kingdoms in 300 A.D. made them vulnerable to the Sassanian dynasty in Persia and to the Hephthalites, also known as the White Huns, respectively in A.D. 241 and 565¹⁷

The year 642 is outstanding in the history of what is now Afghanistan, as it marked the beginning of the Arab conquest of the region, after the Muslims had defeated the Persian Sassanids at the battles of Walaja, Al Qadisyah and Nahawand that year.¹⁸ As a result of the Muslims' conquest, the majority of the inhabitants were converted to Islam, a religion that challenged the pre-existing religious faiths, notably Buddhism,¹⁹ Zoroastrianism,²⁰ Hinduism,²¹ and the Sassanids' religion. Yet, the conversion of present-day Afghanistan natives was not without difficulty, particularly those in the western periphery, for as the Muslim army moved to another area, they returned to their old faith.²² It was until the 9th century AD that the Muslims, whose capital was Baghdad,

¹⁷ Alfred, Adghajanian (ed), *Afghanistan: Past and Present*, U.S.A., Indo European Publishing, 2007, p.4.

¹⁸ Fred, Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations: Power, Politics and Ideology*, UK., Cambridge University Press, 2005, p.322.

¹⁹ Buddhism is an Asian religion based on the teaching of Siddhartha Gautama (or Buddha). Ibid

²⁰ Zoroastrianism is one of the world's oldest monotheistic religions. It was founded by Prophet Zoroaster in ancient Iran approximately 3500 years ago. www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/Zoroastrian. Accessed: January 4, 2012

²¹ Hinduism is the main religion of India and Nepal which includes the worship of one or more gods and belief in reincarnation. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 8th edition*.

²² <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/afghanistan/religion.htm>. Accessed: July 23, 2012

managed to convert to Islam most of the inhabitants of modern Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, and areas of northern India.

Once they had overwhelmed the Sassanids, the Muslim conquerors advanced westwards to capture present-day Herat and Seitan and founded the Samanid dynasty.²³ The Samanids were the first native dynasty to arise in Persia after the Muslim conquest.²⁴ Having appreciated the service that Asad, son of Saman Khoda, had provided for the Muslims in suppressing a rebellion against Caliph Al-M'amun (r. 813-833), Ghassan, the Abbasid governor of Khorasan, appointed to important positions Asad's four sons, Nuh, Ilyas, Ahmed and Yahya to govern Samarqand, Herat, Ferghana, and Shash.²⁵

However, from the mid-eighth century A.D, the empire began to witness some political unrest, for the political elites of the empire grew into factions to negotiate political power. Additionally, the princes who had been granted areas to govern, declared themselves independent from the Abbasid Caliph. As a result, they started to conquer areas without the latter's assent. An instance of this was Yaqub Ibn Layth Saffari who, in 870 A.D., marched through Kandahar, Ghazni, Kabul, Bamyan, Balkh and Herat, conquering these provinces in the name of Islam.²⁶

²³<http://www.globalsecurity.org>, opo.cit

²⁴Encyclopædia Britannica. *Ultimate Reference Suite*, Chicago, 2011

²⁵N. R., Frye. (ed), *The Cambridge History of Iran from the Arab Invasion to the Seljuks*, Cambridge, C.U.P., 1975. p. 136,

²⁶<http://www.cemml.colostate.edu>. Accessed: October 9, 2012

Equally, the Samanids overthrew the Saffarids of Khorassan and the Zaydites of Tabaristan in 900 A.D.,²⁷ thus establishing a semi-autonomous rule over Transoxania²⁸ and Khorassan, with Bukhara as a capital. Hence, from 10 A.D., the Muslim world saw two conflicting empires: the Abbassids governing from Baghdad and the Omeyyads from Cordova. What embittered the plight of the Muslim empires were the religious tensions that brought into opposition the Sunni Muslims to the Shia, which impacted the empire stability, as every religious faction sought to dethrone the other. An instance of this, was the Sassanid dynasty which crumbled by the mid-tenth century, in the face of attacks from the Turkish tribes in the North and from the Ghaznavids, a rising Turkish dynasty in modern Afghanistan.²⁹

The Ghaznavids ruled over a large empire from 962 to 1151.³⁰ The empire comprised modern Afghanistan, Pakistan, and parts of India. Because of their religious as well as financial motivations to seek converts to Islam and keep the machinery of their government turning, they looted

²⁷Before the Arab conquest, the southern Caspian provinces (Gilan, Dailam and Tabaristan) were vassals of the Sasanians. At the time of the conquest, Tabaristan embraced all the territory around the southern Caspian. B. A. Litvinsky (ed.), *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*, UNESCO, Paris, 1996

²⁸Transoxiana is an ancient region that was the home to one of the oldest series of states in Central Asia and was situated in and around the river basin of the lower Amu Darya where it empties into the Aral Sea, and north-eastern Persia. Its territory varied greatly depending who was ruling it, but at its height it stretched into most of Afghanistan, eastern Persia, central Turkmenistan and southern Kyrgyzstan, plus central and southern Uzbekistan and all of Tajikistan (which together made up ancient Transoxiana). The name now belongs to a province in modern Iran and a region in north-western Uzbekistan, [www. historyfiles.co.uk](http://www.historyfiles.co.uk) Accessed: July 22, 2011

²⁹Alfred, Adghajanian, op.cit., p.6.

³⁰Meredith L., Reunion, op.cit., p.49

Indian temples and expropriated booty from India.³¹ With the wealth they had accumulated, they built educational infrastructure, universities and provided sponsorship for philosophers.³²

Religiously, the Ghaznavids spread Islam in modern India in spite of the challenging Hinduism. Despite their might, they were defeated by the Ghorids, a dynasty of Persian extraction. The latter's spheres of influence were what is now Afghanistan, Pakistan, northern India, western Iran and part of central Iran.³³ The dynasty was ultimately dominated by the Seljuk Turks. From 1200 to 1205, some of their lands were conquered by the Shah of the Khorassan, whose empire was in turn conquered by the Mongols in 1220.

The Mongol Empire, which dominated modern Afghanistan from 1220 to 1506, had a great impact on Afghanistan. After unifying the warlike tribes in Central Asia, the Mongol leader Genghis Khan built a powerful empire that stretched from China to the Caucasus. The empire overran the Khawarism Empire from 1219 to 1221, and subsequently controlled modern Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. The Mongols were known for their fierceness. Once they conquered a region, they massacred its people, particularly those who showed resistance. Those who had the chance to survive were forced into slavery and hard conditions. For

³¹ Alfred, Adghajanian, op.cit., p.6.

³²Ibid.

³³Ibid.

instance, the survivors of Balkh, a region in Northern Afghanistan, had no food to eat other than dogs and cats and human flesh.³⁴ Having strengthened their control over the aforementioned regions, the Mongols destroyed the irrigation systems.³⁵ They also burnt vast amounts of land, the fact that impacted some of the soil in regions of what is now Afghanistan, such as Herat, Balkh, Ghazni and Bamyan.³⁶ Upon the damage they inflicted on the Afghans, they forced the inhabitants to recognize Genghis Khan as the world leader. Culturally, the title 'Khan' was to be adopted in Afghanistan like other regions in Asia to denote respect.

Genghis Khan's descendants, who ruled the area, were not unlike him in pillaging it, massacring the inhabitants, and destroying the irrigation systems of the captured regions.³⁷ What distinguished Timur Lang, one of Genghis Khan's descendants, was that once he had destroyed an area, he would reconstruct it provided that the conquered people recognized him as their master.³⁸ Upon Timur Lang's death, there ensued intermittent clashes for the throne, which hastened the Timurid Empire decline in 1506 for the benefit of the Mughals and the Saffarids.³⁹

³⁴Michael, Burgan, *Great Empires of the Past: Empire of the Mongols*, New York, Facts on File, 2004, p. 85

³⁵Saichta, Wahab and Barry, Youngerman, *A Brief History of Afghanistan*, New York, Fact of File, p.61, 2007

³⁶Meredith L., Reunion, op.cit., p.55

³⁷Saichta, Wahab and Barry, Youngerman, op.cit., p.63

³⁸Meredith L., Reunion, op.cit., p.61

³⁹Ibid.

Like the Timurids, the Mughals and then the Safarids, had a major impact on Afghanistan. Zahiruddine Mohammad, the founder of the Mughal Empire strengthened his power in Afghanistan by his seizure of the two most important cities: Kabul in 1504, which he made capital, and Kandahar in 1522.⁴⁰ After making these influential cities his power base, he expanded Afghanistan southwards by marching into Delhi in 1526 and overpowering the last sultan of the Indian Empire, Ibrahim Lodi.

Yet, what politically featured the beginning of the 17th century in Afghanistan, was that it was ruled by two antagonistic empires: the Mughals of India, ruling from Kabul, and the Safavids of Persia, governing from Herat. The mid-seventeenth century saw the Mughal Empire overwhelmed by the Safavids, who continued their expansion policy into the Indian provinces. Despite their powerful empire, the Safavids were weakened by religious problems as the city of Kandahar comprised the Sunni Ghilzai and the Shiite Abdali ethnic groups.⁴¹

Historically, the Muslims' split into Sunni and Shia's sects arose as a result of disputes over succession to the position of Caliph.⁴² In fact, while the Sunnis maintained that the caliph's office should be assumed as a result of vote, the Shiites asserted that such an office should be obtained by the person closer to the Prophet's lineage. The Sunnis' and Shiites' religious

⁴⁰Meredith L., Reunion, op.cit., p.20.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Vartan, Gregorian, *Islam, a Mosaic, not a Monolithic*, Washington, Brookings Institutions Press, 2003, p.15.

arguments led to sectarian fanaticism that affected the Safavid Empire. What embittered the case of the Empire was the Safavids' attempt to convert the Sunni Ghilzai into Shiism,⁴³ which ultimately had consequential effects on the religious and political stability of their empire, for these two sects developed into two antagonistic entities.⁴⁴ However, due to the national awakening of the Afghan aborigines, on the one hand, and the waning power of the Safavids on the other, there ensued the birth of Afghanistan as a modern state,⁴⁵ under the Durannis, a native dynasty that was able to build a powerful empire in 1747. This empire was to meet internal as well as external challenges. Then, how would it contend with them?

II. The Foundation of Afghanistan and its Internal and External Challenges

One of the Durrani's main concerns was to bring stability to Afghanistan, by unifying the mosaic tribal groups to respond to the internal and external challenges to their empire. Under the Safavids' and the Mughals' rules in what is now Afghanistan, the native tribal groups occasionally turned one colonizer against the other, without giving too much concern to their own unification, even though some sort of agreement

⁴³Starting as a political faction, this group gradually developed into a religious movement, Shīism, which not only influenced Sunni Islam but also produced a number of important sects to which the term Shīah is applied. *Encyclopædia Britannica*, op.cit.

⁴⁴Saicha, Wahab and Barry, Youngerman, op.cit., p.2

⁴⁵Nabi, Misdaq, *Afghanistan: Political Frailty and External Interference*, London, Routledge, 2006, p.226

among the Hindu Kush tribes was beginning to take shape. This absence of tribal groups' consciousness was to delay the departure of the colonizers. However, profiting from the declining power of the Safavids, Mirwais, an influential tribal chief of the Ghilzai Pashtuns, set about raising the awareness of his fellow men. In so doing, Mirwais is credited to be one of the founders of modern Afghanistan.⁴⁶ Another outstanding figure in the history of Afghanistan, was Ahmed Shah Durrani who gained his reputation not only from his concern about the unification of the Afghan disparate ethnic groups, but also by being the founder of the Durrani Empire in 1747, the first to emerge in Afghanistan.⁴⁷ Ahmed Shah Durrani was elected king of Afghanistan by consensus by a Loya Jirga owing to his military feat, equestrian dexterity and, above all, to the fact that he was a Pashtun from the Sadozai extraction, one of the most outstanding Pashtun tribal groups in Afghanistan.⁴⁸

Once on Afghanistan throne, Ahmed Shah Durrani took upon himself the task to bring stability to the empire. Having captured Ghazni from the Ghilzais, he deprived the local chieftains of their control of Kabul. Two years following his enthronement, Ahmed Shah set about putting an end to the revolts that broke out in Northern Afghanistan, by subjugating the

⁴⁶Meredith L., Reunion, op.cit., p. 63

⁴⁷Ahmed, Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia*, London, Yali University Press, 2011, p. 11

⁴⁸Meredith L., Reunion, op.cit., p. 68.

Turkmen, Uzbek, Tajik and Hazara tribal groups.⁴⁹ Taking advantage of the waning power of the Persians, Ahmed Shah captured Herat from Shah Rukh of Persia, thus limiting the Persian influence in Afghanistan, the fact that facilitated the declining Mughal Empire defeat. He also launched raids on neighbouring territories; one of these was Delhi, the Mughal empire capital whose emperor was made a ‘puppet.’ The latter’s role was to restrain the local inhabitants from revolting against the Afghan emperor, on both the Punjab and Kandahar regions, which had fallen under the control of the Durrani Empire⁵⁰ (see map 2, p.26)

However, the year 1762 marked a turning point for the political stability of the Durrani Empire, for it had to face the Sikhs of the Punjab who constituted a terrible threat that was hard for it to reduce. Ahmed Shah was also concerned about the Uzbeks in Northern Afghanistan, due to the latter’s renewal of their rebellion, calling for an autonomous region north of Amu Daria, which forced Ahmed Shah to compromise.

⁴⁹Meredith L., Reunion, op.cit., p..72

⁵⁰Ibid., p.69

Map 2: Ahmad Shah Durrani's Afghan Empire



Source: Peter Tomsen, *The Wars of Afghanistan*, USA, 2011, p.34

If King Ahmed Shah's rule over the vast empire he had built was to a large extent successful, his successors were less able men, for they lacked political craft and military genius to run the Durrani Empire.⁵¹ The

⁵¹Meredith L., *Reunion*, op.cit., p.71

successors' inability to quell the rebellions within Afghanistan, their loss of influence outside it and, most notably, their civil wars made them vulnerable in front of the European powers, particularly the Russians and British whose scramble in the region was, then, more pronounced than ever.⁵²

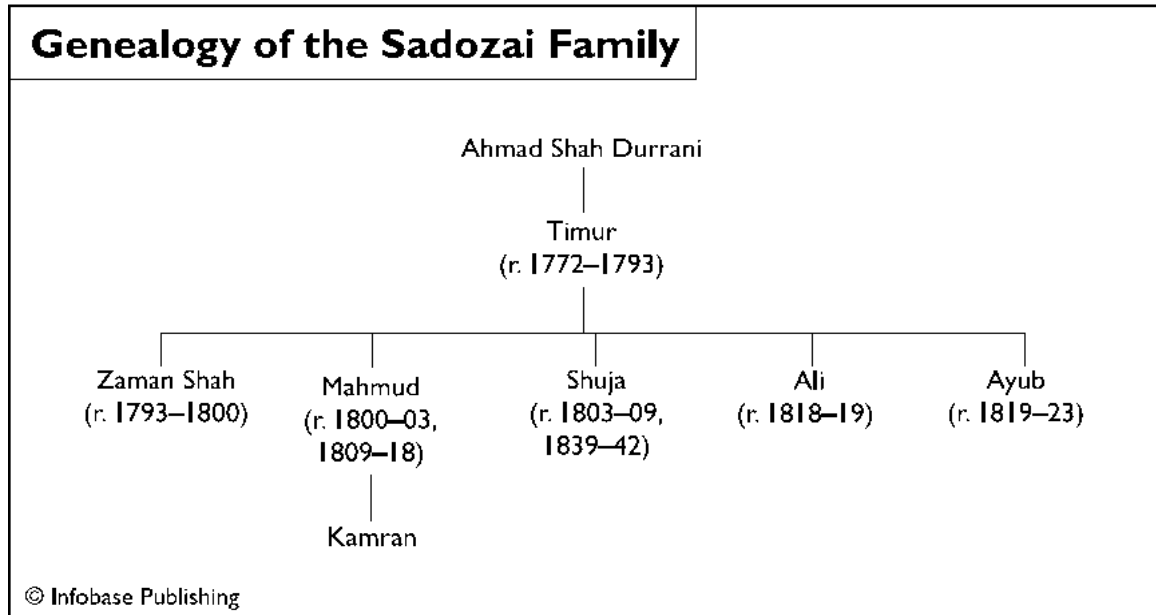
Of the Pashtun kings who were unsuccessful, there were King Zaman Shah (r.1793-1800), King Shuja Shah (r.1803-1809)(1839-42), and King Mahmud Shah (1809-1818) (r.1809-1818). In fact, King Zaman Shah's reign was not without difficulties externally and internally. Externally, he was unable to subdue the Sikhs despite his appointment of a Sikh leader over the Punjab to appease the atmosphere there. Internally, he lacked tact and diplomacy, which impacted his ability to take advantage of tax revenues, and ultimately have finance to keep the wheels of his government turning. Politically, he removed the tribal groups leaders from influential positions in the government and appointed others from his lineage, the Sadozai⁵³ (see chart 1, p.28).

Believing that a Loya Jirga, composed of tribal groups' chieftains, was a handicap for the smooth running of the empire, he decided to ignore it.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Meredith L., Reunion, op.cit., p. 73

Chart 1: Genealogy of the Sadozai Family



Source: Saichta, Wahab and Barry Yougerman, *A Brief History of Afghanistan*, New York, Fact of File, 2007, p. 75

In consequence of the dismissal of the Loya Jirga and the political reshuffle that King Zaman Shah had effected, the political stability that prevailed under King Ahmed Shah was significantly disrupted. There ensued revolts that the ejected chieftains instigated against the king's actions. King Zaman faced the revolts by the chieftains' execution.⁵⁴The tribal groups to which the executed leaders belonged, namely the Barakzai, Nurzai, Alizai and Qizilbash, joined forces and deposed King Zaman Shah, upon their seizure of Kandahar, the capital. The deposition of King Zaman Shah paved the way for further intrigue for the accession to the throne.⁵⁵

⁵⁴Meredith L., *Reunion*, op.cit., p73

⁵⁵Ibid.

In 1800, Mahmud Shah⁵⁶ was enthroned, only to be dethroned three years later by his brother, Shuja Shah. What featured King Shah Shuja's reign was that he was more inclined to cooperate with the British than with the French and Russians. In fact, King Shuja's reign saw France and Russia battling for holding Afghanistan in sway, which would clear them the ground for more expansion in the region. Believing that Persia's amity could decrease this scramble for Afghanistan, Britain concluded two treaties in 1812 and 1814. These treaties forbade any European military force to invade India through the Persian lands. In return, should Persia be subject to the hostility of a foreign force, Britain would intervene to side with it.⁵⁷

Because the protection of India was always at the core of British preoccupations in Asia, they managed to make the Afghan king sign a treaty of alliance that prohibited any European power to cross Afghanistan. The British intention was to make of Afghanistan a buffer state that would help them secure their interests in India.⁵⁸ However, the problem that arose, then, was how to secure the Indian frontier and make of the Afghan ruler a strong and friendly ally.

In Afghanistan political stability that would enable the British achieve their purpose was relative because political intrigue persisted.

⁵⁶Mahmud Shah was King Zaman's brother.

⁵⁷C.U., Aitchison, (ed.), *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements, and Sunnuds Relating to India and Neighboring Countries*, VII Calcutta, Military Orphan Press, 1865, pp. 121-129, www.archive.org. Accessed: April 14, 2013

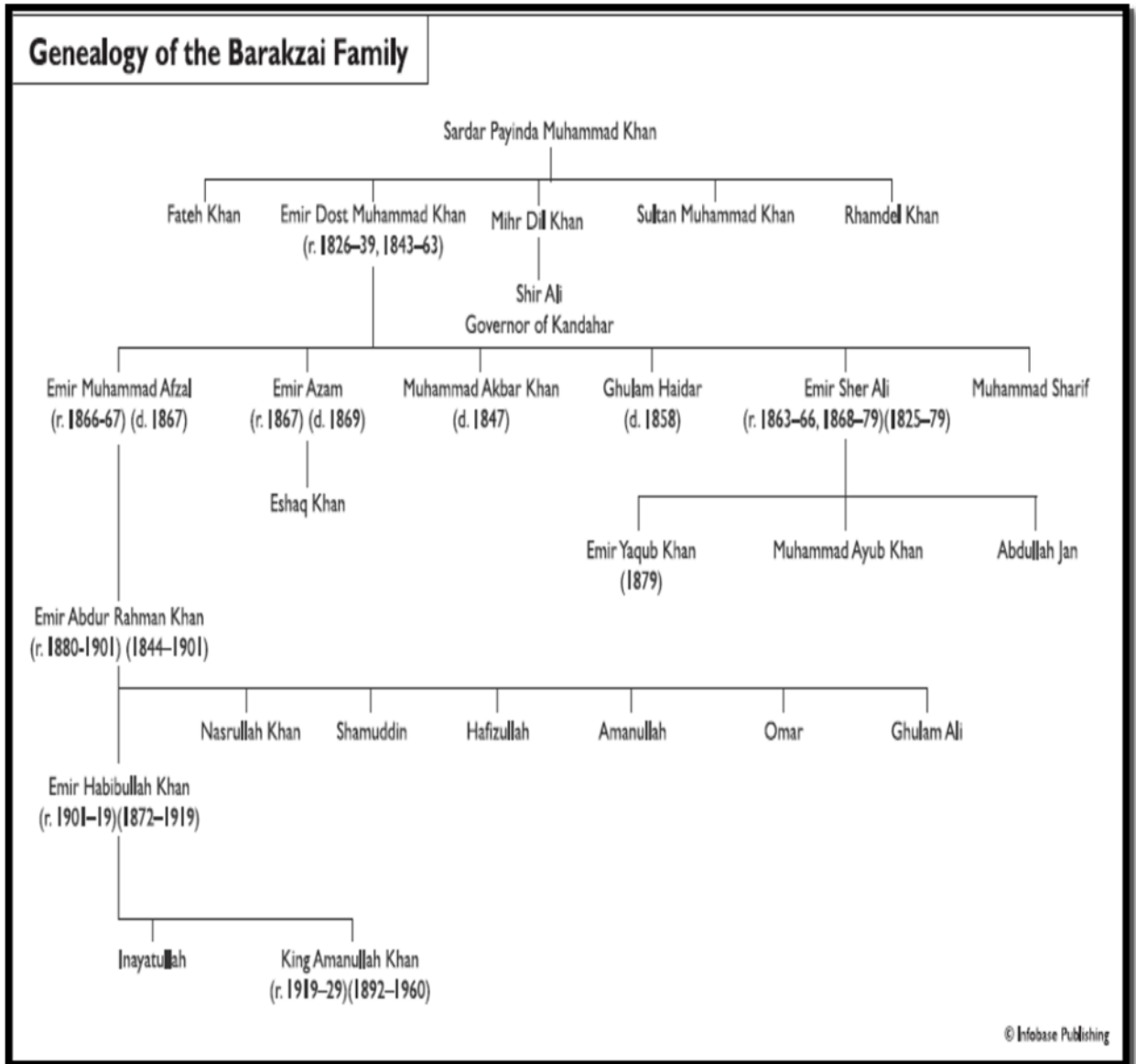
⁵⁸*Encyclopædia Britannica*, op.cit.

Because of King Shuja's cooperation with the British, Mahmud Shah managed to topple him in 1809 to rule Afghanistan for nine years.⁵⁹ During these years, the British, French and Russians continued to vie for the domination of the country. While the British, for example, were concerned that King Mahmud would abide by the treaties that King Shuja had signed with them in 1812 and 1814, the French and the Russians were obsessed by encroaching on Central Asia, including Afghanistan in which machinations for political power continued. A case in point was Ali Shah's dethronement of Mahmud Shah to rule Afghanistan for a year before he was himself toppled by a Barakzai named Dost Mohammad, who gained advantage of the declining power of the Durrani dynasty and their mutual quarrel. The waning power of the Durrani enabled the Barakzai dynasty to hold sway over Afghanistan, save Herat which remained in the hands of Mahmud Shah (see chart 2, p.31). So, Dost Mohamed controlled Ghazni, Jalalabad and Kabul, whereas his brothers controlled Peshawar and Kandahar.⁶⁰

⁵⁹Meredith L., Reunion, op.cit., p.74

⁶⁰Ibid. p.75.

Chart 2: Genealogy of the Barakzai Family



Source: Saichta, Wahab and Barry Yougerman, op cit., p.77

Yet in 1826, Dost Mohammad managed to weaken his brothers' powers, and in so doing, he was able to rule the whole of Afghanistan.

Dost Mohammad's ascension to the throne paved the way to the Barakzai Dynasty to seize political power in Afghanistan. However, the Barakzais' rule of Afghanistan was not without complications because of the Anglo-Russian rivalry for power and influence in the region, as Afghanistan lay between both expanding empires

III. British Imperialism in the Indian Subcontinent.

In its broader sense, the term 'imperialism' denotes the policy of a state to extend its power and domination, mainly through "direct territorial acquisition or by gaining political and economic control of other areas."⁶¹ John Darwin, the British historian, defined the term as "a sustained effort to assimilate a country or region to the political, economic or cultural system of another power."⁶² A case in point was British intervention in Afghanistan on three occasions to extend its power respectively in 1838, 1878, and 1919.

Yet, British interventions in Afghanistan cannot be understood without knowing what was taking place in neighbouring India being, then, under the English domination. The English presence in India dates back to

⁶¹Imperialism.. *Encyclopedia Britannica Ultimate Reference Suite*, Chicago, 2012

⁶²John, Darwin, "Imperialism and the Victorians: The Dynamics of Territorial Expansion," *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 112, No. 44, 1997, p.110

the 1600s, when economic competition between European powers for expansion and acquisition of territorial footholds in the ‘New World’ and Central Asia was stiffening.

British intervention in India was not originally the achievement of the English Crown. It was that of the EIC, formed by individual companies and magnates to whom Queen Elizabeth I granted the monopoly to trade in India, in December 1600. The EIC’s headquarters was in London. Its ships were made of oak. The owners of the company were financially powerful; they employed tradesmen, ship builders, manufacturers, seamen, dock labourers, and clerks.⁶³

The EIC’s foothold in India was not without difficulties, for it had to face fierce competition from other European powers, namely the Portuguese, the Dutch, and the French. Such competition usually degenerated into conflict. In addition to the rival powers that the EIC had to contend with, the company felt compelled to deal with the Mughal Emperor, Jahangir (r.1605-27), whose sympathy, it was to win, to gain more territorial footholds in India. As a result of the good relationship that the EIC fostered with the Mughal emperors, three major factories⁶⁴ were built in a span of 100 years in Bombay, Madras and Calcutta.⁶⁵ In order to secure its trading bases, in Surat, Madras, Calcutta and Bombay which

⁶³www.porcities.org. Accessed: October 1, 2013

⁶⁴The term factory, here, means a trading post. Surjit Mansingh, *Historical Dictionary of India*, Maryland, The Scarecrow Press, 2006

⁶⁵Saichta, Wahab and Barry, Youngerman, op.cit, p.79

witnessed repeated attacks from the rival powers, local people, and pirates, the EIC equipped its fleet with arms. Gradually, it built its own army and a naval power capable of deterring its enemies' repeated attacks. It also managed to buy bits of land from Indian rulers to establish permanent settlements close to its trading posts. Equally, the EIC, not only set up trading posts, but also extended its activities to establish Straits Settlements to dominate trade in areas such as Penang, Singapore, Malacca and Tabuan⁶⁶ and the Spice Island, now Indonesia. Nevertheless, the balance of English exports and imports in the Indian subcontinent was not all the same harmonious.

The EIC first provided the India market with the English manufactured woollen cloth, but the latter did not prove remunerating in a hot country like India, which drove the company to provide the Indian market with silver that the English pirates expropriated from the Spanish ships coming from South America.⁶⁷ Given that the English commerce in silver was costly, it disrupted the company's balance of trade.

Unlike the EIC's exports from England to India, the company's imports from India were profitable. They enabled the company to accumulate wealth, provided the London market with spices, such as pepper, nutmeg, mace and cloves but also with rare commodities in Europe,

⁶⁶Philippa, Levine, *The British Empire: Sunrise to Sunset*, Great Britain, Pearson Longman, 2007, p.225

⁶⁷Trevor, Lloyd, *The History of the British Empire*, Great Britain, Cambridge University Press, 2001, p.7

such as medicinal drugs, aromatic plants, silk, and cotton.⁶⁸ Moreover, in 1620, the EIC purchased 250,000 pounds of pepper in the East Indies with the value of £26,041. This was sold in London for £208,333.⁶⁹ India also supplied the British market with exotic commodities on a regular basis, and attracted lucrative investments for the British. Additionally, it provided military troops,⁷⁰ usually available to assist the imperial army, as the Indian population then numbered 300 million people.⁷¹ Hence, the profitability of trade in India and the economic incentives that it provided for Britain made it hold a special position compared with all Britain's imperial possessions. Therefore, the loss of India would mean the collapse of the British Empire, for the latter symbolized indomitability, superior power, and prestige for the British.⁷²

British comfortable position in the Indian subcontinent was threatened by the French Indian Company (FIC), and the Russian Empire. The EIC's rivalry with the FIC for supremacy in the subcontinent drove both companies to engage in war that culminated in the FIC's defeat in the Battle of Plassey, in 1757.⁷³ The French, then, lost Bengal, one of the

⁶⁸www.porcities.org. Accessed: October 1, 2013

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰The military troops India provided the EIC with were called 'Sepoys'.

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷²www.newworldencyclopedia.org Accessed: August 2, 2015

⁷³Peter, Harrington, *Plassey 1757: Clive of India's Finest Hour*, Great Britain, Osprey, 1994, p.80

richest regions in India, making of the English ‘a paramount colonial force in the subcontinent.’⁷⁴

The EIC’s elimination of the French threat to India was not the company’s ultimate aim, for the Russians’ menace was more serious owing to the fact that the Russian Empire was the main British rival in Asia, and above all its longstanding expansive ambitions in Central Asia. Among the reasons for such competition, there was the clash of interests of both the British and Russian empires . While the British sought to protect their interests in India, the Russians remained adamant that they should pursue their expansion policy, and subsequently, increase their spheres of influence in the region.⁷⁵ As Afghanistan lay between both expanding powers, it remained, therefore, crucial to bring it under one or the other’s influence.⁷⁶ So, given both powers’ intense rivalry, the invasion of Afghanistan by either power was not without the bounds of impossibility.

For the Russians, the invasion of India through the sea was difficult, for the British Navy was there to protect it; hence, they attempted to achieve their goal through Afghanistan. They believed the Afghan land was attainable, due to its poverty-stricken people and fragmented tribal groups.⁷⁷ question that begs an answer is how far the EIC could match the Russian As a result, the prospect of a Russian invasion of Indian via Afghanistan drove

⁷⁴Peter, Harrington, op.cit., p. 85.

⁷⁵<http://www.military-history.org>. Accessed: May 4, 2012

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷Ibid..

the British to attempt to keep the latter as a barrier state⁷⁸ Then, the empire might, particularly when the company witnessed some signs of bankruptcy.

In fact, the EIC's seizure of Bengal made it depart from trading in goods with the Indian natives. It, instead built an effective administrative structure that eased the collection of taxes, and custom duties, a privilege given to them by the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II in 1765, after Major-General Robert Clive of India had defeated him in the battle of Buxar on 22 October 1764.⁷⁹ Clive's victory enabled him to coerce the Mughal emperor into signing the Allahabad Treaty, which deprived the latter of the right to collect taxes.⁸⁰ Thus, the control of taxation in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa became within the jurisdiction of the EIC in return for 2.6 million rupees to be granted to the Mughal emperor.⁸¹ The taxes that 20 million people had to pay 'generated a surplus of £2 to 3 million per year.'⁸² To ensure that the revenues were collected efficiently, the EIC set up military and civil administrations. However, despite the establishment of these administrations, the EIC grew on the brink of bankruptcy for the continual French threat drove the company to advance further inland, which required more men and finance.⁸³ The EIC's treacherous condition urged the Governor General to India, Warren Hastings, to borrow money repeatedly

⁷⁸<http://www.military-history.org.op.cit>

⁷⁹www.hutchesons.org. Accessed: December 2, 2012

⁸⁰ Philippa, Levine, op cit., p.66

⁸¹Ibid.

⁸²Ibid.

⁸³Philippa, Levine, op cit., p.66

from the Indian rulers so that he could run his administration and wage war against his enemies.⁸⁴ Yet, the British Parliament saw those borrowings as acts of extortion, and consequently charged him of corruption and bribery.⁸⁵ Parliament also voiced its condemnation to the nabobs,⁸⁶ who accumulated wealth through unpopular means.⁸⁷

G.M. Trevelyan, the British historian, justified the Governor General's inefficiency on the ground that the Home Government left him without the necessary means to counter the internal and external challenges, given that the British Government was beset with the tensions that triggered the American Revolution in 1775.⁸⁸ Yet, Parliament held the Governor General responsible for misgovernment, and subsequently initiated legal proceeding against him. Of the twenty peers who voted in 1795, six held Warren Hastings to account; the remaining ones, however, discharged him and he was ultimately acquitted.⁸⁹

The EIC's incapability of running its own affairs, and the corruption scandal, some of its officials had been accused of, prompted the British Home Government to intervene in India to initiate political reforms. As a

⁸⁴Nicholas B., Dirks, *The Scandal of Empire*, U.S.A., Harvard University Press, 2006, p.121

⁸⁵Ibid., p.11

⁸⁶Robert Clive was one of those nabobs who worked hard to have the East India Company turned into a tax collecting body. Philippa, Levine, op.cit., p.66.

⁸⁷Ibid.

⁸⁸G.M.,Trevelyan, *A Shortened History of England*, Great Britain, Penguin, 1959, p.44

⁸⁹Denis, Judd, *The World First Superpower: The Rise of the British Empire from 1497 to 1901*, London, Metropolitan University, 2004, p. 34.

result, in 1773 Parliament issued the Regulatory Act whose purpose was to submit the Company's finance to Parliament's supervision. The Regulatory Act also appointed a governor general with supervisory powers over Bombay, Madras and Calcutta.⁹⁰ This official was assisted by a council of four officials. This Act is considered as the beginning of British Government intervention in the EIC's matters and was to pave the way for the suppression of the company. It was also to clear the ground for the British government's direct rule of India, through the Board of Control,⁹¹ upon the Indian Mutiny event in 1857.⁹² Such British direct rule of India was commonly known as the British Raj whose main preoccupation was the protection of India even if such protection required British intervention in neighbouring Afghanistan from which territory the Russians' invasion of India might be launched.

IV. The Origins of the British First Intervention in Afghanistan

King Dost Mohammad's reign of Afghanistan (1826-1839) witnessed a series of disagreements with Britain which culminated in a four-year-war in 1838, as a result of British rivalry with the Russian Empire, an imperial rivalry better known as the Great Game. The Great Game denotes an Anglo-Russian competition and intrigue for the quest of political power and influence along with territorial aggrandizement in Southwest Asia and

⁹⁰Encyclopædia Britannica. op.cit.

⁹¹The Board of Control was an administrative body, which a Parliamentary Act (the 1833 Charter Act) empowered to have full authority over the EIC by conferring more power to the Governor-General.<http://www.parliament.uk>. Accessed:October 22, 2014

⁹²Ahmed, Rashid, *Taliban, Islam*, op.cit, p.11.

Central Asia. Ahmed Rashid, a Pakistani journalist, states that the Great Game was “a clandestine war of wits and bribery and occasional military pressure as both powers kept each other at a respectful distance, by maintaining Afghanistan as a buffer state between them.”⁹³ Professor Dominic Lieven defines the phrase as ‘the geopolitical rivalry that set Great Britain against Russia over a period that ranged from the 1830s to the early 1900s.’⁹⁴

Most noteworthy is that John William Kaye, the British Historian, was the first to use the expression ‘Great Game,’⁹⁵ after taking it from the letters of Arthur Conolly, the British explorer and spy to Central Asia that the amir of Bukhara beheaded in 1842.⁹⁶ However, Arthur Conolly did not use the exact phrase, ‘Great Game’. He worded it ‘Grand Game’ to denote the same historical fact, that is, the Anglo-Russian competition in Central Asia. The Russian diplomat and statesman, Count Karl Robert (1780-1862), termed the Anglo-Russian competition, ‘the Tournament of Shadows.’ Rudyard Kipling, however, is credited to have made the expression ‘Great Game’ known to the public, in his novel, entitled *Kim*. The British and the Russians’ spheres of influence in Asia were:

⁹³Ahmed, Rashid, *Taliban, Islam*, op.cit, p.11.

⁹⁴Dominic Lieven, *Empire. The Russian Empire and its Rivals*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2000. Cited in Andrei Miroiu, *The Great Game or the Many Misunderstandings about the Russian Advance in Central Asia*, www.academia.edu. Accessed: September 17, 2014.

⁹⁵Miron, Rezun, “The Great Game Revisited,” *International Journal*, Vol. 41, No. 2, Southwest Asia, (Spring, 1986), pp. 324-341

⁹⁶Milan, Hauner, “The Last Great Game,” *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 38, No 1 (Winter, 1984), pp.72-84.

Afghanistan, the Black Sea, the Baltic regions, Persia, Kashmir, the Punjab, and the steppes and deserts between the Caspian Sea and China⁹⁷ (See map 3, p.42) .

Doubtless, the British surpassed the Russians in terms of infrastructure which not only aided goods transport, but also improved the communication channels between the empire colonies. For instance, the Russians started to build the railroad system in Central Asia in the 1880s, when the British had already completed the construction of 1,000 miles of track in India alone.⁹⁸ Additionally, the fact that the Industrial Revolution started in England in the 1750s had enabled Britain to make great strides in industrialization and oil drilling,⁹⁹ and therefore accumulate capital, which prerequisites Russia did not possess. Despite the aforementioned British advantages, she did not ignore Russia's ambitions because the Russians' progress within Central Asia was threatening. It not only threatened India, but also Afghanistan whose stability was capital since it was a gateway to India.

⁹⁷www.faqs.org. *Espionage Encyclopedia*. Accessed: February 12, 2012

⁹⁸Miron, Rezun, op.cit., p.327.

⁹⁹Ibid., p.328.

Map 3: The Great Game: British and Russian Expansion (1846-1900)



Source: Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan*, U.S.A., Da Capo Press, 2002, p.128

Historically, the Russian conquest of Central Asia is a throwback to Peter the Great's rule of Russia (1682-1725). His motives were mainly political and economic, namely to keep trade routes free from the Kazakhs' inroads and to consolidate the Russians' presence in Asia. To

achieve such a purpose they established on the Ural River the Orenburg base whose purpose was to deter the Kazakhs from attacking the Russian merchants. A second motive that drove the Russians to expand in Central Asia was their pressing need of raw material, namely cotton, to keep their textile industry running.

In addition to the aforementioned political and economic incentives, the Russian military counted, among their ranks, upon men like Cherniaev, who was eager to display his military feat to win glory, promotions, and medals. Hence, to win their superiors' sympathy and ultimately achieve their dreams, they made of Russian expansion their main goal.¹⁰⁰ A further motive that underlay the Russians' occupation of Central Asia was to exert pressure on the EIC.

On the other hand, the British loss of the thirteen colonies made them grow adamant not to lose India, and the very thought of a potential loss of it, made them develop some sort of paranoia and obsession. Professor Philippa Levine expresses this idea as follows:

The EIC's hold on India was tightening at much the same time that the American colonies broke away from Britain. The loss of America was as much a psychological as an economic blow. The failure of British trade in the East Indies (Indonesia and the Spice Islands) and the

¹⁰⁰www.academia.edu. Accessed: September 17, 2014.

barriers to trade in China before the 1840s made India a particularly important site of British interest, their principal foothold in Asia.¹⁰¹

In addition to the Anglo-Russian competition in Central Asia, these powers' rivalry also grew in the Middle East, which compelled them to have good relations with Turkey and Persia.¹⁰² These latter states were of crucial importance as Russia's and Britain's military and commercial communications ran through them. The Russians were anxious that they might fail to control the declining Ottoman Empire, for it was a route to their homeland.¹⁰³ Turkey was especially more important for Britain, because, having it under its influence, meant having under her control the Suez Canal, Britain's lifeline to India.

Within the Anglo-Russian imbroglios in Central Asia, Afghanistan was of the utmost importance for both powers. For the Russians, it constituted an outlet for India. By the same token, the British wanted Afghanistan to be a barrier country, so that they could consolidate their empire, and eventually, secure their political and economic interests in India.

An archival source stressed the fact that the prospect of an invasion of India was commonplace in the first years of the nineteenth century, not only within the European general public, but also within the European

¹⁰¹Philippa, Levine, *op.cit.*, p. 62

¹⁰²*Ibid.*

¹⁰³*Ibid.*

political and military elite.¹⁰⁴ The author of *On the Practicability of an Invasion of British India*, Lieut.-Colonel De Lacy Evans maintained that to prepare for contingencies, the Bengal Government then gave the political agents assignments to secure Hindustan then, the most vulnerable, and from which a likely European invasion might be launched.¹⁰⁵

Several other factors gave rise to British fears that India might fall in the hands of the Russians, and thus were to move the British to intervene in Afghanistan in 1838: Russia's annexation of some of the Persian territories, the Persians' siege of Herat in 1837, the Russians' steady expansion in Central Asia, and their political agents' manoeuvres in Kabul in 1837.

King Mahmud's first rule of Afghanistan (r.1800-03) witnessed a Russo-Persian armed confrontation which culminated in the Persians' defeat and the Russian annexation of some Persian territories. In fact, pursuing her expansion policy in Central Asia, Russia was to collide with Persia, owing to the latter's determination to recover the territories that had once been under the Safavids' domination, namely Herat and Khorasan.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴De Evans Lacy, *On the Practicability of an Invasion of British India*, London, Harvard College Library, 1828, www.archive.org. August 2, 2010

¹⁰⁵De Evans Lacy, op.cit.

¹⁰⁶The word "Khorasan" means "the East" or "Land of the Rising Sun," the name of a province in northeastern Iran and the historical name of an area that roughly corresponds to eastern Iran and Afghanistan at the time of Abdali Durrani Ahmad Shah (r. 1747–1773). It was part of the Achaemenid and Sasanian Empires, then conquered by the Muslim Arabs in A.D. 651–652. Abu Muslim raised the "Black Banner" of the house of Abbas and with his Khorasanian army defeated the Umayyads, bringing the Abbasid caliphs to power. Khorasan was virtually

Persia's wars with Russia ended in her setback, and Russia's annexation of Georgia in 1801. All that Persia could achieve was the recapture of Mashad in 1802, and Ghurian, a fortress in Eastern Herat in 1803. Despite the Persians' inability to capture Herat during the early years of the nineteenth century, their claim for sovereignty over Herat did not wane.

The Russians' activity in Central Asia, namely in Persia and Afghanistan, was noticeable through the attempts of their minister to Persia, Count Ivan Simonich, to convince the Persians and Afghans to join forces against the governor of Herat, Shah Mahmud, Dost Mohamed's enemy. Consequently, with the encouragement of the Russians, the Persians blockaded Herat in 1837.

Yet, two facts were sufficient to cause British concern in the 18th and 19th centuries: Peter the Great's alleged statement, in 1725, that Russia should move towards India, and the nineteenth century Russians' expansion eastwards and southwards Central Asia, 'at a rate of 55 square miles a day.'¹⁰⁷ Peter the Great's statement, along with Russia's expansion obsessed Britain for a century, from the eighteenth century to the nineteenth century. This expansion was, in the long run, to decrease British

independent under the Tahirid, Saffarid, and Samanid dynasties (821–999) and part of Ghaznavid, Seljuk, and Khwarizm Empires. The Mongols controlled the area, and the Safavids fought the Uzbeks over Khorasan before it became the heartland of Ahmad Shah's empire. Khorasan was called the "cradle of classical Persian culture."

Ludwig W. Adamec, op. cit, p.221

¹⁰⁷<http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/article/ministry-silly-wars-britain-central-asia>
Accessed: September 14, 2015

India's and Russia's geographic frontiers, from 4,000 miles, in the eighteenth century, to 1,000 miles in the mid - nineteenth century.¹⁰⁸ As a reaction to Russia systematic expansion in Central Asia, Britain took the following measures: the capture of the territories from which the potential threats might be posed, and the making of barrier states to stem the Russian advance towards India.

The need to shield India from external threats drove the British to form a circle of protection around it. Accordingly, they seized the Seychelles (1797), the Cape of Good Hope (1797) and Malta (1800).¹⁰⁹ Because the Burmese encroached on Indian territories, they waged two wars in 1824 and 1852 against the latter, during which the British annexed parts of Burma.

To the East, China was closely connected to British interests in India, for a significant fraction of the East India Company's profits derived from its commercial activities with China. The result was that, these commercial activities drained the Chinese Government coffers, for the latter had to barter tea and silver for opium.¹¹⁰ The Chinese authorities' efforts to stop the flow of Indian opium led, in 1839 and again in 1856, to war and subsequently, to Britain's annexation of the island of Hong Kong in 1841.¹¹¹ Because Aden was contiguous with the Red Sea and the Arabian Sea, the

¹⁰⁸<http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org>, op.cit.

¹⁰⁹Philippa, Levine, op.cit., p. 63

¹¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹¹Ibid.

British captured it. In fact its seizure enabled them to ensure the supply of their ships in coal on their way to India.¹¹² As a result of these territorial acquisitions, the British made the boundaries of India secure.¹¹³

In addition to the British annexation of the territories from which European invasion of India might occur, they considered the idea of buffer states. In fact, the Russian intermittent expansion in the first years of the nineteenth century was to arouse Britain's fear that India might be encroached upon. Such a situation made Britain think of buffer states that would separate India from Russian footholds. These were Afghanistan, Persia, and Tibet, all of which, had borders with India. This led both rivals to compete to have these states under their respective influence.¹¹⁴

Of the aforementioned buffer states, Herat, which Persia subjected to blockade, was strategic, for the British considered that it was a gateway to India. However, Afghanistan as a whole was of utmost importance for them.¹¹⁵ Therefore, they saw it judicious to establish friendly relations with its amir, Dost Mohammad. So, how did the Anglo-Afghan relations develop into mutual hostility?

¹¹²Philippa, Levine, op.cit., p. 63

¹¹³Ibid.

¹¹⁴Beryl, Williams, "Approach to the Second Afghan War: Central Asia during the Great Eastern Crisis, 1875-1878," *The International History Review*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (Apr., 1980), pp. 217-218

¹¹⁵Ibid.

The Russian Government altered the Anglo-Afghan peaceful political relations. In fact, the arrival in Kabul of Ivan Vitkevic, Russia's political agent in 1837, co-occurred with that of Alexander Burnes, Lord Auckland's envoy to Dost Muhammad.¹¹⁶ Both men claimed to establish commercial relations with Afghanistan. However, the amir of Afghanistan showed more readiness to conclude a pact with the British than the Russians, with the proviso that they helped him recover Peshawar from the Sikhs.¹¹⁷ Because the British ignored his request, he deemed it necessary to deal with the Russians, a step that was both to damage the Anglo-Afghan relations, and to hasten British military intervention in Afghanistan.¹¹⁸ The purpose of such intervention was to dethrone Dost Mohammad and re-enthroned King Shah Shuja, the British perfect candidate as he was more willing to work with the British rather than the Russians.

Being aware of the Russian schemes, the British thought it fitting to make of Afghanistan a buffer state that would act as a shield against a potential expansion of Russia towards India. In their effort to enforce their plan, the British first resorted to diplomatic channels with the Afghans. In 1837, they commissioned Alexander Burnes to Afghanistan to convince Amir Dost Mohammad Khan (r. 1826-1839 and 1843-1863) to ally with Britain against Russia, and to accept the British buffer state scheme. Dost

¹¹⁶Peter R., Blood, *Afghanistan: Past and Present*, Los Angeles, CA, Indo - European Publishing, 2007, p.16

¹¹⁷Meredith L., *Reunion*, op.cit., p.76

¹¹⁸*Ibid.*, p.77

Mohammad Khan asserted that he would agree on condition that the British would assist him recover Peshawar, then under the Indian princes.¹¹⁹ This was the amir's basis of negotiations. Because they were against antagonizing the Indian princes, the British rejected the Amir's condition, and subsequently the negotiations broke down. Given the stalemate that the negotiations reached, Lord Auckland¹²⁰ issued a formal declaration; he called 'the Simla Manifesto' in which he justified British intervention in Afghanistan. Subsequently, the first Anglo-Afghan War broke out in 1838.¹²¹ In doing so, the Governor-General did not act in accordance with Alexander's advice.¹²² On the contrary, he was in favour of maintaining Dost Mohammad on the Afghan throne, due to his comprehensive knowledge of Afghanistan and the Afghans.¹²³

Now, whether British intervention in Afghanistan was founded or not, this remains at issue. In fact, while the 19th century British political elite argued that the Russians' southward expansion was a real threat to India, the Russians' held that they had no intention of invading it. In this respect, Tatiana Zagarodnikova, a Russian historian, asserted that the

¹¹⁹Meredith L., Reunion, op.cit.,p.77

¹²⁰Auckland, Lord George Eden was Governor-General of India (1836–1842). In defiance of the Court of Directors of the British East India Company, he started the disastrous First Anglo-Afghan War to replace Amir Dost Muhammad with Shah Shuja.

¹²¹Abdul, Sabahuddin, *History of Afghanistan*, India, Global Version Publishing House, 2008, p. 56

¹²²Alexander Burnes was William Macnaghten's envoy to Afghanistan.

¹²³Dinah, Birch and Mark, Llewellyn (eds), *Conflict and Difference in Nineteenth-Century Literature*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, p.61

British claim that Russia intended to invade India was a British military subterfuge to compel British Parliament to finance their military expansions. She expresses this idea in the following words:

..... to my mind, it was a game, kind of making face, towards audience, towards public opinion. Another thing is that that was a wonderful pretext in the parliament to demand more money for military purposes, for keeping big armies in India and so on.¹²⁴

William Dalrymple, the British historian, believes that the nineteenth British military elites exaggerated the Russian threat and were, therefore at all costs, determined to dethrone Dost Mohammad and enthrone Shah Shuja. In the words of William Dalrymple:

As we know in our own time, if you create a phantasm, a horror figure of your own imaginings, that figure can actually come into being. You can imagine a threat into life. Just like the neo-cons had wanted to topple Saddam Hussein long before 9/11, and 9/11 gave the neo-cons the excuse they were looking for. In the same way the Hawks, the Russophobes, in the British establishment in Simla and in Calcutta, had wanted to pre-empt the Russians in Central Asia.¹²⁵

Equally, Francis Henry Skrine and Edward Denison Ross, authors of a book entitled, *The Heart of Asia*, contended that the Russian threat to India was a

¹²⁴<http://www.multiplesclerosis.co.uk/afghanistan/boston.html>.
Accessed: June 1, 2012

¹²⁵Ibid.

British pure conjecture.¹²⁶ They accounted for the British Public's increasing fear by stressing the role that the media, then played to shape public opinion that the Russian threat was real and that Britain should wage war against Russia.¹²⁷ One such open military confrontation was the Crimean war (1853-56). Skrine and Ross also argued that a Russian potential invasion of India required Russia to possess a formidable naval power capable of outweighing that of Britain, which power the Russians lacked.¹²⁸

In brief, the Anglo-Russian rivalry for supremacy in Central Asia lasted more than a century. Within this period, Britain intervened in Afghanistan repeatedly to coerce the successive Afghan amirs into bending to the British will, notably the rejection of Russian potential friendly overtures with Afghanistan, and the maintenance of close and stable relations with Britain. Additionally, as part of their forward policy, the British wanted to make of Afghanistan a barrier state to counter Russian southwards expansion.

However, in return for the Afghan amirs' commitments to the British terms, the latter would have to help the Afghan amir to restore the Punjab from the Sikhs, which condition, the British were unwilling to honour for fear of putting at stake their friendly relations with the Sikhs. Because Dost Mohammad objected to the British conditions, notably, severing diplomatic

¹²⁶Francis, Henry Skrine and Edward, Denison Ross, *The Heart of Asia*, London, Routledge Curzon, 1899, p.261

¹²⁷Francis, Henry Skrine and Edward, Denison Ross. op.cit., , p.261

¹²⁸Ibid.

relations with the Russians, and at the same time befriending the British without being assisted to restore the Punjab. Within this imbroglio the British opted to dethrone Dost Mohammad and enthrone King Shah Shuja, who was willing to bend to British will, ie., maintaining friendly relations with the British while refraining from making friendly overtures with the Russians. Thenceforth, the British waged the first war against Afghanistan in 1838.

Chapter Two

British First Intervention in Afghanistan (1838-42)

Of the wars that Britain waged in Central Asia, 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).

Now that the reader has an idea about the origins of the First Anglo-Afghan War, and given that the colonial administration of India was determined to wage the war against the Afghans in view of toppling their amir, Dost Mohammad and enthroning their candidate Shah Shuja , the questions that call for investigation are the following: What were the outcomes of the war? Should the British manage to enthrone Shah Shuja, what relationship would he have with his subjects? Would this relationship be harmonious, or strained? An attempt to address the aforementioned questions will follow in this chapter.

I. Documents Relating to the First British Intervention in Afghanistan

Due to the considerable significance of this historical fact, some British, particularly, those from the theatre of war, felt the need to keep records of their correspondences, recollections, and daily lives in Afghanistan, which records were digitized, and are therefore available in the net. Among the primary sources left by people who were either, active participants in the First Anglo-Afghan War, or simple witnesses of it, there is a diary that Florentia Sale, the wife of Brigadier Robert Sale kept, which she entitled, *A Journal of the Disasters in Afghanistan (1841-1842)*.¹²⁹

Equally momentous is Lieutenant Vincent Eyre's diary entitled *the Military Operations at Cabul which ended in the Destruction of the British Army*.¹³⁰ The diary is kept as a testimony of the regular occurrences of the First Anglo-Afghan War, during which he was appointed Commissary of Ordnance to the Kabul field force. Vincent Eyre was ultimately taken prisoner by Akbar Khan, Dost Mohammad's elder son, for nine months in which time he wrote his diary.¹³¹

There are also print recordings that both Houses of Parliament had presented to Queen Victoria during the Anglo-Afghan Wars. These

¹²⁹Sale, Florentia (Lady) Sale, *A Journal of the Disasters in Affghanistan* London, 1843. www.archive.org. Accessed: July 7, 2011.

¹³⁰(Lieut.) Vincent, Eyre, *The Military Operations at Cabul*, London, John Murray, 1842, www.archive.org. Accessed: July 7, 2011

¹³¹Cambridge University Library: Royal Commonwealth Society Library, *Portraits of the Cabul Prisoners*, RCMS 101. www.archive.org. Accessed: 7 Oct. 2011

recordings entitled *Papers relating to Military Operations in Afghanistan* contain correspondences between political and military chiefs in Afghanistan, and between these chiefs and those in India. The scrutiny and analysis of these sources, among others, help the reader forge an idea about the circumstances that were behind British failure to implement their policy in Afghanistan.

The war that the British were to wage against the Afghans was directed by the British government in India, and encouraged by that in London headed by the Whig Party, under the premiership of Lord Melbourne (1835-1841). British eventual military operations to dethrone Dost Mohammad was to lead to the invading forces' disaster.¹³² This was due to the hawkishness of both governments in India and Britain,¹³³ combined with the arrogance and lack of serious preparations for the war. Being pugnacious, the Government of India determined to wage war against Afghanistan, though one of the main factors that incited the British to launch the war was removed, namely the Persians' evacuation of Herat¹³⁴ Therefore, Lord Auckland, the British Governor of India ignored the Simla Manifesto that held out that the invasion of Afghanistan would have no raison- d'être if Herat were freed. Given the British determination to dethrone the Afghan amir, war was inevitable.

¹³²Martin, Ewans, *Conflict in Afghanistan: studies in Asymmetric Warfare*, London, Routledge, 2005. p.16

¹³³Ibid.

¹³⁴Morris, Mowbray, *First Afghan War*, London, Sampson Low, 1878, p.34, www.archive.org. Accessed: February 18, 2012

II. The Warring Parties' Military Strategies

In terms of military organization, army strength, and equipment the warring parties differed greatly. In fact, the Anglo-Indian forces that invaded Afghanistan in 1838 were composed of five contingents: The Bengal army, the Bombay army, King Shuja's army, and the Sikh army. The three former armies, which were called the army of the Indus, numbered about 26,500 men in addition to the camp followers that numbered 38,000 persons.¹³⁵ The military organization of the invading armies was as follows: a military head of each of the aforementioned armies was at the top of the pyramid, commanding the whole force. This force was split into infantry divisions, themselves divided into brigades.¹³⁶

The military head of the Bombay army was supposed to be Major General Sir Henry Fane, but Major General Sir John Keane was to replace him, owing to the former's poor physical condition. The Bombay force was 5,000 men strong.¹³⁷ Sir John Keane was assisted by William Macnaghten, his political advisor and the Governor-General's envoy at Kabul.¹³⁸ As a subordinate to William Macnaghten, was Alexander Burnes, the author of *Travels into Bukhara*, a book that had been published in London in 1824, relating his voyage of discovery of Central Asia.

¹³⁵Morris, Mowbray, op.cit., p.34

¹³⁶Ibid.

¹³⁷Ibid.

¹³⁸Martin, Ewans, op.cit., p.16.

In the case of the Bengal contingent, the whole force was divided into two foot soldiers, respectively under the command of General Sir Willoughby Cotton, and Major General Duncan. The former's force was divided into three brigades, receiving injunctions from the following Colonels: Sale, Denis, and Not. Unlike General Willoughby's force, Duncan's was divided into two Brigades, respectively commanded by Colonels Robert and Worsley.¹³⁹ The Bengal contingent, then under the command of Sir Willoughby Cotton, included 9,500 men.¹⁴⁰ It was composed of five brigades of infantry, one brigade of cavalry, and one brigade of artillery.

Shah Shuja's force consisted of six battalions of infantry, two irregular cavalry regiments and one battery of horse artillery. He could recruit 6,000 men, mostly Indian sepoys¹⁴¹ and Punjabi Moslems.¹⁴² Therefore, no Afghan soldier could be found among Shah Shuja's forces.¹⁴³ The camp followers numbered 38,000, and the camels 30,000, in addition to the baggage.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁹Forbes, Archibald, *The Afghan Wars, 1839-42 and 1878-80*, London, Seeley and Co., 1892. www.archive.org. Accessed July 8, 2011

¹⁴⁰Martin, Ewans, *op.cit.* p.25

¹⁴¹Sepoys were Indian policemen who had been first hired by Portuguese, then later by the British; they were also used as soldiers. Wolpert, Stanley (ed), *Encyclopedia of India, Anglo-Afghans Wars, U.S.A.*, 2006.

¹⁴²Percy, Sykes, *A History of Afghanistan*, London, MacMillan, 1940, p.5, www.archive.org. Accessed: July 7, 2011

¹⁴³Jules, Stewart, *On Afghanistan's Plains: the Story of Britain's Afghans Wars*, London, I.B.Tauris, 2001, p.38

¹⁴⁴Martin, Ewans, *op.cit.*, p.25

Colonel Wade who commanded a combined force of Sikhs and mercenaries that numbered 6,000 men had to lead his army from Ferozepore to the Khyber Pass from which he would make his way to Kabul. Ranjeet Singh,¹⁴⁵ a British ally, used the Khyber Pass to head for Kabul. He, then, refused to allow the British and Indian sepoy forces to cross the Sikh lands and enter Afghanistan through the Khyber Pass¹⁴⁶(see map 4, p.59). Therefore, the only alternative left to them, was to invade Afghanistan through the Bolan Pass, in South Western modern Pakistan, and then the Khojak Pass, in proximity with Afghanistan. The British and sepoy armies were to assemble at Bukkur to cross the Bolan Pass,¹⁴⁷ and then the Khojak Pass to head for Kandahar, and then to Kabul via Ghazni. It was, indeed, these three localities that the Afghan resistance was determined to protect.

¹⁴⁵ Singh, Maharaja Ranjit (1780–1839) was a Sikh ruler of India. He ruled a large state in northwestern India that eventually encompassed the Punjab, Kashmir, several districts to the west of the river Indus, and the region around Multan. Stanley, Wolpert.(ed.), *Encyclopedia of India, Anglo-Afghan Wars*, U.S.A., 2006

¹⁴⁶Ibid.

¹⁴⁷The Bolan Pass is a mountain pass in West Pakistan about 60 miles (97 km) long. For centuries it has been a route for traders, invaders, and nomadic tribes between India and higher Asia. *Encyclopædia Britannica*. op.cit.

Map 4: The Routes Taken by the Invading Forces



Source: Martin Ewans, *Conflict in Afghanistan*, London, Routledge, 2005, p.26

Given the asymmetric nature of the war, the Afghan resistance relied on the various resources available to them. The latter concentrated their

efforts on the blockage of the gateways and the passes to Kabul. The Afghan resistance also relied on the clergy to initiate a fatwa to jihad to incite the Afghans to join forces to combat the invaders. To achieve these purposes, the Barakzais¹⁴⁸ fortified all portals to Kabul, the capital. Since Peshawar was in the Sikhs' hands, and was therefore a gateway to Kabul given its proximity to the Khyber Pass, Dost Mohammad dispatched his elder son, Akbar Khan, to lead Afghan soldiers to survey the exit of the pass, with the Afridi tribesmen's assistance.¹⁴⁹In Kandahar, Dost Mohammad relied on the local chiefs to combat the invading forces.

Unlike Kandahar, Ghazni's geographical location made it hold a strategic position. In fact, because it was an entryway to Kabul, its fortification with high bricks was capital. Therefore, Dost Mohammad sent a cavalry of 8,000 horsemen that his sons Hyder Khan and Afzul headed to defend it and its vicinity.¹⁵⁰ However, the amir's sons left the gateway to Kabul unfortified, should the need arise to receive assistance.

The passes were vital for the Afghan resistance, too. This fact offered the Afghans a significant advantage, for they controlled these passes. The Bolan Pass, the Khojak Pass, the Solang Pass and the Khyber Pass, among others, are the most notable today. Of the aforementioned passes, the

¹⁴⁸The Barakzai is an important section of the Zirk branch of the Durrani to which the Barakzai Muhammadzai ruling family belongs. Ludwig W. Adamec, *op.cit.*

¹⁴⁹Martin, Ewans, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

¹⁵⁰*Ibid.*

Khyber¹⁵¹ was of great concern for the British invaders and the Afghan resistance alike, for it was a gateway to Kabul, the Afghan capital. Additionally, the fact that the Afghans controlled the passes enabled the Afghan resistance to sever all communication between the British military officers in Afghanistan and the Government of India.

Equally noteworthy, Dost Mohammad relied on the mosaic tribes. To urge them to rally to his cause, he obtained ‘a fatwa’¹⁵² from the Afghan clergy calling for a jihad against the infidels.¹⁵³ Omar Cherifi, the Afghan Researcher and Director of the American Institute for Afghan Studies, argued that the Afghans’ response to join the jihad was to unite people as a nation.¹⁵⁴ In addition, the idea of jihad against the unbelievers had always been deeply ingrained in the Afghan culture. In this respect, Amin Saikal argues that ‘for the absolute majority of Afghans, regardless of their identification with a particular ethnic group, both the British and the Russians were first and foremost Kafirs (unbelievers) against whom jihad

¹⁵¹The Khyber Pass is a high mountain pass at an elevation of 1,070 m (3,510 ft) above the sea level, located in the north eastern part of the Spin Ghar Mountains. The road over the pass is the main route between Pakistan and Afghanistan. <http://www.dangerousroads.org/asia/afghanistan.html>. Accessed: September 23, 2015

¹⁵²A fatwa is a definitive legal pronouncement given in response to a question about an Islamic legal practice; it is given by a qualified mufti and based on authoritative precedents, not personal opinion alone. Historically, fata’wa have been separate from the judgments of the qa’di’s. In modern times the fatwa has sometimes been associated in the popular practice with declarations of jiha’d or with death decrees, Gordon Newby, *A concise Encyclopedia of Islam, Oxford, One World*, 2004

¹⁵³<http://www.mymultiplesclerosis.co.uk/afghanistan/boston.html> Accessed: April 23, 2012

¹⁵⁴Ibid.

ought to be waged.¹⁵⁵ However, regarding the war in question, it was the British who decided to wage it against the Afghans.

September 1838 marked the Indian Government's decision to begin the onslaught on Afghanistan, a decision which the hawks in London buoyed up. As mentioned earlier, Ranjeet Singh's refusal to allow the remaining invading forces to cross the Sikh land compelled the British forces to take a rather longer arduous route to Kabul.¹⁵⁶ Pursuant to Lord Auckland's injunctions, the Bengal army, under General Sir Willoughby Cotton, started its advance from Ludhiana, crossed the Sutlej River, and headed for Shikarpur in December 1838, where all the allied forces were to assemble.

In the same year, King Shuja's army left Ferozepore, a town in the Punjab, and marched along the Sutlej River in the direction of Shikarpur. And in February 1839, the Bombay contingent, under Sir John Keane, left Karachi for Shikarpur.

It is worth noting that the invading armies' advance on Kandahar, Ghazni and then Kabul, was not achieved without difficulties, due to the fact that they had no idea about the geography of the region. Their lack of knowledge of the area was coupled with their ignorance of their enemy's

¹⁵⁵Amin, Saikal, op cit., p.27.

¹⁵⁶Martin, Ewans, op.cit. , p.23.

capacities.¹⁵⁷ Before they reached Quetta (April 1839), they were attacked by tribesmen who massacred camp followers and dispossessed them of their camels and cattle. The invading armies' difficulties were embittered by the lack of food supply, which drove Lord Auckland to put the soldiers on short rations.¹⁵⁸ However, despite their setback, the British managed to capture some major cities.

III. The British Capture of Afghanistan Major Cities

Given the warring parties' asymmetry in army strength, organization, and equipment, the victory in battles went in favour of the invading forces; nevertheless, the Afghans' setback did not mean the end of Afghan resistance. British ascendancy over the Afghans can be accounted for the fact that they concentrated their efforts on the capture of three Afghan main cities: Kandahar, Ghazni, and Kabul. The seizure of Ghazni, for example, was crucial because it was coterminous to Kabul, and therefore, constituted a gateway to it, in addition to the fact that Kabul was the Afghan capital, where the Afghan policy was made. What is more important, the British believed that the capture of these aforementioned cities would, in the long run, bar the way to Russian encroachment upon India. Thus, the Anglo-Afghan war asymmetry tipped the balance, at least in the inception of this military confrontation, in the invaders' favour.

¹⁵⁷Martin, Ewans, *op.cit.*, p.27

¹⁵⁸*Ibid.*

Kandahar was the first Afghan locality that the British captured. The invaders overwhelmed Kandahar chiefs¹⁵⁹ because of their lack of self-confidence.¹⁶⁰ Now that Kandahar was in the hands of the invading armies, General Keane entrusted it to General Knot to ensure its security, and then, made his way towards Kabul via Ghazni on June 23, 1839.

Unlike that of Kandahar, Ghazni's capture was mainly due to an Afghan's treachery. Although Dost Mohammad had fortified Ghazni, General Keane and his troops were able to seize it, after storming it, and then moved forward in the direction of Kabul. The capture of Ghazni resulted in the invaders' loss of 17 men and the injury of 165 including 18 officers¹⁶¹ while within the ranks of the Afghans, more than 600 men lay dead and 1,600 were taken prisoners.¹⁶² Dost Mohammed's incapacity of defeating General Keane was due to the perfidy of his nephew, Abdool Reshed Khan who, after having deserted Dost Mohammad's ranks, disclosed the defects in Ghazni's fortifications.¹⁶³ Mowbray Morris illustrates such an idea in the following:

¹⁵⁹The phrases 'Kandahar chiefs' and 'Kandahar Sardars' are usually used interchangeably in literature related to Afghanistan. Emadi Hafizullah, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: The British, Russian, and American Invasion*, U.S.A., Palgrave Macmillan, 2010

¹⁶⁰Ibid.

¹⁶¹Morris, Mowbray, op.cit., p.48.

¹⁶²Adams W.H., Davenport, *The Makers of British India*, London, John Hogg, 1900, p.223. www.archive.org. Accessed: February 6, 2012

¹⁶³John William, Kaye, *History of the War in Afghanistan*, Vol.1, London, W.M.H. Allen & CO., 1874, www.archive.org. Accessed: October 15, 2011

One of the garrison, a Barukzye of rank, nephew to the Ameer himself, had deserted to our camp; the gate he assured us, had all been built with the exception of the Cabul gate, and therefore it was decided that the entrance should be made. That very night was chosen for the attack.¹⁶⁴

What should be underscored was that Dost Mohammad nephew's disclosure of the secret information relative to the defects of Ghazni fortifications was to the British invading armies of great assistance without which their advance to Kabul would be seriously thwarted because some British officers envisaged renunciation of the enterprise.¹⁶⁵ In return for the information which W. H. Davenport qualified as 'valuable',¹⁶⁶ the Afghan traitor was given a bribe.¹⁶⁷ Therefore, thanks to the traitor's assistance, the invading armies were capable of tipping the balance in their favour by attacking their enemy through the Kabul gate and ultimately routing the Afghans.

The Afghans' setback in Ghazni affected their morale but did not end their resistance. Dost Mohammad's reliance on Ghazni ramparts to busy the invaders for months was eliminated, which contributed to the impairment of the soldiers' morale and energy. Faced with the removal of his reliance on Ghazni's fortifications, and above all the duplicity of some of his companions, the amir's only rescue was to flee for safety to Bukhara.

¹⁶⁴Morris, Mowbray, op.cit., p.50.

¹⁶⁵W.H., Davenport, op.cit., p.226.

¹⁶⁶Ibid.

¹⁶⁷W.H.,Davenport did not mention the amount of money Dost Mohammad's nephew received, nor did he note the reason of the latter's betrayal, if not for the money.

Additionally, Ghazni's local inhabitants expressed their hostility against the invaders by attacking those who dared venture far from the army's camping site as it is expressed in the following words.

... to stray to any distance beyond the precincts of the camp was never safe, and in more than one instance proved fatal to the parties indulging in it. Two British officers, who had gone to fish the stream, were attacked on their return home, and one of them, Lieut. Inverarity, of the 16th Lancers, was murdered. A party of the 13th light infantry, who had been tempted to drive the animals and the cattle too far to graze, were set upon, and several of them wounded; while a body of not fewer than two hundred camp followers, when endeavoring to make their way back to Hindostan were betrayed, disarmed and butchered to a man.¹⁶⁸

Equally, invading Afghanistan was not, in the least, a party of pleasure as the British believed.¹⁶⁹ Worse still, Dost Mohammad's whereabouts were unknown. This fact instilled the British and Shah Shuja's fears, for Dost Mohammad's disappearance increased the prospects of the Afghans' resistance to the British and unrest in Afghanistan, which would ultimately foil the British schemes.

¹⁶⁸George Robert, Gleig, M. A., *Sales Brigade in Afghanistan, with an Account of the Seizure and Defence of Jellalabad.*, London, John Murray, 1846, p.39, www.archive.org. Accessed: October 14, 2011

¹⁶⁹Gregory Fremont, Barnes, *The Anglo-Afghan Wars (1839-1919)*, London, Osprey Publishing, 2009, p. 21.

The capture of Kabul, like that of Kandahar, did not prove hard on account of the nature of asymmetric warfare that the warring parties engaged in. The capture of Kabul was due to the impressive armies that marched on it, on the one hand, and the military strategy that the British developed on the other. Such strategy put Dost Mohammad's army in dire straits, for the latter had to face two armies advancing from two directions. The British main forces managed to approach the capital from Ghazni, while Colonel Wade's force, made up of mercenaries and Sikhs, were able to head towards the capital from the Khyber Pass.

Kabul's fall in the hands of the invading armies was also attributed to some Afghans' lack of determination, confidence, and perhaps their apathy towards Dost Mohammad's cause. Reverend G.R. Gleig, the principal chaplain to the invading forces, clearly stated in his book, *Sale's Brigade in Afghanistan*, that before the invading armies entered Kabul, Dost Mohammad's soldiers had left in the battlefield 22 pieces of field artillery.¹⁷⁰ Instead of using these weapons to defend the capital, they vanished leaving it unprotected.¹⁷¹ This, indeed, facilitated the capture of Kabul.

The British seizure of the main Afghan localities and in particular Kabul was a feat, which was followed with celebrations. Upon the capture of Kabul, the British concentrated their forces outside it, in its Northern

¹⁷⁰George Robert, Gleig, op.cit., p.42

¹⁷¹Ibid.

outskirts at Shairpore, a location in which they were obliged to erect their military base, in the proximity of Shah Shuja's fortress named Bala Hissar. To consolidate their power in Afghanistan, the British built and strengthened forts in Kandahar, Ghazni and Jalalabad. As a reward for their military exploit, the Home Government promoted the main actors on the battlefield to higher ranks. The Governor-General was promoted Earl; Keane was made Baron Keane of Ghazni; the envoy at Kabul and his assistant became, respectively Sir William Macnaghten and Sir Alexander Burnes.¹⁷²

Following the British promotions, Major-General Lord Auckland effected some military arrangements, which ultimately proved to be fatal for the British invaders. In fact, believing that he had achieved the purpose for which the British had invaded Afghanistan, notably the restoration of Shah Shuja to his throne, Lord Auckland decided to reduce the army strength in Afghanistan.¹⁷³ Pursuant to his decision, the Bombay contingent left Afghanistan for India in September 1840, followed by the Sikh conscripts and Keane's column in October.¹⁷⁴ Sir William Macnaghten, in his turn, thought of leaving Afghanistan for India, where he was appointed Governor of Bombay.¹⁷⁵ However, the Eastern Ghilzai tribesmen's uprisings made him delay his departure as he decided to reduce the money

¹⁷²Martin, Ewans, op.cit., p.30

¹⁷³Ibid., p.39

¹⁷⁴Ibid.

¹⁷⁵Ibid.

he had allocated to them for securing the Khyber Pass.¹⁷⁶ He, instead, instructed Robert Sale¹⁷⁷ to head for India.¹⁷⁸

Now that Shah Shuja had been restored to the Afghan throne, how would he rule the country, especially when his subjects showed some lukewarmness towards him for being assisted by the “infidels” to regain the throne? How long would the British forces stay in Afghanistan? Would Shah Shuja ‘s relation with Russia be amicable or inimical? An attempt to answer these questions will ensue in the following pages.

IV. King Shuja’s Inability to Consolidate his Power

The British capitalization on King Shuja’s ability to rule Afghanistan failed miserably. In order to exercise his authority effectively, the Afghan king sought to rely on the chiefs to assist him through their advisory council in the levying of taxation that would enable him to set his machinery of government in motion.¹⁷⁹ A like endeavour proved impossible because of the difficulty to rally every tribal chief to his cause.

Added to this, Shah Shuja grew unpopular with his subjects following his entry into Kabul. The very fact that King Shuja entered

¹⁷⁶The Ghilzai is a major Pashtu-speaking tribe who fought the British when they invaded Afghanistan and subsequently became the major rivals of the Durrani. Ludwig Adamec, op.cit.

¹⁷⁷General Sir Robert Sale was a commander of the garrison at Jalalabad during the First Anglo-Afghan War (1838–1842).

¹⁷⁸Martin, Ewans, op.cit, p.39

¹⁷⁹John William, Kaye , *History of the War in Afghanistan*, London, 1852, Vol. I, p. 464. Cited in Martin Ewans, p.32-33

Afghanistan with a foreign military force, holding different cultural, political and above all religious beliefs, made his subjects carry the firm conviction that the man who claimed to be their rightful king, had more beliefs to share with the invaders, than with them. Consequently, neither Shah Shuja, nor the invaders were welcomed in Afghanistan. In this respect, the British historian, John William Kaye (1814-1876), argued that people's reception of the man who had once been their king "was more like a funeral procession than the entry of a King into the capital of his restored dominions."¹⁸⁰ He added, "the Shah had no hold of the affections of his people. He might sit in the Bala Hissar, but he could not govern the Afghans."¹⁸¹ Reverend Gleig shared a similar conviction with John William Kaye's opinion as expressed in the following words:

There was no increase of good feeling on the part of the inhabitants towards the invaders. The province submitted, or appeared to submit, to the rule of Shah Shuja, but of enthusiasm in his cause no class of society exhibited a sign; while the bearing of all in their intercourse with the English was as hostile as ever.¹⁸²

Given these latter facts, one can therefore imagine the type of government Shah Shuja would erect in the face of his subjects' rancour and the aforementioned obstacles that he was to contend with to make the wheels of his government running. Now what dwells at issue is how he could ally

¹⁸⁰ John William, Kaye, op.cit., p.478

¹⁸¹ Ibid., p.2

¹⁸²G.R. Gleig, op. cit., p.48

them to his government. If King Shuja's plight was desperate, that of the British was not in the least pleasant.

V. British Dilemma in Afghanistan

The British, too, were not in a firm position. This desperate situation was due to the fact that their maintaining of Shah Shuja on the throne would require them finance and a military force always in readiness to crush any potential rebellion.¹⁸³ Both means the British were not ready to provide, for they would drain the government treasury coffers, which in the long run, would render the British colony of India at stake.¹⁸⁴ In order to avoid the pitfalls mentioned above, the British resorted to unpopular means that caused Afghan bitter resentment.

In fact, to maintain Shah Shuja on the throne, the British officers, made use of force, but such a policy proved counterproductive, because it fuelled hatred and antagonism towards the new government and the British alike.¹⁸⁵ Therefore, skirmishes between the British forces and the Afghans were common. This situation created a dilemma for the British in that, keeping Shah Shuja on the throne would compel the British to dip into the Indian Treasury.¹⁸⁶ Equally, leaving the latter without the necessary military and financial assistance would hasten his fall, and consequently all the

¹⁸³Martin, Ewans, op.cit., p. 31

¹⁸⁴Ibid., p.38

¹⁸⁵Ibid., p.36

¹⁸⁶Ibid.

enterprise that the British undertook to enthrone their friendly king to achieve their hopes, would end in a fiasco.¹⁸⁷ What Macnaghten failed to realize was that British occupation of Afghanistan had already affected the financial resources of the Indian treasury.

Due to the financial instability that the colonization of Afghanistan had brought about, Governor-General Lord Auckland notified Macnaghten to consider his administration expenditures, for such a military occupation of Afghanistan cost the Indian treasury a million and a quarter sterling a year, which had contributed to the Indian coffers leakage.¹⁸⁸ The Anglo-Indian Government thought of abandoning such an enterprise given its high cost. Macnaghten first objected to reducing the Ghilzai payment, justifying his position on the ground that such money pacified the Ghilzai tribesmen whose job was to ensure both the safety carriage of goods and ammunition to the British soldiers stationed in Afghanistan, and communication with India. However, faced with Lord Auckland's pressure, he ultimately yielded.¹⁸⁹

If the Afghans, with their heterogeneous ethnic groups, showed some sort of apathy towards the cause of their amir who was exiled in India, they

¹⁸⁷ Martin, Ewans, *op.cit.*, p.36

¹⁸⁸ Archibald, Forbes, *op.cit.* p.61

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

were to join forces to rise in rebellion against the British and their candidate, Shah Shuja.¹⁹⁰

VI. The Outbreak of the Afghan Insurgency

The year 1841 was outstanding in the Afghans' history because it constituted a starting point of their popular resistance to British rule. This situation drove British officials to consider bringing about some reshuffle in the army that served in Afghanistan. In fact, in April 1841, Lord Auckland was compelled to make a substitution at the head of the military leadership in Afghanistan, because of Sir Willoughby Cotton's poor physical condition. General William Elphinstone, who was to replace him, was then aged 62 and suffered from rheumatism.¹⁹¹ In addition to his illness, General William Elphinstone was an irresolute person lacking firmness of purpose.¹⁹² Brigadier Shelton was to assist him. Yet, these two men did not make a perfect match, for Brigadier Shelton displayed brutal conduct and showed some disdain for his senior officer.¹⁹³ It was these two men who were to deal with the Afghan rebels whose grievances were manifold.

Six events underlay the Afghan insurgency. First, Sir William Macnaghten's decision to bring down the Ghilzai chiefs' stipend that the latter had been accustomed to receiving for their surveillance of the British goods from plunder and their keeping of the communication channels with

¹⁹⁰Archibald, Forbes, op.cit. p.61

¹⁹¹Ibid.

¹⁹²Ibid.

¹⁹³Ibid.

India safe was to antagonize these Ghilzai chiefs.¹⁹⁴ Second, the invaders' long stay on the Afghan land was incomprehensible to the local population. Third, the arrival of European women and the birth of children were to confirm the Afghans' suspicions that the invaders were there to stay.¹⁹⁵ Fourth, the use of force to collect the revenues for King Shuja antagonized the Durrani and Ghilzai, the most untamable tribes in Afghanistan. Fifth, British interference with the Afghans' customs and traditions was to shake the cohesion within the Afghan social groups and subsequently antagonized them. Last, the invading armies' meddling with the Afghan women was the last straw, for such behaviour in a highly conservative society aroused the Afghans' rancour so bitterly that revenge alone could alleviate.¹⁹⁶ Still, the invading armies did not know that a mere question to ask about the health of someone's wife is comparable to an affront, let alone making advances to her.¹⁹⁷ Such hostility led to open confrontations between these tribes and the British under Colonel Nott, culminating in the defeat of both tribes in August 1841.¹⁹⁸

Equally, the British invaders altered the King's relationships with the tribal chiefs. In her diary *Journal of Disasters in Afghanistan*, Lady Sale noted that before the British and their allies arrived in Afghanistan, the

¹⁹⁴Archibald, Forbes, op.cit. p.39

¹⁹⁵www.mymultiplesclerosis.co.uk/afghanistan/rodricbraithwaite.html, Accessed: June 1, 2012

¹⁹⁶Gregory Fremont, Barnes, op.cit., p.24.

¹⁹⁷Frank A., Martin, *Under the Absolute Amir*, London, Harper and Brother, 1907, p.92, [www. Archive.org](http://www.archive.org). Accessed: August 11, 2014

¹⁹⁸Ibid.

political relationships between the Afghan king and the tribal chiefs had been consensual, and in times of war the latter provided the amir with their servants, and in exchange they received money. However, during the occupation, King Shah Shuja pressured the tribal chiefs into supplying the invading armies with their retainers, who bore the British bitter resentment, without receiving any money in return.¹⁹⁹ Such British misdeeds coupled with Afghans' growing resentment had affected the Anglo-Afghan relationships so seriously that even the change in government in Britain could not ward off in the months that followed British misdeeds.

The change of the British Government and the rise of the Tory Party to power in 1841, under Sir Robert Peel, did not change the course of events in Afghanistan.²⁰⁰ Though William Macnaghten attempted to justify his stipend reduction measure to the government of India, on the ground of the financial constraints that the occupation of Afghanistan incurred for both British governments in India and London, he was ultimately made responsible for causing unrest.²⁰¹ In fact, the events that followed were catastrophic for the British as the Afghan resistance to the British intensified. The Afghans' rise into rebellion encouraged Dost Mohammad's elder son, Akbar Khan to enter Kabul and lead the revolt. During the turmoil, the British suffered serious setbacks. As a matter of fact, several

¹⁹⁹Florentia, Sale (Lady Sale), *A Journal of the Disasters in Affghanistan*, London, 1843, p.8, www.archive.org. Accessed: July 7, 2011

²⁰⁰Martin, Ewans, op.cit, p.39

²⁰¹Ibid.

events tested the British strength and boldness, and proved that the Afghans had carefully prepared their actions against the British.

In late October 1841, the Afghans attacked a British outpost in Northern Kabul, grabbing the ammunitions, which helped them pursue their insurgency. In November, they murdered Alexander Burnes, the British spy, the latter's brother and Lieutenant Broadfoot.²⁰² Upon Burnes's death, the rioters managed to deprive their enemies of their reserves of medicines and grains which were already dwindling.²⁰³ Yet, the British were incapable of taking actions against the Afghans due to their weakness vis -à-vis the Afghan insurgents. The British weakness encouraged other autochthons to enter Kabul, to help the ones who were already sniping at the British and Indian soldiers. The rebels took the heights, an advantage that they had over their enemies, for the British cantonment grew exposed to the Afghan Jezail²⁰⁴ which was more precise and had a longer range than the British gun, and thus outweighing it.²⁰⁵

In the same month, the insurgents succeeded in laying siege to the British barracks in Kabul. This made the British unable to get assistance

²⁰²Archibald, Forbes, op.cit., p.74

²⁰³Ibid.

²⁰⁴The jezail is a long-barreled musket with a thin, curved butt that was the major Afghan firearm during the nineteenth century and can still be seen in the bazaars of the country. It was muzzle-loaded and therefore required several minutes to prepare, but it is said to have had greater accuracy and range than the British muskets. Ludwig W. Adamec, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, Oxford, the Scarecrow Press, 2003.

²⁰⁵W.H. Davenport, Adams, op. cit., p. 237.

from the neighbouring areas. Then, counting upon Colonel Nott's force in Kandahar would take about five weeks' march owing to the snow that would hamper the Indian soldiers' advance because the latter were not accustomed to the snowy weather. Disobedience and indiscipline within the invading forces' ranks were to add to their weaknesses.

What made the British condition worse were the cases of insubordination.²⁰⁶ An illustration of this was the 44th foot's refusal of Elphinstone's orders, as he appeared to them weak and incapable.²⁰⁷ A similar case of insubordination was Robert Sale's. In fact, confronted with the Ghilzais' unrest, the only resort left for the British was to count upon Robert Sale's brigade to reestablish communication channels with India, which channels the Ghilzai malcontents had closed. However, believing that William Macnaghten was then the source of the problem, due to his policy of reducing the tribal chiefs' stipend, Robert Sale ignored his orders.²⁰⁸ Given the cases of insubordination that the invading forces witnessed and the lack of harmonious relations they developed, their condition in Afghanistan worsened.

²⁰⁶Gregory Fremont, Barnes, op. cit., p.27

²⁰⁷Ibid.

²⁰⁸Percy, Sykes, op cit.,p. 25

By mid November 1841, the British plight became tragic. The Afghans' repeated snipe fires at them and the news that a whole Gurkha²⁰⁹ regiment had been massacred in Kohistan²¹⁰ were to sap their morale. Equally, they suffered from want in supplies of men, soldiers and ammunitions. Worse still, the British officers' communication with their comrades in Kandahar and Ghazni was hopeless because the Afghans controlled the passes. To establish communication channels with India for supplies of reinforcements and support, the British should be required to control the Khyber Pass, the portal to India. Likewise, in order to get assistance from their allies the Sikhs in Peshawar, as stated in the Tripartite Treaty of 1838²¹¹, the latter would have to cross the Khyber Pass.²¹² However, since the pass was in the hands of the Afridis,²¹³ the British frequently offered the latter bribes, which attitude was not on all occasions productive. Below is Sir William Macnaghten's correspondence with Captain Macgregor, the political agent at Gandamuck, in which he gives us an insight about the dire straits which the British were going through.

²⁰⁹The Gurkhas were Nepalese soldiers who were permitted to volunteer for service for the East India Company's army after the Anglo-Nepalese peace treaty of 1816. <http://www.army.mod.uk/gurkhas>. Accessed: April 1, 2015

²¹⁰Kohistan is today a district in Parwan Province north of Kabul. Its population is largely Tajik and Sunni Muslim. Ludwig W. Adamec, op. cit.

²¹¹See appendix I, p.221

²¹²According to the Tripartite Treaty of June 26, 1838, Dost Muhammad was to be overthrown and Shah Shuja, an Afghan prince living in exile, at Ludhiana was to be placed on the throne of Afghanistan with the Sikh military and British financial support. <http://www.historydiscussion.net/british-india>. Accessed: April 1, 2015

²¹³The Afridi is a Pashtu-speaking tribe that is located in the area of the Khaibar Pass, just beyond the Afghan border. Ibid.

I HAVE received your letters of the 13th instant. The cossid gave us an account of your action of the 14th instant, which, if he speaks truth, must have been a very successful one; we are in statu quo. Our chief want is supplies. I perceive now, that you could not well have joined us. I hope you have written to Mackeson, asking aid from the Sikhs under the treaty. If there is any difficulty about the Sikhs getting through the pass, Mackeson should offer a bribe to the Khybers, of a lac of rupees or more, to insure their safe passage.²¹⁴

The Afghan resistance success in weakening the invaders was due to the effective strategy it conceived. Abdullah Khan Achakzai, Aminullah Khan Logari, Sikandar Khan, and Abdussalem Khan were among the men who sparked off the Afghan rebellion, which ultimately led to the British retreat from Afghanistan in 1842.²¹⁵ These men met at Abdullah Khan Achakzai's home to plan the coordination of their actions against the British forces and their allies on November 1, 1841. They also increased people's awareness of the necessity of getting rid of Alexander Burnes, one of General Elphinstone's political advisors and spies. Accordingly, on 2 November 1841, the malcontents murdered Alexander Burnes, his brother, Charles Burnes, and Captain Broadfoot. They also deprived the invading armies of most of their victuals, ammunitions, and treasury that equalled

²¹⁴*Papers Relating to Military Operations in Affghanistan presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty*, 1843. www.archive.org. Accessed: July 7, 2011

²¹⁵Ahmed Ali, Kohzad, *Men and Events through 18th and 19th Century Afghanistan, Kabul*, [s.n.], 1900. p.120. www.archive.org. Accessed: August 3, 2012

£17,000.²¹⁶ Alexander Burnes's loss was so a major blow for the British colonizers that some eminent writers felt the need to seek an explanation for such a loss. W.H. Davenport Adams was one of these.

W.H. Davenport Adams (1828-1891), the English writer and journalist of the 19th century, attributed Alexander Burnes's assassination to his complacency and overconfidence.²¹⁷ His knowledge of the Pashtu language, owing to his previous travels in the Afghan land and mainly to his residence among the Afghans, made him develop self-confidence, and subsequently, ignore Osman Khan's warnings,²¹⁸ even though Alexander Burnes sensed the Afghans' antagonism vis-à-vis British rule.

British miserable condition was mainly due to their officials' lack of promptness and indecision. What should be essential to note is that, though Alexander Burnes had previously apprised Major General Sir William Elphinstone and Sir William Macnaghten of the Afghans' imminent rebellion, the latter hesitated to take prompt measures to deal with the insurgency;²¹⁹ such indecision and lack of promptness, seriously impacted the British plight.

Additionally, British officials' incessant arguments were to add to the invaders' affliction. Surprisingly enough, the British, whose camp was a

²¹⁶Martin, Ewans, op. cit., p. 40.

²¹⁷Adams, Davenport op. cit., p. 232

²¹⁸Osman Khan was King Shuja's Prime Minister.

²¹⁹Martin, Ewans, op.cit., p.39

mile and a half from Alexander Burnes's dwelling, were unable to come to his rescue from the Afghan angry mob. This conjuncture incited the officers to urge General Elphinstone to summon Lieutenant Shelton, who was at the Bala Hissar, for assistance. Disappointed about Elphinstone's indecisive attitude and procrastination, the lieutenant bickered with his chief, intensifying both men's formerly prevailing antipathy.²²⁰

Equally, Shah Shuja's political entourage was not to appease the strained atmosphere. In a letter dated 20 October 1841, that Sir William Macnaghten sent to T.H. Maddock, then Secretary to the Government of India, he attributed the breakout of the Afghan rebellion to Governor Humza Khan's duplicity, in that instead of acting as a mediator between Sir William Macnaghten and the Eastern Ghilzai chiefs, Humza Khan helped spark off the rebellion.²²¹ Additionally, Hamza Khan objected to voicing the Eastern Ghilzais' grief to Sir William Macnaghten so that the latter would redress it, which complicated the rebels' communication with the British officials.²²²

Faced with the latter development, the British military leaders in Afghanistan were indecisive about what of the following courses of actions to take: to fight or negotiate a treaty with the Afghans.²²³ Their indecision to take actions against the Afghan mobs seen by the latter as a sign of British

²²⁰Martin, Ewans, op.cit., 40

²²¹See appendix II, p, 227

²²²Ibid.

²²³Ibid.

officials' feebleness, encouraged the latter to further intensify their commotion. Accordingly, in November 1841, the Afghan malcontents looted the commissariats in which the British army stored their supplies. Lieutenant Vincent Eyre expounded British indecision to react to the Afghans' unrest in the following words:

The fact of our having permitted them so long to brave us with impunity, had doubtless been regarded by the secret enemies of the new rule as a mark of conscious weakness, and may have encouraged them, in no slight degree, to hatch those treasonable designs against the state which were so suddenly developed in November 1841 and which were for the time, unhappily, but too successful.²²⁴

Worse still, the aforementioned British officials' arguments drove General Elphinstone to reject Brigadier Shelton's suggestions, notably to take coercive actions against the Afghan insurgents. He instead determined to listen to his political agent, Macnaghten, who recommended a negotiated settlement with the Afghans. So, General Elphinstone refused to listen neither to Brigadier Shelton, nor to Shah Shuja who both were for the idea of assembling all the invading forces' troops at the Bala Hissar. W. H. Davenport Adams provides an instance of General Elphinstone's stubbornness in the following words: "when the amir advised the concentration of the entire British forces at the Bala Hissar, he urged their withdrawal to

²²⁴Vincent, Eyre, op.cit, p.5.

Jalalabad.”²²⁵ British officials’ weakness coupled with the prospects of hunger in a cold weather impelled Sir William Macnaghten to negotiate a surrender agreement with the Afghan sirdars on December 11, 1841, on the banks of Kabul River.²²⁶

What featured the Afghans’ and British negotiations was that these belligerent parties fuelled mutual mistrust.²²⁷ For example, while the Afghan sirdars insisted that the invading forces should leave Kabul for India unarmed, the British raised objections to such an idea. Additionally, in order to prevent the British forces stationed in Kandahar and Jalalabad to join forces with those in Kabul, the Afghan sirdars pressed the British forces to withdraw to India first, as mentioned in clause three below of the treaty that both parties signed in Zulqada 1257.²²⁸ Clause ten of the same treaty stipulated that the British should be required to deliver British hostages, which, the Afghans believed, would guarantee Dost Mohammad’s safe return to his throne.²²⁹ In his book entitled, *Men and Events through 18th and 19th Century Afghanistan*, the Afghan writer, Ahmed Khan Kohzad explains the clause relative to the hostages and the British evacuation of Jalalabad and Kandahar as follows:

²²⁵W.H., Davenport, op.cit., p.235.

²²⁶Louis, Dupree, “The Retreat of the British Army to Jalalabad in 1842: History and Folklore,” *Journal of Folklore Institute*. Indiana University Press, 1967, p.54.

²²⁷Ibid.

²²⁸Ahmed Ali, Kohzad, op cit., p.126,

²²⁹Ibid.,p.127

... Pottinger promised that since the evacuation of the English troops had been undertaken by the English, it was undertaken that prior to the reaching of the English troops at Jalalabad, the English must evacuate Jalalabad forces, too, from that city Indiawards. Clause number ten of this Treaty , too, had undertaken that the English would leave military officers as hostages at Kabul, till the matter of the return of Amir Dost Mohammad Khan and his relatives from India to Afghanistan could be settled at Peshawar. In accordance to this latter clause, the English left seven of their officers at Kabul, namely Durrand, Walsh, Warburton. Webb, Conolly, Avery and Anderson. These hostages were detained in the house of Nawab Mohamed Zaman Khan.²³⁰

Upon the British observation of clause No.3, the Afghans would, in return, promise them safe withdrawal, forage for the horses, and food supply.

Shah Shuja's plight was not in the least agreeable. The Afghan sirdars warned him that his restoration to the Afghan throne was conditional on his observation of some specific demands. These were the use of his power of persuasion to induce Robert Sale to evacuate Jalalabad and his assistance of Akbar Khan with his army to combat Robert Sale, if need be. Despite his acquiescence to the sirdars' conditions, Shah Shuja was murdered on April 5, 1842 by Shuja-u-Dola, son of Zaman Khan, to whom the guard of the British prisoners was entrusted.²³¹

²³⁰Ibid., pp. 126-127.

²³¹Percy, Sykes, op.cit., p. 45.

Shah Shuja's assassination was to add to the British mistrust, which increased their anxiety. In fact, fearing the Afghans might violate the agreement, the British attempted to corrupt the Afghan tribal chiefs, by granting them money and promising further grants, in the hope that they would abide by the safe conduct. Because he believed he could not find a compromise with the tribal chiefs, Sir William Macnaghten attempted to implement 'the divide and rule policy'²³² thought that the only rescue from a like unfavourable condition was to cause discord among the tribal chiefs, a scheme that cost him his life on December 23, 1842.²³³

William Macnaghten's death was due to several factors, among which his complacency and overconfidence, his ignorance of the Afghan people and their cultures; in fact, General Elphinston was dubious about the Afghans' sincerity that the Afghan tribal chiefs' promises were hollow²³⁴. what Macnaghten failed to know, was that despite the rivalry that featured the Ghilzai and the Durrani social relationships for political power, they were all Pashtuns who were always ready to join forces to combat the invader. It is in such circumstances that Elphinstone ordered the

²³²'Divide and rule' is a policy whose aim is to create discord between subordinates in order to secure a position of power. The British made use of such a policy first in the Punjab, within the Indian Army following the Indian Mutiny of 1857 to counter the growing of nationalism in India. Therefore, William Macnaghten believed that such a policy would also be effective in Afghanistan. "Neil Stewart, Divide and Rule: British Policy in Indian History," *Science & Society*, Guilford Press, Vol. 15, No. 1 (Winter, 1951), pp. 49-57

²³³Percy, Sykes, op.cit., p. 45.

²³⁴Ken McNaughton, *Sir William Hay Macnaghten and the First Afghan War*, www.clanmacnaughton.net/

British and Indian columns to start the long march in January 1842 towards India.

As a matter of fact, compelled to retreat from Kabul for India on January 1, 1842, the invaders endured a terrible thirteen-day ordeal that resulted in their loss save one survivor. The retreating people, who then numbered 16,500,²³⁵ consisted of 4,500 fighting men and 12,000 camp followers.²³⁶ These people were to head for Jalalabad, a region that is more than 208 kilometers from Kabul.

The retreating people were to take the following routes: they would move from Kabul to Tezeen through the Khurd Kabul Pass,²³⁷ and then from Tezeen to Gandamak through the Jagdalak Pass.²³⁸ Finally, they would progress from Gandamak to Jalalabad, where Robert Sale had assembled his brigade (see map 5, p.87).

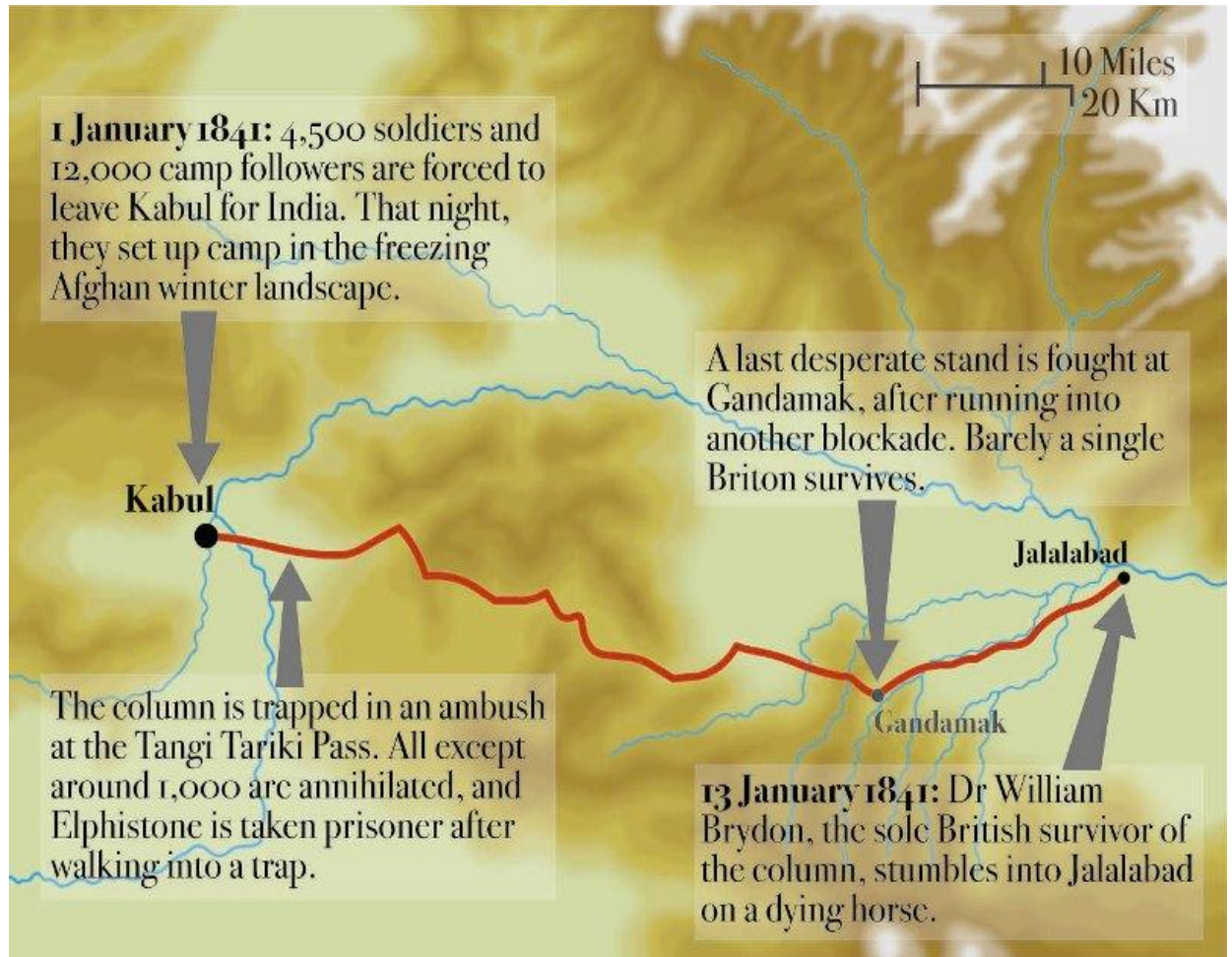
²³⁵There is no agreement as to the number of British and Sepoy forces retreating from Kabul in January, 1842. Whereas Louis Dupree in *The Retreat of the British Army to Jalalabad* in 1842 emphasizes that the number was 16,500, the Afghan writer, Kohzad Ahmed Ali in his book, *Men and Events through 18th and 19th Century Afghanistan* insists that the number was about 17,500

²³⁶<http://www.military-history.org/articles/the-retreat-from-kabul-exclusive-map.htm>
Accessed: May 4, 2012

²³⁷The Khurd Kabul Pass, which is 24 kilometres from Kabul, is eight kilometres long.
Ibid

²³⁸The Jagdalak Pass is thirty-eight kilometres, from Tezeen. It is 3, 2 kilometres long and rises at an elevation of 6,420 feet. Ibid

Map 5: British Retreat from Kabul



Source: www.military-history.org/articles/the-retreat-from-kabul-exclusive-map.htm. Accessed: May 4th, 2012

The retreating people's advance from Kabul was fraught with disaster because of the weather, hunger, Afghans' attacks and their ascendancy over this retreating army. In fact, the people who withdrew from Kabul on January 1, 1842, had to brave the cold and snowy weather and the lack of the necessary rations, transport and forage. In spite of these hardships, they

managed to cover eight kilometres the first day. These people's advance was not easy because their rear guard was subject to repeated attacks of their enemy²³⁹ The advantage that the Afghans had over the retreating armies was that they knew the geography of the area better than the British did; they controlled these passes and occupied the high ground, which made it for them to snipe at the retreating people

During the second day of their withdrawal, the British were faced with two options: whereas Shelton suggested that they should hurriedly traverse the Khurd Kabul Pass before the Afghans could gather in strength, William Elphinstone, still counting upon Akbar Khan's assurances, proposed that they should stop awaiting the food supply and fire wood that the latter had promised. However, they ultimately had to abandon such option.

Traversing the Khurd Kabul Pass was disastrous for the retreating armies,²⁴⁰ due to the Afghans' hostility on the one hand and William Elphinstone's credulity on the other. The Ghilzais' repeated sniper fires culminated in the slaughter of 3,000 retreating people.²⁴¹ Upon this grievous affliction, Akbar Khan asked William Elphinstone to deliver him the wounded people, the women, and children so that he would grant them

²³⁹Percy, Sykes, op.cit., p. 33

²⁴⁰Khurd Kabul Pass is a pass that is about 20 miles east of Kabul, extending for a length of about six miles and only about 100 to 200 yards wide, through which passes a road, crossing the Kabul River 23 times. Ludwig W. Adamec, op.cit.

²⁴¹Percy, Sykes, op.cit., p.34

custody.²⁴² Akbar Khan added that he was sorry for being unable to prevent the Ghilzais from perpetrating a like massacre.²⁴³ Despite the fact that William Elphinstone had been hesitant at first to respond positively to Akbar Khan's demand, as he was suspicious of Akbar Khan's motives, he ultimately acquiesced. Before the survivors could cross the Jagdalak Pass for Gandamak, Akbar Khan took the British military leadership, namely, William Elphinstone, Shelton and Johnson, as hostages. The remaining survivors among whom 20 British officers and 55 soldiers were left to their fate while struggling, in frost and snow to reach Gandamak.²⁴⁴ Akbar Khan took such a course of action because he feared that the survivors might assemble in full strength with Robert Sale's force already encamped in Jalalabad, and awaiting military reinforcements from India. While laboriously advancing towards Jalalabad, weather-beaten and under their enemy fire, all the survivors were killed, apart from Doctor Brydon (1811-1873) who, on January 13, 1841, managed to relate the disaster to his military comrades in Jalalabad.²⁴⁵

If the retreating armies from Kabul had been utterly destroyed, save Doctor William Brydon who painfully managed to reach Jalalabad on

²⁴²Florentia Sale, *A Journal of the Disasters in Affghanistan* was one of the hostages. Percy Sykes, op cit.

²⁴³Florentia Sale, p.35

²⁴⁴Ibid.

²⁴⁵W.J.D., Gould, *The Years in India, in the 16th Queen's Lancers, and Three Years in South Africa, in the Corps Levies*, Toronto, Hunter, Rose & Company, 1880, p.53, www.archive.org. Accessed: October 17, 2014

January 13, 1842,²⁴⁶ in Kandahar, Ghazni and Jalalabad, the fighting was still underway. In Ghazni, the invading armies were driven to surrender because of their want of water supply, medical stores and military ammunition, due to the failure of communication with Kabul. Colonel Nott, to whom the security of Kandahar had been entrusted, managed with great difficulty to defeat his enemies. Similarly, Robert Sale cavalry was able to put Akbar Khan's force to rout, on two occasions, forcing Akbar Khan to abandon his siege of Jalalabad.

The British army's defeat in Afghanistan was hard, for it was both material and psychological. Lady Sale's journal that was published in London a year following the disaster moved the British, as the journal described the horror that the British and the Indian soldiers suffered from while retreating from Kabul to India. Lady Sale described their ordeal in her diary in the following paragraph.

At the commencement of the defile, and for some considerable distance, we passed 200 or 300 of our miserable Hindostanees, who had escaped up the unfrequented road from the massacre of the 12th. They were all naked, and more or less frostbitten: wounded, and starving, they had set fire to the bushes and grass, and huddled all together to impart warmth to each other. Subsequently, we heard that scarcely any of these poor wretches escaped from the defile :

²⁴⁶John F., Riddick, *The History of British India: a Chronology*, London, Praeger, 2006, p.44

and that driven to the extreme of hunger they had sustained life by feeding on their dead comrades.²⁴⁷

The utter destruction of the British army aroused the British public opinion wrath. To appease their ire, the British invaded Afghanistan again in retribution. Though Ellenborough, the new Governor of India, was at first in favour of the British withdrawal from Afghanistan, the pressure for retaliation in London was unrelenting. Therefore, Lord Auckland commissioned Major-General Pollock to launch a punitive expedition into Afghanistan for revenge.²⁴⁸ The latter had three missions. First, he had to lift the siege of Jalalabad, where major Sale faced Akbar Khan's repeated attacks. His second mission was to release the hostages in Bamian, Ghazni and the Bala Hissar and his third mission was to carry out the retaliation against the Afghans.

To exact retribution against the Afghans, the British government of India commissioned the military commanders they judged fit for such a mission. Three men assisted Major-General Pollock in his retaliation campaign: Brigadier-General Catskill, Brigadier Wild and Colonel Nott. These men mobilized 8,000 men strong.²⁴⁹ Eight infantry regiments, three horse corps, a troop and two batteries of artillery, and a mountain train, composed the invading army.

²⁴⁷ Florentia, Sale, op. cit., p. 281

²⁴⁸ Archibald, Forbes, op.cit., p. 135

²⁴⁹ Ibid., p.136

To avoid potential pitfalls that might hamper their advance, the army of retribution adopted the following strategy: it placed soldiers on each side of the defiles heights. These men had two tasks: first conduct reconnaissance, and then clear the ground in the heights of the passes to help the army march through the passes, without difficulty.²⁵⁰ The army that started its retreat from Kabul on January 1, 1842, failed to pursue such military strategy, and had therefore been , one of the major causes of its destruction. Unlike the retreating army, the retribution army strengthened the rearguards of the forces that marched through the passes.

The adoption of the aforementioned military strategy proved effective. It pre-empted the Afghans' plan, for they had blocked the Khyber and Jugdaluck passes in their effort to hold sway over the defiles, and ultimately defeat the British army.²⁵¹ Pursuant to the British plans, Major-General Pollock was to march on Kabul from Jalalabad while Major-General Nott was to reach it from Kandahar. Accordingly, Major-General Pollock was able to rout the Afghans and marched on Kabul, which he reached in mid-September 1842. Colonel Nott's advance on Kabul was successful, too, but not without meeting with fierce Afghan resistance in Ghazni, which he, ultimately, was able to overpower.

As part of their retribution plan, the British focused their reprisal measures on three Afghan localities: Kohistan, Istaliff and Kabul. In

²⁵⁰Ibid., p.137

²⁵¹Archibald, Forbes, op.cit., p.137

Kohistan, which, they believed, provided a home for the indomitable Ghilzai warriors they razed Charikar, the Kohistanee capital which a few months before, had witnessed the complete destruction of Nepalese recruits commanded by Major-General Codrington.²⁵² The retribution army also set fire on a village named Istaliff, after they had routed an Afghan force.²⁵³ In Kabul, the place where the Afghans had displayed Alexander Burnes's and Macnaghten's heads in 1841, the British destroyed the Kabul Bazaar. On the same day, Major General Pollock dispatched mounted soldiers to liberate Akbar Khan's hostages, among whom there were Lady Sale, Lieutenant Eyre and Captain Lawrence. Shaista Wahab, the Afghan historian and native of Kabul, wrote that there were also scenes of pillage and cases of rape, as part of the British army's retribution.²⁵⁴ Additionally, H.W. Bellow, a medical officer reckoned in his journal entitled a *Journal of a Political Mission to Afghanistan*, the British army profaned Sultan Mahmud's tomb in Ghazni.²⁵⁵ The Sultan was known to be the founder of Ghazni, where Afghans came to show their regard for the defunct.

All in all, as part of the British reprisals, the Afghans witnessed scenes of extreme violence and atrocities. However, the Afghans resistance

²⁵² Archibald, Forbes, op.cit., p.155

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ Shaicha, Wahab, op.cit., p.85.

²⁵⁵ Bellow Henry, *Walter, Journal of a Political Mission to Afghanistan*, in 1857, London, Smith, Elder and Co., 1910, p., 184, www.archive. org. Accessed: July 8, 2011

was able to kill and injure some sixty soldiers.²⁵⁶ They also managed to seize their enemy's baggage, namely that of Major-General M'Caskill's and Nott's soldiers'.²⁵⁷

In brief, the British debacle, commonly known as 'Auckland's folly' and tragedy that the British experienced in Afghanistan in 1842 originated in the following factors. One of these factors is imputable to their failure to understand the relationships between these diverse tribal groups, the clergy and the central government in Kabul.²⁵⁸ History shows that these tribal groups had always been inclined to some independence vis-à-vis Kabul government, whose authority they had repeatedly challenged, which partly accounted for Akbar Khan's inability to bring the Ghilzai tribesmen into submission, during the British retreat from Kabul in January 1841. Akbar Khan's inability to deal with the Ghilzais was coupled by General Elphinstone's credulity, as he failed to sense the Afghans' disingenuousness towards the invaders. Additionally, the British failed to know that the women, gold and land constituted the Afghan's valuables for which he fights by all means.²⁵⁹

Equally, the British made no effort to set up an effective intelligence apparatus or reconnaissance that would save their lives, time and energy, particularly at the outset of their invasion. Cases in point of these defects

²⁵⁶ Archibald, Forbes, op.cit., p. 156

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ Peter, Tomsen, *The Wars of Afghanistan*, U.S.A., Public Affairs, 2011, p. 46

²⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 46

were the tribesmen's attacks and plunder the invading armies were subject to, before they reached Kandahar. In the absence of military reconnaissance, the invading armies marched blindly with no idea about the location of water points, and the whereabouts of their enemy whose repeated plunder caused them to lose camp followers, horses and camels altogether. Additionally, the number of camp followers, initially 38,000 people, and the inessential baggage were to hamper the swift advance of the invading armies.

Besides, the British military elites in Afghanistan were frequently indecisive in taking actions to face the rebels. In some situations, an officer issued an order that he would subsequently countermand or that another officer would ignore. An instance of this was Robert Sale's refusal to carry out Sir William Macnaghten's order to contend with the Ghilzai tribesmen and reestablish communication channels with India. In addition to the aforementioned invaders' defects, Sir William Macnaghten and Lord Elphinstone repeatedly showed some lack of resolution, when dealing with a matter that needed immediate settlement. An instance of this was the latter's delay to respond to Alexander Burnes, who apprised both men of the necessity to dispatch additional soldiers to cope with the rebellion

Coupled with the British elites' indecision to take appropriate action in proper time, there were cases of insubordination, which revealed not only the nature of relationships that the British gradually developed in the face of the Afghans' repeated attacks, but also the psychological tension they were

subjected to. The Afghans, on the other hand, had a boosted morale owing to the success they had achieved over their enemy.

Unlike the British, the Afghans were more resolute because they were aware of the advantages they had over the British. The Afghans warriors knew the terrain, passes, valleys, and routes that the invaders or their supplies had to take, which was a great advantage to them. Given this fact, the Afghans could effortlessly charge their enemies' isolated posts and convoys that brought supplies from India. Additionally, knowing that the invading armies could not operate without communication channels with India, the Afghans controlled the passes, a course of action the British failed to accomplish, particularly when they had been in full strength, before the Bombay contingent headed for India in late September 1841. Faced with a humiliating defeat which aroused British public opinion's indignation and rage, the British colonial administration was pressed for retaliation against the Afghan resistance.

Of the retaliation measures that Ellenborough took upon Major-General Lord Auckland's departure from India, was the re-establishment of the British army reputation; then the question that begs an answer is 'did the British army of retribution really reestablish that reputation?'

The First Anglo-Afghan war was, particularly, important for Afghanistan, for it made of it a nation state, as it contributed to the unification of the ethnically diverse tribes around one single chief, the Amir

of Afghanistan. The war was significant for Britain too, for it taught the British that the knowledge of people's cultures is of paramount importance before the prospect of any invasion.

What is noteworthy is that the war that the British waged against the Afghans in the first half of the nineteenth century falls within the framework of asymmetric wars, given that the invading force far more outweighed that of the Afghans in number as well as equipment and ammunition. Despite the Afghans' defects they managed to notch up a notable victory over the invaders.

Equally, the Anglo-Afghan war falls within the framework of the nineteenth European imperialism because the British attempted to extend their authority over weaker states; a case in point, here, is Afghanistan. Furthermore, in addition to the British war effort to protect India, as it was one of their colonial possessions, against other powers, there was also the British will to find markets outlets.

Chapter Three

British Second Intervention in Afghanistan (1878-80)

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Britain waged a second war against Afghanistan, because the Anglo-Russian rivalry for supremacy in Central Asia continued.²⁶⁰ Such a rivalry was mainly motivated by both powers' quest for power and economic incentives in the region. In fact, as the Industrial Revolution went on in Britain, new markets were needed. For Russia, the access to raw materials like cotton was vital for the textile industry. In consequence of this competition, Russian expansion intensified in the second half of the nineteenth century to reach the Afghan frontier, causing British concern that India might be swallowed up via Afghanistan, which moved the British to react to the Russian expansion policy by making of Afghanistan a barrier state between both empires. To achieve such a goal, the British advanced northwards up to the Indian-Afghan frontier. To reach the frontier, they submitted the Sikh kingdom which was on their way and

²⁶⁰Gregory Fremont, Barnes, op. cit., p.50

defeated the Burmese who, they believed, constituted a threat to the Indian stability.

In Afghanistan, which witnessed a war of succession to the Afghan throne upon Dost Mohammad's death in 1863,²⁶¹ the British colonial administration had to contend with Sher Ali, the Afghan amir who emerged victorious from a war of succession, forcing Abdurrahman, his nephew and most obstinate rival, into exile in Bukhara. Politically, the Liberals and the Conservatives were unable to agree upon a policy to adopt with regard to Sher Ali and the Russians, who, the British believed, constituted a major threat to British-ruled India.²⁶²

So, what were the origins of Russian imperialism? What territories in Central Asia did the Russian empire annex? And how did the British react to Russian expansion in Central Asia and subsequently manage to reach the Afghan frontier? On the other hand, how did both empires' expansions affect Afghanistan stability?

I. Russian Imperialism in Central Asia

Russian imperialism covers the period that extends from the late 19th century to the early 20th century, albeit the Russian expansion in Central Asia had started long before the nineteenth century, precisely under Ivan IV

²⁶¹Sir William Wilson Hunter(ed), *Rulers of India* : Lord Lawrence, Oxford , Oxford University Press, 1892, p.177.

²⁶²Raziullah M., Azmi, "Russian Expansion in Central Asia and the Afghan Question (1865-85)," *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 35,N^o3(Third Quarter 1984), pp.106-135.

in the 15th century. ²⁶³However, Russian expeditions, then, did not make much headway.

What characterized Russian imperialism was that it was more particularly directed towards Central Asia, as a new Russian commercial class emerged, seeking markets and investments in regions contiguous with Russia.²⁶⁴ As a result, the Russian administration was concerned that its peripheral states, though still less industrialized, would be prone to the European rival powers' influence, notably Britain, which prospect, the Russians believed, would enable the latter to preempt them in the region.²⁶⁵

An overview of the geography and history of Central Asia is crucial to understand the importance of this region for Russia, and her scramble to have a foothold there, and why Britain was concerned about the Russian expansion into Central Asia.

Central Asia, whose geography is 12, 8 million square kilometres, holds a pivotal position in the Asian continent.²⁶⁶ It extends from the

²⁶³ Raziullah M., Azmi, op.cit., p.106

²⁶⁴ Derek W., Spring, "Russian Imperialism in Asia in 1914." *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique*. Vol. 20 N°3-4. (July-December 1979), p. 307.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Peter B., Golden, *Central Asia in World History*, Oxford, Oxford university Press, 2001, p.1

Caspian Sea in the West to China in the East, and from Afghanistan in the south to Russia in the North (See map 6, below) .

Map 6: Central Asian States



Source: <http://asiasociety.org/central-asia-political-history-19th-century-present>

Central Asia comprises five countries: Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. These are modern countries that the former Soviet Union had colonized.

Historically, Central Asia enjoyed a considerable political significance for centuries. The Turks, Mongols, Chinese and other peoples crossed the region into Afghanistan in quest of goods and artifacts from Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Egypt. What is more, it was through Central Asia that merchants, travellers and adventurers passed to move from China to modern Istanbul and from there to Rome. There, markets would be supplied with silk and inexpensive types of artifacts, all coming from Asia, which aroused the Russians' and British ambitions and subsequently led to the scramble for the region. The population in Central Asia, largely nomadic, was an aggregate of peoples united with ties of clan, tribes and religion.²⁶⁷

The separate Khanates namely, Bukhara, Khiva and Kokand were important states in Central Asia²⁶⁸(see map 7, p.104). The Khanates were, in fact, countries that took the names of their capital cities. Despite the fact

²⁶⁷Peter B., Golden, op.cit., p.1

²⁶⁸A khanate is the state ruled by a khan; the term khan is a title of tribal chiefs, landed proprietors, and heads of communities. Feudal khans were given honorary military ranks in exchange for providing levies for the Afghan army in case of national emergency. Now khan is used like "mister" and placed after the name of a person. Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, Random House, 1999

that they were autonomous, their political and religious ties were strong.²⁶⁹ At the top of the political structure, was the Emirate of Bukhara, headed by the amir to whose emirate, the Khanates of Khiva and Kokand, came to be subordinate.

Map 7: Russian Penetration in Western Central Asia in the 19th and 20th Centuries



Source: *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1998

²⁶⁹Peter L., Roudik, *The History of the Central Asian Republics*, London, Greenwood Press, 2007, p. 57

Before the Russian Empire's annexation of the Central Asian khanates, the latter enjoyed political and religious unity. At the head of the khanates were khans.²⁷⁰ Because of this political structure, the three khanates became so closely tied that the threat to one khanate would affect the two others, for they shared the same religious faith and political structure.²⁷¹ In this political and administrative organization, the clergy were to strengthen the khanates' relationship, in that they managed the three states' affairs.²⁷² In these states, Islam was the religious faith, and the amir of Bukhara was the religious leader of all the Muslims in Central Asia. One of the eminent amirs to whom the power of Bukhara was accredited in the second half of the 18th century was Shah Murad (r. 1785-1800)

In fact, in the history of Bukhara, Shah Murad is known today to be the one who had made of Bukhara a powerful emirate. In his effort to make of Bukhara a powerful emirate, Shah Murad had to initiate some administrative, judicial and military reforms. In order to ensure the smooth collection of taxes that would keep the wheels of his government turning, he divided the emirate into districts, which themselves were divided into sections, where the shariah law was enforced.²⁷³ There were some 300 mosques and madresses, which were to make of Bukhara a religious and educational centre that comprised Turks, Tajiks, Arabs, Iranians, Afghans,

²⁷⁰The term 'Khan' is a title that is used to mean lord of chief and is considered an elite title of respect. Reunion L. Meredith, op cit.,p. 143

²⁷¹Peter L., Roudik, op.cit., p. 57

²⁷²Ibid., p.58

²⁷³Ibid.

Armenians, Chinese, Hindus and Jews.²⁷⁴ Bukhara also included nomadic and semi nomadic peoples, namely Uzbeks, Turkmens, Kazakhs and Kara Kalpaks.

Khiva was also an important khanate. If today, the khanate is divided between Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, prior to the 19th century Russian invasion, it was located along the Amu-Darya River, south of the Aral Sea. Owing to the proximity of Khiva to the Silk Road and its relative political independence, the Uzbeks, who were formally nomadic, chose it as their perpetual dwelling. The location of the khanate also aroused the Russians' ambitions since the eighteenth century, as the latter discovered, in the event of an invasion of India, that they had to pass through Khiva, hence its importance. In consequence, they sent two expeditions to subdue it: the first one in 1717 and the second in the winter of 1839-1840. Yet, both expeditions were doomed to failure because of the Russians' insufficient cognizance of the geography of the region.²⁷⁵

Kokand, which is today a city in North West Afghanistan, was formally a powerful khanate that a Ming leader named Abdelkarim founded around 1740.²⁷⁶ In the 19th century, it was an important centre of trade and handicraft. Its importance grew from the fact that it was located in the

²⁷⁴Peter L., Roudik, op.cit., p.58

²⁷⁵Harold. T., Cheshire, "The Expansion of Imperial Russia to the Indian Border," *The Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol.13, No.370, (Jul., 1934) pp.85-97

²⁷⁶Ming, here, must not be confused with the Chinese Ming Dynasty which ruled from 1368 to 1644.

proximity to Fergana Valley, which is now located in eastern Uzbekistan. Additionally, Kokand had more than 300 mosques, which made it a religious centre that the Khans supervised.²⁷⁷ However, from the 1840s, the power of Kokand declined, due to its antagonism with Bukhara on the one hand, and its infighting on the other. Such a condition both eased the Russian conquest of it in the second half of the nineteenth century,²⁷⁸ and the subsequent intensification of the Anglo-Russian rivalry in the region, which culminated in the Crimean war (1853-56) which opposed Russia to the allied forces of Britain and France.²⁷⁹

Yet neither the Crimean War, nor the costly expeditions that threatened the drain of their treasury deterred the Russians from pursuing their campaigns in Central Asia. Even though the Russian forces were defeated in the war, they pursued their expansion policy. They, indeed, launched military expeditions on the three main Muslim khanates of Central Asia: Kokand, Bukhara, and Khiva. The result of these expeditions was that the Russians incorporated Kokand and Khiva to the Russian Empire, respectively in 1868 and 1876²⁸⁰, whereas, they annexed Bukhara in 1873.²⁸¹

²⁷⁷Encyclopedia Britannica, op.cit.

²⁷⁸Peter L., Roudik, op.cit., p.61

²⁷⁹The Crimean war arose from the conflict of great powers in the Middle East and was more directly caused by Russian demands to exercise protection over the Orthodox subjects of the Ottoman sultan. Another major factor was the dispute between Russia and France over the privileges of the Russian Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches in the holy places in Palestine. Encyclopædia Britannica. *Ultimate Reference Suite*. Chicago, 2015.

²⁸⁰Svat, Soucek, *A History of Inner Asia*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000, p.201

In 1878-81, a Russian military force pursued its expedition against the warring tribes in Turkmenia, North of Persia and Afghanistan, which expedition ended with the subjugation of these tribes. To justify their expansion policy in Central Asia, Chancellor, Prince Gorchakov alleged in 1864 that the Russians, like their homologues the English, French, Americans and Dutch in other parts of the globe, were conducting a ‘civilized mission’ whereby they strove to stabilize their border by dealing with “half savage, nomad populations possessing no fixed social organizations.”²⁸²

Given the Russians’ determined expansive policy, how would the British successive governments contend with such facts, and thus secure their political and economic pull in Central Asia? And, how far would they be successful in keeping Afghanistan under their influence and then ensure the territorial integrity of India? Then, how would the British deal with the Afghan Government?

II. British Reaction to the Russian Expansion Policy and its Effects on Afghanistan

In the wake of the Indian Mutiny (1857), the British Government felt compelled to effect some administrative, political, and military reforms. The purpose of these reforms was to respond to the challenges posed within

²⁸¹ Andrei, Miroiu, “The Great Game or the Many Understandings about the Russian Advance in Central Asia,” *Monitor Strategic*, Vol.11, No. 1-2, 2010, pp.131-141

²⁸² Raziullah M., Azmi, op.cit.

the context of British-ruled India and the international one, due to the Russian expansion policy. And once again, Afghanistan would be the victim of the Anglo-Russian rivalry.

In accordance with the intended reforms, British Parliament enacted the India Act in 1858. The result was the suppression of the East India Company and its Board of Control, and the British Government's hold of the company's assets.²⁸³ The forces of the Company were disbanded and their regiments absorbed into the newly created Indian Army. The Indian army was further reformed under John Lawrence's viceroyalty (1864-1869), in that the Queen's body of soldiers and previous EIC's were blended, and the Indian soldiers were forbidden to service in the artillery units, and the number of European troops was increased.²⁸⁴ For the sake of effectiveness, the aforementioned India Act created the post of viceroy, who was the direct representative of the Crown. It also appointed a Governor-General of India and created a new Cabinet post, that of the Secretary of State who was responsible for the government of India and other British colonies. This government official was assisted by the Council of India, an advisory body that was composed of fifteen members under the

²⁸³George Macaulay, Trevelyan asserted that was not really abolished. What changed was the name; so thenceforth, the name Governor-General became Viceroy. He added that the introduction of the telegraph wire and the steamship would decrease their freedom of action in Asia. George Macaulay Trevelyan, *British History in the Nineteenth Century (1782-1901)* London, Longmans, Green and Co., 1930, p.323

²⁸⁴Ibid.

Government of India Act that the British Parliament passed in 1858.²⁸⁵ This council's main task was to ensure effective intelligence between India and Britain. This advisory body had also the power to give the financial approval on loans and expenditure.²⁸⁶ Yet, unlike the preceding President of the Board of Control, the Secretary of State did not need to convene it to declare war or conclude peace with a given country, no matter how great expertise its members had.

It was on the aforementioned reforms that the British Government banked to react to Russian Southward expansion in Central Asia, which reaction ultimately affected Afghanistan stability. However, the British politicians held divergent views about the policy to adopt vis-à-vis Russia and Afghanistan.

In fact, two schools of thought featured British nineteenth century policy towards these two countries: the 'masterly inactivity' and the 'forward policy.'²⁸⁷ The term 'masterly inactivity' was coined by Sir John Lawrence, Governor General to India from 1864 to 1869. It was the Liberals' policy of appeasement vis-à-vis Russia and Afghanistan upon the

²⁸⁵ Christopher A., Bayly, *Indian Society in the Making of the British Empire*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1988, p.195

²⁸⁶ Sneh, Mahajan, *British Foreign Policy (1874-1914)*, London, Routledge, 2001, p. 30

²⁸⁷ Whereas the advocates of the 'masterly inactivity' policy preferred to avoid direct intervention in Afghanistan, the supporters of the 'forward policy' believed that the only way to protect India from a potential Russian expansion was to move forward to occupy the Kabul-Ghazni-Kandahar line. Hassan Kakar, *A Political and Diplomatic History of Afghanistan (1863-1901)*, Boston, Brill's Inner Asian Library, 2006, p.177

end of the First Anglo-Afghan War provided Russia would not encroach upon Afghanistan being a gateway to India. The masterly inactivity deterred the Liberals from interfering within the Afghan internal affairs. George Bruce Malleson (1825-1898), the English officer in India and author of *The Russo- Afghan Question and the Invasion of India* explained the phrase in the following words:

Russia might do as she pleased in Central Asia, provided she did not touch Afghanistan; whilst British India should remain inactive, not encumbering herself with an offensive alliance with a power beyond its actual frontier, least of all with Afghanistan, and taking care to give no pledge to support the dynasty of the actual ruler of that country.²⁸⁸

In principle and as part of the Liberals' 'masterly inactivity' policy the Afghans were free to manage their internal affairs, but were forbidden to make friendly overtures with the Russians. In return for their compliance with the Liberals' will, they would receive a yearly financial assistance and military equipment.²⁸⁹ As a matter of fact, the British Government of India displayed some caution as to favouring an Afghan claimant to the throne at the expense of another, during the Afghan Civil War (1863-1869).²⁹⁰ Lord Lawrence, at the head of this government, adopted the wait-and-see

²⁸⁸George Bruce, Malleson, op.cit., p. 66

²⁸⁹William Wilson, op cit., p.180

²⁹⁰Ibid.

policy.²⁹¹ A case in point was Sher Ali's elder half-brother, Muhammad Azim Khan who, in 1866, asked the Government of India to recognize him as the legitimate amir of Afghanistan, after the latter had held Kabul in sway. Viceroy Lord Lawrence refrained from offering assistance to either party, preferring to leave the Afghans solve their own problems. Yet, Lord Lawrence threatened to provide the enthroned amir with pecuniary assistance and arms should the defeated party seek foreign assistance, in particular from Russia.²⁹²

In consequence of the British masterly inactivity policy, the Russian Empire grew closer to Afghanistan, which the British wanted as a buffer state between both empires. This contiguity antagonized both the British and the Afghan Governments. The British Liberal policy-makers first pinned their faith in the Russians' assurances that Afghanistan would be outside the latter's sphere of influence. However, in the course of time, they realized that they had been deluded and subsequently grew more concerned about the Russian expansion. As a result, they issued their diplomatic remonstrance about the Russian policy. Given these facts the Liberal adherents to the 'masterly inactivity' policy, those who once had been Governors-General of India, namely, John Lawrence (1864-1869), Lord Mayo (1869-1872) and Lord Northbrook (1872-1876) persuaded their Home Government to reach an agreement with the Russian

²⁹¹William Wilson, *op cit.*, p.180

²⁹²*Ibid.*, p.183

administration to set up a demarcation line between Afghanistan and her northern border.²⁹³ Yet, the attempt failed due to the Russian procrastination on the one hand, and the weakness of the British Government on the other. In a correspondence with Viceroy Lord Lytton, the British Secretary of State for India (1876-1880), Lord Salisbury illustrated the British weakness with regard to Russia in the following:

Russia knows perfectly well that she is unassailable by us ... There is absolutely no point at which we could attack her with any chance of doing serious injury ... The result, of course, is that Russia, being unassailable by our arms, is deaf to our diplomacy and remonstrances upon the subject of her advance in Asia have become a trite and not very edifying Foreign Office form.²⁹⁴

British inability to forestall the Russians' advance prompted Lord Gladstone, the Liberal Government leader, to reach an agreement with the Russian administration on the definition of Afghanistan northern border. As the British had planned, there ensued some Anglo-Russian talks in 1873 between the Russian Imperial Chancellor, Prince Gorchakov and Granville, the British Foreign Secretary. These talks ended with the declaration that the Oxus, commonly known as the Amu Darya River, formed the Afghan

²⁹³Raziullah M., Azmi, op.cit., p.113

²⁹⁴*Salisbury to Lytton, private, 22 June 1877, Layard Mss. [British Library,] Additional]Mmanuscripts, 39164.*Cited in Beryl Williams, "Approach to the Second Afghan War: Central Asia during the Great Eastern Crisis, 1875-1878," *The International History Review*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (Apr., 1980), p.216

northern frontier that the Russian forces were not to encroach upon and that Afghanistan was to remain a neutral zone. Lord Clarendon was the first to utter the phrase ‘neutral zone’ in 1869, but the British Government argued against the phrase thereafter.²⁹⁵ According to Richard Bourke, the 6th Earl of Mayo, “Afghanistan can never be a neutral zone for India. It is bound to India geographically and politically, and must continue to be bound.”²⁹⁶ Thus the British administration used the term ‘intermediate zone’ instead, and thus refused the term ‘neutral zone.’²⁹⁷

Gorchakov-Granville agreement neither put an end to the Anglo-Russian arguments, nor appeased the Afghan amir’s fear. Despite British reservations regarding the phrase, ‘neutral zone’, the Russians continued to use it, which gave the Gorchakov-Granville agreement some sort of ambiguity that benefitted the Russians as the agreement neither stopped their expansion, nor forbade them from concluding treaties with Sher Ali, the Afghan amir.²⁹⁸ To Sher Ali’s fear that the Russian might invade Afghanistan, the British turned a deaf ear to the latter’s call for assistance.²⁹⁹

In the meantime, the Russians pursued their advance southwards so steadily enough to increase both the British as well as the Afghan concern.

²⁹⁵ Harold, T. Cheshire, op.cit.

²⁹⁶ George Bruce, Malleson, op.cit., p.34

²⁹⁷ Raziullah M., Azmi, op.cit., pp.115

²⁹⁸ Ibid., p.115

²⁹⁹ Ibid., p.117

The Russians' conquest of Central Asia was complete in 1884 with the annexation of Merv, a region attestive of early Islamic civilization. According to Professor Svat Soucek, a specialist in Central Asian history, it was not Merv's history that interested the Russians; it was rather its contiguity with Afghanistan and thence with India.³⁰⁰ In view of the Russians' steady expansion and the concern it caused, and because the Anglo-Russian first talks about a frontier between both empires failed, the British insisted that new talks be held.

In fact, in 1869, Lord Clarendon, the British Foreign Secretary, held talks with Baron Brunnow, the Russian ambassador, over the prospect of an establishment of a boundary line between the two empires. The frontier line, Clarendon put forward, would be Amu-Darya, south of Bukhara.³⁰¹ To Lord Clarendon's request, Prince Gorchakov asserted that Afghanistan was not within Russia's sphere of influence. Nevertheless, he objected to Clarendon's proposal that Amu-Darya was to be the frontier line between both empires.³⁰² Then, to assure the British policy-makers, the Russian Government dispatched Count Shuvalov in 1873 to London, where he declared that they had no intention to incorporate Khiva to the Russian

³⁰⁰Svat, Soucek, op.cit. p.199

³⁰¹Harold T., Cheshire, op. cit., p. 95

³⁰²Ibid.

Empire.³⁰³ But in the absence of a British firm policy towards Russia, the latter annexed Khiva.³⁰⁴

What is noteworthy is that the ‘masterly inactivity’ policy, which the Liberals pursued, was a thorough blackout. In fact, when the Liberals were in office, the Governor of India, together with the Home Government, not only determined not to meddle with the Afghan internal affairs, but also forbade their officials to know what was taking place beyond the Indian frontiers. A like policy aroused the curiosity of some British officials among whom the adherents to the forward policy. In a letter that Sir Henry Bartle Frere addressed to Lord Salisbury on 3 March 1876, he expressed his dissatisfaction about the Liberals’ policy in the following:

I was grievously disappointed at the amount of knowledge possessed by men in excellent positions for learning what goes on amongst the Afghans. Of course no intelligent, zealous man can be long in such a position without learning a vast deal about his neighbour over the border but the constant inculcation of a non-interference and know-nothing policy, the standing orders to frontier officers, the spirit of the orders being to turn their backs and shut their eyes and ears to all beyond the frontier, and the prohibition of using the most obvious means of getting information, all these have borne fruit, and very little of real diplomatic

³⁰³Harold T., Cheshire, op. cit., p. 95

³⁰⁴Ibid.

utility seems known of events, persons, motives, or parties beyond our border.³⁰⁵

In view of the Liberals 'ineffective policy to stop the Russians' southwards expansion, an alternative stance was imperative to counteract such expansion. The Conservative Government led by Disraeli (1874-1880) was to consider the British policy towards the Russian administration.

Indeed, the Conservative Government which came to power in 1874, pursued a policy that was diametrically opposed to that of the Liberals.³⁰⁶ In fact, they approached the issue differently by departing from the Liberals' 'masterly inactivity' policy and adopted the 'forward policy.' The main proponents of this policy who were to constitute the Council of India were: H. Rawlinson, Sir Henry Bartle Frere, Sir Robert Montgomery, Sir William Kane, and Sir Bulwer Lytton, the Viceroy to India who replaced Lord Northbrook in 1876. These conservative politicians did not trust the Russians' repeated assurances and promises that the latter failed to honour during the Liberals' tenure, but saw cause for alarm and, therefore, championed prompt actions to counterbalance British policy to forestall the Russian advance towards India via Afghanistan. Regarding Afghanistan, they opted for the control of the Afghan foreign policy, making of the

³⁰⁵John, Martineau, *The Life and Correspondence of Sir Bartle Frere*, Vol. II, London, John Murray, 1895, p.145, www.archive.org. Accessed: July 8, 2011

³⁰⁶Raziullah M. Azmi, *op.cit.*, p. 114

Afghan amir a ruler in name, not in fact, subservient to British power.³⁰⁷ As for the policy to adopt against the Russians' progress towards Afghanistan, the Conservatives conceived that the preemption of a Russian possible progress on Kabul, and thence on India was the appropriate course of action to take.³⁰⁸ They were against the use of diplomacy with the Russians to deter them from advancing northwards.³⁰⁹ Now since the Khyber Pass was secure due to its contiguity with Peshawar, where the British had their garrison from which they would keep a watchful eye on the Pass, General John Jacob, the British commissioner in Sind, suggested that the British should equally occupy Quetta, where they would watch over the Bolan Pass, a gateway to India.³¹⁰

Once appointed as Viceroy of India (1876-1880), Lord Lytton announced the true colours of the forward policy vis-à-vis the Russian expansion.³¹¹ First, Afghanistan would be brought under British tutelage.³¹² Second, the British would advance further in the Indian North-Western frontier to counter a Russian potential progress towards India through Afghanistan. Third, the viceroy would compel the Afghan amir to

³⁰⁷Victoria, Schofield, *Afghan Frontier: Feuding and Fighting in Central Asia*, London, Taurisparke Paperbacks, 2003, p.97

³⁰⁸A.P.,Thornton, "Afghanistan in Anglo-Russian Diplomacy, 1869-1873," *Cambridge Historical Journal*, Vol.11, No.2 (1954), pp. 204-218

³⁰⁹Ibid.

³¹⁰A.P.,Thornton,op.cit., pp. 204-218

³¹¹William J. , Eastwick, *Lord Lytton and the Afghan War*, Bristol Selected Pamphlets, (1879) University of Bristol Library

³¹²Ibid.

accept a British Resident in Kabul to inform the Government of India about the amir's underhand machinations with the Russians.³¹³

In response to the Conservative new policy, the Russian administration pursued a carefully thought strategy. It consisted of diplomatic intrigues; for instance, while assuring the British Government that they had no intention of acquiring further territories, the Russian military forces were, in fact, on the spot carrying out their policy of territorial aggrandizement.³¹⁴ However, when meeting with other governments' inflexibility, they would relinquish temporarily to pursue their territorial expansion policy whenever circumstances grew favourable.³¹⁵ In a letter that Lord Palmerston, then Home Secretary, addressed to Lord Clarendon in 1853, he explained the Russian diplomatic intrigues in the following:

The policy and practice of the Russian Government has always been to push forward its encroachments as fast and as far as the apathy or want of firmness of other Governments would allow it to go, but always to stop and retire when it was met with decided resistance, and then to wait for the next favourable opportunity to make another spring on its intended victim. In furtherance of this policy, the Russian Government has always had two strings to its bow—moderate language and

³¹³<http://www.archivesdefrance.culture.gouv.fr>. Accessed: September 18, 2014

³¹⁴Beryl, Williams, "Approach to the Second Afghan War: Central Asia during the Great Eastern Crisis (1875-1878)," *The International History Review*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (Apr., 1980), p.216

³¹⁵George Bruce, Malleson, op.cit., p.38

disinterested professions at St. Petersburg and at London; active aggression by its agents on the scene of operations.³¹⁶

So, despite the Russians' progress towards the Afghan frontier, causing alarm among the Afghans, the British Conservative politicians not only showed some reluctance to offer Sher Ali immediate assistance, but also wanted a direct involvement in the Afghan foreign policy. They believed that by the appointment of a permanent British agent, they could get intelligence with India about Sher Ali's relations with the Russians and the latter's secret activities in the region. As a result, this situation created a dilemma for the Afghan amir because he had to decide between two courses of action with potentially undesired outcomes: either to foster close relations with Russia and contend with the possibility of a renewed British invasion of Afghanistan, or face a potential Russians' engulfment of Afghanistan as a result of their systematic and determined military progress southwards.

III. The Afghan Amir between the Russian Advance toward Afghanistan and the British Failed Assurances

Upon the First Anglo-Afghan War and the safe return of Dost Mohammad to Kabul in 1843, the Anglo Afghan relations improved for more than twenty years, during which the two countries signed two treaties in 1855 and 1857.³¹⁷ In the 1855 treaty, Britain promised to respect

³¹⁶George Bruce, Malleson, op.cit., p.38

³¹⁷Raziullah M., Azmi, op.cit., pp.109-110

Afghanistan territorial integrity, and in exchange the Afghan amir pledged to show amity towards the British. Then, two years later, another treaty came to reinforce both countries' relations.³¹⁸

However, under Sher Ali, Dost Mohammad's successor, the Anglo-Afghan relations became inharmonious. This is because the British Government policy vis-à-vis Afghanistan did not promote Anglo-Afghan amicable relations, particularly when the British failed to honour their promises to assist Sher Ali in the event of a Russian invasion of Afghanistan. In fact, under Sher Ali, the Russian military forces became closer to Afghanistan, as the Russians managed to annex the three main Khanates of Central Asia in addition to Merv, which made the Russian in contiguity with Afghanistan. Equally, the Afghan amir's banking on the British Government of India to assist him to deter a potential Russian invasion, proved worthless. In addition, his repeated appeals to the British to forestall the Russian progress towards Khiva, were met with mitigated assurances.

Equally, British attitude vis-à-vis Afghanistan contained some inconsistencies. One of these was that the British wanted the Afghans to foster amity towards them, but enmity towards the Russians, without British material assistance, which attitude drove Sher Ali to describe them as self-

³¹⁸Raziullah M., Azmi, op.cit., pp.109-110

seekers.³¹⁹ In view of British inability to stem the Russians' advance and their unfulfilled promises, Sher Ali grew adamant not to bank on the British Government, which would eventually lead to the second Anglo-Afghan War.

IV. The Outbreak of the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878)

The second Anglo-Afghan war (1878-1880) was shorter in comparison to the first one, but it had deleterious effects on the Afghans, because they lost not only territory, but also their authority over their foreign policy. British ascendancy in the war was due to three factors: the military reforms they undertook before the war, the technology they introduced in the war and the military equipment they used.

In fact, following the Indian Mutiny that broke out in 1857, the British Government in India set about initiating military reforms. These reforms involved the British as well as the Sepoy and Gurkha units,³²⁰ in that the size of these three elements was increased. In addition, the Sepoy and Gurkha soldiers were mustered on ethnic basis, for the sake of boosting the latter's morale, a condition that lacked in the First Anglo-Afghan War.³²¹

These military rectifications were compounded with the improvement of communication systems made available thanks to the technological

³¹⁹Raziullah M., Azmi, op.cit., p.116

³²⁰The Gurkhas are Nepalese soldiers.

³²¹Martin, Ewans, op. cit., p.56

innovations that made the use of the telegraph possible. In consequence, the Anglo-Indian armies, either operating on the Indian Afghan frontier, or imparting intelligence with their superiors in India, no longer suffered from communication problems; equally important was the introduction of the railway system that enabled British-ruled India to establish a rail network through India up to the Afghan border in the wake of the second Anglo-Afghan War.³²² Furthermore, the use of steam power in place of wind, helped British war vessels, carrying troops, to move at high speed within the required time frame. In addition, the British use of the Suez Canal was to reduce the distance between England and India to half.³²³

In terms of military equipment, the British introduced the Henry rifle which came to displace the musket that they used in the First Afghan War. This was because this sort of weapon was more precise and had a longer range than the musket.³²⁴

Compared to the British army, the Afghans relied on three main resources: the human resources, the financial ones, and British military equipment. In fact, on the eve of the military confrontation with the British troops, Sher Ali managed to mobilize a regular Afghan army that approximated to 62 regiments of infantry, 16 regiments of cavalry and 49

³²²Martin, Ewans, op. cit., p.56

³²³Ibid.

³²⁴Ibid.

batteries of artillery.³²⁵ In addition to this regular force, he relied on Afghan tribesmen, some of whom offered their service in return for government payment; others mobilized their personal resources.

As for the financial resources, the Afghan amir made use of the subsidies that the British Government of India granted him as part of the masterly inactivity principle to which the Liberals adhered. As a matter of fact, as a result of the amity that he had previously developed with the Liberal, Lord John Lawrence during the latter's viceroyalty (1864–1869), Sher Ali had received a financial aid that amounted to £ 60,000. Under Lord Mayo, Lord Lawrence's successor, he had obtained a further pecuniary aid in 1869 that totalled £60,000.³²⁶ The amir also resorted to the money his government collected from taxes and austerity policy he adopted which involved the royal family as well as the population at large, because he believed that "every penny saved would go to strengthen the country's defense."³²⁷

In addition to these financial aids, Lord Lawrence had provided Sher Ali with some military equipment, namely 3,500 sets of firearms.³²⁸ These

³²⁵Gregory Fremont, Barnes, op. cit., 55

³²⁶(Sir)William Wilson, Hunter, op.cit., p.191

³²⁷Effendi, Sirdar M. A. K., *Royals and Royal Mendicant, A Tragedy of the Afghan History, 1791–1947*, Lion Press, Lahore, [1948]. Cited in Hassan Kakar.op. cit

³²⁸Ibid., p.188

firearms ranged from the out-of-date Brown Bess³²⁹ that the British used during the Napoleonic Wars (1786-1815) to the, then, current Sniders and Enfields.³³⁰ This military weaponry, along with the aforementioned batteries of artillery and the Afghan local Jezail, constituted the military equipment that the Afghan resistance used in the Second Anglo-Afghan War to counter the British forces.

As for their war strategy, the Afghan resistance fighters positioned their forces within and round the major cities of Afghanistan, namely Kabul, Kandahar and Herat. A further task consisted of occupying three main passes: the Khyber Pass, the Peiwar Kotal Pass, both gateways to Kabul, and the Bolan Pass, an entryway to Kandahar and then to Herat. The Khyber and the Peiwar Kotal passes were particularly important for the Afghan resistance, for holding them in sway meant depriving the British army of both capturing Kabul, and securing communication with India and Afghanistan.

The British strategy, on the other hand, was to force the aforementioned passes open, which would enable them to occupy Afghanistan main cities. In pursuance of this strategy, the British forces, then numbering 35,000 men, invaded Afghanistan from three fronts: the

³²⁹The Brown Bess is a flintlock smoothbore musket used by British Services from the 1730's to the 1830's. The Gun weighs over 11 lb., barrel length is 3 ft. 6 in., bore diameter 75. Cited in R. A. Steindler, *the Firearms Dictionary*, U.S.A. Stackpole Books

³²⁸Martin, Ewans, op cit., p.57

Khyber Pass, in the North of modern Pakistan, Kuram in the Centre and Quetta in the South³³¹(see map 8, below) .

Map 8: The Second Anglo-Afghan War: The Invasion Routes



Source: Martin Ewans, *op.cit.*, p.58

³²⁹ Martin, Ewans, *op cit.*, p.57

The British forces were respectively under the commands of General Browne, General Roberts, and General Stewart. General Sam Browne's mission was to free the Khyber Pass from the Afghans. His force which was to march from Peshawar on Kabul through the Khyber Pass, numbered 16,000 men, armed with 48 guns.³³²

General Roberts, whose task was to expel the Afghans who controlled the Peiwar Kotal Pass leading to Kabul, headed a force that counted 6,500 men carrying 18 guns.³³³ This force was initially stationed at Thal, a village in the North West of modern Pakistan. One of the advantages of General Roberts's force and General Browne's, was that they were not too far from each other, in that only 80 kilometers separated them which facilitated their communication through the telegraph and subsequently their mutual assistance.³³⁴

Unlike Browne's and Roberts's forces, which assembled in the North of the India-Afghan frontier, Lieutenant-General Stewart gathered his force in the South, in Quetta, then a fortress that the British occupied in 1776. This force numbered 12,500 men, equipped with 78 guns. Out of these men, 7,000 armed with 68 guns, marched on Kandahar through the Bolan Pass.³³⁵ Of the Challenges that these forces faced were the bad weather conditions and food supply. They had to cope with the local tribesmen's attacks, too.

³³⁰ Martin, Ewans, op cit., p.57

³³¹ Ibid.

³³² Ibid.

³³⁵ Ibid.

Nevertheless, they were able to reach Kandahar and occupy it on January 12, 1879.

To manage to control the Khyber and the Peiwar Kotal passes, the invaders were met with Afghan determined resistance. Despite this resistance and in the face of the British commanders' communication technology and their military strategy, the Afghan soldiers were compelled to retreat.³³⁶ The Afghan loss of Kandahar and these two vital passes, being gateways to Kabul, affected Sher Ali's morale who was unable to oppose the Anglo-Indian progress towards Kabul. He, therefore, appointed his son Yakub Khan as regent, and left for Mazar-i-Sharif, where he died, in December 1879 after he had been unable to secure the Russians' pledged assistance.³³⁷ The result was the Afghans' loss of territory among which Kandahar, the Khyber Pass and Kabul.

Sensing that the occupation of territory was costly and fraught with disaster, the British ultimately opted for the control of the Afghan foreign policy, and the appointment of a British representative in Kabul . In fact, upon British military achievements in Afghanistan, in particular their seizure of Kabul and the passes that led to it, General Roberts

³³⁶Martin, Ewans, op cit., p.57

³³⁷Ibid.

compelled Yakub Khan to sign a treaty at Gandamak (1879),³³⁸ which empowered the British to lay hold over the Pishin Valley, the Bolan Pass, Sibi in Baluchistan, the Khyber Pass, and the Kurram Valley.³³⁹ In addition, the treaty allowed the British to exercise authority over the Afghan foreign policy. However, the British eventually abandoned the policy of occupying territory, for the Conservatives conceived that effective military occupation of Afghanistan was both high-priced and accompanied with fatal disasters. Therefore, they considered the abandonment of such a policy and opted for the control of the Afghan foreign policy.³⁴⁰ Along with the British control of Afghan foreign policy, the Gandamak Treaty enabled them to appoint a permanent British agent in Kabul, who actually took office in July 1879. In return, the Afghans were left to manage their own internal policy, with the British promise to grant them a yearly subsidy that amounted to £60,000 and their assistance in case they should face a foreign invasion.³⁴¹

³³⁸ In May 1879, Sir Louis Cavagnari, the British representative in Kabul, and Yakub Khan, the Afghan Amir signed the Gandamak Treaty. The terms of the treaty included the British being given permission to position a permanent resident in Kabul, as well as Yakub agreeing to consult the British in regard to his foreign affairs, in addition to surrendering three territories to direct British control. Laffer, Stephanie, "From "Masterly Inactivity" to Limited Autonomy: Afghanistan as a Catalyst for Liberal Imperialism" (2005). *Electronic Theses, Treatises and Dissertations*. Paper 3321.

³³⁹ Michael R., Rouland, *Great Game to 9/11: A Concise History of Afghanistan's International Relations*, Washington, Air Force History and Museums Program, 2014, p.11

³⁴⁰ Rasul Rais, Baksh, *Recovering the Frontier State War, Ethnicity and State in Afghanistan*, U.S.A., Lexington Books, 2007, p.13

³⁴¹ Stephen Tanner, op.cit., p.208

Upon the Gandamak Treaty, the Conservative Party decision-makers managed to implement their forward policy in Afghanistan, but such a policy led to British disaster and their retribution against the Afghans, who felt hatred against foreign presence on their land.

Indeed, six weeks after Major Louis Cavagnari had taken office as a British Agent in Kabul, he had to face an Afghan rebellion which resulted in his murder, along with three British officers and the whole escort of guides, numbering seventy-five Indian conscript soldiers. In addition to these casualties, the Afghan resistance destroyed the British embassy in Kabul on September 3, 1879.

Subsequently, the British Government in India, in concert with that in London, instructed General Roberts to occupy Kabul. Pursuant the government's instructions and Lytton's endorsement,³⁴² General Roberts mustered 6,600 soldiers, equipped with 18 guns.³⁴³ Despite the Afghan stiff resistance, he managed to capture Kabul in October 1879 and then forced Yakub Khan to abdicate, as the British believed he was unable to contain the Afghan rebels.

Following Louis Cavagnari's assassination and Yakub Khan's forced abdication, General Roberts implemented retaliatory measures against the Afghan rebels. He took up residence in the Bala Hissar, the Afghan kings'

³⁴²Stephen Tanner, *op.cit.*, p.95

³⁴³Martin, Ewans, *op.cit.*, p.60

usual dwelling-place and the symbol of their power.³⁴⁴ As part of General Roberts's retribution measures, he established a court of law by means of which he sentenced more than 100 Afghans to death, and immediately hanged them.³⁴⁵ Upon these executions, Roberts's force got hold of the villagers' food supply, and destroyed the property of those who attempted to resist.³⁴⁶ However, in the face of the massive executions and the brutal treatment that General Roberts had inflicted on the villagers, the Afghans put up strong resistance that resulted in a battle in Kabul.

The battle opposed a British contingent of 200 cavalry with four guns and an Afghan force that numbered 10,000 men.³⁴⁷ Because of his inability to quell the Afghan resistance fighters, who stationed themselves up the hills, General Roberts concentrated all his forces at Sherpur cantonment, where the Afghan fighters, under the command of Mohammad Jan, laid siege to Sherpur on 15 December 1879. Yet, General Roberts's soldiers were in a more comfortable position than those who had been besieged in 1841, for they were well sheltered from cold and had sufficient supplies of food and ammunition.

The Afghans, on the other hand, did not have the required armament to launch an assault upon the besieged.³⁴⁸ The Afghan resistance issued an

³⁴⁴Martin, Ewans, op.cit.,p.60

³⁴⁵Ibid. p.61

³⁴⁶Ibid.

³⁴⁷Martin, Ewans, op.cit., p.61.

³⁴⁸Victoria, Schofield, op cit., p.96

ultimatum ordering General Roberts to restore Yakub Khan to the throne and to deliver two British officers to be taken in custody to guarantee Yakub Khan's safe return.³⁴⁹ However, instead of responding positively to the Afghan resistance ultimatum, General Roberts opted for surprise attacks. These attacks were followed by an ultimate flanking charge that proved effective, as it caused the Afghans to retreat to their villages, waiting for a favourable opportunity to renew the onslaught on the invading forces.

The Afghan determination to resist did not deter General Roberts from pursuing his retribution measures. Following Kabul battle, he received military reinforcements, amounting to more than 10,000 men.³⁵⁰ This military strength encouraged him to pursue his retaliation policy, by further penalizing the villagers and carrying out his court martial and hangings. His scheme was to clear the ground for an absolute subjugation of the Afghan resistance.

Yet, British occupation of Afghanistan was controversial in addition to the absence of a rightful claimant to the Afghan vacant throne. This was due to the fact that British permanent occupation of the Afghan territory, including Kabul, Kandahar and other principalities not only drained the British Government treasury in India, but also required the mobilization of a sufficiently appropriate armed force, ready to intervene to bring order by crushing any potential rebellion. Additionally, the armed force was perforce

³⁴⁹Martin, Ewans, op.cit.,p. 63

³⁵⁰Ibid., p. 62

to be available to secure communication channels between Kabul and India. A case in point was the route from the Khyber Pass to Kabul that mobilized 150,000 armed men to safeguard it.³⁵¹ Furthermore, the invading armies had to contend with frequent attacks from the Afghan guerilla resistance. Given all these latter facts, the British then considered the eventuality of withdrawing from Afghanistan.

British withdrawal from Afghanistan that had been problematic in the face of the absence of a rightful claimant to the Afghan throne was ultimately eased. Sher Ali's nephew Abdurrahman Khan, was to resolve the British dilemma.³⁵² However, the transfer of power from a military government under the British to a civilian government under Abdurrahman Khan would be sanctioned only if the latter would meet certain specific requirements, among which the observation of the Gandamak Treaty.³⁵³ He would also have to secure the allegiance of the tribal chiefs without whose support, he could not rule. Besides, what was of paramount concern for the British was to install a central authority that would be friendly with them. Seeing that Abdurrahman Khan was the suitable candidate, as the latter was

³⁵¹ Martin, Ewans, *op.cit.*, p. 64

³⁵² Abdurrahman was Amir Sher Ali's nephew. The latter challenged Amir Sher Ali for the Afghan throne. As the amir defeated him in 1868, he took refuge in Samarqand under the Russians' custody for eleven years. Hassan Kakar, *op.cit.*, p.12

³⁵³ *Ibid.*

acquiescent to the British conditions, the Government of India granted him their recognition as the rightful amir to the Afghan throne.³⁵⁴

Meanwhile, in Britain, the Conservatives' defeat in the General Election in 1880 and the coming to power of the Liberals under William Gladstone was to hasten the British withdrawal from Afghanistan.³⁵⁵ This can be accounted for the fact that the Liberals had repeatedly shown their reservations as to the Conservatives' Forward policy and the effective occupation of Afghanistan. However, their withdrawal was to be postponed due to the military developments that were taking place in the South, where Yakub's brother Ayub Khan was preparing to launch a military campaign against the invading armies.

In fact, believing he was the rightful heir to the Afghan throne, Ayub Khan, then Governor of Herat, was bent on fighting the British and wresting the throne from Abdurrahman Khan, the newly installed amir. Therefore, he decided to march from Herat to Kandahar. But before reaching Kandahar, an Anglo-Indian army which were under the command of Brigadier General G.R.S.Burrows,³⁵⁶ he intercepted him in a village named Maiwand, where a battle was fought in July 1880.

The battle of Maiwand was a pitched one. It took place on July 27, 1880 at a village named Maiwand, located 50 miles North West of

³⁵⁴Ibid

³⁵⁵Ibid., p. 65

³⁵⁶Ludwig, Adamec, op.cit.

Kandahar. It opposed an Afghan force of 11,000 regulars, equipped with British Enfield rifles and 30 guns, and a force of irregulars.³⁵⁷ The whole force was under the command of Ayub Khan. The British force amounted to 2,500 men, with six guns.³⁵⁸ Being the first to reach Maiwand, General Burrows deployed his force in an open ground, the right of which was a narrow steep-sided valley, in whose side an Afghan force had been hidden. At the outset of the battle, there ensued an Afghan surprise attack, causing an exchange of artillery fire. The Afghan irregulars' onslaught came to supplement that of the regulars, making the battle ultimately conclusive, as the Afghan artillery outgunned General Burrows'. In consequence, Ayub's force was able to rout its enemy, killing 962 after five hours of fighting.³⁵⁹ Following his victory at Maiwand, Ayub headed for Kandahar and besieged it.

Ayub's military achievements caused serious concern among both the British officials in Kabul and those in India. This was due to the fact that those accomplishments were to thwart their plan to establish an Afghan central government, under Abdurrahman's rule. In addition, the very thought that Ayub might seek the Russians' alliance to wrest Amir Abdurrahman who had become their favourite, moved the British Government in India to take prompt actions against him.

³⁵⁷Jeremy, Black, *A Military History of Britain : from 1775 to the Present*, USA., Praeger Security International Advisory Board, 2006, p. 93

³⁵⁸Ibid.

³⁵⁹Jeremy, Black,., p. 93

In accordance with the British decision makers in India and the endorsement of those in London, Lord Roberts took prompt measures, which culminated in Ayub's defeat. To achieve such a victory, he mustered a martial force, composed mainly of Sikhs, Gurkhas and Highlanders, amounting to 10,000 men in all.³⁶⁰ This force was preceded by that of Abdurrahman Khan, whose object was to clear the ground for Roberts' advance on Kandahar, and subsequently secure food supplies for the latter. Owing to Abdurrahman's assistance and the quality of the force he mustered, General Roberts was able to rout Ayub Khan in a battle that took place in the West of Kandahar in September, 1880.³⁶¹

What dwelt at issue, following Ayub Khan's defeat, was the British occupation of Kandahar. Should Britain keep Kandahar under her occupation, or leave it to the new Afghan amir? A heated parliamentary debate opposed the adherents of the 'forward policy' and those of the 'masterly inactivity' policy. The forward policy supporters were in favour of maintaining British control over Kandahar, whereas, those of the 'masterly inactivity' policy were for yielding it to Abdurrahman, and for concentrating the whole of Kandahar force in Quetta. They also argued that to keep a British force in Kandahar would drain the government of India treasury, let alone the Afghans' frequent attacks that would ensue. In

³⁶⁰Victoria, Schofield, op cit.,p.98

³⁶¹Marsha E., Ackermann, Michael J, Shroeder, Janice J.Terry Jiu Hwa upshur, Mar F.Whitter (eds), *Encyclopedia of World History: Age of Revolution and Empire, (1750-1900)*, Vol. 4, USA, Info publishing, 2008

accordance with the Liberals' view, the British troops that had occupied Kabul began to withdraw to Jalalabad, from the Peiwar Kotal and Kurram in September 1881. Eight months later, the remaining troops that had been stationed in Kandahar, evacuated it and withdrew to Quetta.³⁶²

Now that the British had withdrawn from the main principalities of Afghanistan, how would the new Afghan amir behave with his subjects, particularly when he had joined forces with the invaders they named 'kaffirs' to defeat his Afghan rivals? What about his relationship with Russia which had housed him for ten years before he ascended the Afghan throne? What type of relationship would he develop with the British government of India? Would he foster friendly relationships with it, especially when the latter controlled the foreign policy of Afghanistan and occupied the main passes leading to Kabul? Last, but by no means the least, would the new amir abide by the Gandamak Treaty and observe it religiously? An attempt to answer these questions will be provided in the following paragraphs.

V. Amir Abdurrahman's Efforts to Build a Modern State

Of the amirs who ruled Afghanistan at different times in history, none of them was able to centralize his political power in Kabul, apart from Abdurrahman Khan. The preceding amirs used to relinquish their authority to the governors of the provinces. Each of the provinces enjoyed political

³⁶² Victoria, Schofield, op.cit., p.98

and economic latitude, which enabled its governors to levy taxes through which they subsequently managed to raise their proper armies capable of challenging the amir's authority in Kabul. Therefore, the latter's ability to rule the country was contingent on his sympathy with the local governors and the tribal chiefs, whose persuasion was capital for the collection of taxes for the amir, and whose consultation was essential to decide upon pressing matters, notably those relative to the defense of the country. Prior to Amir Abdurrahman's accession to the throne, the taxes were fixed for each tribe, and the tribal chiefs took charge of collecting them for the amir.

Upon Amir Abdurrahman's accession to the Afghan throne in 1880, the usually harmonious relationship that the provincial governors used to have with the amir altered radically, for he was to challenge their authority. In fact, Amir Abdurrahman aimed at altering the old state structure in which the government of Kabul was to rely on the principalities funding and the tribal chiefs' assistance through the collection of taxes to keep the wheels of the government turning.³⁶³ Additionally, he decided to do without the tribal chiefs' provision of soldiers to meet external threats. He, instead, cleared the ground for the building of a national standing army whose military leaders he kept under covert surveillance lest they should wield enough power to challenge his authority.³⁶⁴ This standard army had a regular salary,

³⁶³Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan*. 2nd ed. Cited in Thomas Barfield, *Afghanistan A Cultural and Political History*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2010, p.147

³⁶⁴Thomas, Barfield, op.cit. p.166

which enabled it to follow the Anglo-Indian mobilized troops pattern.³⁶⁵ In doing so, Amir Abdurrahman managed to do without the tribal lashkars,³⁶⁶ who would operate under their chiefs' orders. These reforms were unprecedented in Afghanistan, which made them objectionable by some Afghans. Therefore, sensing that his reforms would meet popular resistance, the amir decided to pursue a brutal policy against the obstructive elements, hence his nickname the 'Iron Amir'. To carry out his policy, the amir counted upon two sources of income: the British yearly subsidies that the Gandamak Treaty allowed³⁶⁷ and the forced taxation upon individual landowners. With these sources of revenue, he raised a standing army, built weapon factories, and purchased arms from abroad.

Now that he got hold of the ingredients to implement his brutal policy towards his subjects, he directed his first campaign as retribution measure against the eastern Pashtuns, the Ghilzais for their alliance with his rival, Ayub Khan, during the war of succession. His campaigns against the eastern Pashtuns started in the 1880s by the arrest of the most dominant tribal leaders and members of the clergy, namely those who issued a 'fatwa' calling the people to stand against the amir who was believed to be

³⁶⁵Whit Mason (ed.), *The Rule of Law in Afghanistan*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001, p.235.

³⁶⁶Lashkars were Afghan tribal armies that were always ready for mobilization to supplement the regular army in times of war.

³⁶⁷Thomas Barfield noted that Amir Abdurrahman received 1.2 rupees in 1883. This sum was raised to 3 million rupees in 1893.

a puppet in the hands of the British infidels.³⁶⁸ Surprisingly, the amir imprisoned three thousand Ghilzais, those who resisted the British invasion.³⁶⁹ These campaigns were followed by a systematic taxation of every individual Ghilzai landowner, in that everyone would pay “a third of his agricultural produce from irrigated lands.”³⁷⁰

In response to the amir’s persecutions, the Ghilzais who were known to be untamable and had never displayed weakness towards their enemy, particularly the foreign invader, rose in rebellion in 1886, but the amir defeated the rebels. The following year, the amir had to contend with a hundred thousand Ghilzai insurgents, but he was able to subdue them, slaughtering twenty-four thousand of them.³⁷¹ The amir’s victory over the Ghilzais was due to the fact that his army was well organized. His men were equipped with more efficient arms which he managed to buy with the regular subsidies that he received from the British and the taxes he got from his subjects.

As mentioned earlier, Amir Abdurrahman carried out his policy to remove any potential menace to the stability of his regime so that he could concentrate all the powers in his hands. The province of Turkistan, in Northern Afghanistan, was precisely an obstacle to the smooth running of

³⁶⁸Hassan, Kakar, op cit., p.38

³⁶⁹Thomas, Barfield, op.cit., p.148

³⁷⁰Ibid.

³⁷¹Thomas, Barfield, op.cit., p.149

the prospective central government, for the province enjoyed some autonomy from Kabul government control. Additionally, Amir Abdurrahman believed that his cousin, Ishaq Khan, the governor of Turkistan, was a potential threat to his authority; in addition, should the amir die, Ishaq Khan would be a rightful heir to the Afghan throne, owing to the amir's children's minority. Most noteworthy was the fact the amir's and his cousin's conceptions of the Afghan government differed fundamentally, in that, whereas, Ishaq Khan adhered to some sort of a federal state in which the Afghan provinces would enjoy some autonomy under the control of the government in Kabul, Amir Abdurrahman wanted a central government that ruled all the provinces in Afghanistan with no autonomy whatever. As a result, the amir engaged Ishaq in a battle that culminated in the latter's defeat. In consequence, the province of Turkistan fell within the jurisdiction of Kabul in 1884.

Following Amir Abdurrahman's punitive campaigns against the eastern Ghilzai tribes, there came the turn of the Hazaras, an Afghan ethnic group who lived in central highland, called Hazarajat, even though Hazara people can be found in every Afghan principality.³⁷² The Hazaras were always at variance with their neighbours: the Sunni Muslims.³⁷³ But their assistance to the invaders in the Second Anglo-Afghan War and the plunder

³⁷²The majority of the Hazara ethnic group belong to the Shia branch of Islam and speak Persian. The Hazaras are divided into other social groups; most prominent of them are the Hazaras of Dai Kundi, Dai Zangi, Shaykh Ali, and Uruzgan. Hassan Kakar, *op cit.*, p.126

³⁷³*Ibid.*, p.120

of the Sunni houses, when the latter were combating the British in Kabul, intensified the Sunni Muslims' animosity vis-à-vis the Hazaras.³⁷⁴ In pursuance of his policy of building a central state that was to control the whole of the Afghan provinces and subsequently ensure the effective collection of taxes, Amir Abdurrahman not only deprived Shaykh Ali Hazaras of their autonomy vis-à-vis Kabul but also deported them to other regions of Afghanistan in view of weakening their power.³⁷⁵ On the other hand, he gave Uruzgan Hazaras exclusive right to maintain their independence as a reward for having assisted him in his campaigns against Ayub Khan and Ishaq Khan.³⁷⁶

In brief, the war that the allied Anglo-Indian waged in Afghanistan ended in the victory of these allied forces, for it was asymmetric given the quality of military Anglo-Indian soldiers that served in the war. Sure the mobilized Afghans' number outweighed that of the Anglo-Indian troops, but the military equipment that the latter possessed, were far more effective than that of the Afghans. Doubtless, the Government of India provided the Afghans with weaponry in times of peace, but the British knew the limitations of each weapon, for they made such weapons and they knew each one's range, not to mention that some of them were out-dated like the Brown Bess that the British had used in the Napoleonic wars (1786-1815).

³⁷⁴Faiz, Muhammad, *Siraj-ol-Tawarikh [the Lamp of Histories]*. Cited in Hassan Kakar, *A Political and Diplomatic History of Afghanistan (1863-1901)*, Boston, Brill Academic Publishers, 2006, p. 206

³⁷⁵Hassan, Kakar, op. cit., p.127

³⁷⁶Hassan, Kakar, op. cit., p. 130

Additionally, the 19th century technological breakthrough allowed the use of the telegraph, thus, narrowing the distance between the viceroy and the British government in London. It also enabled the British officers in the Afghan-Indian frontier to communicate between them, an advantage the Afghans lacked, as the telegraph had not then been operational in Afghanistan.

A further advantage that tipped the balance in the British favour was the expertise they gained from previous wars. Instances of these were the wars they waged against the Sikhs, the Burmese, in addition to the Crimean War, and more particularly the First Anglo-Afghan War. These wars were advantageous for the British Government in India as well as the British troops operating in the region. For example, the annexation of the Sikh territory in 1849, made the British Raj in contiguity with Afghanistan. Additionally, owing to these wars, the Anglo-Indian troops acquired military experience, hence, helping the British Government to develop new weapons that were consistent with the required circumstances which in the long run helped the British consolidate their power in India .

The Afghans, on the other hand, lacked those advantages. Apart from the First Anglo Afghan War which they were compelled to fight, they fought no war against a foreign force. On the contrary, the civil war that Sher Ali engaged against his elder half brothers, not only tore Afghanistan asunder, but also depleted its material resources.

All things considered, it was plain that the Afghans were not able to win the wars they were forced to fight against their invaders. This was particularly due to the asymmetric nature of these wars, among others. However, under Amir Abdurrahmane's rule, and particularly that of his successors Habibullah, and then Amanullah, the Afghans were able to tip the balance in their favour thanks to their political craft on the one hand, and the fact that those two latter rulers were receptive to new ideas on the other. These amirs' qualities, among others, as the reader will see in the following chapter, contributed to the rise of the Afghans' national awakening and thenceforth to complete independence of Afghanistan in 1921 .

Chapter Four

The Rise of the Afghans' National Awakening and the Achievement of their Independence (1900-1921)

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 four major historical facts: Pan-Islamism, the injurious demarcation of the Durand line, the ratification of the 1907 Anglo-Russian Convention at the expense of the peoples of the region, notably the Persians and the Afghans,

and the role of the Afghan nationalists. So, how did these four historical facts combine to promote 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 chapter.

I. The Emergence of Afghan Nationalism

Before dealing with the term ‘nationalism’, it is worth first 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.”³⁷⁷ Professor Steven Grosby defines the term as “a social relation with both temporal depth and bounded

³⁷⁷Rob, Kitchin and Nigel, Thrift (eds), *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*, Oxford, Elsevier, 2009

territory.”³⁷⁸ 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.³⁷⁹ He further asserts that the ties that bind these individuals and the language they share constitute their collective consciousness.³⁸⁰ 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.’³⁸¹ Benedict Anderson sees a nation as ‘an imagined political community , imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign’³⁸²By ‘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 Enlightenment³⁸³ whose aim was to free people from the government

³⁷⁸Steven, Grosby, *Nationalism: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005, p.11

³⁷⁹Steven, Grosby, pp.10-11

³⁸⁰Ibid.

³⁸¹Ibid.

³⁸²Benedict, Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London, Verso, 1983, p.6

³⁸³The Enlightenment is the period in the history of western thought and culture, stretching roughly from the mid-decades of the seventeenth century through the eighteenth century, characterized by dramatic revolutions in science, philosophy, society and politics.<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/enlightenment>. Accessed: June 27, 2015

unrestricted power.³⁸⁴The 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.’³⁸⁵ So, 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 effects 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.

A. 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.’³⁸⁶ *The Historical Dictionary of Islam* explains the term as ‘the political unification of the Islamic world to gain strength for defense against European imperialism.’³⁸⁷ Therefore, Pan-Islamism goes beyond the ethnic group and the national borders without

³⁸⁴<http://plato.stanford.edu.>, pp.6-7

³⁸⁵Anthony D., Smith, *National Identity*, London, Penguin Books, 1991, 51

³⁸⁶Richard C., Martin (Ed. in Chief), *Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslims World*, U.S.A., Macmillan Reference, 2004

³⁸⁷Ludwig W., Adamec, *Historical Dictionary of Islam* (2nd. Edition), UK., The Scarecrow Press, 2009

downplaying the importance of ethnicity and nationalism.³⁸⁸ Pan-Islamists argued that the latter must be reinforced. Two key figures were behind the advocacy of Pan-Islamism: Sayyid Jamal al-Din-al Afghani (1838 - 1897) and Muhammad Abduh (1849 - 1905), his disciple.

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.³⁸⁹ Pan-Islamism overlooked Muslims' race, language and ethnicity, and instead stressed the term Umma (nation),³⁹⁰ which united all the Muslims all around the world, then counting 250,000,000.³⁹¹ 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).³⁹² Then, the Ottoman state had to face serious challenges because it could no longer finance the possession of its Christian and

³⁸⁸ *Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslims World*, op.cit.

³⁸⁹ Abdul 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

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁹¹ Valentine, Chirol, *Pan-Islamism: Proceedings of the Central Asian Society*, London, Billing and Sons, 1906, p.1.,www.archive.org, Accessed December 23, 2013

³⁹² *Ibid.*

Muslim dominions which constituted one of the origins of unrest within these dominions. Equally, European powers' interference in the dominions was to foment discontent which affected the Ottoman Empire stability. 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.³⁹³ 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),³⁹⁴ which condition resulted from the British forward policy that bisected the Pashtuns by means of the Durand line in 1893.³⁹⁵ In consequence, of the growing anti-British sentiment, the tribes in the NWFP, with the Afghans'

³⁹³*Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslims World*, op.cit.

³⁹⁴The NWFP refers to the tract of land that is located east of the foregoing Durrani Empire that 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. Victoria Schofield, op.cit., p.37

³⁹⁵*Ibid.*

instigation, rose in rebellion in 1897.³⁹⁶Even though the British forces managed to crush the malcontents, the latter could make their cause known globally and subsequently gained 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.³⁹⁷

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 dismembered the Pashtuns.

B.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

³⁹⁶Victoria Schofield, *op.cit.*, p.37

³⁹⁷*Ibid.*

Ocean was imperative³⁹⁸ 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 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 (1879) that allowed the annexation of Afghan territories in contiguity with the 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.

³⁹⁸Nabi, Mirdaq, op. cit., p.289

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.³⁹⁹

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.⁴⁰⁰ As a result, the Anglo-Indian forces had to intervene in the Kurram to pacify the tumultuous frontier.

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 Durand⁴⁰¹ who was to negotiate the boundary settlement with the amir of Afghanistan, Amir Abdurrahman (see map 9, p.153) .

³⁹⁹Nabi, Misdaq, op. cit., p.289

⁴⁰⁰Ibid.

⁴⁰¹The 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.

Map 9: The 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

The negotiation of the agreement started during the tenure of the Liberal Party headed respectively by William Ewart Gladstone (1892-1894), Archibald Primrose (1894-1895), and 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.⁴⁰² 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.⁴⁰³ 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 kinship groups in Afghanistan.⁴⁰⁴

⁴⁰²*The Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, op.cit.

⁴⁰³Michael R., Rouland, op.cit., p.12

⁴⁰⁴www.bu.edu/aisas/report. Accessed November 9, 2011

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.

Despite the harshness he displayed with his subjects to the point that he was nicknamed the iron Amir, 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.⁴⁰⁵ 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,⁴⁰⁶ contenting himself with inviting 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

⁴⁰⁵Hassan, Kakar, op.cit., p.182

⁴⁰⁶Ibid.

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. Professor Kakar 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.⁴⁰⁷

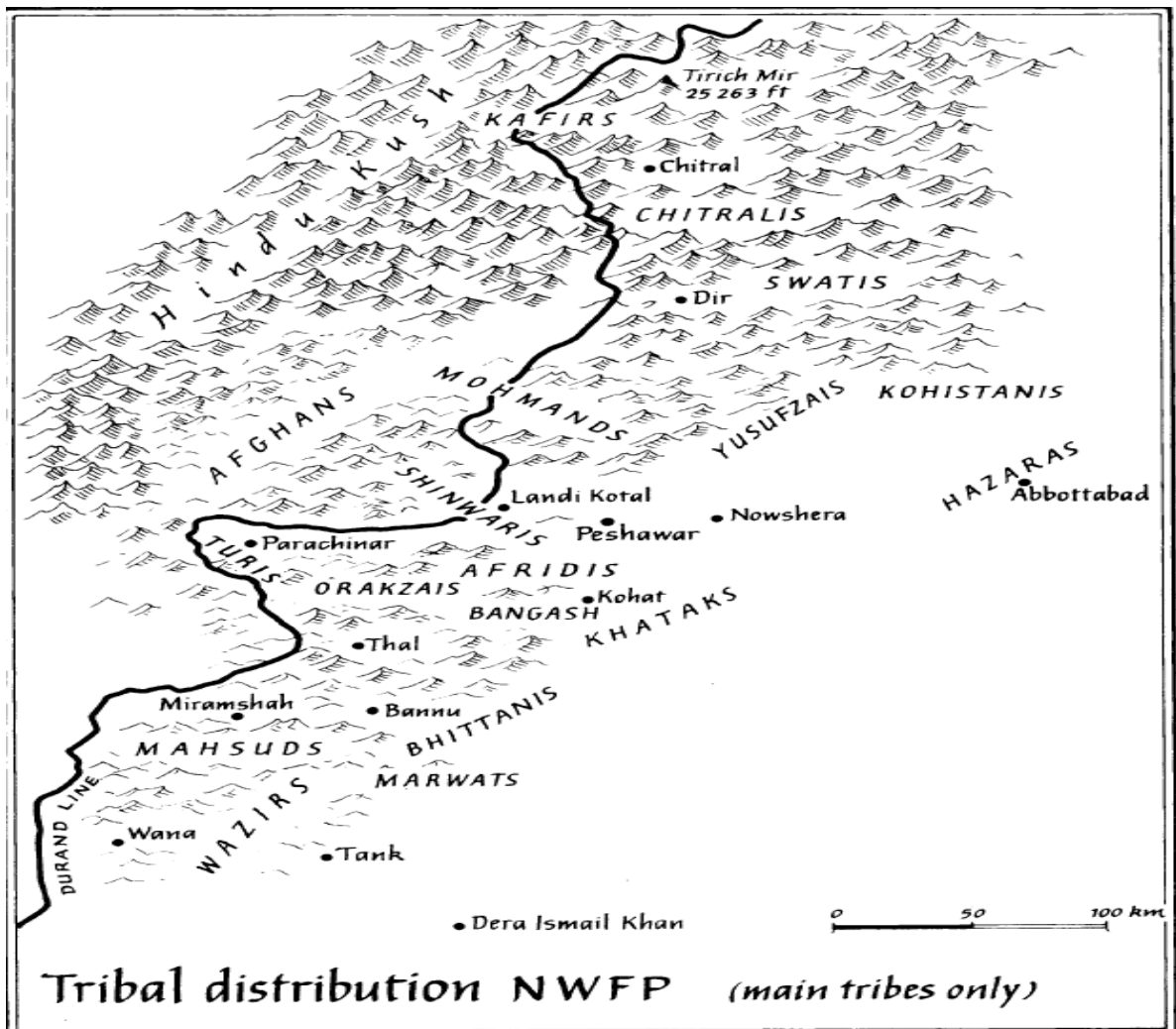
Upon the delimitation of the Durand agreement, the British opted for a systematic bisection of the ‘troublesome’ Afghan tribes that had become under their jurisdiction. These tribes, among others, were the Tarkanalays, the Wazirs, the Mohmands, the shinwarys, the Nurzays, the Achakzays, the Bereches and the Baluches⁴⁰⁸(See map 10, p. 154) . In the effort to pacify the threatening tribes the British frequently resorted to corruption.

⁴⁰⁷Hassan, Kakar, op.cit., p.183

⁴⁰⁸Ibid., p.187

Nevertheless, the aforementioned tribes and others, all numbering 200,000 fighting men rose in rebellion in 1897 against British political control,⁴⁰⁹ but they were overwhelmed by the Anglo-Indian forces.

Map10: 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

³⁹² Hassan, Kakar, op.cit., p.187

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.⁴¹⁰

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.⁴¹¹

If the 1907 Anglo-Russian convention ended these powers' rivalry in Central Asia, it was catastrophic for Afghanistan, the tribes between the Afghan-Pakistani frontier, and for Afghanistan-Pakistan relations dating from 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

⁴¹⁰Percy, Sykes, op. cit., p.177

⁴¹¹Ibid.

Kakar describes as ‘a no-man’s land’ that was backward economically and in permanent instability.⁴¹²

Equally interesting, the Durand line had dis severed 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.⁴¹³ 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.⁴¹⁴ Among the Pashtun tribes which were bisected there were the Afridis, the Mahsuds, the Wazirs and the Swat.⁴¹⁵ 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.⁴¹⁶ The Pakistanis, on the other hand, hold that the Durand line is an international

⁴¹²Percy, Sykes, *op. cit.*, p..188

⁴¹³*Ibid.*p.190

⁴¹⁴Amy, 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

⁴¹⁵James, Wynbrandt, *A Brief history of Pakistan*, New York. Facts on File, 2009, p.133

⁴¹⁶*Ibid.*

border between two states,⁴¹⁷ 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.⁴¹⁸ 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 (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 towards them. However, these Anglo-Afghan friendly relations were not to last long, for the British signed an agreement with Russia in 1907 to the detriment of Afghanistan.

C. The 1907 Anglo-Russian Convention and its Effects on Afghanistan

The imperial rivalry between Great Britain and Russia for supremacy in Central Asia was to reach a satisfactory conclusion in 1907 by the ratification of an agreement called the Anglo-Russian Convention. This convention was to damage the cordial relations that Britain then used to foster with Afghanistan. So, what factors led to Anglo-Afghan tensions? A close examination of the major players in the international arena may offer an answer to the question.

⁴¹⁷Ali Mehtab, Shah, *The Foreign Policy of Afghanistan: Ethnic Impacts on Diplomacy*, New York, I.B.Tauris, 1997, p.108.

⁴¹⁸Amy, Hawthorne, op.cit.

Britain's foreign policy that objected to the formation of long-term international alliances by the end of the 19th century was to come to an end. This was due to the fact that Britain no longer occupied a comfortable economic and military position as it used to do in the nineteenth century which had led her to adhere to the 'Splendid Isolation.' In other words, her supremacy was at stake. At the beginning of the twentieth century, other powers began to challenge her more seriously, notably Germany, France, and the U.S.A. in addition to Russia whose threat to India was still looming; and the rivalry that had been purely commercial between these powers turned into military and then to open confrontation. Furthermore, Britain lacked the necessary human resources to protect India owing to the vastness of the empire, the scarcity of the material resources to maintain it on the one hand and her dominions declination to supply her with troops to be sent to India on the other.⁴¹⁹ Among the powers which posed a serious threat to Britain were Russia and Germany.

In Central Asia, Russia was able to reinforce her empire with a navy and a network of railways closer to the Afghan border at the beginning of the twentieth century. The Russian enterprise was sufficient to cause British concern and Germans' alike.⁴²⁰ In Europe, Britain had to contend with hegemonic Germany whose rapid industrialization had enabled her to

⁴¹⁹Imanuel, Gess (ed.), *The Outbreak of the First World War*. Cited in Sneh Mahjan, *British Foreign Policy (1874-1914): The Role of India*, London, Routledge, 2002, p.164.

⁴²⁰Mustapha A., Sam, *Germany in the Modern World: A New History*, New York, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2001, p.135

possess machinery, steam engines and weaponry capable of challenging Britain's industrial manufactures.⁴²¹ The difference between Britain and Germany is exemplified by their global manufacturing contribution. In fact, Germany's global contribution which was 8.5 % in 1880, increased in 1900 to reach 14.8%. In contrast, Britain's contribution decreased from 22.9% to 18.5% in the same period.⁴²²

Along with her manufacturing supremacy, Germany engaged in a naval building programme that would coerce the other powers, particularly Britain which objected to recognizing her as a world power.⁴²³ Hence, it was clear that Alfred Von Tirpitz (1849-1930), the German statesman, adhered to the American historian Alfred Mahan's conception that 'Great Power status depended on sea power.'⁴²⁴ Therefore, given that Germany was able to build her own sea power, then she deserved the status of a great power. As a result, she wanted to 'take her share of the spoils.' The German Secretary of State, Bülow,⁴²⁵ made this idea clear in 1897. "The days when the Germans left the land to one of their neighbors and the sea to the other, keeping only the sky for themselves and when pure theory reigned are now

⁴²¹Jason P., Coy, *A Brief History of Germany*, New York, Facts on File, 2011, p.130

⁴²²Addy, Premen, *Tibet on the Imperial Chessboard*. Cited in Sneh Mahjan, *British Foreign Policy (1874-1914): The Role of India*, London, Routledge, 2002, p.124.

⁴²³Raffael, Scheck, *Germany (1871-1945): A Concise History*, Oxford, Berg, 2008, p.66

⁴²⁴Martin, Kitchen, *A History of Modern Germany*, U.S.A., Wiley, Blackwell, 2012, p. 166.

⁴²⁵Bernhard Heinrich Martin Karl Bülow (1849–1929) was a German diplomat and politician. He was chancellor of the German Empire (1900–09) under Kaiser Wilhelm II. *The Hutchinson Encyclopedia of Modern Political Biography*. United Kingdom, Helicon , 2005

over ... We do not wish to put anyone in the shade, but we also demand a place in the sun.’⁴²⁶ So, the Germans were determined by all means at their disposal to have their ‘share of the pie’, i.e., imperial possessions like Britain, Russia, and France. They also wanted to have a say in world matters on par with Britain and other powerful nations.’⁴²⁷ The German threats along with the Russian caused so much dismay to the British that they considered the means and methods required to face those threats.

As a result of these international developments, Britain set up the Committee of Imperial Defence (CID) in 1902. This was an advisory body that was composed of three members: the prime minister, the foreign secretary and a naval representative. Its aim was to suggest to the Cabinet the appropriate course of action to take in case there should be a

war for the defence of the empire against the Triple Alliance,⁴²⁸ or the allied forces of Russia and France. Upon its investiture and in accordance with the attribution devolved to it, the CID sketched out a foresighted scheme to repel a potential attack that Britain’s enemies, notably the Russo-French allied forces, might launch.⁴²⁹ To cope with the Russian threat, the CID suggested a forward policy that would culminate in the seizure and

⁴⁰⁹Martin, Kitchen, op.cit., p.166

⁴¹⁰Raffael, Scheck, op.cit., p.65

⁴²⁸The Triple Alliance (1882-1915) was an alliance of three powers: Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy. It promised Italy support in case it was attacked by France and committed Italy to assist Germany and Austria-Hungary in case they were attacked by the two other powers, presumably Russia and France. Raffael Scheck, *Germany(1871-1945):A Concise History*,op.cit.

⁴²⁹Eric W. , Osborne, op.cit., p.14

control of the Kabul-Kandahar line in Afghanistan for the defense of India,⁴³⁰ a forward policy vis-à-vis the Afghan sovereignty to which the British resorted every time they felt India was at stake. The amir of Afghanistan should also have to agree to the British building of railways and telegraphs on the Afghan soil and accept a British representative at Kabul.⁴³¹ Lord George Curzon, the British viceroy of India threatened Amir Habibullah, Amir Abdurrahman's son that in case of the amir's failure to comply with his directives, the government of India would both give up granting him subsidies and forbid the entrance of weaponry into Afghanistan through India.⁴³² But for how long would the CID be successful in warding off Britain's enemies' permanent threat? Did Britain have the necessary financial and human resources to withstand potential enemy attacks, when her dominions showed some reluctance to join forces with her?

In fact, 1902 marked a turning point in British relations with the other powers. In 1902 Britain abandoned the 'Splendid Isolation' and forged an alliance with Japan to counter Russian expansionism in East Asia through a treaty called the Anglo-Japanese Treaty. The latter was signed during the tenure of the Conservative government that Arthur Balfour led (1902-05).

⁴³⁰Berghah V.,R. *Germany and the Approach of War in 1914*.Cited in Sneh Mahajan, *British Foreign Policy (1874-1914):The Role of India*, London, Routledge, 2002, p.124

⁴³¹Sneh, Mahajan, op.cit., p.152

⁴³²Cain P., J. and Hokins, A.G., *Cobdenism and the Radical Economy of Imperialism*.Cited in Sneh Mahajan, op.cit., p. 152.

The signatories of the treaty were the British Henry Charles Keith Petty-Fitzmaurice, fifth Marquess of Lansdowne, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and Hayashi Tadasu, the Japanese ambassador at London.⁴³³ This formal document, which comprised six articles, was to satisfy the aspiration of both signatories of the treaty. Article one stipulated that Britain's commercial and industrial interests were secured.⁴³⁴ In addition to her actual interests in China, Japan reiterated her desire to possess political, commercial, and industrial interests in Korea.⁴³⁵ Article two of the treaty held out that should one of the treaty signatories engage in a war with another power, the other signatory of the treaty should remain neutral and hinder the other powers' assistance to the enemy.⁴³⁶ Additionally, should a third party assist their common enemy, the second ally should make common cause with the other contracting party as it was clearly stipulated in the third article of the Anglo-Japanese alliance treaty of 1902. Article four forbade either of the contracting powers to negotiate a peace accord with the enemy to the detriment of either's interests.⁴³⁷ The treaty insisted that there should be an atmosphere of frankness between the signatories of the treaty as stated in article five. The last and final article reminded the

⁴³³Phillip, O'Brien (ed.), *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance (1902-1922)*, London, Routledge Curzon, 2004, p.19

⁴³⁴Christopher, Wyatt, *Afghanistan and the Defence of the Empire: Diplomacy and Strategy during the Great Game*, London, 2011, pp.273-214.

⁴³⁵Ibid.

⁴³⁶Ibid.

⁴³⁷Ibid.

signatories of the treaty that the latter would come into force after its ratification and would expire after five years.⁴³⁸

With the conclusion of the Anglo-Japanese treaty, Britain had an ally in the Far East she could trust to help her to counter a Russian potential expansion through Afghanistan and ultimately keep India secure against the other powers' maneuvers, notably Russia, all the more so as Britain's situation had started to witness some downturn in the Far East before the 1902 Anglo-Japanese alliance.⁴³⁹ This was mainly due to the Russians' challenge there.⁴⁴⁰ In return, Japan gained British recognition as a regional power. 1904 was crucial for both signatories of the alliance treaty, as it was to test their honesty that is, how far they were ready to observe the article of the treaty when either of them went to war with a third party.

Indeed, in 1904, Japan fought a war with Russia which culminated in the latter's defeat and the drain of her treasury. Therefore, the Russians were obliged to effect a change of their foreign policy to fit the circumstances. They believed that their overtures with Britain would enable them to secure loans from the London money market.⁴⁴¹ Additionally, they could underwrite a market for their grains.⁴⁴² To this end, they favoured a

⁴³⁸Christopher, Wyatt., op.cit., , pp.273-214.

⁴³⁹Ian H, Nish, *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance: The Diplomacy of two Island Empires* (1894-1907), London, Athlone Press, 1966, p.19

⁴⁴⁰Ibid., p.15

⁴²⁶Sneh, Mahajan, op.cit., p. 163

⁴⁴²Ibid.

rapprochement with Britain for a negotiated settlement called the Anglo-Russian Entente or the Anglo-Russian Convention as mentioned in other sources. This agreement was ratified under the Premiership of the Liberal Henry Campbell Bannerman (1836-1908) and the viceroy of India, Gilbert John Murray Minto.

The Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 put an end to the Anglo-Russian rivalry in Central Asia and the Far East, a rivalry that is better known as the 'Great Game.' The convention stipulated that Persia should be divided into three parts: the northern part, including Teheran, would be under the Russians' sphere of influence, whereas the Persian regions bordering India and Afghanistan would be under the British sphere of influence, leaving central Persia as a buffer zone between the contracting powers.⁴⁴³ While Russia conceded that Afghanistan would be beyond her sphere of influence, and that her establishment of any rapport with Afghanistan would have to be with the British consent. The Russians also asserted not to colonize Afghanistan, nor seize a part of it.⁴⁴⁴

If the Anglo-Russian Convention suited its contractors, it was to antagonize the Persians and Afghans alike, because neither the Russians nor the British consulted them about such a convention. Furthermore, the convention asserted British control of the Afghan foreign policy, as it is stated in the first article concerning Afghanistan:

⁴⁴³L.C.B., Seaman, *Post-Victorian Britain (1902-1951)*, London, Methuan, 1966, p.38

⁴⁴⁴Amin, Saikal, op.cit., p.51

His Britannic Majesty's Government declare that they have no intention of changing the political status of Afghanistan. His Britannic Majesty's Government further engage to exercise their influence in Afghanistan only in a pacific sense, and they will not themselves take, or encourage Afghanistan to take, any measures threatening Russia. The Russian Government, on their part, declare that they recognize Afghanistan as outside the sphere of Russian influence, and they engage that all their political relations with Afghanistan shall be conducted through the intermediary of His Britannic Majesty's Government; they further undertake not to send any Agents into Afghanistan.⁴⁴⁵

Therefore, it follows from the above article that Britain had no intention of leaving the Afghans manage their foreign relations with other countries, which affected the Anglo-Afghan relations so seriously that some Afghans started to call for Jihad against the British.⁴⁴⁶ So, how had the Afghan rise of consciousness led to Afghan nationalism and then to the country's full independence?

D. 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

⁴⁴⁵John Albert, White, *Transition to Global Rivalry: Alliance, Diplomacy and the Quadriple Entente; 1895-1907*, United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, 1995, p.311

⁴⁴⁶Thomas, Barfield, op.cit., p.177

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.⁴⁴⁷ 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.'⁴⁴⁸

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.⁴⁴⁹

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

⁴⁴⁷The 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

⁴⁴⁸Thomas, Ruttig, *Afghanistan's Early Reformists*, www.afghanistan-analyst.org.
Accessed: May 25, 2014

⁴⁴⁹Ibid.

faith).⁴⁵⁰ They believed that the religious institution had failed in its mission; therefore, it must be reformed to 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.⁴⁵¹ 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.⁴⁵² 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.⁴⁵³

In addition to the above reforms, Amir Habibullah granted the Afghan exiles permission to enter the country. These were those who had

⁴⁵⁰I Thomas, Ruttig,

⁴⁵¹Amin, Saikal, op.cit., p.45

⁴⁵²Wahab Saicha and Barry Yougerman, op cit., p.98

⁴⁵³Ibid.

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).⁴⁵⁴ 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.⁴⁵⁵

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 1905.⁴⁵⁶ In order to rival with the West, these nationalists contended that Muslims would have to unite, hence the notion of Pan-Islamism.

⁴⁵⁴Willem, Vogelsang, *The Afghans*, London, Wiley & Blackwell, 2008, p.272

⁴⁵⁵Thomas, Barfield, op.cit., p.176

⁴⁵⁶Ibid., p.175

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.⁴⁵⁷ 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 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

⁴⁵⁷Amin, Saikal., op.cit., p.41

the foundation of *Siraj-ol-Akhbar*, a periodical whose editing job was given to Mahmud Tarzi.⁴⁵⁸

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 of 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.⁴⁵⁹ This educational institution was followed by the establishment of the first modern Afghan hospital and the first telephone line in 1910.⁴⁶⁰ If the reforms in the field of education were to

⁴⁵⁸Siraj-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 instilled the Afghans with the nation of nationalism. Senzil Nawid, *Tarzi and the Emergence of Afghan Nationalism: Formation of a National Ideology*, www.bu.edu/aiaa/nawid_article Accessed: May 29, 2014

⁴⁵⁹Huma Ahmed, Gosh, *A History of Women in Afghanistan: Lesson Learnt for the Future or Yesterday 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

⁴⁶⁰Willem, Vogelsang, *op.cit.*, p. 272

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.⁴⁶¹The 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.⁴⁶²

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.⁴⁶³ In addition, to maintain social cohesion, he had to assure the Shia Muslims that modernity would not reduce their power.⁴⁶⁴Sensing that such a social cohesion would

⁴⁶¹Vartan, Gregorian, "Mahmud Tarzi and Saraj-ol-Akhbar: Ideology of Nationalism and Modernization in Afghanistan," *Middle East Journal*, Vol.21. (Summer,1967), pp.345-368.

⁴⁶²Vartan, Gregorian,op.cit. pp.345-368.

⁴⁶³Ibid.

⁴⁶⁴Ibid.

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.⁴⁶⁵ Therefore, the limitation of people's knowledge left room for witchcraft and fanaticism.⁴⁶⁶ 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.⁴⁶⁷ The failure of the Mullahs and the schools to accomplish their missions compelled the Afghan elite to consider the initiation of social, educational

⁴⁶⁵Vartan, Gregorian,op.cit. pp.345-368

⁴⁶⁶Ibid.

⁴⁶⁷Vartan, Gregorian,op.cit.,pp.345-368.

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.⁴⁶⁸ Furthermore, he managed to create an 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.⁴⁶⁹

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.⁴⁷⁰ Given these aforementioned facts, it was in the nature of things that

⁴⁶⁸Thomas, Barfield, op.cit., p.166

⁴⁶⁹Ibid.

⁴⁷⁰Thomas, Barfield, op.cit., p.166

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.⁴⁷¹ 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.⁴⁷² Equally, what made these Dari speaking people more influential was their intermarriage, which explained the succeeding

⁴⁷¹Anthony, Hymann, "Nationalism in Afghanistan: Nationalism and the Colonial Legacy in the Middle East and Central Asia," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol.34, No.2, (May,2002), pp. 299-315, pp.299-315

⁴⁷²Jadwiga, 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

governments' inability to make Pashto the official language in Afghanistan.⁴⁷³

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 mastered the notions of 'fatherland' and 'nation.'⁴⁷⁴ He also resorted to religious precepts and parables to promote national consciousness.⁴⁷⁵ 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.'⁴⁷⁶ As far as the term nation is concerned, he defined it as 'group of people living in a specific state'.⁴⁷⁷ 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.⁴⁷⁸

II. British Third Intervention in Afghanistan (1919)

The harmonious relations that Afghanistan and British India used to foster were not to last long under Amir Habibullah, in whose court there were members who were anxious to sever those friendly relations and

⁴⁷³Jadwiga, Pstrusinka, pp.299-315

⁴⁷⁴Ibid.

⁴⁷⁵Ibid.

⁴⁷⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷⁷Ibid.

⁴⁷⁸Ibid.

subsequently promote a thorough independence from Britain. These court members were the amir's brother Nasrullah, and his sons Inayatullah and Amanullah.⁴⁷⁹

Upon the breakout of the First World War in 1914, Amir Habibullah was subject to pressure from the Berlin administration to side with the Central Powers and, subsequently to deliver his country from the Anglo-Russian influence. The Afghan amir had also to face the Afghans who pressed him for jihad against the infidels. A year later, Kabul received a Turco-German deputation whose intention was to conscript Afghan soldiers for the invasion of India.⁴⁸⁰

These political developments were to cause a split between the amir and his court as these two parties differed in their approach to the issue. In fact, while the war party saw the Turco-German overtures as an opportune moment to rid the country of the Anglo-Russian yoke, Amir Habibullah was anxious not to disrupt the Anglo-Afghan relations. He, therefore, not only assured the British of his lukewarmness vis-à-vis the Turks and the Germans, but also ignored the latter's pressures, believing in the achievement of his country's independence through diplomatic means alone, which caused his murder in 1919, probably through the instigation

⁴⁷⁹Martin, Ewans, op cit., p.72

⁴⁸⁰Martin, Mc Cauley, *Afghanistan and Central Asia. A Modern History*, London, Longman, 2002, p.8

of Amanullah, the amir's successor.⁴⁸¹ However, in order to ascend to the throne, Amir Amanullah was required to get the official recognition of the British for whom the amir was the ruler of Kabul only, not the whole country. As a result Amanullah declared jihad against the British.

Compared with the First and the Second Anglo-Afghan wars, the third one was shorter as it started in May 1919 and ended in August of the same year. Additionally, in the Third Anglo-Afghan War, the Afghans relied on the standing army that Amir Abdurrahman and his successor had managed to build up by means of the British subsidies and the levy of taxes. Amir Amanullah did not, however, rely on the tribal chiefs' conscripts alone. According to the British historian, Gregory Fremont Barnes, the Afghan standing army was 50,000 men strong who were disposed as follows: 75 battalion of infantry and 21 cavalry regiments, equipped with 28 modern pieces of artillery.⁴⁸² In addition to the aforementioned Afghan force of regulars, the amir was able to mobilize 80,000 tribesmen.⁴⁸³ Apart from his own forces, Amir Amanullah counted upon the Pashtun tribesmen in the North West Frontier Province to rebel against the British .

The English soldiers , on the other hand counted within their ranks the Indian army that comprised eight divisions and five independent

⁴⁸¹Martin, Mc Cauley, op.cit., p.8

⁴⁸²Gregory Fremont, Barnes, op cit., p.83

⁴⁸³Ibid., p.82

brigades of cavalry.⁴⁸⁴ Besides the Indian force, the British resorted to the military technology that the twentieth century offered, namely machine guns, armoured cars, radio communications, motorized transport, and aircraft bombers.⁴⁸⁵

What also singled out the Third Anglo Afghan war was that it was triggered by Amir Amanullah who issued a call for Jihad against the British.⁴⁸⁶ Following the amir's call for jihad, an Afghan force advanced closer to the Khyber Pass and captured Bagh, a strategically important village to the Indo-British forces, as it supplied water to the neighbouring Landi Kotal, where these forces were mustered. Given the strategic importance of Bagh, an Anglo-Indian force launched an offensive against the Afghan forces stationed there. The assault on Bagh was compounded with aircraft bombing Dacca. On May 11, 1919, the Anglo-Indian army pursued their attacks on the Afghan positions in Dacca and Bagh using 18 pieces of artillery and 22 machine guns.⁴⁸⁷ On May 24, 1919, the British Royal Air Force (R.A.F) bombed Jalalabad and Kabul, which sapped the Afghans' spirit as the latter's determination to fight did not outweigh the British superiority. As a result, Amir Amanullah called for an armistice which was followed in August 1919 by a peace treaty called the Treaty of Rawalpindi.

⁴⁸⁴Gregory Fremont, Barnes, op cit., p.82

⁴⁸⁵Ibid.

⁴⁸⁶Ibid.

⁴⁸⁷Ibid.

III. The Rawalpindi Treaty and the Achievement of Afghanistan Independence (1919-1921)

In view of the asymmetric warfare that tipped the power balance in favour of the British colonial administration of India, Amir Amanullah called for a peace treaty and for the renewal of friendship with the British.. Therefore, the amir commissioned his representatives to India for such a purpose. The points the latter intended to discuss revolved around the following: Afghanistan's full independence, British relinquishment of their control over Waziristan and other tribal areas, the Afghan determination not to yield further territories, and finally, the British grant of a pecuniary aid to Afghanistan.⁴⁸⁸ The British representative, Lord Grant and the amir's representatives signed the treaty on August 8, 1919 at Rawalpindi, a city in today's northern Pakistan. The treaty comprised five articles upon which both contracting parties had agreed.

Article 1 reminded both signatories that upon their endorsement of the treaty, they should enjoy friendly relationships.⁴⁸⁹

Article 2 of the treaty forbade the amir to use the Indian channels to import British weaponry and munitions.⁴⁹⁰

Article 3 stipulated that the amir would no longer receive subsidies, including those the British owed to the amir.⁴⁹¹

⁴⁸⁸Percy, Sykes, op.cit., p.284

⁴⁸⁹Ibid., p.358

⁴⁹⁰Ibid., p..284

Article 4 asserted that the British Government would acquiesce to the treaty of friendship, upon the Afghan Government's agreement to a period of six months, during which the British would test the amir's sincerity and his good intentions. The British adopted such a stance because of the climate of suspicion and mistrust that the Third Anglo-Afghan war had created.⁴⁹²

Concerning the Durand line, and pursuant to article 5 of the treaty, the British colonial administration of India maintained the status quo, in that the issue relative to the line would, on no account, be open to debate. The British colonial administration added that the amir should assent to the line demarcation that the British commission had already established. Regarding the undemarcated boundary line, west of the Khyber Pass, the amir would be required to accept a British commission for future demarcation of the area.⁴⁹³

As one can notice the Treaty of Rawalpindi (1919) did not explicitly state that the Afghans had their complete independence. But if one refers to the Gandamak Treaty that the British and the Afghans had signed in 1879 at the close of the Second Anglo-Afghan War, one can see that the British pressured the Afghans to accept the confiscation of their foreign policy, in return for British grants of regular subsidies and ammunitions. Hence, since

⁴⁹¹Percy, Sykes, op.cit., p.284

⁴⁹²Ibid.

⁴⁹³Ibid., p.359

this privilege had been revoked as it is clearly stated in articles 2 and 3, the British would no longer deprive the Afghans of their foreign policy. To make the matter explicit, Sir Hamilton Grant addressed a letter to the amir of Afghanistan in which he asserted Afghanistan's complete independence.

You have told me that the Afghan Government are unwilling to renew the arrangement whereby the late amir agreed to follow unreservedly the advice of the British Government in regard to his external relations. I have not therefore pressed this matter, and no mention of it is made in the Treaty. Therefore, the said Treaty and this letter leave Afghanistan officially free and independent in its internal and external affairs. Moreover, this war has cancelled all previous Treaties.⁴⁹⁴

Now that Afghanistan got its independence, how would it behave with foreign powers, particularly Britain and the Soviet Union that was born as a result of the Bolshevik Revolution (1917). In fact, with the decline of the Russian Empire and the end of the Great Game following the Anglo-Russian Entente (1907), Britain had no more fear of losing India, which partly accounted for Britain's acknowledgment of Afghanistan's full independence in 1919. The British conceived that Amir Amanullah would not sever all ties with Britain; on the contrary, he would make every endeavour to strengthen his relations with them, for he was apprehensive

⁴⁹⁴Percy, Sykes, op.cit., p.359

about new atheistic neighbours that the new order brought about.⁴⁹⁵ Therefore, fostering good relations with Britain could help both countries promote trade and save Afghanistan from Soviet potential encroachments upon the Afghan land. However, in order to secure British friendship, Amir Amanullah had to abide by four conditions. He could not establish diplomatic relations with the Bolsheviks, nor accommodate Indian rebels,⁴⁹⁶ or encourage the frontier tribes to rise in rebellion against the British. The Amir must accord great respect to the British Agent at Kabul, a further prerequisite that the Amir must comply with to gain British friendship.⁴⁹⁷

Yet, the Afghan policy did not then live up to the British expectations, even though both states managed to appoint ambassadors reciprocally in 1921.⁴⁹⁸ In fact, mistrust and hatred featured both governments' relationships. This lack of harmonious rapport was mainly due to the frequent unrest that the population on the Indian side of the Durand Line caused, on the one hand, and the Russo-Afghan political rapprochement in the 1920s, on the other. The colonial administration of

⁴⁹⁵Percy, Sykes, op.cit., p.285

⁴⁹⁶Mahendra Pratap was one of these Indian rebels who built connections with the outer world, notably, Rangoon, the Capital of Burma, Singapore, and Kabul, where he declared himself President of a provisional government of India. Mohammad Barakatullah was the Prime minister of this provisional government, and Obaidullah Sindhi, the Interior Minister. Gergorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan*. Quoted in Amin Saikal, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival*, U.S.A., I.B. Tauris, 2004, p.261

⁴⁹⁷Ibid.

⁴⁹⁸Saichta, Wahab, op.cit., p.104

India was persuaded that the Afghans were behind such uprisings. This is partly true, according to Shaista Wahab, the Afghan historian and native of Kabul. The latter admitted that the Afghans, not only occasionally emboldened the malcontents to rise in rebellion against the British, but also assisted them financially.⁴⁹⁹ As a punitive measure, the British colonial government of India limited the Afghan imports of goods from India.⁵⁰⁰

The Amir rapprochement with the new Soviet administration was mainly motivated by the recovery of his lost provinces, namely, Panjdeh and Merv.⁵⁰¹ What Amir Amanullah failed to know was that the Russian revolutionary Vladimir leader, Lenin was more in need of the Amir than the latter was of Vladimir Lenin, for the Soviet leader required international recognition that would ensure the integration of his new regime in the international arena.⁵⁰² Secondly, the Soviet leader wanted the Amir to assist him to quell the Muslim rebels in Central Asia. The establishment of this harmonious relation resulted in a Treaty of Friendship in May 1921.⁵⁰³ Vladimir Lenin pledged to provide the Amir with finance, technology, and weaponry and the installation of telephonic systems.⁵⁰⁴

Though Afghanistan was able to achieve complete independence from Britain, Amir Amanullah did not inspire confidence in the British,

⁴⁹⁹Saichta, Wahab, op.cit., p.104

⁵⁰⁰Ibid.

⁵⁰¹Ibid.

⁵⁰²Ibid.,p.105

⁵⁰³Ibid.

⁵⁰⁴Ibid.

nor was he ready to endure their pressures that would compromise his country's independence. To guard his country from such contingencies, Amir Amanullah embarked on an ambitious programme through the introduction of wide-ranging reforms that aimed at modernizing the Afghan state. Because of his conviction that Europe was the cradle of modernity, he believed in the feasibility of westernizing Afghanistan. Thus, he thought 'it was possible to transplant the western experience to non-European regions.'⁵⁰⁵

In order to give a legal basis to his reforms, he initiated a constitution that included 73 articles, on April 9, 1923.⁵⁰⁶ In this constitution, special attention was given to education, being the cornerstone for both the socio-economic development and the modernization of the country. To achieve such a goal, the Afghan Government relied on cultural co-operation with foreign countries, among which Turkey, France, and Germany.⁵⁰⁷ The institutions where foreign instructors provided the rural and urban people with education and training were the mosques, religious schools, and even homes. Additionally, the Afghans' restoration of diplomatic channels with the outer world enabled them to secure seats in foreign colleges where they pursued their studies. The Amir's reforms deterred gender bias and made education both free

⁵⁰⁵Farhang, Rajaei, *Islamism and Modernism : The Changing Discourse in Iran*, U.S.A., University of Texas Press, 2007, p.45

⁵⁰⁶<http://www.constitution.org/cons/afghan/const1923.htm>. Accessed: March 23, 2013

⁵⁰⁷Hafizullah, Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: The British, Russian, and American Invasion*, U.S.A., Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, 22

and mandatory for both sexes, as article fourteen of the constitution stipulated.

Every subject of Afghanistan has the right to an education at no cost and in accordance with the appropriate curriculum. Foreigners are not permitted to operate schools in Afghanistan but are not barred from being employed as teachers.⁵⁰⁸

So, females were not excluded from these educational reforms; for example, Amir Consort, Queen Soraya, not only took charge of the first school for girls, but also inaugurated the first Afghan women's magazine, named, '*Irshed Niswan*' (Guide for Women). The prevalence of joint education of both sexes in the same classes was encouraged, too. Along with these education reforms, Amanullah initiated some social ones; he therefore, instituted secularism⁵⁰⁹ and monogamy and promoted adult literacy. He also hired the service of European architects for the construction of a modern palace, a Parliament house, and social amenities, namely, a theatre and a café.⁵¹⁰

⁵⁰⁸<http://www.constitution.org/cons/afghan/const1923.htm>. Accessed: August 6, 2014

⁵⁰⁹Secularism is the belief that religion and religious bodies should have no official part in public life or in running public institutions, especially schools. Collins. P.,H. (ed.), *Dictionary of Politics and Government*, London, Peter Collin Publishing, 1988

⁵⁰⁹Shaista, Wahab and Barry, Youngerman , op.cit., p.107

⁵¹⁰<http://www.constitution.org.op.cit>. Accessed: March 23, 2013

In the religious field, the Amir's reforms ensured the right of worship for those religious groups or sects, holding religious beliefs other than Islam, as article 2 of the 1923 constitution held out.

The religion of Afghanistan is the sacred religion of Islam. Followers of other religions such as Jews and Hindus residing in Afghanistan are entitled to the full protection of the state provided they do not disturb the public peace.⁵¹¹

What is essential to realize though was that, out of the 73 articles of the 1923 constitution, five were amended, respectively in 1924 and 1925. The conservatives made amendments because of the political weight they had in the Loya Jirga. Article two was among the ones which carried amendments. So, the following sentence was added to the article: "Hindus and Jews must pay the special tax and wear distinctive clothing."⁵¹²

What was remarkable in terms of religion was the Amir's abolition of the veil, and his seven month-tour with the unveiled queen in Asia and Europe that his subjects saw as both extravagant and revolting.⁵¹³ As part of his westernizing programme, the Amir's substituted the Thursday weekly holiday for Friday and made monogamy compulsory for government

⁵¹¹<http://www.constitution.org/cons/afghan/const1923.htm>. Accessed: March 23, 2013

⁵¹²Thomas, Barfield, *op. cit.*, p.188

⁵¹³*Ibid.*, p.189

officials and obliged the latter to dress like Europeans with suits and hats.⁵¹⁴

If the Afghan intelligentsia, who constituted the minority, were in favour of these reforms, a large majority of the Afghans, particularly the ones predominantly conservative were against them, for they hurt their pride and went counter the religious and tribal leaders, who were apprehensive of co-education and above all unveiling. Along with these unprecedented novelties, the Amir meddled with the socio-cultural life of his subjects, by attempting to lower the bride price, believing that such reforms would increase the pace of modernization.⁵¹⁵ Such attitude was, indeed, unparalleled for no Amir had ever dared to behave in a like manner.⁵¹⁶ Amir Amanullah seemed ignorant of the fact that development and modernization required a gradual process of evolution and time as Mahmud Tarzi recommended.⁵¹⁷ Additionally, his haste to implement his programme, combined with his obstinacy, ran counter the clergy who had a more sufficiently coercive power than the state which lacked a strong army to help the Amir implement his reforms. Moreover, his prolonged absence from Afghanistan increased his unpopularity as it brought about

⁵¹⁴Willem, Van Schendel and Erik J.,Zurcher (eds),op.cit. p.154

⁵¹⁵Ibid., p.188

⁵¹⁶Nabi, Misdaq, op.cit., p.64

corruption and instability.⁵¹⁸ Because of all these factors, the Amir was compelled to abdicate in 1828 .

In brief, Afghanistan independence was achieved owing to the correlation of four factors: Nationalism, Pan-Islamism, 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.

⁵¹⁸Nabi, Mirdaq, op.cit., p.190

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

The 1907 Anglo-Russian Convention defined the British and the Russians' spheres of influence, and ended these two powers' rivalry in Central Asia. However, the Anglo-Russian agreement was negotiated without the consultation of the mostly concerned countries, namely Persia and Afghanistan, which indubitably antagonized these latter countries.

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Conclusion

The balance of power that prompted the European powers to the political domination and economic exploitation of the fragile states in the nineteenth century, was primarily due to the industrialization requirements. In fact, these powers embarked on global expansion to the detriment of vulnerable states in Africa, South America and Asia to secure markets to keep their machinery turning.

In Central Asia for instance, the competition for supremacy and influence involved Britain and Russia, then two hegemonic powers in the region. Russia's steady expansion southwards was to cause British mounting concern, for such a systematic enlargement would, in the long term, jeopardize British efforts to protect India, 'the Crown Jewel.' In their attempt to cope with such contingent circumstances, the British colonial administration believed that making of Afghanistan a buffer state between India and Russia, would halt Russian expansion. Because this latter policy did not deter the Russians' southward extension, Britain sought to forge friendly relations with the Afghan amir, Dost Mohammad. However, the Russians were to alter these amicable relations, through frequent visits of their political agents to Kabul. This Russian attitude was to increase British anxiety to such a degree that it developed to some sort of

paranoia, which ultimately led to British repeated armed interventions in Afghanistan.

In a span of 81 years (1838-1919), the British intervened in Afghanistan three times to coerce the successive Afghan amirs into bending to their will, namely befriending the British and severing all ties with the Russians.

The first Anglo-Afghan war (1838-1842) was a type of asymmetric warfare, for the British army outweighed the Afghan forces considerably in number and equipment. In the first Anglo-Afghan war, the British dethroned the Afghan amir, Dost Mohammad (r.1834–1839) because they believed he constituted a threat to the Raj and exiled him in India. On the Afghan throne, they seated King Shah Shuja who gained the Afghan throne with the British military assistance, but he could not govern, owing to his unpopularity with his subjects. For example, the very fact that he was restored to the Afghan throne with the assistance of infidels' foreign military force, having different cultural, political and above all religious beliefs, made the Afghans firmly believe that the man who claimed to be their rightful king, had more beliefs to share with the invaders, than with them. Furthermore, to maintain him on the throne, the British would mobilize a great number of troops in Kabul and its vicinities, which was not feasible, because India was badly in need of troops. Therefore, retreating from Afghanistan and re-enthroning Dost Mohammad was the only option left to them to resolve the dilemma. The First Anglo-Afghan war ended in

the British complete defeat. Only one British officer managed to escape death. British debacle in Afghanistan was due to the fact that the British political and military elites were ignorant of the Afghans and their culture. They did not know that the Afghans were deeply conservative, and that they would prefer to die rather than allow Shah Shuja, accompanied by 'Infidels' to rule them.

Surprisingly enough, the factors that led to the first British military intervention in Afghanistan in the first half of the nineteenth century persisted in the second half of the century, for Russia continued her expansion southwards to engulf all the Muslim Khanates in Central Asia and subsequently become in contiguity with Afghanistan. Fearful that the Russian expansion might swallow up Afghanistan, the Afghan amir, Sher Ali called for British assistance which he did not get, due to British procrastination. Sher Ali's uneasiness of mind drove him to make overtures of friendship with Russia, which angered Britain. Thenceforth, the Second Anglo-Afghan war broke out in 1878 and ended two years later with the Gandamak Treaty that was signed under Amir Abdurrahmane's rule (1880-1901) which witnessed some positive aspects as well as negative ones.

Upon his ascension to the Afghan throne, Amir Abdurrahmane, known as the Iron Amir, resorted to force to centralize power and deprive the tribal chiefs, in the provinces, of theirs. He also raised a modern standing army in the British model. Despite these attributes, he could not ward off the British demarcation of the Afghan-Indian frontier, by means of

a 2,444 Km long line, the British named the 'Durand line.' The result was the separation of the Pashtun ethnic group from their kinsmen in Afghanistan. What equally increased Amir Abdurrahmane's disrepute was his ratification of the Gandamak Treaty which was catastrophic for Afghanistan, for it confiscated the Afghans' foreign policy, along with some regions in contiguity with the then Indian North East frontier. As a reaction to the Gandamak Treaty, there emerged the Young Afghans, a reformist movement that voiced its discontent vis-à-vis the treaty. Because of Amir Abdurrahmane's violent response to it, the movement was compelled to militate underground waiting for a favourable opportunity to rise to surface once again.

In fact, that opportune moment came under Abdurrahmane's successor, Amir Habibullah who granted the Afghan exiles permission to enter the country. Among these exiles was the educated man Mahmud Tarzi (1869-1933) who gave a great impulse to the Young Afghan reformist movement owing to the fact the man 'rubbed shoulders' with modernists and nationalists abroad who subscribed to ideals such as anti-colonial resistance and national independence.

All in all, the achievement of Afghanistan independence could not be possible without these elements: Pan-Islamism, the effects of the injurious Durand line and the 1907 Anglo-Russian Convention upon the Afghans, and the role of Nationalists. Equally important is the fact that Pan-Islamism and

Nationalism were mainly achieved under the rule of Amir Habibullah who was receptive to Afghan elite's reforms.

Pan-Islamism, not only promoted unity and solidarity among Muslims, but it also galvanized them to take arms to rid themselves of the invaders' yoke. It also imparted some optimism among them and raised their consciousness that they belonged to a community. The Durand line demarcation was effected without giving any consideration whatsoever, neither to the Afghans, nor to the far-reaching consequences it would have for both Afghanistan and Pakistan. A case in point is the permanent argument that currently causes mutual hostility between these two countries. Equally, the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 was achieved to the detriment of the peoples of the region, notably the Persians and the Afghans. If it put an end to the Anglo-Russian rivalry in the region, it also endorsed the dismemberment of Persia and Afghanistan

Nationalism was no less crucially important as it managed to inculcate the notions of nation and fatherland through *Siraj-ol-Akhbar*, a periodical that managed to enlighten both Amir Habibullah and his subjects about what was taking place both within the realm and outside it. Afghan reformers like Mahmud Beg Tarzi and the Young Afghans played key roles in sensitizing the multi-ethnic social and linguistic groups. Equally, without the nationalist Afghan reformers and their mouthpiece, *Siraj-ol-Akhbar*, the Afghans would have no idea of what was taking place beyond their frontiers, nor be sufficiently cognizant about Pan-Islamism and the 1907

Anglo-Russian convention that was injurious to their country, and still less about the sufferings of the Pashtuns beyond the Durand line. Therefore, these four historical facts had sufficient weight to incite the Afghans to take up arms to rid their country of the British invaders

The Third Anglo-Afghan war was fought under Amir Amanullah (r.1919-1929) who was adamant about the recovery of the Afghan foreign policy that the British had confiscated at the outset of Amir Abdurrahman's rule. What was singular about this war was that it was the Afghans who took the initiative and declared war. Given the British troops' superiority in arms, military equipment, and particularly their air force, they managed to win the war. However, due to the Russian waning threat after the Anglo-Russian Convention (1907), and the Great War (1914-1918) which depleted Britain's human and material resources, the British were unable to mobilize their troops permanently to fight in more than one front. Because of these factors Britain granted the Afghans their full independence.

Glossaries

Glossary 1: Afghan Renowned Names

- **Abdali** was the original name of the Durrani, the royal Pashtun tribe, located in the Kandahar area.
- **Afridi** is a Pashtu-speaking tribe that is located in the area of the Khaibar Pass, just beyond the Afghan border.
- **Ahmad Ali Kohzad** was a historian, writer, and editor of *Aryana* and *Afghanistan*. He served as president of the Historical Society of Afghanistan (1956–1961), professor of history, deputy director of the compilation and translation department of the Afghan Academy, and director of the Kabul Museum. He is the author of numerous publications in Afghan history. Born in 1907, the son of Muhammad Ali, he graduated from Istiqlal Lycée and worked with the French Archeological Delegation for many years. He served for three years as secretary at the Afghan embassy in Rome. He died on November 25, 1983.
- **Ahmad Shah**, a Abdali Durrani, was King of Afghanistan, 1747– 1773, and founder of the Sadozai dynasty of the Abdali (Durrani) tribe. He was born in 1722 in Herat, the son of Muhammad Zaman Khan, who was governor of Herat.
- **Amir Dost Muhammad** (r. 1826–1838 and 1842–1863) was an Afghan ruler who known as the “Great Amir” (*Amir-i Kabir*). He was ousted by the British in the First Anglo-Afghan War but was able to regain the Afghan throne after four years in Indian exile.
- **Amir Shir Ali** (r. 1863–1866 and 1868–1879) was one of Amir Dost Muhammad’s 27 sons who became amir of Afghanistan in 1863 and spent much of his tenure trying to meet challenges from his brothers who governed various provinces. By 1869 he had consolidated his power and

travelled to Ambala, India, in response to an invitation from the viceroy, Lord Mayo. He was willing to form an alliance with India in exchange for British protection from Russian attacks, assistance in weapons and money, and recognition of the succession of his favorite son Abdullah Jan. But the viceroy merely expressed his pleasure that the civil war among the princes had come to an end and, as a gesture of friendship, gave the Afghan ruler a present of 600,000 rupees and a few pieces of artillery.

- **Barakzai** is an important section of the Zirk branch of the Durrani to which the Barakzai/Muhammadzai ruling family belongs.
- **Mahmud Tarzi** was a prominent Afghan nationalist, “Father of Afghan Journalism,” and high government official during the reigns of Amir Habibullah and King Amanullah. Born in Ghazni on August 23, 1865, the son of Ghulam Muhammad Tarzi, he accompanied his father into exile and was educated in India and Damascus under the supervision of his father. He returned to Kabul after the death of Amir Abdul Rahman and became editor of the *Seraj al-Akhar Afghaniya*.
- **Sayyid Jamaluddin Afghani** was born in 1838. He is known to be the “Father of the Pan-Islamic movement,” Muslim modernist, and political propagandist who advocated unity of the Islamic world and selective borrowing from the West for the purpose of stemming the tide of Western imperialism. He was the adviser of Muslim rulers in many parts of the Islamic world and a political activist in Iran, Afghanistan, Egypt, and the Ottoman Empire.
- **Shah Shuja-UL-Mulk** (r. 1803–1810 and 1839–1842) was born about 1792, the seventh son of Timur Shah, he became governor of Peshawar in 1801 during the reign of his full brother Shah Zaman. In 1803 he captured Kabul, imprisoned his brother Mahmud, and proclaimed himself king. He accepted a British mission in 1809 under Mountstuart Elphinstone.

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

Glossary 2: British Officials

- **Alexander Burnes** (1805–1841) was a captain in the Indian Army who was sent by Lord George Eden Auckland, governor-general of the British East India Company, to the court of Amir Dost Muhammad in September 1837 for the purpose of concluding an alliance with Britain and establishing peace between the Afghan ruler and Ranjit Singh, who had captured Kashmir and occupied Peshawar. Burnes was well received at Kabul, and it appeared that an agreement with the amir was possible; but in spite of Burnes's recommendations Lord Auckland was not willing to make any promises. He recommended that Dost Muhammad waive his claims on Peshawar and make peace with the Sikh ruler.
- **Auckland, George Eden**, Earl of (1784-1849), Governor-General of India, son of William Eden, First Baron of Auckland, was born at Eden Farm, near Beckenham, in Kent, in August 1784. He was educated at Christ Church, Oxford, and was called to the bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1809. From 1810-13, he represented Woodstock in Parliament. He served as President of the Board of Trade from 1830-34. In 1834, he became the First Lord of Admiralty under Lord Melbourne, who sent him out in April 1836 to India as governor-general. <http://www.learnpunjabi.org>. Accessed: January 1, 2015.
- **Florentia Sale**, (1790–1853) was the wife of General Sir Robert Sale, commander of the garrison at Jalalabad during the First Anglo-Afghan War (1838–1842). Lady Sale was a hostage with other British women and some of their officer husbands and thus escaped the general massacre of the British forces. She recorded her experience in a book, entitled *A Journal of the Disasters in Afghanistan, 1841–1842*, which is an important source on the British misadventure .
- **General Sir Frederick Roberts** (1832–1914) was a British General, the son of Sir Abraham Roberts, and commander of the Kurram Field Force in the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–1880)..

- **Mortimer Durand** (1850–1924) was the Foreign secretary of the government of India (1884–1938) who sent to Kabul in September 1893 for the purpose of negotiating an agreement defining the Indo-Afghan boundary, subsequently called the Durand Line. He served in the Northwest provinces 1829–1838 and as political secretary to Frederick Roberts in the Kabul campaign in 1879.
- **Pierre Louis Cavagnari** was a man of mixed British and French ancestry described variously as having “great charm and ability” and being a man “of overbearing temper, consumed by the thirst for personal distinction.” He was signatory for the British government of the Treaty of Gandomak (1879) with Amir Yaqub Khan.

Source: Ibid.

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Appendices

Appendix I

THE SIMLA MANIFESTO

SIMLAH, October 1, 1838.

The Right Hon. the Governor-General of India having, with the concurrence of the Supreme Council, directed the assemblage of a British force for service across the Indus, his Lordship deems it proper to publish the following exposition of the reasons which have led to this important measure.

It is a matter of notoriety that the treaties entered into by the British Government in the year 1832, with the Ameers of Sindh, the Newab of Bhawalpore, and Maharajah Runjeet Singh, had for their object, by opening the navigation of the Indus, to facilitate the extension of commerce, and to gain for the British nation in Central Asia that legitimate influence which an interchange of benefits would naturally produce.

With a view to invite the aid of the de facto rulers of Afghanistan to the measures necessary for giving full effect to those treaties, Captain Burnes was deputed, towards the close of the year 1836, on a mission to Dost Mahomed Khan, the chief of Caubul. The original objects of that officer's mission were purely of a commercial nature. Whilst Captain Burnes, however, was on his journey to Caubul, information was received by the Governor-General that the troops of Dost Mahomed Khan had made a sudden and unprovoked attack on those of our ancient ally, Maharajah Runjeet Singh. It was

naturally to be apprehended that his Highness the Maharajah would not be slow to avenge the aggression; and it was to be feared that, the flames of war being once kindled in the very regions into which we were endeavouring to extend our commerce, the peaceful and beneficial purposes of the British Government would be altogether frustrated. In order to avert a result so calamitous, the Governor-General resolved on authorizing captain Burnes to intimate to Dost Mahomed Khan, that if he should evince a disposition to come to just and reasonable terms with the Maharajah, his Lordship would exert his good offices with his Highness for the restoration of an amicable understanding between the two powers. The Maharajah, with the characteristic confidence which he has uniformly placed in the faith and friendship of the British nation, at once assented to the proposition of the Governor-General, to the effect that, in the meantime, hostilities on his part should be suspended.

It subsequently came to the knowledge of the Governor- General that a Persian army was besieging Herat; that intrigues were actively prosecuted throughout Afghanistan, for the purpose of extending Persian influence and authority to the banks of, and even beyond, the Indus; and that the Court of Persia had not only commenced a course of injury and insult to the officers of her Majesty's Mission in the Persian territory, but had afforded evidence of being engaged in designs wholly at variance with the principles and objects of its alliance with Great Britain.

After much time spent by Captain Burnes in fruitless negotiation at Caubul, it appeared that Dost Mahomed Khan, chiefly in consequence of his reliance upon Persian encouragement and assistance, persisted, as respected his misunderstanding with the Sikhs, in urging the most unreasonable pretensions, such as the Governor-General could not, consistently with justice and his regard for the friendship of Maharajah Runjeet Singh, be the channel of submitting to the consideration of his Highness; that he avowed schemes of aggrandisement and ambition injurious to the security and peace of the

frontiers of India; and that he openly threatened, "in furtherance of those schemes, to call in every foreign aid which he could command. Ultimately he gave his undisguised support to the Persian designs in Afghanistan, of the unfriendly and injurious character of which, as concerned the British power in India, he was well apprised, and by his utter disregard of the views and interests of the British Government, compelled Captain Burnes to leave Caubul without having effected any of the objects of his mission.

It was now evident that no further interference could be exercised by the British Government to bring about a good understanding between the Sikh ruler and Dost Mahomed Khan, and the hostile policy of the latter chief showed too plainly that, so long as Caubul remained under his government, we could never hope that the tranquillity of our neighbourhood would be secured, or that the interests of our Indian Empire would be preserved inviolate.

The Governor-General deems it in this place necessary to revert to the siege of Herat and the conduct of the Persian nation. The siege of that city has now been carried on by the Persian army for many months. The attack upon it was a most unjustifiable and cruel aggression, perpetrated and continued, notwithstanding the solemn and repeated remonstrances of the British Envoy at the Court of Persia, and after every just and becoming offer of accommodation had been made and rejected. The besieged have behaved with a gallantry and fortitude worthy of the justice of their cause; and the Governor-General would yet indulge the hope that their heroism may enable them to maintain a successful defence, until succours shall reach them from British India. In the meantime, the ulterior designs of Persia, affecting the interests of the British Government, have been, by a succession of events, more and more openly manifested. The Governor-General has recently ascertained by an official despatch from Mr. M'Neill, Her Majesty's Envoy, that his Excellency has been compelled, by a refusal of his just demands, and by a systematic course of disrespect adopted towards him by the

Persian Government, to quit the Court of the Shah, and to make a public declaration of the cessation of all intercourse between the two Governments. The necessity, under which Great Britain is placed of regarding the present advance of the Persian arms into Afghanistan as an act of hostility towards herself, has also been officially communicated to the Shah, under the express order of her Majesty's Government.

The Chiefs of Candahar (brothers of Dost Mahomed Khan of Caubul) have avowed their adherence to the Persian policy, with the same full knowledge of its opposition to the rights and interests of the British nation in India, and have been openly assisting in the operations against Herat.

In the crisis of affairs consequent upon the retirement of our Envoy from Caubul, the Governor-General felt the importance of taking immediate measures for arresting the rapid progress of foreign intrigue and aggression towards our own territories.

His attention was naturally drawn at this conjuncture to the position and claims of Shah Soojah-ool-Moolk, a monarch who, when in power, had cordially acceded to the measures of united resistance to external enmity, which were at that time judged necessary by the British Government, and who, on his empire being usurped by its present rulers, had found an honourable asylum in the British dominions.

It had been clearly ascertained, from the information furnished by the various officers who have visited Afghanistan, that the Barukzye chiefs, from their disunion and unpopularity, were ill fitted, under any circumstances, to be useful allies to the British Government, and to aid us in our just and necessary measures of national defence. Yet so long as they refrained from proceedings injurious to our interests and security, the British Government acknowledged and respected their authority; but a different policy appeared to be now more than justified by the conduct of those chiefs, and to be

indispensable to our own safety. The welfare of our possessions in the East requires that we should have on our western frontier an ally who is interested in resisting aggression, and establishing tranquillity, in the place of chiefs ranging themselves in subservience to a hostile power, and seeking to promote schemes of conquest and aggrandisement.

After serious and mature deliberation, the Governor-General was satisfied that a pressing necessity, as well as every consideration of policy and justice, warranted us in espousing the cause of Shah Soojah-ool-Moolk, whose popularity throughout Afghanistan had been proved to his Lordship by the strong and unanimous testimony of the best authorities. Having arrived at this determination, the Governor-General was further of opinion that it was just and proper, no less from the position of Maharajah Runjeet Singh, than from his undeviating friendship towards the British Government, that His Highness should have the offer of becoming a party to the contemplated operations.

Mr. Macnaghten was accordingly deputed in June last to the Court of His Highness, and the result of his mission has been the conclusion of a triplicate treaty by the British Government, the Maharajah, and Shah Soojah-ool-Moolk, whereby his Highness is guaranteed in his present possessions, and has bound himself to co-operate for the restoration of the Shah to the throne of his ancestors. The friends and enemies of any one of the contracting parties have been declared to be the friends and enemies of all.

Various points have been adjusted, which had been the subjects of discussion between the British Government and his Highness the Maharajah, the identity of whose interests with those of the Honourable Company has now been made apparent to all the surrounding States. A guaranteed independence will, upon favourable conditions, be tendered to the "Ameers of Sindh, and the integrity of Herat, in the possession of its present ruler, will be fully respected; while by the measures completed, or in progress, it

may reasonably be hoped that the general freedom and security of commerce will be promoted; that the name and just influence of the British Government will gain their proper footing among the nations of Central Asia; that tranquillity will be established upon the most important frontier of India; and that a lasting barrier will be raised against hostile intrigue and encroachment.

His Majesty, Shah Shoojah-ool-Moolk will enter Afghanistan, surrounded by his own troops, and will be supported against foreign interference and factious opposition by a British army. The Governor-General confidently hopes that the Shah will be speedily replaced on his throne by his own subjects and adherents; and when once he shall be secured in power, and the independence and integrity of Afghanistan established, the British army will be withdrawn. The Governor-General has been led to these measures by the duty which is imposed upon him of providing for the security of the possessions of the British Crown; but, he rejoices that, in the discharge of his duty, he will be enabled to assist in restoring the union and prosperity of the Afghan people. Throughout the approaching operations, British influence will be sedulously employed to further every measure of general benefit, to reconcile differences, to secure oblivion of injuries, and to put an end to the distractions by which, for so many years, the welfare and happiness of the Afghans have been impaired. Even to the chiefs, whose hostile proceedings have given just cause of offence to the British Government, it will seek to secure liberal and honourable treatment, on their tendering early submission, and ceasing from opposition to that course of measures which may be judged the most suitable for the general advantage of their country.

By order of the Right Hon. Governor-General of India.

W. H. MACNAGHTEN
Secretary to the Government of India,
with the Governor-General

Source: Brig. Gen. (Sir) Percy Sykes, *A History of Afghanistan*, Vol. II, London, MacMillan & CO. LTD, 1940, [www. Archive.org.](http://www.archive.org), Accessed: July 8, 2011

Appendix II

THE OUTBREAK OF AFGHAN REBELLIONS

(Excerpt)

W. H. Macnaghten, Bart., Envoy and Minister at the Court of Shah Shooja, to T. H. Maddock, Esq., Secretary to the Government of India.

Cabool, October 20, 1841.

Sir,

I HAVE now the honor to report the circumstances attending the recent rebellion of certain of the Eastern Chilzie Chiefs.

The first intimation I received of this rebellion was about three weeks ago, to the effect that the chiefs had suddenly left Cabool ; and, the day after, I learnt that they had stopped a caravan on the high road, and had taken the property and its owners to the hills, at a distance from the road.

I immediately waited upon His Majesty, and prevailed upon him to send the Governor, Humza Khan, with a message to the rebels, inviting them to return to their allegiance, and promising redress of any real grievance they might have sustained. This mission failed of success, because Humza Khan was the chief instigator of the rebellion.

Two reasons have been assigned for this rebellion. First, the reduction of the allowances of the Ghilzie Chiefs; and, secondly, the engagement that was required of them to be responsible for robberies by the Eastern Ghilzies, wherever committed.

On the first point I may observe that the necessities of His Majesty, and the frequent prohibitions I had received against further reliance on the resources of the British Government, appeared to admit of no alternative. I was assured that the chiefs had admitted the justice of, and cheerfully acquiesced in, the reduction; moreover, that, after the reduction was effected, the chiefs would, in consequence of the enhanced value of grain, receive larger allowances than they did in the time of Dost Mahomed.

On the second point, I am compelled to state that the grievance of the chiefs was well founded. Their liabilities should have been only co-extensive with their respective jurisdictions. Unfortunately, they never represented their grievance to me. They had been prohibited from visiting me by the before-named Governor, on the part of the Shah, (Humza Khan) a worthless man, alike inimical to us and to His Majesty. The good result of the recent rebellion is the disgrace and imprisonment of this man. His father was killed in the Shah's service; and His Majesty, an amiable weakness, was unwilling to acknowledge the demerits of the son, of which, however, he is now fully sensible.

One of the chief rebels, Mahomed Shah Khan, has very large possessions in the district of Lughman I therefore urged the minister to send out a relative of his own with 300 Huzarbash Horse to that neighbourhood. This was done without the delay of an hour, and the designs of the rebels were for the time frustrated. They attacked the party, en route, but did comparatively little damage; and the conspirators found it necessary to separate, and each to look after his individual interests, before the plot was matured.

There are four thanas, or posts, guarded by Ghilzies, between Cabool and Gundamuk. The first belongs to a chief named Khoda Buksh, a relative, by marriage, of

the ex-Ameer Dost Mahomed Khan. The second to Sher Mahomed Khan, the third to Allahzar Khan, and the fourth to Gool Mahomed Khan. The second named of these (who has by far the greatest influence) was gained over to our cause at an early period, and the third was always staunch in his allegiance. Khoda Buksh and Gool Mahomed went into open rebellion, and with them was joined Mahomed Shah Khan already mentioned, a Ghilzie Chief, possessing extensive property in Lughman, and a relative also, by marriage, of the ex-Ameer.

The conduct of Gool Mahomed was the most inexcusable of all. On the Shah's arrival in this country, that individual was in a state of destitution, and was placed in power and affluence by His Majesty. He has been indefatigable in his endeavours to stir up the surrounding tribes to rebellion, but I have much gratification in adding that he has in no one instance succeeded, a fact which speaks well for His Majesty's Government. Gool Mahomed Khan was immediately deposed, and his place supplied by Burkut Khan, a chief of great influence and respectability.

On the separation of the rebels, Mahomed Shah Khan retreated to Lughman. Khoda Buksh Khan, with not more than 100 followers, proceeded to occupy the Khoord Cabool Pass; and Gool Mahomed Khan went into his own country to raise the tribes. Lughman was already occupied by the Huzarbash horse, and I had no apprehension from that quarter. I had the greatest confidence in the new chief appointed by His Majesty to supersede Gool Mahomed, and the first thing to be done was to dislodge Khoda Buksh and his party of rebels from the strong defile which they had occupied. The manner in which this service was performed, has doubtless been reported to Government by Major-General Elphinstone, C.B., and it only remains for me to add, that the prowess displayed by the British troops on this occasion was the admiration of all the Affghans, and there were not a few on our side who witnessed it.

I have, &c.

W. H. MACNAGHTEN,
Envoy and Minister.

Source: *Papers Relating to Military Operations in Affghanistan presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty, 1843.* www. archive.org.
Accessed: May 13, 2012

Appendix III

**MAJOR-GENERAL SIR ROBERT SALE TO CAPTAIN
MACKESON.**

(Excerpt)

Camp Futteabad, November 11, 1841.

Sir,

In the course of my operations against the Eastern Ghilzies, undertaken in pursuance of instructions from Major-General Elphinstone, I reached Gundamuck on the 30th ultimo, and whilst there, was made aware of the critical position in which the force of Cabool is placed, by the occupation of the city and of the heights around it by bodies of insurgents, who have captured, it is said, one magazine, and seem to have it in their power, now at the approach of winter, to cut off every supply from the troops in the Bala Hissar and intrenched cantonment. I was unable as they and I had desired to march to their relief, partly in consequence of the desertion, in great numbers, of the owners of our hired carriage with their animals, and partly from our want of ammunition, half of our supply having been expended in our numerous affairs with the enemy, Jellalabad being at the same time menaced on the side of Lughman. I have determined to secure that important point by falling back upon it, and hope to reach it to-morrow. The Commissariat Officer will probably communicate with you on the subject of any wants he may have in that department; and I have now urgently to request the favor of your exerting your influence with the Sikh authorities at Peshawur, to obtain for me, without delay, 200, 000 rounds of musket ammunition, or if that amount be not in readiness in their arsenal made up into cartridges, the material complete for the same.

I have, &c,
R. SALE,
Commanding Field Force,

Source: *Papers Relating to Military Operations in Affghanistan presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty, 1843.* www.archive.org. Accessed: May 13, 2012

