

DYNAMICS AND EVOLUTION OF HUMANITARIAN AND
DEVELOPMENT AID TO AFGHANISTAN

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DEVELOPMENT AID TO AFGHANISTAN**

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ABSTRACT

DYNAMICS AND EVOLUTION OF HUMANITARIAN AND DEVELOPMENT AID TO AFGHANISTAN

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This dissertation examines the dynamics and evolution of international humanitarian and development aid to Afghanistan, tracing its development from historical origins to the present day, with a focus on the post-9/11 period. Contrary to the liberal school of thought approaching aid from a donor-centric perspective with the assumption that donors are benevolent actors aiming to promote development and international cooperation through providing aid to recipient countries in need, this research argues that non-donor-centric realist school of thought treating aid as a political or strategic tool in the hands of not only aid-giving but also aid-receiving actors provides a more accurate explanation of the relationship between Afghanistan and the international aid community. This approach suggests that both aid-giving and aid-receiving countries perceive foreign aid as a political or strategic instrument and enter into aid relationship with a calculated pursuit of their national interests. This argument is supported by the historical trajectory of both aid provision and aid receipt in Afghanistan. While diverse donors have allocated aid driven by their own geopolitical interest, often overlooking Afghanistan's absorptive capacity, socio-cultural context, domestic political dynamics, and long-term sustainability, Afghanistan has accepted this aid due to its own pursuit of national interest. Moreover, Afghanistan was well aware that Maussian reciprocity governs aid relationships, leaving either little or no room for altruism. The issue with Afghanistan's aid-receiving practices is that the country often fails to fully assess the associated long-term risks or considers the possible negative consequences

but prioritizes short-term benefits or allows self-interested political elites to focus on their own gains rather than those of the country or its people. This has resulted in Afghanistan becoming a fragile, aid-dependent rentier state, swinging from one local power broker to another and from one superpower's influence to another, leaving the Afghan people trapped in a persistent cycle of crises and challenges.

Keywords: Afghanistan, humanitarian aid, development aid, Taliban, 9/11

ÖZ

AFGANİSTAN'A YAPILAN İNSANİ VE KALKINMA YARDIMLARININ DİNAMİKLERİ VE GELİŞİMİ

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Bu tez, Afganistan'a yönelik uluslararası insani ve kalkınma yardımlarının dinamiklerini ve evrimini incelemekte, bu yardımların tarihsel kökenlerinden günümüze kadar gelişimini takip etmekte ve özellikle 11 Eylül sonrası döneme odaklanmaktadır. Donörleri, yardım sağladıkları ülkelerde kalkınmayı ve uluslararası işbirliğini teşvik etme amacı güden hayırsever aktörler olarak varsayan liberal uluslararası ilişkiler kuramının aksine, bu araştırma, yardımın yalnızca yardım veren ülkeler tarafından değil, aynı zamanda yardım alan ülkeler tarafından da bir siyasi veya stratejik araç olarak görüldüğü, donör-merkezli olmayan realist uluslararası ilişkiler kuramının, Afganistan ile uluslararası yardım topluluğu arasındaki ilişkileri daha doğru bir şekilde açıkladığını ileri sürmektedir. Bu yaklaşım, hem yardım veren hem de yardım alan ülkelerin, dış yardımı bir siyasi veya stratejik araç olarak gördüğünü ve yardım ilişkilerine ulusal çıkarlarını hesaplayarak girdiklerini öne sürmektedir. Bu argümanı, Afganistan'daki yardım sağlama ve yardım almanın tarihsel süreci desteklemektedir. Birçok farklı donör, kendi jeopolitik çıkarları doğrultusunda Afganistan'a yardım sağlamış ve bu yardımları sağlarken de sıklıkla hazmetme kapasitesi, sosyo-kültürel bağlam, iç siyasi dinamikler ve uzun vadeli sürdürülebilirlik gibi konuları göz ardı etmiştir; Afganistan ise bu yardımları kendi ulusal çıkarları doğrultusunda kabul etmiştir. Ayrıca, Afganistan Maussian karşılıklılık ilkesinin yardım ilişkilerini yönettiğinin farkındadır, bu da yardım ilişkilerinde hayırseverliğe pek yer bırakmamaktadır. Afganistan'ın yardım alma pratiğindeki sorun, ülkenin genellikle uzun vadeli riskleri veya olası olumsuz sonuçları tam

olarak hesaplayamaması, kısa vadeli yararları öncelikli olarak deęerlendirmesi veya kişisel çıkarları peşinde koşan siyasi elitlerin, ülkenin veya halkının yararlarını gözetmeksizin kendi kazançlarına odaklanmasına izin vermesidir. Bu durum, Afganistan'ın kırılğan, yardıma bağımlı rantçı bir devlete dönüşmesine, bir yerel güç aracısından dięerine ve bir süper gücün etkisinden dięerine savrulmasına neden olmuş, Afgan halkını sürekli bir kriz ve zorluklar döngüsüne hapsedmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Afganistan, İnsani Yardım, Kalkınma Yardımı, Taliban, 9/11

To the memory of my father Mustafa Güreş
&
To my mother Ayşe Güreş

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CBHAP	: Cross-border Humanitarian Assistance Programme
EU	: European Union
FCV	: Fragility, Conflict and Violence
HAVA/ HVA	: Helmand Valley Authority
HVDP	: Helmand Valley Development Project
ICRC	: International Committee of the Red Cross
IFRC	: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
ILO	: International Labour Organization
LIC	: Low-income Countries
LIMC	: Lower-middle income countries
MDG	: Millennium Development Goal
MIC	: Middle Income Countries
MKA	: Morrison-Knudsen Afghanistan Inc.
NATO	: North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	: Non-Governmental Organization
ODA	: Official Development Aid
OEEC	: Organization for Economic Cooperation
OECD	: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
SDG	: Sustainable Development Goals
SIGAR	: Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction
UN	: United Nations
UNAMA	: UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNGA	: United Nations General Assembly
UNDP	: United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNOCHA	: United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNSC	: United Nations Security Council
US/U.S./USA	: United States of America
USAID	: United States Agency for International Development

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Research Scope and Objective

Considering the turbulent history of Afghanistan that exposed the country and its people to “14 regime changes, 16 rulers (8 of whom died violently), and at least 18 national flag redesigns”¹ from its emergence as a modern Afghan state in the late 19th century to its transition into a failed state in the late 20th century, during which the Afghans first experienced the state-building efforts of different Afghan rulers having different visions for the future of their country that was intertwined with the efforts for development and modernization, but the country’s severe underdevelopment, stemming from a multitude of factors, led its rulers to increasingly rely on external funding, mostly in the form of foreign aid, to achieve these goals, leaving them to face the dilemma of how to develop and modernize their country in the state-building journey while avoiding the dependency trap that would cost the country’s political and economic independence, especially in the Cold War period when the Third World became the theater of superpower competition, with development aid playing a key role and Afghanistan being defined in this context as “the first “economic battlefield” in the Cold War outside the Marshall Plan area”² by the Americans, and secondly witnessed the 1979 Soviet invasion and the subsequent Soviet state-building project involving ambitious modernization, development and social engineering elements to bolster the communist PDPA government that resulted in a devastating civil war after its failure in 1989 and the Taliban’s rise to power in the late 1990s while in the meantime obliterating many of the one-century-long gains in various fields and traditional socio-political structure,³ and more importantly, as the main focus of this study,

¹ Omar Samad, “The 2021 Collapse: Lessons Learned from a Century of Upheavals^[1] and Afghanistan’s Foreign Policy,” in *The Great Power Competition Volume 4: Lessons Learned in Afghanistan: America’s Longest War*, ed. Adib Farhadi & Anthony Masys (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2023), 416

² Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), *Afghanistan: Dependence on Soviet Economic and Military Aid*, Intelligence Memorandum, January 1973, Release Date: 2006, 1, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP85T00875R001700050003-2.pdf>

³ Astri Suhrke, “Reconstruction as Modernization: the ‘Post-conflict’ Project in Afghanistan,” *Third World Quarterly* 28, no. 7 (2007): 1296; S. Yaqub Ibrahim, “Afghanistan’s Political Development Dilemma: The Centralist State versus A Centrifugal Society,” *Journal of South Asian Development* 14, no. 1 (2019): 53-54.

the continuation of the country's turbulent history into the 21st century with the 2001 US-led invasion as part of the US-led 'war on terror' in response to the 9/11 attacks to oust the Taliban regime and the ensuing US-led international neoliberal state-building project, combining post-conflict reconstruction with a comprehensive agenda for development, modernization, and "the seeds of radical social change" in a way resembling "a form of development model that in the 1950s and 1960s was referred to as 'modernisation'",⁴ but with Karzai-formulated "neo-Musahiban approach"⁵, which concluded with the Taliban's return to power following the withdrawal of the US-led international forces in 2021, marking the second failure of the exogenous state-building project in the country and the beginning of the second isolation period of the Taliban from the international community, this study aims to provide a thorough picture of the humanitarian aid and development assistance in the Afghan state-building journey from the early days of the country to the present.

For this purpose, this study examines the evolution over time of these two essential (civilian) components of the international aid architecture in the Afghan context, while looking into the complex interplay of the relevant internal and external factors over different periods of the country's turbulent history. In order to develop a comprehensive understanding of the increasingly complex and rapidly changing humanitarian and development aid landscape in Afghanistan, this research also studies the continuities and changes as well as similarities and differences across various periods of aiding Afghanistan. However, whenever relevant or necessary, international political-military dimension, more specifically the involvement of various political actors in post-conflict reconstruction, rehabilitation and state-building efforts through integrating their military aid and military actors into humanitarian and development assistance framework, will be included to give a fuller picture.

Afghanistan is chosen as case study not because other similar countries are less important in aid context but because Afghanistan's experience with humanitarian and development aid in its state-building journey exhibits both ordinary and exceptional characteristics. The country is an ordinary case in terms of humanitarian and development aid during its endogenous (internally-driven) state-building periods due to being one of the many underdeveloped countries that have faced humanitarian and development challenges commonly seen in other aid contexts such as food insecurity, susceptibility to natural disasters, poverty, poor

⁴ Astri Suhrke, "Reconstruction as Modernization: the 'Post-conflict' Project in Afghanistan," *Third World Quarterly* 28, no. 7 (2007): 1291, 1293

⁵ S. Yaqub Ibrahim, "Afghanistan's Political Development Dilemma: The Centralist State versus A Centrifugal Society," *Journal of South Asian Development* 14, no. 1 (2019): 55-57

institutional capacity, weak governance, limited infrastructure, and the issues/problems related to accessing financial aid, receiving appropriate aid that matches the country's specific needs and priorities, and managing aid effectively. Apart from holding crucial significance as a battleground of competing models of development during the Cold War prior to the Soviet invasion in 1979,⁶ the country stands out as an exceptional case as one of the very few countries in the world that have undergone dramatic changes in its socio-political landscape within a short period of time while serving as a theatre of exogenous (externally-driven) state-building initiatives following military interventions by two major powers at different points in history: the first one was the Soviet state-building project driven by ideological rivalry during the Cold War (1979-1989) that turned the country into proxy battleground where external actors supported anti-Soviet Mujahideen groups until the Soviet withdrawal in 1989, leading to the collapse of the pro-Soviet regime in 1992, a protracted civil war, and the eventual rise of the Taliban to power in the late 1990s, and the second one was the US-led international state-building project driven by global security concerns after the 9/11 attacks (2001-2021) that faced a significant challenge from the increasing Taliban insurgency, resulting in the withdrawal of the US-led international forces in 2021 and the subsequent return of the Taliban to power.⁷ This continuous warfare and political instability causing extensive damage to civilian infrastructure, economic devastation, massive population displacement apart from loss of lives, disruption of essential services such as basic healthcare and education, limited humanitarian access, and further fragmentation of political and social landscape made Afghanistan's humanitarian and development challenges exceptionally severe compared to those faced by typical underdeveloped countries, and the Taliban's isolation by the international community further exacerbated/significantly worsened these challenges. Relatedly, based on these specific challenges and volatile context, the focus and strategies of humanitarian and development aid being delivered to the country differed. Afghanistan's complex and turbulent history having a multitude of humanitarian and development challenges and aid interventions aimed at addressing these challenges make it a perfect textbook case from which several valuable lessons can be learnt and adapted to different conflict and/or post-conflict contexts.

As regards the main reasons behind taking humanitarian aid, which is designed to "address emergency situations and meet the immediate basic needs of people affected by those

⁶ Robert Rakove, "Developing Afghanistan since 1950," Oxford Research Encyclopedias – Asian History, October 18, 2013, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277727.013.703>

⁷ Omar Samad, "The 2021 Collapse: Lessons Learned from a Century of Upheavals^[1] and Afghanistan's Foreign Policy," in *The Great Power Competition Volume 4: Lessons Learned in Afghanistan: America's Longest War*, ed. Adib Farhadi and Anthony Masys (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2023), 416-417

crises... [and therefore] is expected to be short-term, flexible, and may circumvent existing national systems in order to quickly deliver aid to people in need...[while upholding] “four recognized principles (humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence) to guide this aim,”⁸ and development aid, which is designed to “address the structural causes of poverty, by working to change the social, economic and political systems that create the conditions in which poverty and inequality occur... [and therefore requires a long-term commitment and collaboration] with local and national government structures” while adopting a human-rights-based approach but without being restricted by the above-mentioned humanitarian aid principles,⁹ together into this study’s scope, there is a close, complex and dynamic interaction between humanitarian and development aid. This relationship is officially recognized for the first time in the 1991 UN General Assembly Resolution 46/182, a landmark document that laid the foundations of current humanitarian system by outlining the guiding principles and the coordination framework for humanitarian assistance within the UN system, with the following words: “There is a clear relationship between emergency, rehabilitation and development. In order to ensure a smooth transition from relief to rehabilitation and development, emergency assistance should be provided in ways that will be supportive of recovery and long-term development. Thus, emergency measures should be seen as a step towards long-term development.”¹⁰

Various scholars, practitioners and aid organizations have tried to explain this complex relationship during the 1990s, some of which are as follows: Peter Sollis was stating that “relief efforts have an impact on long-term development, and, conversely, that development interventions have an impact on a country's propensity for disaster,”¹¹ UNDP was warning that relief operations being designed and conducted in isolation would “replace development and breed long-term dependencies, undermine indigenous coping strategies and increase vulnerabilities,”¹² Margaret Buchanan-Smith and Simon Maxwell was highlighting that

⁸ Midori Kaga and Delphine Nakache, “Protection and the Humanitarian-Development Nexus: A Literature Review,” Local Engagement Refugee Research Network Paper No. 1, December 2019, 2, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3750190>

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), *Resolution 46/182 - Strengthening of the Coordination of Humanitarian Emergency Assistance of the United Nations*, A/RES/46/182, December 19, 1991, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://documents.un.org/doc/resolution/gen/nr0/582/70/img/nr058270.pdf>

¹¹ Peter Sollis, “The Relief-Development Continuum: Some Notes on Rethinking Assistance for Civilian Victims of Conflict,” *Journal of International Affairs* 47, no. 2 (Winter 1994): 451

¹² UNDP, “Position Paper of the Working Group on Operational Aspects of the Relief to Development Continuum,” January 12, 1994, 1, quoted in Mark Duffield, “Complex Emergencies and the Crisis of Developmentalism,” *Institute of Development Studies (IDS) Bulletin* 25, no. 4 (1994): 40

“[b]etter ‘development’ can reduce the need for emergency relief; better ‘relief’ can contribute to development; and better ‘rehabilitation’ can ease any remaining transition between the two,”¹³ Mark Bidder from UN Ethiopia was pointing out that “(1) better development can help reduce the frequency, intensity and impact of shocks; (2) better relief can be consistent with and reinforce development, and (3) better rehabilitation can offer more than a simple return to the status quo” on the condition that “relief should not undermine development” and “relief operations should contribute as much as possible to development,”¹⁴ Jonathan Moore, who had garnered many titles as academic and public servant while serving six US presidents, was underlining “interdependency of emergency life-saving and livelihood-building [which is based on] the need for follow-on social and economic progress to prevent the squandering of humanitarian assistance.”¹⁵

The 1991 UN General Assembly’s landmark resolution 46/182 laid important groundwork for subsequent efforts to bridge the traditional humanitarian-development divide. Gilles Carbonnier, an academic who had also worked as a humanitarian practitioner in various civil war settings, states that humanitarian and development aid actors “invest much of their resources” and “increasingly work” in the same contexts by “providing different justifications for operating in the same areas”, which he names “chronic crises” and “fragile states” respectively, and also “often share common objectives, such as reducing malnutrition and child mortality or providing drinking water to vulnerable communities”, making the traditional humanitarian-development divide “based on emergency versus long-term interventions” disappear to a great extent but triggering tensions between “conservative agenda of neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian actors” and “the more transformative ambitions of the development agenda.”¹⁶ Since the early 1990s, successive waves/generations¹⁷ have emerged in the debate trying to formulate first how to integrate humanitarian and development responses and later, after 9/11, how to link these two aid

¹³ Margaret Buchanan-Smith and Simon Maxwell, “Linking Relief and Development: An Introduction and Overview,” *Institute of Development Studies (IDS) Bulletin* 25, no. 4 (1994): 2

¹⁴ Mark Bidder, “Linking Relief and Development: A Conceptual Outline, UNDP Emergencies Unit for Ethiopia, December 14, 1994, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://www.africa.upenn.edu/eue_web/ctinuum.htm

¹⁵ Jonathan Moore, “The Humanitarian-Development Gap,” *International Review of the Red Cross* 81, no. 833 (March 1999): 103

¹⁶ Gilles Carbonnier, *Humanitarian Economics: War Disaster and the Global Aid Market* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 192, 178, 188, 202-203

¹⁷ For details of the waves/generations of the debate, please see: Jeremy Shusterman, “Gap or Prehistoric Monster? A History of the Humanitarian-Development Nexus at UNICEF,” *Disasters* 45, no. 2 (2021): 360; Logan Cochrane and Alexandra Wilson, “Nuancing the Double and Triple Nexus: Analyzing the Potential for Unintended, Negative Consequences,” *Development Studies Research* 10, no. 1 (2023): 3

types with foreign policy, security, and peacebuilding, which led to the development of many new approaches by bilateral and multilateral actors aiming to transcend the divide, based on different interpretations of the resolution's continuum model and the later formulated contiguuum model¹⁸, such as 'Linking Relief and Development (LRD) or Developmental Relief Approach' by the US in early 1990s, "Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development" by EU in 1996 (LRRD), , 'Relief to Development and Transition', 'Gap Approach' by UNHCR and the World Bank in 1999, 'Seamless Assistance', 'Early Recovery (ER)' by UNDP, 'Resilience Approach' in early 2000s, 'Humanitarian-Development Nexus (HDN)', 'Build Back Better (BBB)', 'Whole-of-Government Approach', 'New Way of Working (NWoW)', and most recently 'Triple Nexus or Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus¹⁹ (HDPN) Approach'.²⁰ These approaches have significance in two respects: first, they inform us about where the aid industry is heading, and secondly these approaches have been employed and put into practice by different aid actors in the delivery of aid in so many countries including Afghanistan.

When it comes to the question of how these developments in the aid industry have been translated into the field, in relation to the subject of this research, one should look into the

¹⁸ EU had initiated the contiguuum model to indicate the coexistence of varying needs and response stages back in the mid-1990s but since its integration into mostly linear and bureaucratic planning and funding processes has been challenging, the continuum model has tacitly continued to guide many aid programs. For details, please see Commission of the European Communities, *Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD)*, COM (96) 153 Final, April 30, 1996, ii, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:1996:0153:FIN:EN:PDF>; Margie Buchanan-Smith and Paola Fabbri, *Links Between Relief, Rehabilitation and Development in the Tsunami Response - A Review of the Debate* (London: Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC), November 2005), 5, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.humanitarianlibrary.org/sites/default/files/2014/02/lrrd-review-debate.pdf>

¹⁹ OECD states that although humanitarian and development pillars are "broadly well-understood concepts", peace pillar does not have "conceptual clarity", referring to SIPRI's description of the concept as "contested, complex and evolving", as there is "no agreed international system for measuring peace and security spending" and "many development priorities contribute to peace", and adds that this situation poses a significant challenge to the operationalization of the peace pillar and the development effectiveness of in fragile/conflict-affected contexts.

OECD, *Peace and Official Development Assistance* (Paris: OECD, 2023), 9

²⁰ Midori Kaga and Delphine Nakache, "Protection and the Humanitarian-Development Nexus: A Literature Review," Local Engagement Refugee Research Network Paper No. 1, December 2019, 3-4, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3750190>; Jon Harald Sande Lie, "The Humanitarian-Development Nexus: Humanitarian Principles, Practice, and Pragmatics," *Journal of International Humanitarian Action* 5, no. 18 (2020): 4; Yukie Osa and Atsushi Hanatani, "Addressing the Humanitarian and Development Nexus Since the Cold War," in *Crisis Management Beyond the Humanitarian-Development Nexus*, ed. Atsushi Hanatani, Oscar A. Gomez, and Chigumi Kawaguchi (New York: Routledge, 2018), Taylor & Francis eBook, 52-56; Oscar A. Gomez and Kawaguchi Chigumi, "A Theory for the Continuum: Multiple Approaches to Humanitarian Crises Management," in *Crisis Management Beyond the Humanitarian-Development Nexus*, ed. Atsushi Hanatani, Oscar A. Gomez, and Chigumi Kawaguchi (New York: Routledge, 2018), Taylor & Francis eBook, 88-89, 92-107; Miriam Bradley, *The Politics and Everyday Practice of International Humanitarianism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2023), 281-296; Amany Qaddour, Hayley Hoaglund, and Paul Spiegel, *The Humanitarian-Development Nexus: A Framework for Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health, Voluntary Family Planning, and Reproductive Health*, MOMENTUM Integrated Health Resilience Internal Report, (Washington, DC: USAID MOMENTUM, February 2022), 5-6

provision of aid to fragile states like Afghanistan in times of conflict and peace as each context has different challenges but also key similarities. First, fragile, conflict-prone, conflict-affected and/or post-conflict countries, such as Afghanistan, are the places where these two types of international aid predominantly show either consecutive or concurrent existence during and after conflicts, and also the settings where humanitarian assistance- and development aid- related actions, actors and phases are increasingly blurred at various levels either intentionally or otherwise. The 2020 World Bank Group strategy paper for fragility, conflict and violence (FCV) underlines that the FCV-affected countries accounting for some “10 percent of the global population” accommodates an estimated half of the world’s extreme poor that could rise to two-thirds by 2030 and “80 percent of people who are affected by natural disasters”, along with that, FCV began to affect countries at all income levels with the surge of violent conflicts in middle-income countries (MICs), challenging the notion that these issues are exclusive to low-income and lower-middle income countries (LICs and LIMCs), and with the growing internationalization of FCV challenges that cross borders and generate both regional and global spillovers (such as massive influx of refugees, forced displacement crises, illicit activities etc.), and therefore calls for a much more coordinated approach that would bring together not only humanitarian and development actors but also security/military, peacebuilding and private sector ones at various levels,²¹ further adding to the blurring boundaries between humanitarian, development and other types of aid. Actually, this was the consequence of a process that started in the 1990s when the humanitarian interventions and peacekeeping operations brought civilian and military actors into contact with each other and increased after 9/11 with the Global War on Terror that made ‘weak and fragile states’ increasingly the focus of aid by arguing that a lack of security is an obstacle to achieving MDGs.²²

Carbonnier states that once international humanitarian and development aid actors cooperate with military actors as part of international stabilization, reconstruction, statebuilding and similar efforts being carried out with the collaboration of host states (such as Provincial Reconstruction Teams-PRTs in Afghanistan and Iraq) or military actors are given huge funds by their respective governments to directly respond to urgent humanitarian and development needs through targeted projects (such as the US Commander’s Emergency Response Program- CERP in Afghanistan and Iraq with more than \$6 billion budget in total) or military actors make “hearts-and-minds” aid disbursements conditional on intelligence

²¹ World Bank Group (WBG), *WBG Strategy for Fragility, Conflict and Violence 2020-2025* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group, 2020), viii, 2, 102, 7, 37, 52

²² Silke Roth, *The Paradoxes of Aid Work – Passionate Professionals* (London: Routledge, 2015), 31-32

sharing (such as “coalition forces in Afghanistan provided relief dubbed ‘humanitarian assistance’ to local communities in Faryab and Badghis Provinces in return for intelligence to ‘track down anti-government forces’”) in order to “give the state greater legitimacy and weaken the insurgency”, while putting the lives of both beneficiaries and civilian aid workers at risk, pushing aid agencies to seek military protection, instigating aid diversion in the form of “protection racketeering on a grand scale” (such as the Taliban imposing “10 per cent tax on...protection rackets or ‘protection services’ more or less forcibly sold to international organizations and their Afghan partners”), not only further blur the lines among these aid actors having different objectives and agendas but also undermine “the legitimacy and acceptance of the aid enterprise as a whole.”²³

Andy Sumner and Richard Mallett, after stating that the practical differentiation “between humanitarian aid and ODA” is often ambiguous as there are no clear boundaries indicating “when or where relief ends and development begins” and thus making the identification of “the moment when humanitarian assistance starts feeding into and shaping longer-term developmental objectives”,²⁴ draws attention to other factors increasing this blurriness such as the expansion of the scope of the OECD-DAC formulated ODA concept to include the in-country expenses of donor countries for refugees during their first year and the increase in the allocation of development aid by some donors to countries perceived to threaten their immediate security interests as seen in the surge of global ODA flows to certain FCAS (Fragile and Conflict-Affected Countries) and the corresponding increase in funding for “ODA-related security activities” within these flows.²⁵ Actually, this is not the first time that the range of expenditures eligible to be classified as part of ODA has been changed. While keeping the OECD definition of ODA unchanged since 1972, the OECD-DAC members, the great majority of whom are Western donor countries that play a leading role in defining and determining what does and does not qualify as ODA, have continually worked to expand the scope of the ODA concept to include new types of transfers that would not only move their aid figures upwards but also meet their changing priorities and have so far achieved the inclusion of the following activities and expenditures as ODA: administrative costs in 1979, the implicit subsidies of tuition costs of students from developing countries studying in donor countries in 1984 as a consequence of pressure from donor countries

²³ Gilles Carbonnier, *Humanitarian Economics: War Disaster and the Global Aid Market* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 38, 79, 89, 119, 125, 178, 182-183

²⁴ Andy Sumner and Richard Mallett, *The Future of Foreign Aid: Development Cooperation and the New Geography of Global Poverty* (London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 13-14

²⁵ Andy Sumner and Richard Mallett, *The Future of Foreign Aid: Development Cooperation and the New Geography of Global Poverty* (London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 13-14

having high-share of students from the South, the aforementioned first-year in-donor refugee costs in 1988 (widely used in the early 1990s when in-country conflicts in Europe and elsewhere triggered refugee flows), the bilateral ODA-eligible peacekeeping expenditures (1994, after the 1992 UN Agenda for Peace), and as a result of growing security concerns after 9/11 – six specific items of expenditure in the fields of conflict, peace and security in 2005, 6% of DAC members’ multilateral contributions to UN peacekeeping in 2006, and several additional peace-and-security-related expenditures for the activities, as long as “their primary purpose is developmental”, involving the use of military and police forces and their existing equipments (such as delivery of humanitarian aid and development services) along with the activities preventing violent extremism-PVE²⁶ through non-coercive means (such as capacity-building for security and justice systems) in developing countries, under the pretext of that “development, human rights, and peace and security are indivisible and interrelated”, as outlined in the 2016 DAC High-Level Meeting Communiqué.²⁷ The abovementioned inclusion of elements that are tenuously connected to the OECD-DAC defined ODA, blurs the distinction between different types of aid, particularly between ODA and military aid. The peace-and-security-related inclusions, especially the ones after 9/11, which lead to gradual and increasing integration of development aid into military initiatives, together with other factors such as aid fungibility, intense disagreements over “what economic development means” and “how it can be achieved – even among those like-minded donor countries of the OECD-DAC”, evaluation of ODA as based on donor’s declared intention rather than its actual impact on recipient country, and lack of robust oversight mechanisms to check whether donor’s aid truly serves its declared development purpose, increase this blurriness, despite the OECD-DAC’s exclusion of military aid from the definition of ODA and introduction of limitations on ODA reporting to avoid subjective interpretations of donors (such as declaring the supply or financing of military equipment and services, counter-terrorism activities, military debt forgiveness, the enforcement aspects

²⁶ PVE had not been ODA-eligible earlier as the OECD had categorized it alongside counter-terrorism. For further information please see, Alistair Millar, “Updated Guidance on ODA-Eligible Activities for Preventing Violent Extremism: Implications and Opportunities for the European Union,” The Global Center on Cooperative Security, May 2017, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://globalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/DAC-and-PCVE-Think-Piece-1-1.pdf>

²⁷ OECD, “Measuring Aid: 50 Years of DAC Statistics -1961-2011,” April 2011, 6-7, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/MeasuringAid50yearsDACStats.pdf>; OECD, “DAC High Level Meeting Communiqué,” February 19, 2016, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://web-archiv.oecd.org/2016-02-19/388307-DAC-HLM-Communiqu-2016.pdf>; Olav Stokke, *International Development Assistance: Policy Drivers and Performance* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 55-56; Yahya Gülseven, “An Assessment of the Measurement of Official Development Aid: Uncertainties and Inconsistencies,” *Avrasya Etudleri* 26, no. 58 (2020): 18, 20; OECD, *DAC Working Party on Development Finance Statistics: Converged Statistical Reporting Directives for the Creditor Reporting (CRS) and the Annual DAC Questionnaire (Chapters 1-6)*, DCD/DAC/STAT(2023)9/FINAL, JT03517771 (Paris: OECD, April 2023), 34-42, last accessed May 01, 2024, [https://one.oecd.org/document/DCD/DAC/STAT\(2023\)9/FINAL/en/pdf](https://one.oecd.org/document/DCD/DAC/STAT(2023)9/FINAL/en/pdf)

of peacekeeping, building defence capacities or strengthening military capabilities of recipient countries, police training for paramilitary functions, etc. as ODA-ineligible) in the past.²⁸ Since the majority of the OECD-DAC members still find the current scope of the ODA definition “too narrow”,²⁹ it is highly likely that the upcoming years will witness its further expansion and thus a further blurring of the distinction between different types of aid.

Secondly, in times of peace, both humanitarian and development aid are of vital importance for low-income countries, which are susceptible to frequent and severe natural disasters of many kinds, such as Afghanistan,³⁰ during their journey towards modernization and development, as per the first Prime Minister of independent India Jawarharlal Nehru’s analogy of traveling in “one-way traffic in Time.”³¹ Margie Buchanan-Smith and Paola Fabbri state that there is an obvious relationship between underdevelopment and vulnerability to natural disasters by addressing Hewitt’s statement of that “[m]ost natural disasters, or most damages in them, are characteristic rather than accidental features of the places and societies where they occur”³² in his 1983 dated study, the increasing attention on the issues of disaster reduction through development after large-scale disasters in the late 1990s that also constituted one of the reasons for the establishment of the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) in 2000, and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies IFRC’s 2001 report underlining, “half of natural disasters occur in countries with a medium human development index (HDI) but two-thirds of the deaths occur in countries with a low HDI.”³³ The authors also draw attention to the linkage and resemblance between natural disasters and conflict-related disasters by referring to the frequent overlap between these two and to the very fact that neither of these two is “one-off

²⁸ Yahya Gülseven, “An Assessment of the Measurement of Official Development Aid: Uncertainties and Inconsistencies,” *Avrasya Etudleri* 26, no. 58 (2020): 13, 17, 19-20.

²⁹ Olav Stokke, *International Development Assistance: Policy Drivers and Performance* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 56

³⁰ Afghanistan ranks second only to Haiti among low-income countries, “in terms of the number of fatalities from natural disasters in the period 1980 to 2015.” Federica Ranghieri et al., “Disaster Risk Profile – Afghanistan,” Working Paper No. 114097 (Washington DC: World Bank, 2017), 3, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/284301491559464423/Disaster-risk-profile-Afghanistan>

³¹ Nick Cullather, “Damming Afghanistan: Modernization in a Buffer State,” *The Journal of American History* 89, no. 2 (September 2002): 513

³² Kenneth Hewitt, “The Idea of Calamity in a Technocratic Age,” in *Interpretations of Calamity – From the Viewpoint of Human Ecology*, ed. Kenneth Hewitt (1983; reis., London: Routledge, 2020), 25

³³ Margie Buchanan-Smith and Paola Fabbri, *Links Between Relief, Rehabilitation and Development in the Tsunami Response - A Review of the Debate* (London: Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC), November 2005), 9, 11-12, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.humanitarianlibrary.org/sites/default/files/2014/02/lrrd-review-debate.pdf>.

ad hoc event” independent from “how society is structured” respectively.³⁴ Relatedly, the authors briefly examine three closely interrelated concepts (vulnerability, risk reduction, livelihoods) of the traditional linking debate, each of which underlines the necessity of linking short-term humanitarian and long-term development activities while considering the broader impact of a disaster, whether it be natural or conflict-related, and underline the following points: first, with reference to Anderson and Woodson’s 1989 dated seminal book, “the structural factors” that determine a community’s susceptibility and response capacity to disasters have implications for both humanitarian and development response; secondly, with reference to Pelling’s 2003 dated work, more attention should be paid to political, economic and social contexts of risk for the development of a proper risk management strategy; and thirdly, with reference to the work of various aid agencies with different mandates, (sustainable) livelihoods approach³⁵ offer a long-term development perspective by extending the humanitarian objectives to include saving livelihoods as well as lives.³⁶

Explaining the reasons behind the complex relationship between natural disasters and development, Julia Irwin states that both natural disasters and their associated costs disproportionately affect the least developed countries and the poorest sections of their populations, donors often need to redirect funds from ongoing development activities to post-disaster relief-recovery-reconstruction efforts, and sometimes “the process of development itself often increases vulnerability to disasters by damaging local ecosystems and by encouraging migration into hastily and poorly constructed urban areas, where large populations are put at risk.”³⁷ Relatedly, Irwin, in her article examining the interwar US natural disaster relief operations in three Caribbean Basin countries, argues that drawing “a solid conceptual line between the temporary, emergency, and restorative nature of humanitarian relief and the long-term, alchemical, and transformative character of development assistance” does not hold true as “the discourses, practices, and genealogies of relief and development are more deeply intertwined than we may acknowledge” by adding

³⁴ Ibid., 10, 36,

³⁵ For a historical review of livelihoods framework, please see Ian Scoones, “Livelihoods Perspectives and Rural Development,” *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 36, no. 1 (January 2009): 171-196

³⁶ Margie Buchanan-Smith and Paola Fabbri, *Links Between Relief, Rehabilitation and Development in the Tsunami Response - A Review of the Debate* (London: Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC), November 2005), 20-26, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.humanitarianlibrary.org/sites/default/files/2014/02/lrrd-review-debate.pdf>; Mary B. Anderson & Peter J. Woodrow, *Rising from the Ashes: Development Strategies in Times of Disaster* (1989; reis., New York: Routledge, 2019), 9-11; Mark Pelling, “Paradigms of Risk” in *Natural Disasters and Development in a Globalising World*, ed. Mark Pelling (London: Routledge, 2003), 3-14

³⁷ Julia F. Irwin, “The “Development” of Humanitarian Relief: US Disaster Assistance Operations in the Caribbean Basin, 1917–1931,” in *The Development Century – A Global History*, ed. Stephen J. Macekura and Erez Manela (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 58-59

that “the boundaries between these two forms of international assistance have regularly blurred” with consistent efforts of various aid actors in bringing about “more comprehensive social, political, and economic changes” in recipient countries during humanitarian relief efforts.³⁸

Apart from that, ill-conceived and/or poorly implemented development activities of foreign governments or a sudden and sharp decrease in aid levels for low-income fragile countries might lead to humanitarian crisis, sometimes with serious political consequences for recipient countries. Afghanistan experienced the results of a combination of these two factors in the past. American white elephant Helmand Valley Development Project (HVDP) that had serious negative impact on the Afghan agriculture, combined with a sharp drop in aid levels previously pouring to Afghanistan from the Americans and the Soviets due to détente in the 1970s, triggered economic and food crisis, social unrest, and suspension of parliament that culminated in Daoud Khan’s coup overthrowing King Zahir Shah in 1973.³⁹ Another example is Haiti, a huge graveyard of white elephant projects of major donors, most notably the US, and of their aid implementing agencies within the country.⁴⁰ A sudden and sharp drop in aid levels for low-income fragile countries alone is also enough for fuelling humanitarian crises with potentially far-reaching destabilizing consequences. Upon recent drastic cuts on development aid to fragile and least developed countries, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres warned that aid cuts not only “threaten to undo gains in development” but also “could contribute to global instability” by addressing the increasing poverty in conflict-affected countries.⁴¹ United Nations University (UNU) researchers underlines the following six key areas in which development aid plays a critical role, the first three of which focuses on the interests of recipient countries whereas the latter three focuses

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 40-41, 42, 44

³⁹ Nick Cullather, “Damming Afghanistan: Modernization in a Buffer State,” *The Journal of American History* 89, no. 2 (September 2002): 535

⁴⁰ National Academy of Public Administration, “Why Foreign Aid to Haiti Failed,” Working Paper (Washington DC: National Academy of Public Administration, February 2006), last accessed May 01, 2024, https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/wps/napa/0032011/f_0032011_26003.pdf; Unni Karunakara, “Haiti: Where Aid Failed,” *The Guardian*, December 28, 2010, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2010/dec/28/haiti-cholera-earthquake-aid-agencies-failure>; Claire Provost, “Haiti One Year On: A Look at Aid Progress Reports,” *The Guardian*, January 12, 2011, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2011/jan/12/haiti-one-year-on-aid-reports>; Terry F. Buss, “Foreign Aid and the Failure of State Building in Haiti from 1957 to 2015,” *Latin American Policy* 6, no. 2 (December 2015): 319-339; Jacob Kushner, “Haiti and the Failed Promise of US Aid,” *The Guardian*, October 11, 2019, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/oct/11/haiti-and-the-failed-promise-of-us-aid>

⁴¹ Patricia Justino and Laura Saavedra-Lux, “Development Aid Cuts will Hit Fragile Countries Hard, Could Fuel Violent Conflict,” United Nations University (UNU), December 01, 2023, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://unu.edu/article/development-aid-cuts-will-hit-fragile-countries-hard-could-fuel-violent-conflict>

on the interest of donors: 1) “development aid is effective when linked to the delivery of public services”; 2) “financial assistance can help governments absorb the effects of economic shocks”; 3) “the reduction in aid allocation to least developed countries and especially those recovering from violent conflict could result in continued political instability and underdevelopment”; 4) “cuts in development aid may reduce the limited leverage Western countries still have to prevent the rise of opportunistic armed groups such as the Wagner group, the spread of extremism and the risk of civil conflict”; 5) “worsening economic and security conditions in fragile and least developed countries are already reverberating into Europe” as evidenced with increase in irregular migration to the EU, meaning keep them either at their home through direct aiding or in their neighborhood or worst in a buffer country around the EU borders through using aid in various ways; 6) “rising discrepancy in development aid allocation could amplify mistrust in international institutions and western actors” by adding that “[s]ome governments in fragile countries are already reluctant to continue to engage with the UN and especially Western actors to combat violent non-state actors” with reference to DR Congo’s recent request to the UN for swift withdrawal of UN peacekeeping mission known as MONUSCO, and concludes that development aid should be aligned with peacebuilding and humanitarian needs to address these challenges,⁴² in line with Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) nexus. There are two significant country examples with regard to the issue. As the sample from past, Afghanistan, as a fragile conflict-affected country chronically dependent on international aid for decades, has experienced disastrous consequences of draining massive aid flows to the country, first during the early 1990s when the Soviet collapse significantly diminished the country’s importance for international donor community and later during the Taliban’s first and second rules in the period 1996-2001 and since 2021 respectively when international community imposed sanctions and isolation in addition to severe aid cuts. Another example is Lebanon where the country’s deepening economic crisis and dysfunctional political economy impoverished millions of people living in the country and left them in need of humanitarian assistance (2.1 million Lebanese-nearly half of the country’s total population, 1.5 million Syrian refugees, 200,000 Palestinians) while pushing the state to the verge of collapse. International donor community that is increasingly providing humanitarian aid to all these people, including Lebanese, also help pay for “Lebanon’s public education, health care, social assistance, security, and more—even sponsoring partial salaries for teachers and soldiers”, which is described by donors as “the type of aid...that ordinarily goes to countries

⁴² Patricia Justino and Laura Saavedra-Lux, “Development Aid Cuts will Hit Fragile Countries Hard, Could Fuel Violent Conflict,” United Nations University (UNU), December 01, 2023, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://unu.edu/article/development-aid-cuts-will-hit-fragile-countries-hard-could-fuel-violent-conflict>

devastated by war.”⁴³ For a country such as Lebanon, a significant decrease in aid to the country trigger a series of events that would lead to the country’s total collapse.

Furthermore, severe natural disasters, which capitalize on the public’s disorientation and the urgent need for recovery, are often exploited by various actors (such as donor governments, national governments, local authorities, interest groups etc.) to enforce the implementation of controversial policies and actions that might not be accepted under normal circumstances and thereby trigger profound and rapid political, economic and social transformations prioritizing interests of these actors in disaster-stricken countries. For instance, during the international post-disaster relief and reconstruction efforts initiated under Building Back Better (BBB) in Indonesia’s natural resource-rich separatist Aceh Province after the December 2004 tsunami, each actor involved in these efforts, whether directly or indirectly, had a different agenda with regard to the results of these efforts: UN Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery in Southeast Asia Bill Clinton was focusing on “the promotion of entrepreneurship accompanied by market-based reforms”, the three-decades long civil conflict that attracted international attention again after the tsunami was concluding with the signature of peace agreement few months after the tsunami in August 2005, and Indonesia’s newly established special agency to oversee relief operations BRR was seeking to “push for reforms with a view to lifting post-conflict Aceh ‘out of isolation’” after the peace agreement, and Aceh’s rapid transition from conflict to peace that started after the 2006 election was turning Aceh’s war economy into a post-conflict economy characterized by rent-seeking and clientelism with GAM’s former combatants becoming new contractors for post-tsunami construction projects, other GAM figures becoming provincial political leaders and civil servants while enforcing strict sharia rule in Aceh.⁴⁴ Conflict-related version of what happened in Indonesia after the 2004 tsunami happened in Lebanon. Following the Israeli attacks on Lebanon in 2006, which heavily damaged infrastructure, international donors, particularly Western states such as the US and France and Western-backed international institutions such as IMF and the World Bank, offered reconstruction aid to Lebanon on the condition that certain neoliberal economic policies namely free-market “reforms”, including telecom and electricity privatization, are implemented by assuming that Western-backed Lebanese government in need of money would “accept whatever strings they attached to aid” and Lebanese premier Fouad Siniora agreeing to the terms even

⁴³ Sam Heller, “Adopt a Ministry: How Foreign Aid Threatens Lebanon’s Institutions,” The Century Foundation, November 07, 2023, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://tcf.org/content/report/adopt-a-ministry-how-foreign-aid-threatens-lebanons-institutions/>

⁴⁴ Gilles Carbonnier, *Humanitarian Economics: War Disaster and the Global Aid Market* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 184-185

employed “the Bush-connected surveillance giant Booz Hamilton to broker Lebanon’s telecom privatization” just to show “his willingness to play ball.”⁴⁵

As last, I would like to underline that this research has a number of limitations. The first limitation stems from the poor quality of data and information on Afghanistan. The main underlying cause leading to this situation is the decades of war and conflict bringing the already fragile country to the brink of complete collapse several times in its history. The data quality problem has both quantitative and qualitative dimensions. This issue becomes evident with conflicting data and historical narratives. In relation to the first dimension, inadequacy or lack of quantitative data on various issues relating to Afghanistan is widely accepted by those specializing in any specific area of Afghan studies that requires measurable data. The country’s population that is still based on rough estimations shows the extent of the problem. As for the second dimension, reconstruction of past events based on different interpretations of consequential context or selective reading of the facts or pure bias of various kinds (personal, cultural, ethnic, political, etc.) is not a new phenomenon for social science disciplines, especially those focusing on conflict zones, but the extent of this matter in Afghan studies is quite noteworthy, even in some cases dates of the same historical event are given differently, let aside different storytelling. To overcome this problem, I used cross-method triangulation by checking information and data given in a resource from various others to verify the reliability and validity of both information and data presented in this research.

1.2. Research Question

The main research question of this dissertation arises from the motivation to understand how the international humanitarian and development aid process has affected and shaped the relationship between Afghanistan and the international aid community.

1.3. Literature Review

The global aid system is re/structured around the continuous and complex interaction between donors as supply side of aid and recipients as demand side of aid. This interaction both shape and is shaped by objectives, means, and motives of these two sides, most notably

⁴⁵ Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2007), 439-440. For a detailed analysis of political nature of reconstruction efforts in Lebanon after the 2006 attacks, please see Christine Sylva Hamieh and Roger Mac Ginty, “A Very Political Reconstruction in Lebanon After the 2006 War,” *Disasters* 34, no. Suppl 1 (January 2010), 103-123.

of the supply side taking advantage of the power asymmetry it enjoys. This asymmetry is caused by the fact that recipient countries “have no automatic rights to or claims on concessional financial assistance. Aid is something ‘granted’ to an aid-seeking nation or other entity at the discretion of the donor. Full decision-making authority about the allocation of aid belongs to the donor.”⁴⁶ US President’s Commission on Foreign Economic Policy (the Randall Commission) most clearly and least diplomatically expressed this in 1954 by stating; “Underdeveloped areas are claiming a right to economic aid from the United States... We recognize no such right.”⁴⁷

Aid objectives are roughly categorized as charitable (e.g. “action against hunger, misery and despair”), economic (e.g. supporting the efforts of developing and underdeveloped countries to “develop their resources and to create conditions for self-sustained economic growth”), and political (e.g. promoting political stability, democracy, peace, and comprehensive conflict prevention actions, and also maintaining sphere of influence of donor countries).⁴⁸ Aid instruments that are continually evolving in response to changes in the international aid landscape include financial aid (concessional aid such as grants or subsidized loans and non-concessional aid such as loans, tied aid, project/program aid, pooled funding, general or sectoral budget support, balance of payment support, debt relief, cash transfer programs, PRSPs, IFMs, etc.), non-financial aid (food aid and technical assistance), and humanitarian aid (relief aid and reconstruction aid).⁴⁹ The selection and use of aid instruments depend on the recipient-country context (fragile and/or conflict-affected, low/low middle/middle income, post-conflict etc.) and the donor’s own assessment of this context. Nicholas Leader and Peter Colenso states that fragile country contexts require a much more efficient and sophisticated strategic planning and coordination than ‘normal’ country contexts due to “the complexity of political and development objectives and activities, and the fragmentation of actors on both the donor and partner side...[and] the difficulties in linking humanitarian, development, diplomatic and security concerns”, therefore donors in fragile-country contexts mostly prefer to proceed with comprehensive tailor-made frameworks that are defined as “mechanisms through which donors coordinate their analysis, strategies and disbursements, with each other, with recipient governments and with other actors such as the UN” and

⁴⁶ Robert E. Wood, *From Marshall Plan To Debt Crisis: Foreign Aid and Development Choices in the World Economy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 109

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ Jan P. Pronk, “Aid as a Catalyst,” in *Catalysing Development?: A Debate on Aid*, ed. Jan P. Pronk et al. (UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004), 3.

⁴⁹ Andy Sumner and Richard Mallett, *The Future of Foreign Aid: Development Cooperation and the New Geography of Global Poverty* (London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 15-16

choose aid instruments accordingly.⁵⁰

Aid motives are classified as self-interest of various kinds, including political, economic, strategic, and security interests at different levels, and altruistic and ethical reasons such as compassion, international solidarity, moral duty and obligation, and compensation.⁵¹ These motives play a critical role in shaping donors' decisions about their aid allocations across regions, countries and sectors within recipient countries, aid volume, preferred aid instruments and aid channels, and chosen implementation partners in recipient countries.⁵² In addition to these motives, Catrinus Jepma points out that, "donors support countries with which they have, or hope to have, strong ties" by referring to existing historical links, cultural affinities, and trade relations between some donor and recipient countries.⁵³ Some noteworthy examples are the US aid prioritizing Israel, relatedly Egypt and Jordan, by allocating substantial part of its bilateral development aid budget to these countries, French and British aids giving precedence to their former colonies, Japanese aid concentrating on its neighboring East Asian and Pacific countries, and oil-rich Middle Eastern Muslim countries directing their aid primarily to poor Islamic countries.⁵⁴ Alberto Alesina and David Dollar underlining the significance of "the colonial factor" in aid allocation states that: "An inefficient, economically closed, mismanaged non-democratic former colony politically friendly to its former colonizer, receives more foreign aid than another country with similar level of poverty, a superior policy stance, but without a past as a colony."⁵⁵ Furthermore, domestic politics of donor countries also appear as a decisive factor in their aid policies and thus their aid allocations such as President George W. Bush administration's sharp cuts in funding for family planning programs in the developing world, most notably in African countries, to please his majority anti-abortionist voters by using the coerced abortions in

⁵⁰ Nicholas Leader and Peter Colenso, "Aid Instruments in Fragile States," PRDE Working Paper No. 5, London: UK Department for International Development - DFID, March 2005, 10, 16

⁵¹ Andy Sumner and Richard Mallett, *The Future of Foreign Aid: Development Cooperation and the New Geography of Global Poverty* (London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 11, 22, 23; Roger C. Riddell, *Does Foreign Aid Really Works?* (United States: Oxford University Press, 2007), 91-92, 139-142

⁵² Jan P. Pronk, "Aid as a Catalyst," in *Catalysing Development?: A Debate on Aid*, ed. Jan P. Pronk et al. (UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004), 3; Alberto Alesina and David Dollar, "Who Gives Foreign Aid to Whom and Why?" *Journal of Economic Growth*, Vol. 5 (March 2000): 33-34, 40

⁵³ Catrinus J. Jepma, *The Tying of Aid* (Paris: OECD Development Centre, 1991), 14

⁵⁴ Olav Stokke, *International Development Assistance: Policy Drivers and Performance* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 310; Caroline Robb, "Changing Power Relations in the History of Aid," in *Inclusive Aid: Changing Power and Relationships in International Development*, ed. Leslie Groves and Rachel Hinton (London: Earthscan, 2004), 36

⁵⁵ Alberto Alesina and David Dollar, "Who Gives Foreign Aid to Whom and Why?" *Journal of Economic Growth*, Vol. 5 (March 2000): 33.

China due to its one-child policy or the necessity of reallocating resources for the fight against AIDS, malaria, and sexual violence as an excuse.⁵⁶

There are numerous examples proving that aid, particularly bilateral one, is not exclusively ethical or altruistic endeavor, even the opposite, self-interest drivers weigh heavily in the minds and practices of donors. Some of the most noteworthy ones are as follows. President Kennedy, architect of USAID, who described foreign aid as “a method by which the United States maintains a position of influence and control around the world”,⁵⁷ explained why the US should continue its foreign aid program with reference to his country’s “moral obligations as a wise leader and good neighbor in the interdependent community of free nations”, “economic obligations as the wealthiest people in a world of largely poor people” and “political obligations as the single largest counter to the adversaries of freedom” by warning that any failure in meeting these obligations could jeopardize American national security and economic prosperity in the end.⁵⁸ Richard Nixon’s statement of “Let us remember that the main purpose of American aid is not to help other nations but to help ourselves” during his 1968 presidential campaign and the World Bank’s 3rd President Eugene Black’s statement of “Our foreign aid programs constitute a distinct benefit to American business...foreign aid provides a substantial and immediate market for United States goods and services...stimulates the development of new overseas markets for United States companies...orients national economies toward a free enterprise system in which United States firms can prosper”,⁵⁹ and USAID’s former administrator and advocate of ‘Green Revolution’ William S. Gaud’s statement of “The biggest single misconception about the foreign aid programme is that we send money abroad. We don’t. Foreign aid consists of American equipment, raw materials, expert services, and food” by adding that, “Ninety-three percent of AID funds are spent directly in the United States to pay for these things. Just last year, some 4,000 American firms in 50 States received \$1.3 billion in AID funds for products supplied as part of the foreign aid program” and “AID funds also go to pay the salaries of American experts [from various sectors, including government, academia, civil

⁵⁶ Caroline Robb, “Changing Power Relations in the History of Aid,” in *Inclusive Aid: Changing Power and Relationships in International Development*, ed. Leslie Groves and Rachel Hinton (London: Earthscan, 2004), 36; Sarah Left, “Bush Pulls Plug on UN Family Planning Funds,” *The Guardian*, July 23, 2002, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2002/jul/23/usa.sarahleft>; Celia W. Dugger, “Bush Proposes Cuts for Overseas Family Planning,” *The New York Times*, February 15, 2006, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.nytimes.com/2006/02/15/world/americas/15iht-plan.html>

⁵⁷ Teresa Hayter, *Aid as Imperialism* (Harmondsworth, Great Britain: Penguin Books, 1971), 5

⁵⁸ The American Presidency Project, “John F. Kennedy, Special Message to the Congress on Foreign Aid, 22 March 1961”, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/special-message-the-congress-foreign-aid-1>

⁵⁹ Teresa Hayter, *The Creation of World Poverty* (London, Great Britain: Pluto Press, 1981), 83, 86-87.

society, and private business working for the US-funded aid projects]...for the training of foreign nationals in this country” during the US Department of State’s foreign policy conference at Washington D.C. in 1968.⁶⁰ Similarly, the Canadian International Development Agency stated in 2003 that “70 cents on every Canadian aid dollar returns to Canada through the creation of jobs and the purchase of goods and services... and that such aid sustains 30,000 Canadian jobs and provides contracts to 2,000 Canadian businesses, 50 universities, and 60 colleges.”⁶¹ Teresa Hayter, former staff member of Overseas Development Institute (ODI), stated in her book that, “Aid has never been an unconditional transfer of financial resources. Usually the conditions attached to aid are clearly and directly intended to serve the interests of the governments providing it”, such as USAID-implemented bilateral ODA requires by law not only the purchase of goods and services from the US but also their transportation through US-owned ships and planes.⁶² Kofi Annan, the seventh Secretary-General of the UN from 1997 to 2006 and the first one elected from the ranks of UN staff, stated in 2002 that “Aid can be much more effective today than it was 20 years ago if it is focused on building the capacity of recipient countries to run their own economies, not on tying them to the business or geopolitical interests of the donor countries.”⁶³ Catrinus Jepma, in his USAID-funded study examining the tying aid regime that was prepared under the auspices of OECD Development Center, stated that according to empirical research findings, “bilateral aid allocations are made largely in support of the donors’ perceived economic, political and security interests” whereas “aid flows from multilateral sources are found to be essentially in accordance with recipient needs criteria” and thus “[t]ying percentages of multilateral aid are generally quite small in any case than those of bilateral aid.”⁶⁴ Tied aid practices, which refer to the offering of aid on the condition that it would be used “to specific development projects/programmes, to specific commodities/services to be procured, and to the country/region where procurement has to take place”, and *de facto* tied aid practices of bilateral donors, namely creating *de facto* conditions for tying the officially-untied-aid by donors, influence aid allocations while

⁶⁰ William S. Gaud, “Foreign Aid: What It Is; How It Works: Why We Provide It,” *US Department of State Bulletin* LIX, no. 1537 (December 1968): 603

⁶¹ Iian Kapoor, *The Postcolonial Politics of Development* (London: Routledge, 2008), 48

⁶² Teresa Hayter, *Aid as Imperialism* (Harmondsworth, Great Britain: Penguin Books, 1971), 15; Roger C. Riddell, *Does Foreign Aid Really Works?* (United States: Oxford University Press, 2007), 57

⁶³ Caroline Robb, “Changing Power Relations in the History of Aid,” in *Inclusive Aid: Changing Power and Relationships in International Development*, ed. Leslie Groves and Rachel Hinton (London: Earthscan, 2004), 36

⁶⁴ Catrinus J. Jepma, *The Tying of Aid* (Paris: OECD Development Centre, 1991), 13, 14

reducing aid's value and thus weakening aid's potential to promote development.⁶⁵ In the early 2000s, 70 percent of all American ODA and some 50 percent of Australian bilateral ODA are tied, and almost half of European bilateral ODA and more than half of total ODA were tied or partially tied aid.⁶⁶

In the wider context of aid's compulsory engagement with the private sector, Robert E. Wood drew attention to major donors' policy of avoiding public capital's competition with private capital in the aid market through giving public capital only the role of complementing private capital as detailed in the quote below, explains this policy's implementation technique, which was named "strategic nonlending" by David Baldwin back in the 1960s, with that "aid institution will refuse to finance a project for which private investors or lenders can be found, thus forcing the aid-seeking government to accept the terms of the private investors or lenders or else go without external financing", so the recipient is entitled to prove the donor agency that it cannot find private financing for its project(s) but even this does not guarantee aid for the recipient as "aid organizations may withhold aid even from projects for which private investors cannot be found in order to influence government policy to foster a more satisfactory "investment climate"", referring a country's political, economic, social and financial policies, and adds that "strategic nonlending" is applied at sectoral, country and regional levels.⁶⁷ This "investment climate" card was also used against the countries whose technical records are credit-worthy but "their economic policies were leading them, and the world community, in the wrong direction."⁶⁸

From its origins in the early post-war period, foreign aid from the United States and the multilateral institutions, and later from other DAC members, has been administered so as *not* to compete with private investment or lending. At the beginning of the U.S. aid program, Secretary of State Acheson stated the policy that virtually all aid agencies have faithfully followed: "In providing assistance for economic development, it would be contrary to our traditions to place our government's public funds in direct and wasteful competition with private funds. Therefore, it will be our policy, in general, not to extend loans of public funds for projects for which private capital is available." The current head of USAID and the U.S. International Development Cooperation Administration, like virtually all his predecessors, has reiterated this basic stance: "We must be careful here to *facilitate* business involvement and not to *substitute* for private capital." The basic principle

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 11-13

⁶⁶ Roger C. Riddell, *Does Foreign Aid Really Works?* (United States: Oxford University Press, 2007), 57, 76, 99, 100, 351

⁶⁷ Robert E. Wood, *From Marshall Plan To Debt Crisis: Foreign Aid and Development Choices in the World Economy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 115-117

⁶⁸ Nick Eberstadt, "The Perversion of Foreign Aid," *Commentary*, June 1985, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.commentary.org/articles/nick-eberstadt/the-perversion-of-foreign-aid/>

has also been set forth time and again by the heads of other DAC agencies and by the major multilateral institutions. Thus foreign aid almost never represents a policy alternative to private investment or borrowing, but rather is a recourse when all else fails...This policy of avoiding competition with the private sector is written into the statutes of USAID and a number of the other major bilateral aid agencies. It is similarly part of the constitutions of each part of the World Bank Group, as well as the African, Asian, Caribbean, and Inter-American Development Banks.⁶⁹

Teresa Hayter, former staff member of Overseas Development Institute (ODI), states that “Aid is, in general, available to countries whose internal political arrangements, foreign policy alignments, treatment of foreign private investment, debt-servicing record, export policies, and so on, are considered desirable, potentially desirable, or at least acceptable” by donor countries or agencies.”⁷⁰ Ilan Kapoor adds another recipient characteristics to Hayter’s list by sharing the 1994 UNDP Human Development Report’s estimation of that “high military spenders in developing countries got roughly 2.5 times more ODA per capita from bilateral donors (especially the main weapons manufacturers — the US, France, and Britain) than low military spenders” in 1992.⁷¹

Even in the least controversial field of aid industry, food aid for humanitarian emergencies, it is possible see the clues of the same prevailing mindset and practices among donors. Ilan Kapoor states that “Even food aid, often seen as the most ‘pure’ form of aid used for emergency and humanitarian purposes, can be politically motivated” by pointing out Washington and Seoul’s attitude towards Pyongyang during North Korea’s horrific famine in second half of the 1990s that killed an estimated 3 to 5 percent of the total population.⁷² Actually, years before the 1990s, several US authorities and governmental agencies had made statements favoring the politicization of food aid and practiced it. Hubert Humphrey who served as US Senator and later Vice-President stated in 1957: “I have heard...that people may become dependent on us for food. I know that was not supposed to be good news. To me, that was good news, because before people can do anything, they have got to eat. And if you are really looking for a way to get people to lean on you and be dependent on you, in terms of their co-operation with you, it seems to me that food dependence would be terrific.”⁷³ US Secretary of Agriculture under Presidents Nixon and Ford, Earl Butz told

⁶⁹ Robert E. Wood, *From Marshall Plan To Debt Crisis: Foreign Aid and Development Choices in the World Economy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 114-115

⁷⁰ Teresa Hayter, *Aid as Imperialism* (Harmondsworth, Great Britain: Penguin Books, 1971), 15-16

⁷¹ Ilan Kapoor, *The Postcolonial Politics of Development* (London: Routledge, 2008), 84.

⁷² Ilan Kapoor, *The Postcolonial Politics of Development* (London: Routledge, 2008), 85; Michael J. Seth, “North Korea’s 1990s Famine in Historical Perspective,” *Education About Asia* 16, no. 3 (Winter 2011): 24

⁷³ Teresa Hayter, *The Creation of World Poverty* (London, Great Britain: Pluto Press, 1981), 86

Time magazine that, “Food is a weapon. It is now one of the principal tools in our negotiating kit” during the first UN World Food Conference in 1974 that gathered to discuss the early 1970s global food crisis, and this new instrument was also used on Bangladesh in the mid-1970s to ‘convince’ the country already suffering from famine and floods to take some ‘cooperative steps’.⁷⁴ Dan Ellerman from the US National Security Council also stated that, “to give food aid to countries just because people are starving is a pretty weak reason” in 1974.⁷⁵

With regard to the demand side, Sumner and Mallett, drawing on relevant literature, state that recipient countries need development aid to fill their savings and foreign exchange gaps, poverty gaps, capacity gaps, and political gaps by adding that these gaps would differ considerably from country to country based on country income group (low, middle, lower/upper middle) and country status as fragile and conflict-affected, and identifies the following recipient motives that aid would address or promote: “structural imbalances”, “trade facilitation”, “growth-led poverty reduction”, “social development”, “pro-poor policy”, “the MDGs”, “knowledge and technology transfer”, “public service provision”, “democratic processes” “good governance”, “political will for poverty reduction”, “internal paths of development”, and “emancipation from aid.”⁷⁶

Carol Lancaster describing aid as “a potent political symbol and signal” states that aid’s allocation, amount, composition, tying percentage, and terms or any change in these indicators tell a lot about the donor-recipient relationship, such as having some kind of aid relationship indicates “approbation by the donor of the recipient and vice versa”, increasing and decreasing donor support signify bettering and cooling relations respectively, providing high or low percentage of tied aid gives clue about donor’s commercial concerns, having a powerful state or institutional actor as donor in the picture may suggest donor support for recipient’s current or future political and economic policies, and sometimes suggests more than that such as showing other countries the donor’s willingness to protect recipient against all possible external hostility and aggression.⁷⁷ For instance, the American aid provided to

⁷⁴ Time, “Special Section: What to Do: Costly Choices,” November 11, 1974, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://content.time.com/time/subscriber/article/0,33009,911505-6,00.html>; Teresa Hayter, *The Creation of World Poverty* (London, Great Britain: Pluto Press, 1981), 86

⁷⁵ Teresa Hayter, *The Creation of World Poverty* (London, Great Britain: Pluto Press, 1981), 85

⁷⁶ Andy Sumner and Richard Mallett, *The Future of Foreign Aid: Development Cooperation and the New Geography of Global Poverty* (London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 4, 10-11, 22-23

⁷⁷ Carol Lancaster, *Foreign Aid: Diplomacy, Development, Domestic Politics* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007), 11-12, 17-18

Pakistan right after its independence because of its increasing strategic importance for the Americans, as a frontier state against the Soviets, sent strong signals to the Afghans whose aid requests from the US had been repeatedly declined for years about their value for the Americans and how far they can go on in the issue of Pashtunistan. Recipient governments also make this very representation of aid work in their favor in domestic politics by using it to strengthen their position against their political opponents and to increase their legitimacy and public support among their own populations.

With regard to the power implications, Caroline Robb states, “Aid, by its very definition, is a manifestation of inequality. Could aid then be improved by recognizing its various forms of inequality, including the unequal distribution of power? Being poor usually means being powerless; but the aid system is dominated by the interests of the powerful, as opposed to the powerless”, while adding that despite many reform initiatives in aid system over past decades, “What remains a fragmented aid system that...continues to interact on the basis of asymmetric power.”⁷⁸

Peter Bauer, Hungarian-British development economist, who had worked as a researcher for the British Colonial Office in Malaysia (then Malaya) and West Africa in the late 1940s and as an advisor to the former British Premier Margaret Thatcher in the early 1980s, emerged as a dissenting voice and major critic of official foreign aid in the 1950s with his opposition to pro-aid development model of the mainstream development literature in the post-WWII period by challenging the notions of primitive accumulation, vicious circle of poverty, Third World and state/nation-building, identifying official foreign aid as an anti-market action favoring the state sector over the private one, and claiming that intergovernmental aid neither reduce poverty nor promotes economic growth in Third World countries, but only leads to opportunistic rulers using aid money to increase their own wealth, secure their own corrupt governments, and strengthen their political, economic and social control over their own fellow citizens in which entrenched poverty, politicization of every spheres of life, misallocation of resources, inflationary effects, rampant corruption, political tensions at various levels, and pauperization occurs.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Caroline Robb, “Changing Power Relations in the History of Aid,” in *Inclusive Aid: Changing Power and Relationships in International Development*, ed. Leslie Groves and Rachel Hinton (London: Earthscan, 2004), 21, 37

⁷⁹ P.T. Bauer, *United States Aid and Indian Economic Development* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Association, 1959); Barbara Ward & Peter Bauer, *Two Views on Aid to Developing Countries* (London: Institute of Economic Affairs, 1968); P.T. Bauer, *Dissent on Development: Studies and Debates in Development Economics* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1972); P.T. Bauer, *Equality, the Third World, and Economic Delusion* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1981); James A. Dorn, “Economic

Bauer stating that all the rich and developed countries had initially started poor and underdeveloped but achieved to prosper without getting any foreign aid over the past centuries, when aid was not even invented, and there were also several similar examples of prospering without receiving any foreign aid from the very recent past, when official aid system was in place and operational, argued that this is also doable for other Third World countries by pointing out favorable institutional setting, political and economic climate, human attributes (quality, capacity, skills, capability, motivations, culture, etc.), limited government, and liberal trade, migration and population policies as major determinants of development and economic growth.⁸⁰

Furthermore, Bauer accepting the existence of ‘the aid graduates’, namely aid receiving countries that achieved to move from the ranks of low income countries to middle income status, in his late studies also criticized official aid system from a very donor-centric perspective with stating for the bilateral aid that, it “should be given for only limited periods. Donors should firmly refuse long forward commitments, as it is totally impossible to foretell who the eventual recipients will be, or what they will do”, “...should not go to governments whose external policies conflict with the interests of donors” by adding that “...Western interests are also largely ignored in bilateral aid, as this is given regardless of the conduct of recipients, and also of their political significance”; and for the multilateral aid, constituting some “one-third of all Western aid” that it has enjoyed great support among aid community as it has been seen as a political-free transfer of resources during which “the interests of the donors do not influence its allocation”, “the donors cannot impose conditions on the recipients, and “international aid organizations are not allowed to take into account the political interests of the donors” but “[t]ransfer of taxpayers’ money to foreign governments is inevitably political,” “donor governments cannot restrain patently wasteful or even barbarous policies of recipients”, and the loss of contact between donor and recipient reduces aid effectiveness.⁸¹ With regard to the Marshall Plan, which is regarded as a success story by aid advocates, Bauer states:

Development and Freedom: The Legacy of Peter Bauer,” *Cato Journal* 22, no. 2 (Fall 2002): 355-371; Alberto Mingardi, “P.T. Bauer and the Myth of Primitive Accumulation,” *Cato Journal* 38, no. 3 (Fall 2018): 613-630.

⁸⁰ Alberto Mingardi, “P.T. Bauer and the Myth of Primitive Accumulation,” *Cato Journal* 38, no. 3 (Fall 2018): 625-626; John Blundell, “A Conversation with Peter Bauer,” in *A Tribute to Peter Bauer* (London: The Institute of Economic Affairs, 2002), 32-33; James A. Dorn, “Economic Development and Freedom: The Legacy of Peter Bauer,” *Cato Journal* 22, no. 2 (Fall 2002): 364, 366-367; P.T. Bauer, *From Subsistence to Exchange and Other Essays* (New Jersey: Princeton University, 2000), 29; Peter Bauer, “In Response to ‘Just Deserts’ from the March 4, 1982 issue,” *The New York Review*, June 10, 1982, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.nybooks.com/articles/1982/06/10/just-deserts-an-exchange/>

⁸¹ P.T. Bauer, *Equality, the Third World, and Economic Delusion* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1981), 123, 132-134.

Well, there was no comparison at all between foreign aid and the Marshall Plan. The economies of western Europe had to be restored, not developed. The economies of the so-called Third World, to use a fashionable cliché, had to be developed. With Marshall aid, West Germany and western Europe had to be restored, not developed. The people of these countries, particularly Germany, had institutions and attitudes appropriate to material progress, as is obvious from their achievement.⁸²

In her book ‘Dead Aid’ examining empirically how international development aid failed in Africa, Zambian economist Dambiso Moyo problematizes the “culture of aid” and calls the multi-billion aid industry “malignant” while challenging the traditional views and current model of international development aid (systemic aid), and argues that despite more than US\$1 trillion in development-related aid given to Africa in the past 50 years, aid did not only fail to deliver what it had promised, mainly poverty alleviation and economic growth, but even did the opposite by contributing to increasing poverty and declining economic growth through fomenting corruption and conflict, weakening “social construction” and “social capital”, decreasing domestic savings and investment, creating governments responsive to donors rather than their own citizens, causing inflationary pressure and Dutch disease effects- particularly in countries having low absorption capacity and insufficient governance but receiving large amounts of aid, and producing and strengthening “the all-pervasive culture of aid-dependency” in which recipients gradually move away from even trying to become a fully-functioning state with a modern taxation system, strong institutions, and responsible state administration.⁸³ Following in the footsteps of Bauer, Moyo prescribes a three-staged market-based solution plan consisting of first “an economic plan which reduces a country’s reliance on aid year on years” with the use of several different finance tools such as “trade, FDI, the capital markets, remittances, micro-finance and savings”, secondly the realization of this plan on the basis of the rules of financial prudence, either by reducing government expenditures or finding resources to continue the same spending, and thirdly “the strengthening of institutions” during which government accountability will have key importance, and adds that accepting the failure of current aid system in Africa and building the “political will” are the only things required to implement this solution plan but neither Western donors nor African leaders show any inclination to move in that direction, with very few exceptions, and relatedly quoting Rwanda’s President Paul Kagame’s following words criticizing aid system in his 2007 interview:⁸⁴

⁸² John Blundell, “A Conversation with Peter Bauer,” in *A Tribute to Peter Bauer* (London: The Institute of Economic Affairs, 2002), 30

⁸³ Dambisa Moyo, *Dead Aid: Why Aid is Not Working and How There is a Better Way For Africa* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009), 10, 16, 57-59, 63-71

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 135-137

Now, the question comes for our donors and partners: having spent so much money, what difference did it make? In the last 50 years, you've spent US\$400 billion in aid to Africa. But what is there to show for it? And the donors should ask: what are we doing wrong, or, what are the people we are helping doing wrong? Obviously somebody's not getting something right. Otherwise, you'd have something to show for your money.

The donors have also made a lot of mistakes. Many times they have assumed they are the ones who know what countries in Africa need. They want to be the ones to choose where to put this money, to be the ones to run it, without any accountability. In other cases, they have simply associated with the wrong people and money gets lost and ends up in people's pockets. We should correct that.⁸⁵

Irrespective of their differing standpoints towards the nature and purpose of foreign aid, all theories recognize that aid is pervasively political. However, as stated by Mawdsley, "Being political does not necessarily make aid ineffective; just as being 'ethical' does not make aid effective. For that matter, being 'effective' does not mean that aid is virtuous."⁸⁶

Furthermore, Furia argues that realist and liberal schools of thought acknowledge the "intrinsic connection between the extension of the foreign aid gift and the establishment of friendly relationship" though with different interpretations.⁸⁷

1.4. Main Argument

Contrary to the liberal school of thought approaching aid from a donor-centric perspective with the assumption that donors are benevolent actors aiming to promote development and international cooperation by aiding countries in need, this research argues that non-donor-centric realist school of thought treating aid as a political or strategic tool in the hands of not only aid-giving but also aid-receiving actors provides a more accurate explanation of the relationship between Afghanistan and the international aid community. This approach suggests that both aid-giving and aid-receiving countries perceive foreign aid as a political or strategic instrument and enter into aid relationship with a calculated pursuit of their national interests. This argument is supported by the historical trajectory of aid provision and aid receipt in Afghanistan. While donors have allocated aid driven by their own geopolitical interest, often overlooking Afghanistan's absorptive capacity, socio-cultural context, domestic political dynamics, and long-term sustainability, Afghanistan has accepted this aid

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 137-138

⁸⁶ Emma Mawdsley, *From Recipients to Donors: Emerging Powers and the Changing Development Landscape* (London: Zed Books, 2012), 27

⁸⁷ Annalisa Furia, *The Foreign Aid Regime: Gift-Giving, States and Global Dis/Order* (UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 100.

due to its own pursuit of national interest. Moreover, Afghanistan was well aware that Maussian reciprocity governs aid relationships, leaving either little or no room for altruism. The issue with Afghanistan's aid-receiving practices is that the country often fails to fully assess the associated long-term risks or considers the possible negative consequences but prioritizes short-term benefits or allows self-interested political elites to focus on their own gains rather than those of the country or its people. This has resulted in Afghanistan becoming a fragile, aid-dependent rentier state, swinging from one local power broker to another and from one superpower's influence to another, leaving the Afghan people trapped in a persistent cycle of crises and challenges.

1.5. Methodology and Theoretical Framework

This research, which aims to analyze the dynamics and evolution over time of the international humanitarian and development aid to Afghanistan during the country's turbulent statebuilding journey—from the time when f/actors that would have complex interaction in the future emerged in the Afghan landscape up to the present, along with the results yielded for the country and its people—employs single case study approach and qualitative document analysis. Single case studies provide researchers the opportunity to carry out in-depth, holistic and comprehensive assessment and analysis of an issue. Chiara Ruffa states that “single case studies have higher levels of conceptual validity, allowing us to take into account the complexity of contextual factors” in comparison to comparative case studies, and adds that “[w]hen selected strategically, however, single case studies hold the promise of combining the richness of focusing on one case with the ambition of saying something about the broader population of interest.”⁸⁸ However, single case studies have some disadvantages such as “the case-selection bias” and the limited generalizability.⁸⁹ These disadvantages can be minimized by smartly selecting a single case, which Ruffa calls “empowered single case studies.”⁹⁰ As for the qualitative document analysis, described as “a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents—both printed and electronic (computer-based and Internet-transmitted) material,” it involves examining and interpreting data to “elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge.”⁹¹ Glenn A.

⁸⁸ Chiara Ruffa, “Case Study Methods: Case Selection and Case Analysis,” in *The Sage Handbook of Research Methods in Political Science and International Relations*, ed. Luigi Curini and Robert Franzese (UK: Sage Publications, 2020), 1139

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 1140-1141

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 1139, 1141

⁹¹ Glenn A. Bowen, “Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method,” *Qualitative Research Journal* 9, no.

Bowen states that qualitative document analysis is an efficient research method offering several advantages, such as time and cost effectiveness, widespread availability of online documents, broad coverage, and “lack of obtrusiveness and reactivity.”⁹² Bowen also states that, alongside these advantages, qualitative document analysis has certain drawbacks worth noting, such as insufficiency in detail, “low retrievability”, and document selection bias, which he describes as “potential flaws rather than major disadvantages,” and argues that “document analysis offers advantages that clearly outweigh the limitations.”⁹³ Furthermore, Bowen claims that “documents have a major advantage over interviews and observation—that is, their lack of reactivity,” making them immune to “the potentially distorting effects of the qualitative researcher’s presence in the field in terms of behaviours, attitudes, and feelings.”⁹⁴

This study is the outcome of a meticulous examination of primary and secondary resources. Throughout the research process, I carried out document collection and material analysis simultaneously, and whenever I encountered new material related to past events or new developments in the country, I updated and modified my research. The primary resources that this study benefits from are various UN documents (UNSC and UNGA Resolutions, UN briefing, position, and background papers), several US Government documents (Department of State Daily Press Briefings, Embassy Cables, Bulletins, Congress Hearings, and the White House National Security Decision Directives, Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction- SIGAR reports, CIA reports, USAID’s mostly outsourced reports based on fieldwork in Afghanistan), numerous OECD documents, and plentiful newspapers providing timely information and official statements. Furthermore, quantitative data showing aid flows to Afghanistan is derived from USAID and the World Bank Data Bank. Only Afghan Government’s detailed budget in the period 1978-1980 is my own calculation through triangulation method as I had noticed some discrepancies in the calculation. The secondary resources are books and articles that contribute to understanding the evolution of humanitarian and development aid in the Afghan context.

Additionally, knowledge and experience that I have gained during my professional career while working in international organizations at various capacities and in different countries, particularly the meetings with more than 30 governmental, intergovernmental, and local,

2 (2009): 27, <http://dx.doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0902027>.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 31

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 31-32

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 37-38

foreign and international nongovernmental organizations in Kabul and Islamabad during fact-finding mission visits to Afghanistan and Pakistan, helped me greatly in producing this research.

With regard to theoretical framework, in contrast to the liberal school of thought, which views aid from donor-centric perspective assuming donors are benevolent actors promoting development in recipient countries and cooperation within the international community, this research greatly benefits from the realist school of thought, which considers foreign aid, including humanitarian and development ones, as an additional tool or instrument of statecraft where its operation is primarily driven by a complex interaction of self-interest, power dynamics and strategic calculations. Although Afghanistan has long been treated as an object of national interest of foreign powers, it has proven many times that it is an independent actor pursuing its own national interests. Therefore this study views aid as a highly political tool benefiting not only aid-giving country but also the aid-receiving country. Examining the history of aid to Afghanistan, one cannot avoid noticing that the country and its people do not consider or perceive aid as charity, altruism, or an initiative solely aimed at their development without ulterior motives, but rather as a gift-exchange – namely, interest-based aid from a foreign power in exchange for granting spheres of influence. There, I will also utilize from the obligatory reciprocity principle of the concept of gift, which is formulated by French sociologist and anthropologist Marcel Mauss and later interpreted by scholars across various disciplines. Conceptualizing foreign aid as a form of gift practice that takes place on a global scale, the Maussian gift concept with its arguments of that every gift practice incorporates socio-cultural embeddedness, namely a gift gains different meanings in different socio-cultural contexts, requires obligatory reciprocity, no matter how voluntary it appears, serves as a means of establishing and negotiating prestige and status, and more importantly both shapes and is shaped by power dynamics help one understand the interplay of complex dynamics inherent in giving and receiving aid among countries.

1.6. Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation, consisting of nine chapters, is structured chronologically from the emergence of an Afghan entity in need of aid to the present, encompassing the Second Taliban rule as well, to accentuate the evolution over time of the international humanitarian and development aid to Afghanistan during the country's tempestuous statebuilding journey. Accordingly, this dissertation proceeds as follows.

In the first chapter, the research's scope and objective, research question, literature review, main argument, methodology and theoretical framework are presented in sequence. Apart from the introduction and the conclusion parts, the second chapter is divided into five parts. The first two parts present theoretical framework of how the concept of foreign aid was perceived by different disciplines, and the latter three part first give historical overview of humanitarian aid and development aid and later visits the linking debate over how to bridge humanitarian-development divide.

In order to set the scene and as prelude to the research topic, the third chapter covers first the early historical period eventuated in the emergence of modern Afghan state in 1880 and later the course of events leading up to the country's independence in 1919, and as last describes in detail the relevant political, economic and social conditions inherited from the pre-independence period that made the country recipient of its first foreign development aid in its post-independence period. The use of broader historical perspective through examination of the Afghan history starting from the most distant past provides some key information on the country context, state structure, and its people, which would help develop a more comprehensive understanding of political, economic, and social landscape of the country.

The fourth and the fifth chapters present a detailed examination of the evolution of international humanitarian and development aid to Afghanistan during the Cold War years, with the former one focusing on the period before the Soviet invasion and the latter on the period during the Soviet invasion. The fourth chapter elaborately describes how and why the country in search of foreign development aid from non-neighboring powers, specifically the United States, for its ambitious domestic and foreign policy objectives transformed itself into an aid-dependent rentier state, largely in the orbit of the Soviet Union, by analyzing the effectiveness, impact, and distinctive characteristics of the development aid provided by various donors, with a particular emphasis on the US and the Soviet Union as the major donors. The fifth chapter focuses on the Soviet-led and funded statebuilding efforts of the Karmal government and the US-led anti-Soviet bloc's aid to the Mujahideen groups and the Afghan refugees in Pakistan during the Afghan war, and examines the role of the non-military namely civilian aid provided to the warring parties in prolongation, evolution and outcome of the Afghan war by addressing the relevant national, regional and international events along with the resulting dramatic changes in the country's political, economic, and social spheres.

The sixth chapter covers the most turbulent period of the country namely the full-scale civil war years under the rules of Najibullah's Republic of Afghanistan (1989-1992),

Mujahideen's Islamic State of Afghanistan (1992-1996), and Taliban's Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (1996-2001). The chapter first examines the struggle between the Najibullah regime that strengthened its powerbase and thereby maintained its survival after the Soviet withdrawal through masterfully exploiting the ongoing Soviet aid to execute its Machiavellian tactics and the Mujahiddin groups that initially received increased aid from the US-led countries to deliver the final blow to the Najibullah regime right after the Soviet withdrawal but gradually lost this support for several reasons. Later, it explores the Mujahiddin infighting years during which the disappearance of the Soviets from the history resulted in the fall of Kabul to Mujahideen forces, who were in violent disagreement over who should rule the country, and caused the disengagement of the Americans from Afghanistan without brokering a settlement among the Mujahideen groups, both of which led to the general decline in aid and donor interests in the country and the prolongation of civil war. As last, it scrutinizes international aid efforts during the Taliban's transformation from a perceived stabilizing force in the country amidst post-Soviet chaos since its emergence in 1994 to a problematic entity for the international community due to its association with international terrorist groups and human rights violations.

The seventh chapter is devoted to the first two decades of the post-9/11 period. Excluding the introduction and the conclusion, this chapter comes with three parts. This first part discusses the complex aid dynamics of the post-9/11 statebuilding project in Afghanistan during the first decade following the American invasion. From an external perspective, the US-led Afghan statebuilding project appears meticulously planned and well-organized. However, upon closer examination of the actors involved and their interactions with the Afghan state and the Afghan people, the true chaotic nature of the project becomes evident. This part has three sub-parts studying first the US-led short-term reconstruction plans as the US insisted on 'light foot-print approach' in both civilian and military assistance for a long time, very reminiscent of the Soviets in Afghanistan during the early 1980s after their invasion in 1979, secondly the increasing Taliban-led insurgency that exploited social, economic and political cracks exacerbated by the failure of aid, and thirdly Obama's 18-month surge in aid period that reversed this 'light foot-print approach' to 'boots on the ground approach' by injecting massive civilian and military aid to the country within such a short period of time but with the motto of 'if strategy fails, withdrawal prevails'. Obama's strategy of surging aid during his first year in office and his subsequent withdrawal decision upon failure also bears a striking resemblance to Gorbachev's approach to Afghanistan during his initial years in power and subsequent pursuit of a dignified exit from Afghanistan in response to perceived failures. The second part examines the withdrawal decade during

which the country witnessed a steady decline in aid, alongside an increase in Taliban insurgency taking advantage of the power vacuum left by retreating international forces, and concludes with the Taliban's takeover of Kabul in August 2021. The third part visits the country and its people, caught between the Taliban-led Afghan shadow government and the international community's parallel donor state, both of which are inherent structures in exogenous statebuilding efforts in failed, failing or fragile states, involving powerful indigenous insurgency actors engaging in armed conflict while also providing various services to the populations they aim to mobilize and govern, and the international community wielding substantial aid resources outside the control of the recipient government, operating off-budget with minimal accountability.

The eighth chapter focuses on the country and its people under the Second Taliban rule following the chaotic withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan, marking the end of the American decade in Afghanistan. After the introductory part, this chapter first explores the humanitarian and economic context that was left behind by the international community and further deteriorated due to international sanctions, and then evaluates the Taliban's aid diplomacy efforts in pursuit of international assistance and recognition.

The ninth chapter is the conclusion. This chapter summarizes the main findings from the previous chapters.

CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introduction

This chapter explores the concept of aid by initially examining its meaning in social sciences through Mauss' gift theory and then investigating how foreign aid is scrutinized within international relations through the lenses of realism, liberalism, constructivism, and critical theories – with a particular focus on realism and liberalism. The chapter proceeds to examine the origins and evolution of humanitarian aid and development aid, as well as the complex relationship between these two realms in a broader historical context. This includes looking at the earliest known examples and focusing on critical junctures that have influenced their development. The reasons for incorporating 'linking humanitarian and development aid' debate - commonly referred to as 'the linking debate' or 'bridging humanitarian-development divide debate' - into this research are three-fold: First, there is considerable fluidity between these concepts and their practical applications. Second, aid agencies operating at various levels, ranging from intergovernmental organizations like the UN to local NGOs, integrate approaches influenced by the linking debate into their operations across numerous countries, including Afghanistan. Third, this debate provides insight into the future trajectory of the aid industry.

2.2. Theoretical Approaches to Aid in Social Sciences

In order to contextualize aid, one has to look into its socio-cultural assumptions and power dynamics. For this purpose, anthropological, sociological and philosophical approaches to aid, mostly evaluated within the framework of gift-giving, gift-receiving and gift-exchange will be briefly examined.

In his seminal work examining the practices of gift exchange in archaic societies, French sociologist and anthropologist Marcel Mauss suggests that among its three obligations (obligations to give, receive and repay), the gift-giving constitutes "the fundamental act of public recognition in all spheres, military, legal, economic and religious," the gift-receiving

is also “no less constraining” as refusing a gift means “fear of having to repay, and of being abased in default” but in certain conditions the refusal may signify “an assertion of victory or invincibility,” and the gift-repaying is a compulsory act requiring the return of either equivalent value or more.⁹⁵ Mauss’s assigning certain power to objects of exchange “which forces them to circulate, to be given away and repaid” is the essence of his theory in which each object appears “a sign and surety of life...[and] wealth.”⁹⁶ By emphasizing ‘the obligation to repay’ between the giver and the recipient in his theory, Mauss clearly states that the principle of reciprocity governs every gift exchange, meaning that there is no place to altruism.

French philosopher Jacques Derrida refers to the gift as “the impossible” and describes its impossibility by stating that “[th]e moment the gift, however generous it be, is infected with the slightest hint of calculation, the moment it takes account of knowledge [connaissance] or recognition [reconnaissance], it falls within the ambit of an economy” and adds that “[o]ne must give without knowing, without knowledge or recognition, without thanks [remerciement]: without anything, or at least without any object.”⁹⁷ He further states that since “[f]or there to be a gift, there must be no reciprocity, return, exchange, counter-gift, or debt,” Marcel Mauss’s *The Gift* “speaks of everything but the gift: It deals with economy, exchange, contract (*do et des*), it speaks of raising the stakes, sacrifice, gift *and* counter-gift—in short, everything that in the thing itself impels the gift *and* the annulment of the gift.”⁹⁸

French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, based on a theory of practice, argues that there is “dual truth” of the gift; the subjective truth refusing self-interest and egoistic calculation while exalting generosity and the objective truth as the opposite of what subjective truth suggests namely self-interested, egoistic, and the exchange characterized by strict balance⁹⁹ and adds that “[g]ift exchange is one of the social games that cannot be played unless the players refuse to acknowledge the objective truth of the game.”¹⁰⁰

⁹⁵ Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: The Forms And Reasons For Exchange In Archaic Societies*, trans. Ian Cunnison (London: Cohen & West, 1966), 39-41

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 41, 43

⁹⁷ Jacques Derrida, *The Gift of Death*, trans. David Wills. (London: Chicago University Press, 1995), 112

⁹⁸ Jacques Derrida, “The Time of the King,” in *The Logic of the Gift: Toward an Ethic of Generosity*, ed. Alan D. Schrift (London: Routledge, 1997), 128, 138

⁹⁹ Pierre Bourdieu, “Marginalia – Some Additional Notes on the Gift,” in *The Logic of the Gift: Toward an Ethic of Generosity*, ed. Alan D. Schrift (London: Routledge, 1997), 231; Pierre Bourdieu, “Selections from the Logic of Practice,” in *The Logic of the Gift: Toward an Ethic of Generosity*, ed. Alan D. Schrift (London: Routledge, 1997), 200

¹⁰⁰ Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1990), 105

Finnish sociologist Oli Pyyhtinen, after situating Maussian gift theory into scope by stating that for Mauss, “no gift is devoid of obligations, but on the contrary any gift, no matter how voluntary it appears, is given and reciprocated obligatorily... it is a certain property in ‘*the object given*’ that forces the gift to be reciprocated,” and positioning himself against Mauss by stating that “it is precisely in debt that the gift gets annulled” and others who take the gift-object as “a given” through prioritizing “the constitutive role of the gift to relations” while ignoring the gift-object, argues that gift is “a quasi-object in the Serresian sense, that is, as an object that is not independent of the collective but constitutes itself in the relations of the latter” and adds that the gift-object “gains its meaning, value and force in and through relations, based on who has given it and with what intentions, through whose hands it has passed... and what is the relation between the giver and the givee like – all these shape the gift in what it is and becomes.”¹⁰¹

American anthropologist Marshall Sahlins stating that “[i]f friends make gifts, gifts make friends,”¹⁰² read Mauss’s gift theory in the context of Hobbes’s political philosophy and argues that “[f]or the war of every man against every man, Mauss substitutes the exchange of everything between everybody” by adding that “[a]ll the exchanges, that is to say, must bear in their material design some political burden of reconciliation.”¹⁰³ Sahlins’s main criticism to Mauss’s conception of gift was his failure to capture power relations, and for that reason, Sahlins had developed his own typology of gift-giving, composed of “generalized reciprocity, the solidarity extreme”, “balanced reciprocity, the midpoint”, and “negative reciprocity, the unsociable extreme.”¹⁰⁴ With regard to Hobbes, Annalisa Furia states that “Hobbes addresses the definition and the function of the gift in several passages of *De Cive* (1642), as well as in his more famous and mature work, the *Leviathan* (1651),” and details her statement with the following:¹⁰⁵

In addition to the many passages in which the practice of gift is traditionally framed as a form of worship, as connected to the virtue of liberality, and as a means to honour a person and to procure friends and servants..., Hobbes develops his *rational* construction of the modern order by contrasting the *contract* upon which such an order is to be built to the concept of gift,¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹ Oli Pyyhtinen, *The Gift and Its Paradoxes – Beyond Mauss* (England: Ashgate, 2014), 6-7

¹⁰² Marshall Sahlins, *Stone Age Economics* (Chicago: Aldine-Atherton, 1972), 186

¹⁰³ Marshall Sahlins, “The Spirit of Gift,” in *The Logic of the Gift: Toward an Ethic of Generosity*, ed. Alan D. Schrift (London: Routledge, 1997), 83, 95

¹⁰⁴ Marshall Sahlins, *Stone Age Economics* (Chicago: Aldine-Atherton, 1972), 193-195

¹⁰⁵ Annalisa Furia, *The Foreign Aid Regime: Gift-Giving, States and Global Dis/Order* (UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 12

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

French anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss, placing significant emphasis on Mauss's gift theory as "it attempted to explain empirically observed behavior and communication in terms of a society's unconscious rules of exchange," argues that Mauss's separating gift-giving, gift-receiving and gift-repaying as three distinct operations is problematic as these are in reality parts of "the complex social whole of exchange" namely of "the primary structural process of exchange as a whole."¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, Levi-Strauss argues that the impetus behind gift-giving may stem from the pursuit of power and prestige.¹⁰⁸

Apart from these sophisticated approaches to Mauss's conception of gift, there are also other scholars reducing the gift to just social relations such as John Frow stating "[g]ifts are precisely not objects at all, but transactions and social relations",¹⁰⁹ Godbout and Caille writing "the gift is not a thing but a social connection..., perhaps the social connection *par excellence*,"¹¹⁰ or Aafke Komter listing motivations regarding the gift-giving such as strengthening connections with others, communicating positive feelings to the recipient, reducing insecurity, marking superiority or prestige in power relations, "tokens of balance" (*quid pro quo*), and "implicit or explicit self-interest" namely "tokens of utility or material (economic) value."¹¹¹

All the abovementioned ideas and approaches developed in response to Maussian conceptualization of gift provide valuable insights into power dynamics and various dimensions of aid relationships between donor and recipient countries, leading one to better understand the complexities and challenges inherent in the international aid system. For instance, Bourdieu's arguments on gift's having "dual truth" and gift exchange's being "one of the social games that cannot be played unless the players refuse to acknowledge the objective truth of the game"¹¹² explains why "more critical observers point to the system's cultural and symbolic power politics, as 'recipients become complicit in the existing order that enables donors to give in the first place'...in this sense, aid is seen to play an

¹⁰⁷ Claude Levi-Strauss, "Selections from Introduction to the Work of Marcel Mauss," in *The Logic of the Gift: Toward an Ethic of Generosity*, ed. Alan D. Schrift (London: Routledge, 1997), 55

¹⁰⁸ Aafke E. Komter, *Social Solidarity and the Gift* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 9

¹⁰⁹ John Frow, *Time and Commodity Culture: Essays in Cultural Theory and Postmodernity*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997), 124

¹¹⁰ Jacques T. Godbout and Alain Caille, *The World of the Gift*, trans. Donald Winkler. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998), 7

¹¹¹ Aafke E. Komter, *Social Solidarity and the Gift* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 21-26, 45-49

¹¹² Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1990), 105

instrumental role in attempts to preserve the dominant organisation of global hierarchies of power.”¹¹³ Emma Mawdsley interpreting Bourdieu’s “dual truth” states that the recipient’s acquiescence to their ‘symbolic domination’ suggests “their active complicity in maintaining an unequal social order,” and adds, “Persistent unreciprocated receiving allows social inequality to be naturalised as the ‘normal order of things’, and thus perpetuated. In the case of foreign aid, we can see this expressed materially and psychologically as dependency.”¹¹⁴ Similarly, Annalisa Furia, having called foreign aid as a gift, “namely the *voluntary* extension of varied types of resources to foreign peoples,” states that “the foreign aid regime’s effects cannot be captured by remaining within the classical divide between *conservation* and *transformation*, between *domination* and *freedom*” argues that “foreign aid practices allow the conservation of order, hierarchy and inequality because they operate through the freedom, active engagement and responsabilisation of recipients; they operate through a material and ethical promise of transformation, of a new order, freedom and equality” and adds that these practices also “allow the conservation of the existing relations of interdependence by continuously promising the construction of new relations of interdependence, that are always yet-to-come.”¹¹⁵

Another example, Maus’s gift theory based on reciprocity as the principle governing every gift exchange help one understand not only why “other benefits to the donor are taken into account, the imagery of gift giving embedded in most discussions of aid becomes questionable [as] [d]onors may receive more than they give, and recipients may repay more than they receive,”¹¹⁶ but also why a 1968 Richard Nixon statement, “Let us remember that the main purpose of American aid is not to help other nations but to help ourselves” happened.¹¹⁷ Levi-Strauss’s emphasis on power and prestige as one of the primary drivers of gift-giving also help one understand why during the time when Nixon made this statement, “the US government (like other donor governments) continued to construct aid as gift and cover up its grift. Its manipulation of aid statistics....inflating, hiding, withholding figures to make the nation look good, or as Derrida puts it, ‘to pick up gratis the certificate of a

¹¹³ Andy Sumner and Richard Mallett, *The Future of Foreign Aid: Development Cooperation and the New Geography of Global Poverty* (London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 27

¹¹⁴ Emma Mawdsley, “The Changing Geographies of Foreign Aid and Development Cooperation: Contributions from Gift Theory,” *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographies* 37, no. 2 (2012): 259.

¹¹⁵ Annalisa Furia, *The Foreign Aid Regime: Gift-Giving, States and Global Dis/Order* (UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 2, 4

¹¹⁶ Robert E. Wood, *From Marshall Plan To Debt Crisis: Foreign Aid and Development Choices in the World Economy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 14

¹¹⁷ Ilan Kapoor, *The Postcolonial Politics of Development* (London: Routledge, 2008), 85

charitable [nation].”¹¹⁸ With regard to the power implications, Caroline Robb states, “Aid, by its very definition, is a manifestation of inequality. Could aid then be improved by recognizing its various forms of inequality, including the unequal distribution of power? Being poor usually means being powerless; but the aid system is dominated by the interests of the powerful, as opposed to the powerless,” while adding that despite many reform initiatives in aid system over past decades, a fragmented aid system “continues to interact on the basis of asymmetric power.”¹¹⁹

2.3. Theoretical Approaches to Aid in International Relations:

International relations (IR) discipline, in which allegedly “the study of foreign aid represents less than 5% of the total academic production,”¹²⁰ offers four schools of thought to make one better understand both the nature and purpose of foreign aid, namely realism, liberalism, constructivism, and critical theories as an alternative reading of foreign aid.

As the oldest school of thought that was developed in IR literature, realist school, which is based on the assumption that Hobbesian anarchy dictates the objectives states opt to pursue in international relations, leading realists to focus on systemic and structural determinants, power as the primary currency, national security and survival and self-help, perceives foreign aid as a domain being governed by “structural power patterns in the international system.”¹²¹ Realist school considers foreign aid as “an additional foreign policy tool aimed at establishing or maintaining alliances, and thus at securing power, national interests and security.”¹²²

Political realism sees foreign aid as “a policy tool that originated in the Cold War to influence the political judgments of recipient countries in a bi-polar struggle.”¹²³ Considering

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ Caroline Robb, “Changing Power Relations in the History of Aid,” in *Inclusive Aid: Changing Power and Relationships in International Development*, ed. Leslie Groves and Rachel Hinton (London: Earthscan, 2004), 21, 37

¹²⁰ Gino N. Pauselli, “Foreign Aid’s Motivations: Theoretical Arguments and Empirical Evidence,” in *Aid and Politics*, ed. Iliana Olivie and Aitor Pérez (London: Routledge, 2020), 34

¹²¹ Bernabé Malacalza, “The Politics of Aid From the Perspective of International Relations Theories,” in *Aid and Politics*, ed. Iliana Olivie and Aitor Pérez (London: Routledge, 2020), 12; Peter J. Schraeder, Steven W. Hook, and Bruce Taylor, “Clarifying the Foreign Aid Puzzle: A Comparison of American, Japanese, French, and Swedish Aid Flows,” *World Politics* 50, no. 2 (1998): 297-298.

¹²² Annalisa Furia, *The Foreign Aid Regime: Gift-Giving, States and Global Dis/Order* (UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 100

¹²³ Tomohisa Hattori, “Reconceptualizing Foreign Aid,” *Review of International Political Economy* 8, no. 4 (Winter 2001): 642

foreign aid as a gift, Hobbes, a key figure in the development of political realism, defines “the practice of gift” as a “form of worship, as connected to the virtue of liberality” and its function as a “means to honour a person and to procure friends and servants” in his works “*De Cive* (1642)” and “*Leviathan* (1651).”¹²⁴ Annalisa Furia states, “Hobbes develops his *rational* construction of the modern order by contrasting the *contract* upon which such an order is to be built to the concept of gift.”¹²⁵

Hans Morgenthau, the most prominent theorist of realism and a leading representative of Hobessian tradition in his approach to international relations, underlines the importance of foreign aid by elevating it to the level of military and foreign policy and deeming foreign aid as a tool to secure the interests abroad when military means and traditional diplomatic methods are either inadequate or insufficient to achieve it.¹²⁶ Morgenthau classifies six types of foreign aid by calling them as “weapons in the armory of the nation”: “humanitarian foreign aid, subsistence foreign aid, military foreign aid, bribery, prestige foreign aid, and foreign aid for economic development.”¹²⁷ Morgenthau argues that although humanitarian aid is inherently apolitical, it can assume a political role when operating within a political context, subsistence aid is budget support to a recipient state for the purpose of avoiding the breakdown of order in the recipient and thus maintaining the status quo, “[m]uch of what goes by the name foreign aid today is in the nature of bribes” by adding that “[b]ribery disguised as foreign aid for economic development makes of giver and recipient actors in a play which in the end they may no longer be able to distinguish from reality,” prestige aid provides the giver “political advantage” in the recipient country while establishing “a patent relationship between the generosity of the giver and the increased prestige of the recipient,” and for development aid “as military policy is too important a matter to be left to the generals, so is foreign aid too important a matter to be left to the economists.”¹²⁸ Tomohisa Hattori interprets Morgenthau’s classification as “a typology of foreign aid that distinguished five policy aims (i.e. military, economic, prestige, humanitarian, and subsistence) and two strategies of influence: ‘propaganda’ and ‘bribes.’”¹²⁹ Propaganda refers to actions taken

¹²⁴ Annalisa Furia, *The Foreign Aid Regime: Gift-Giving, States and Global Dis/Order* (UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 12

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶ Hans, Morgenthau, “A Political Theory of Foreign Aid” *American Political Science Review* 56, no. 2 (June 1962): 301

¹²⁷ Hans, Morgenthau, “A Political Theory of Foreign Aid” *American Political Science Review* 56, no. 2 (June 1962): 301

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 301-304, 309.

¹²⁹ Tomohisa Hattori, “Reconceptualizing Foreign Aid,” *Review of International Political Economy* 8, no. 4

towards creating “a ‘psychological’ relationship between donor and recipient that drew on the donor’s own aspirations for international recognition and prestige.”¹³⁰

David Baldwin, in his article examining “four problems of foreign aid analysis”, which he listed as “politics and aid”, “forms of aid”, “definition and measurement of aid” and “measuring opposition to aid,” first states that “[s]ince 1945, “foreign aid” has become one of America’s most important techniques of statecraft,” and later continues by stating that “[a]lmost everyone agrees that aid is and should be an instrument of foreign policy,” and adds that “[w]hat is a subject of controversy is determining which foreign policy goals should be pursued with this instrument....to augment our short term prestige or to promote long term economic growth. ...[w]e need to get on with the discussion of the pros and cons of various short run and long run aid goals and to stop quibbling over whether such goals are political or not.”¹³¹ George Liska, one of the first realist scholars trying to formulate a theory merging historicism and a structural approach to international relations, accepts the continuous struggle for power as the essence of international relations and sees foreign aid “as an instrument of foreign policy” in advancing the national interest.¹³²

Furthermore, Emma Mawdsley underlines the divide within the realist tradition between those who think like the above-mentioned predecessors and the others who consider foreign aid as “a waste of domestic resources on undeserving peoples and countries, with insufficient benefit for the donor country...[and] a poor way of conducting economic and diplomatic statecraft: donors don’t get enough back in return,” pointing out Anthony Kim and Brett Schaefer who consider the US aid ineffective by looking at the voting tendencies of the US-aid recipient states within the UN as an example¹³³ During the time of these early realists focusing on donor side of the story, there were very few “historically oriented studies” examining the impact of the aid on the recipient countries, and later in the 1970s-1980s the

(Winter 2001): 642

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ David A. Baldwin, “Analytical Notes on Foreign Aid and Politics,” *Background*, 10/1, (May 1966): 66, 71, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3013712>

¹³² George Liska, *The New Statecraft: Foreign aid in American Foreign Policy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), viii, 14

¹³³ Emma Mawdsley, *From Recipients to Donors: Emerging Powers and the Changing Development Landscape* (London: Zed Books, 2012), 24; Anthony Kim and Brett Schaffer, “U.S. Foreign Aid recipients and Voting at the United Nations,” Heritage Foundation, April 06, 2010, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.heritage.org/global-politics/report/us-foreign-aid-recipients-and-voting-the-united-nations>; Anthony Kim and Brett Schaffer, “U.N. General Assembly: Foreign Aid Recipients Vote Against the U.S.,” Heritage Foundation, February 25, 2013, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.heritage.org/global-politics/report/un-general-assembly-foreign-aid-recipients-vote-against-the-us>

studies using “formal empirical models based on regression analysis to explain the correlations between aid allocation patterns and characteristics of the recipient countries” took place, most of which empirically proved that bilateral aid donors are driven mostly by their own interests.¹³⁴

Liberal internationalism, as the second major IR theory, which shares the view with political realism on that states are rational actors prioritizing their own interests but differs from realists by suggesting that all states derive benefits from participating in cooperative networks within international system with emphasis on cooperation, interdependence, international organizations, international trade, multilateralism, international regimes, principles and rules, norms etc.,¹³⁵ considers foreign aid as “a tool to promote development that contributes to the efforts to enhance equality and cooperation within the international community”¹³⁶ or “a set of programmatic measures designed to enhance to the socio-economic and political developments of recipient countries”¹³⁷ or “an instrument or reflection of the tendency of states to cooperate in addressing problems of interdependence and globalization.”¹³⁸

John Ruggie, who contributed to the development of some of the major concepts of IR such as “international regimes, constructivism, epistemes, multilateralism, and embedded liberalism,” considers foreign aid as a quasi-regime because of “little coherence between the parts of the aid regime and the behaviours of Western donors,” “loose character of aid rules and organisations,” and its functioning as “aspirations rather than commitments for great powers.”¹³⁹ Furthermore, liberal internationalism has gradually incorporated “the idea that

¹³⁴ Bernabé Malacalza, “The Politics of Aid From the Perspective of International Relations Theories,” in *Aid and Politics*, ed. Iliana Olivie and Aitor Pérez (London: Routledge, 2020), 13; Carol Lancaster, *Foreign Aid: Diplomacy, Development, Domestic Politics* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007), 3

¹³⁵ Bernabé Malacalza, “The Politics of Aid From the Perspective of International Relations Theories,” in *Aid and Politics*, ed. Iliana Olivie and Aitor Pérez (London: Routledge, 2020), 14; Emma Mawdsley, *From Recipients to Donors: Emerging Powers and the Changing Development Landscape* (London: Zed Books, 2012), 25

¹³⁶ Annalisa Furia, *The Foreign Aid Regime: Gift-Giving, States and Global Dis/Order* (UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 100

¹³⁷ Tomohisa Hattori, “Reconceptualizing Foreign Aid,” *Review of International Political Economy* 8, no. 4 (Winter 2001): 634

¹³⁸ Carol Lancaster, *Foreign Aid: Diplomacy, Development, Domestic Politics* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007), 4

¹³⁹ Emanuel Adler and Kathryn Sikkink, “What Made John Ruggie’s World Transformation Theory and Practice Hang Together,” *International Organization* 77, no. 4 (Fall 2023): 871; John Gerard Ruggie, “Continuity and Transformation in the World Polity: Toward a Neo-realist Synthesis,” *World Politics* 35, no. 2 (January 1983): 261–285; Bernabé Malacalza, “The Politics of Aid From the Perspective of International Relations Theories,” in *Aid and Politics*, ed. Iliana Olivie and Aitor Pérez (London: Routledge, 2020), 14

intervention in other sovereign states is justified in order to help promote a liberal global order of open trade, international cooperation, peace, stability and (more recently) democracy, including – very controversially – through military incursion where it is deemed necessary.”¹⁴⁰ Furthermore, as put by Furia, both realist and liberal schools of thought acknowledge the “intrinsic connection between the extension of the foreign aid gift and the establishment of friendly relationship” though with different interpretations.¹⁴¹

As the third main school of thought in IR theory, constructivism, placing greater emphasis on “socially constructed ideas, identities and interests” rather than “simplistic material calculations of military, political and economic might,”¹⁴² interprets foreign aid “as the expression of a norm that has evolved in relations between states that rich countries should provide assistance to poor countries to help the latter better the quality of lives of their peoples.”¹⁴³ David Halloran Lumsdaine, after stating that political and economic interests of donor countries alone are not enough to explain “economic foreign aid”, argues that “[s]upport for aid was a response to world poverty which arose mainly from ethical and humane concern and, secondarily, from the belief that long-term peace and prosperity was possible only in a generous and just international order where all could prosper” but adds that “most foreign aid was based on donors' humanitarianism and their perception of the world as an interdependent community.”¹⁴⁴ This results in that “states intentionally and unintentionally project particular identities through their development cooperation discourses and policies.”¹⁴⁵

With regard to dependency, world system theories, post-structural and post-development theories problematizing in/equality in a varied ways, Annalisa Furia states that” [P]ostcolonial and post-structural theorists mainly focus on *cultural, discursive* and *representational* construction of inequality, whereas dependency and world system ones

¹⁴⁰ Emma Mawdsley, *From Recipients to Donors: Emerging Powers and the Changing Development Landscape* (London: Zed Books, 2012), 25

¹⁴¹ Annalisa Furia, *The Foreign Aid Regime: Gift-Giving, States and Global Dis/Order* (UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 100.

¹⁴² Emma Mawdsley, *From Recipients to Donors: Emerging Powers and the Changing Development Landscape* (London: Zed Books, 2012), 26

¹⁴³ Carol Lancaster, *Foreign Aid: Diplomacy, Development, Domestic Politics* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007), 4

¹⁴⁴ David Halloran Lumsdaine, *Moral Vision in International Politics: The Foreign Aid Regime, 1949-1989* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993), 3-4

¹⁴⁵ Emma Mawdsley, *From Recipients to Donors: Emerging Powers and the Changing Development Landscape* (London: Zed Books, 2012), 145

predominantly focus on its *material, historical*, namely *political and economic*, construction.”¹⁴⁶ These theories see foreign aid as a “tool used by the elite/core to exploit the marginalized/periphery.”¹⁴⁷ Malacalza states that neo-Marxism, underdevelopment, and imperialism, also understand aid “as an extension of highly exploitative North-South relationship” and neo-Marxist school, similar to realists, considers aid “as an instrument or vehicle of interest or imperialism.”¹⁴⁸ Neo-Gramscian approach sees aid “as one mechanism for maintaining hegemony in a particular historical structure.”¹⁴⁹

Irrespective of their differing standpoints towards the nature and purpose of foreign aid, all IR theories recognize that aid is pervasively political. However, as stated by Mawdsley, “Being political does not necessarily make aid ineffective; just as being ‘ethical’ does not make aid effective. For that matter, being ‘effective’ does not mean that aid is virtuous.”¹⁵⁰

2.4. Humanitarian Aid

There are various definitions of humanitarian aid reflecting the perspectives and priorities of different entities involved in humanitarian action such as donor governments, intergovernmental organizations, nongovernmental organizations and other stakeholders. While there may be slight variations in the scope of humanitarian actions or governing principles, humanitarian aid can be broadly defined as assistance aiming to “save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity” during and after man-made and natural disasters or emergencies while following the fundamental principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and neutrality.¹⁵¹ Notwithstanding, humanitarianism’s boundary problems still persist. Slim makes the following comment on the issue:

¹⁴⁶ Annalisa Furia, *The Foreign Aid Regime: Gift-Giving, States and Global Dis/Order* (UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 86

¹⁴⁷ Bernabé Malacalza, “The Politics of Aid From the Perspective of International Relations Theories,” in *Aid and Politics*, ed. Iliana Olivie and Aitor Pérez (London: Routledge, 2020), 19

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁹ Bernabé Malacalza, “The Politics of Aid From the Perspective of International Relations Theories,” in *Aid and Politics*, ed. Iliana Olivie and Aitor Pérez (London: Routledge, 2020), 19

¹⁵⁰ Emma Mawdsley, *From Recipients to Donors: Emerging Powers and the Changing Development Landscape* (London: Zed Books, 2012), 27

¹⁵¹ “GHD Principles and Good Practice,” Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD), last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.ghdinitiative.org/ghd/gns/principles-good-practice-of-ghd/principles-good-practice-ghd.html>; “Humanitarian Aid in DAC Context,” Development Initiatives (DI), July 08, 2020, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://devinit.org/blog/humanitarian-aid-in-the-dac-context/>; “European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid,” European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://civil-protection->

Many different institutional actors have adopted the word “humanitarian” to describe particular aspects of what they do. The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and MSF use the word, as do multi-mandate UN agencies and NGOs who work as much for wider human development goals and global transformation. UN agencies like UNOCHA, UNHCR, UNICEF and UNWFP define themselves primarily as humanitarian. UNDP, UNFAO, UNIFEM and UN Habitat can refer to some of their work as humanitarian too. Governments have humanitarian departments. Peacekeeping forces, belligerent military forces and armed groups also refer to their humanitarian activities, as increasingly do commercial companies large and small. All these actors use humanitarian language broadly and with different interests attached. So, if one person’s terrorist is another person’s freedom fighter, then one person’s humanitarian is another person’s development worker, company employee or bomber pilot. When “speaking humanitarian”, people can mean different things when they say the same thing.¹⁵²

Although it is difficult to pinpoint the origins of humanitarianism, Gerard Van Bilzen states that one of the earliest recorded humanitarian aid occurred in 226 BC when the Mediterranean nations sent food aid and equipment to victims of a massive earthquake that devastated Rhodes and adds that since that day, subsequent examples of humanitarian assistance were seen in all over the Roman Empire “to solidify unity (and placate the gods) in times of war, famine or natural disasters.”¹⁵³

There are differing viewpoints among scholars about how to divide the history of humanitarian action into chronological periods depending on the diverging views of turning points in humanitarian history, some of which are as follows: Barnett’s three ages of humanitarianism (1800-1945 Imperial Humanitarianism, 1945-1989 Neo-Humanitarianism, and 1989-present Liberal Humanitarianism),¹⁵⁴ Walker&Maxwell’s viewing the world wars as game changer in the humanitarian industry while calling the Cold War “one of ‘mercy and manipulation’” and the 1990s as “the period of ‘globalization of humanitarianism’”,¹⁵⁵ and Davey, Borton and Foley’s identifying four main periods (from the mid-19th century to the end of the First World War, the period covering the interwar Wilsonian period and the

[humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/who/european-consensus_en](https://www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/topic/file_plus_list/4046-the_fundamental_principles_of_the_international_red_cross_and_red_crescent_movement.pdf); International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), “The Fundamental Principles on the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement,” last accessed May 01, 2024, https://www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/topic/file_plus_list/4046-the_fundamental_principles_of_the_international_red_cross_and_red_crescent_movement.pdf

¹⁵² Hugo Slim, *Humanitarian Ethics: A Guide to the Morality of Aid in War and Disaster* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 8

¹⁵³ Gerard Van Bilzen, *The Development of Aid* (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 50-51

¹⁵⁴ Michael Barnett, *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2013), 30

¹⁵⁵ Peter Walker and Daniel G. Maxwell, *Shaping the Humanitarian World* (London: Routledge, 2009)

Second World War with reference to the emergence and reassertion of “international government”, the Cold War period, and the post-Cold War period).¹⁵⁶

Considering that humanitarianism has evolved through colonialism, two world wars, de-colonization and the Cold War, post-Cold War and the post-9/11 ‘War on Terror’ periods,¹⁵⁷ this research examines the issue by taking these periods into account. During colonialism, colonial states and missionaries of the 19th century view themselves and present their humanitarian actions overseas as “civilizing” the other, which is constructed as “less developed” in their imaginary.¹⁵⁸ Barnett states that “[m]any of the great liberal thinkers of the nineteenth century, including John Stuart Mill, viewed colonialism as a path toward enlightenment and liberalism” and “many abolitionists championed colonialism in order to help the “uncivilized” develop the mental technologies and institutions required for their improvement.”¹⁵⁹ Barnett and Weiss underlines that “King Leopold, for example, justified his genocidal exploitation of the Congo as advancing civilization and as a humanitarian project.”¹⁶⁰ Calhoun highlights that “France’s *mission civilisatrice* was understood as humanitarian, bringing civilization to those suffering from the lack of being French or even European.”¹⁶¹ Calhoun explains the ideological background of this thinking with the following words:

The English word “humanitarian” dates from the early nineteenth century and quickly came into widespread use. More or less closely cognate with humanism, it was used at first to refer to those who emphasized Christ’s humanity but denied his divinity, and was linked to the notion of a religion of humanity. This fairly quickly gave rise, however, to the dominant usage, which was to refer to those who proposed in one way or another to alleviate human suffering in general and/or advance the human race in general. The “in general” clause is crucial. Humanitarianism might be applied within nations but was distinct from nationalism with its project of

¹⁵⁶ Eleanor Davey, John Borton and Matthew Foley, “A History of the Humanitarian System: Western Origins and Foundations,” Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) Working Paper (London: ODI, June 2013), 5, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://cdn-odi-production.s3-website-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/media/documents/8439.pdf>

¹⁵⁷ Silke Roth, *The Paradoxes of Aid Work – Passionate Professionals* (London: Routledge, 2015), 16

¹⁵⁸ Michael Barnett and Thomas G. Weiss, “Humanitarianism: A Brief History of the Present,” in *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics*, ed. Michael Barnett and Thomas G. Weiss (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2008), 20; Michael Barnett, “Humanitarianism as a Scholarly Vocation,” in *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics*, ed. Michael Barnett and Thomas G. Weiss (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2008), 258

¹⁵⁹ Michael Barnett, “Humanitarianism as a Scholarly Vocation,” in *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics*, ed. Michael Barnett and Thomas G. Weiss (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2008), 258, 248

¹⁶⁰ Michael Barnett and Thomas G. Weiss, “Humanitarianism: A Brief History of the Present,” in *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics*, ed. Michael Barnett and Thomas G. Weiss (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2008), 22

improving the conditions of specific peoples. In the general nineteenth-century usage, therefore, humanitarians addressed humanity across racial and national differences. Their projects of advancing the human were closely related to the ideas of civilization, modernization, and, eventually, evolution...Colonialism itself was often understood (with no cynicism) as humanitarian.¹⁶²

Therefore, “[h]umanitarianism is inextricably embedded in colonial governmentality.”¹⁶³ For instance, the interwar US natural disaster relief operations in Guatemala, Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic, drawing on the experience gained during the “civilizing mission”¹⁶⁴ towards the country’s own populations at home (such as the poor, African Americans, Native American Indians, immigrants) and later towards other peoples and cultures in sites of “US involvement, intervention, and occupation” abroad (such as China, Cuba, Haiti and Mexico), went far beyond merely “assisting in the restoration of predisaster conditions” in these disaster-stricken countries and tried to make “permanent, structural changes through their humanitarian aid” in various fields.¹⁶⁵ During this period, Christian missionary movements and colonialism went hand in hand. Roth states that “[m]issionaries have been labelled ‘handmaidens of colonialism’” by adding that “education was primarily a means of evangelism rather than improving living conditions in the colonies” and their “[m]edical service was even more ambivalent than missionary education.”¹⁶⁶ Among many negative long-term consequences of colonialism in the humanitarian history, perhaps the most important one is as follows:

¹⁶² Craig Calhoun, “The Imperative to Reduce Suffering: Charity, Progress and Emergencies in the Field of Humanitarian Actions,” in *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics*, ed. Michael Barnett and Thomas G. Weiss (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2008), 78

¹⁶³ Silke Roth, *The Paradoxes of Aid Work – Passionate Professionals* (London: Routledge, 2015), 17. For detailed information, please see, Alan Lester and Fae Dusart, *Colonization and the Origins of Humanitarian Governance – Protecting Aborigines across the Nineteenth-Century British Empire* (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014)

¹⁶⁴ Michael Adas’s following comment is useful to understand the thinking behind this ‘civilizing mission’: “From the nineteenth century, the highly ethnocentric and increasingly racist assumptions of the superiority of Euro-American ways that informed American policies towards the Indians were increasingly deployed in encounters with overseas people and cultures. In the 1890s and early 1900s, these presuppositions were worked into a distinctive (but by no means unprecedented or unique) American version of the civilizing mission, and some decades later they undergirded the central tenets of modernization theory. Both ideologies were used to justify social engineering projects designed to transform foreign, and again mainly non-Western, societies whose cultures were essentialized as tradition-bound, materially underdeveloped and hopelessly backward.” Michael Adas, “From Settler Colony to Global Hegemon: Integrating the Exceptionalist Narrative of the American Experience into World History,” Paper presented at the 19th International Congress of Historical Societies, University of Oslo, Norway, 06-13 August 2000, 6, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.oslo2000.uio.no/program/papers/mlb/mlb-adas.pdf>. For further information, please see: Michael Adas, “Improving on the Civilizing Mission? Assumptions of United Exceptionalism in the Colonisation of the Philippines,” *Itinerario* 22/4 (1998): 44-46 and Dean Tipps, “Modernization Theory and the Comparative Study of Societies: A Critical Perspective,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 15, no. 2 (1973): 199-226

¹⁶⁵ Julia F. Irwin, “The “Development” of Humanitarian Relief: US Disaster Assistance Operations in the Caribbean Basin, 1917–1931,” in *The Development Century – A Global History*, ed. Stephen J. Macekura and Erez Manela (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 42, 44, 51-52

¹⁶⁶ Silke Roth, *The Paradoxes of Aid Work – Passionate Professionals* (London: Routledge, 2015), 17

Colonial institutions, in particular those regulating race and ethnicity, had long-term consequences for social development resulting in ethno-racial stratification between European settlers and colonial administrators, local elites, privileged racial ethnic groups and indigenous populations. These deeply rooted divisions re-emerge in contemporary social conflicts and play an important role in occurrences of violent confrontations, including the genocide in Rwanda in 1994.¹⁶⁷

The origins of humanitarian action that we know today go back to the 19th century. In 1859, Henry Dunant, witnessing the aftermath of Battle of Solferino where wounded soldiers were left behind on the battlefield, moved to establish a permanent relief system that would provide humanitarian assistance in times of war and initiated the formation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in 1863, and a year later in 1864, the first Geneva Convention titled “the Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded in Armies in the Field,” was signed.¹⁶⁸ This was followed by numerous treaties “specifying rules for the proper conduct of war, including the Hague Convention on the Laws and Customs of War on Land.”¹⁶⁹ Meanwhile, “Dunant’s Red Cross Movement began to develop into a global humanitarian network, and in 1868 the Turkish Red Crescent became “the first of many National Societies to bear the Red Crescent Emblem.”¹⁷⁰

The two world wars together with the humanitarian challenges during the interwar years such as food insecurity, mass displacement, economic depression led to the signature of four Geneva Conventions addressing the protection of war victims in 1949 and the formation of several nongovernmental and intergovernmental organizations addressing the needs of refugees, displaced populations and other victims of war: the League of Nations in 1919, the League of Red Cross in 1919, the Save the Children Fund (SCF) in 1919, the High Commissioner for Russian Refugees by the League of Nations in 1920 in response to massive displacement caused by the Russian Civil War, the International Committee for Russian Relief (ICRR) by a collation of humanitarian organization in 1921 in response to Russian famine during the Russian Civil War, the International Relief Union (IRU) by the League of Nations in 1927 as “the first attempt to develop and intergovernmental structure

¹⁶⁷ Silke Roth, *The Paradoxes of Aid Work – Passionate Professionals* (London: Routledge, 2015), 17

¹⁶⁸ Mark Anderson, Kristin Becknell and Joanna Taliano, “History of Humanitarian Emergencies,” in *Health in Humanitarian Emergencies: Principles and Practice for Public Health and Healthcare Practitioners*, eds. David A. Townes, Mike Gerber and Mark Anderson (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 11

¹⁶⁹ Craig Calhoun, “The Imperative to Reduce Suffering: Charity, Progress and Emergencies in the Field of Humanitarian Actions,” in *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics*, ed. Michael Barnett and Thomas G. Weiss (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2008), 81

¹⁷⁰ “Humanitarian Aid: Past and Present,” University of Oxford, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.elac.ox.ac.uk/programmes-projects/solferino-21/humanitarian-aid-past-and-present/>

explicitly to aid victims of disaster”¹⁷¹, International Rescue Committee in 1933, Plan International during the Spanish Civil War, United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) created to provide repatriation and emergency assistance to the displaced people across Europe under Allied control and post-war economic assistance to European nations in 1943 from the merger of the Intergovernmental Committee for Refugees and the High Commissioner for Refugees, Oxford Committee for Famine Relief (Oxfam) to respond to the Greek famine in 1942, CARE in 1945, several relief and development organizations of churches (such as Lutheran World Relief in 1945, Church World Services by the US National Council of Churches in 1946, and Caritas Internationalis by the Vatican) in 1945-1946, and the United Nations (UN) as a successor to the League of Nations in 1945 and its specialized agencies the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) in 1945, the UN International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) was temporarily formed in 1946 to provide food aid for children in Europe, the International Refugee Organization (IRO) in 1946 replacing the UNRRA that had been disbanded due to the financial problems, and the Organization for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC), the predecessor of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), was created in 1948 to manage the Marshall Plan for the postwar reconstruction of Europe.¹⁷²

During the interwar period, Western relief agencies directed their response efforts to other parts of the world such as the Middle East, partly driven by the necessity of European colonial powers to stabilize their colonial populations, and some of these efforts aligning with the colonial political agendas raised concerns about their independence.¹⁷³

This turbulent period produced two important results. First, humanitarian efforts transformed from the earlier state-run initiatives primarily focusing on the health of the armies to more

¹⁷¹ Mark Anderson, Kristin Becknell and Joanna Taliano, “History of Humanitarian Emergencies,” in *Health in Humanitarian Emergencies: Principles and Practice for Public Health and Healthcare Practitioners*, eds. David A. Townes, Mike Gerber and Mark Anderson (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 12

¹⁷² Silke Roth, *The Paradoxes of Aid Work – Passionate Professionals* (London: Routledge, 2015), 18, 19; Michael Barnett and Thomas G. Weiss, “Humanitarianism: A Brief History of the Present,” in *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics*, ed. Michael Barnett and Thomas G. Weiss (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2008), 22-23; Craig Calhoun, “The Imperative to Reduce Suffering: Charity, Progress and Emergencies in the Field of Humanitarian Actions,” in *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics*, ed. Michael Barnett and Thomas G. Weiss (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2008), 82; Mark Anderson, Kristin Becknell and Joanna Taliano, “History of Humanitarian Emergencies,” in *Health in Humanitarian Emergencies: Principles and Practice for Public Health and Healthcare Practitioners*, eds. David A. Townes, Mike Gerber and Mark Anderson (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 12-14;

¹⁷³ Mark Anderson, Kristin Becknell and Joanna Taliano, “History of Humanitarian Emergencies,” in *Health in Humanitarian Emergencies: Principles and Practice for Public Health and Healthcare Practitioners*, eds. David A. Townes, Mike Gerber and Mark Anderson (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 13

comprehensive endeavors caring for all people affected by conflict.¹⁷⁴ Secondly, after the Second World War, apart from the already established ones during the war years, almost 200 NGOs were established from 1945 to 1949, most of which was established in the US, and the focus of humanitarian action shifted from Europe to other parts of the world.¹⁷⁵ This mushrooming of NGOs led to the emergence of the following “four humanitarian tribes”, categorized by Peter Walker and Daniel Maxwell: 1) “Principle-centred or Dunantist organizations, named after the founding father of the Red Cross, Henry Dunant, claim to be strictly impartial, neutral and independent”, 2) “The pragmatists or Wilsonians, named after the promoter of the League of Nations, US President Woodrow Wilson, receive a substantial funding share from their home governments and tend to act in line with their home countries’ foreign policy objectives”, 3) “Solidarist organizations do not only pursue humanitarian objectives: their action can be partisan depending on their agenda, which may include social justice, women’s empowerment, environmental sustainability, democracy and so forth” and 4) faith-based organizations.¹⁷⁶ Carbonnaire underlines that there is room for maneuver for the humanitarian NGOs as an agency can prefer to “move from one to another category” over time or “simultaneously run a solidarist advocacy branch and a Dunantist operational one,”¹⁷⁷ which has already been happening in practice for a long time.

The Cold War paradigm and the decolonization process significantly shaped the environment in which humanitarian aid actors had to work. The Cold War tensions limited the effectiveness of humanitarian response until the late 1980s¹⁷⁸ Decolonization process led to the emergence of many newly independent states with limited resources, which in turn created a significant need of international aid, including the humanitarian one. States with available funds and diverse political interests became silent partners of the humanitarian aid

¹⁷⁴ “The Evolution of Humanitarianism throughout Historical Conflict,” London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.lshtm.ac.uk/research/centres/centre-history-public-health/news/2017-2>

¹⁷⁵ Eleanor Davey, John Borton and Matthew Foley, “A History of the Humanitarian System: Western Origins and Foundations,” Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) Working Paper (London: ODI, June 2013), 10, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://cdn-odi-production.s3-website-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/media/documents/8439.pdf>.

¹⁷⁶ Gilles Carbonnier, *Humanitarian Economics: War Disaster and the Global Aid Market* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 63; Peter Walker and Daniel Maxwell, *Shaping the Humanitarian World* (London: Routledge, 2009), 121–124. Also see, Abby Stoddard, “Humanitarian NGOS: Challenges and Trends,” Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG), Briefing No. 12, July 2003, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/90825/hpgbrief_12.pdf

¹⁷⁷ Gilles Carbonnier, *Humanitarian Economics: War Disaster and the Global Aid Market* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 63-64

¹⁷⁸ Mark Anderson, Kristin Becknell and Joanna Taliano, “History of Humanitarian Emergencies,” in *Health in Humanitarian Emergencies: Principles and Practice for Public Health and Healthcare Practitioners*, eds. David A. Townes, Mike Gerber and Mark Anderson (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 14

actors. The emergency and reconstruction agencies, which had been established to deal with Europe in the aftermath of the Second World War, became global in subsequent decades.¹⁷⁹ For instance, the UN International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) that had been temporarily formed in 1946 to provide food for children in Europe became permanent under the name of the UN Children’s Fund in 1953.¹⁸⁰

The major events of the Cold War period such as Korean War (1950), Bihar Famine (1951), Vietnam War (1955-1975), Algerian War of Independence (1957), Congo civil war (1960), Nigerian civil war, also known as the Biafran war, and the following famine (1967-1970), Bangladesh’s independence struggle (1971), the African famines (from early 1970 to late 1980s), Vietnam’s invasion of Cambodia (1978-1979), Cambodian genocide by Khmer Rouge regime (1975-1979), Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (1979-1989) and numerous natural disasters in various countries around the world, all of which produced human tragedies related to massive internal and external population displacements and food insecurity, shaped the characteristics of the humanitarian response in this period. Accordingly, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was established in 1950, initially only for three years, but a year later in 1951 its mandate was extended to replace the International Refugee Organization (IRO) that had operated in 1947-1951 and to succeed the UNRRA’s operations in 1943-1947,¹⁸¹ the UN Refugee Convention was adopted in 1951 and later it was amended with the 1967 Protocol which provided the signatory states with the option of removing the time and geographic limits for refugee criteria, the US introduced “Public Law (PL) 480 Food for Peace” in 1954 to allow the use of US food for relief and development purposes, the World Food Programme (WFP) was created under FAO in 1961 to carry out food-for-work projects until the 1970s to promote social and economic development and then provided food aid in emergency situations from the late-1980s to the early 1990s, the Office of the UN Disaster Relief Coordinator was formed in 1971 and the UN Convention on the Rights of Child was adopted in 1989.¹⁸² To guide and safeguard its

¹⁷⁹ Michael Barnett, *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2013), 168

¹⁸⁰ Mark Anderson, Kristin Becknell and Joanna Taliano, “History of Humanitarian Emergencies,” in *Health in Humanitarian Emergencies: Principles and Practice for Public Health and Healthcare Practitioners*, eds. David A. Townes, Mike Gerber and Mark Anderson (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 14

¹⁸¹ “1954-Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR),” Nobel Peace Summit, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.nobelpeacesummit.com/1954-office-of-the-united-nations-high-commissioner-for-refugees-unhcr/>

¹⁸² Mark Anderson, Kristin Becknell and Joanna Taliano, “History of Humanitarian Emergencies,” in *Health in Humanitarian Emergencies: Principles and Practice for Public Health and Healthcare Practitioners*, ed. David A. Townes, Mike Gerber and Mark Anderson (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 14, 15; Eleanor Davey,

humanitarian action, the ICRC proclaimed the seven “Fundamental Principles” (humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality) in 1965, which were later adopted by the IFRC.¹⁸³ This period also produced institutional distinctions between- natural and man-made humanitarian emergencies, which the former was assigned to state aid departments and the latter to the foreign affairs ministries, but due to the linkage of natural disasters to political faultlines in weak states, clearing relief decisions with foreign affairs ministries became prevailing tendency.¹⁸⁴ Furthermore, humanitarian aid, which is mostly regarded as “above politics” by Western governments, was instrumentalized for “geopolitical alliance-building” during the Cold War years, as evidenced by Henry Kissinger’s description of US disaster relief as valuable tool in “cementing ties with friendly governments.”¹⁸⁵

With regard to the humanitarian NGOs, Mark Duffield describes the environment in which NGOs had to flourish and operate by stating that “NGOs expanded as a non-state or petty sovereign power within the liminal space between the West, the Soviet bloc and independent Third World states emerging from colonization” and underlines that “[a]ll the international NGOs that had emerged in response to the humanitarian consequences of total war expanded in the world of poverty revealed by decolonization.”¹⁸⁶ From 1960 to 1970, nearly 300 major new NGOs were established.¹⁸⁷ Based on the UNDP estimations of the early 1980s, “international NGOs were reaching about 100 million people.”¹⁸⁸ However, the Cold War dynamics increasingly politicized and instrumentalized NGOs while leading them to expand beyond their traditional role that was given them in previous decades. NGOs filled the

John Borton and Matthew Foley, “A History of the Humanitarian System: Western Origins and Foundations,” Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) Working Paper (London: ODI, June 2013), 10, 32, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://cdn-odi-production.s3-website-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/media/documents/8439.pdf>.

¹⁸³ Jean Pictet, “The Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross – Commentary,” *International Review of the Red Cross* 19, no. 210 (June 1979): 130, 135-136; International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), “The Fundamental Principles on the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement,” last accessed May 01, 2024, https://www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/topic/file_plus_list/4046-the_fundamental_principles_of_the_international_red_cross_and_red_crescent_movement.pdf

¹⁸⁴ Mark Duffield, *Development, Security and Unending War: Governing the World of Peoples* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2007), 71

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 52, 47

¹⁸⁷ Eleanor Davey, John Borton and Matthew Foley, “A History of the Humanitarian System: Western Origins and Foundations,” Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) Working Paper (London: ODI, June 2013), 11, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://cdn-odi-production.s3-website-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/media/documents/8439.pdf>.

¹⁸⁸ Mark Duffield, *Development, Security and Unending War: Governing the World of Peoples* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2007), 47

humanitarian vacuum created first in Nigeria in early 1970s by Western states, the UN and the ICRC, first two of which addressed the issue as internal affair of Nigeria and the third one halted its humanitarian operation after Nigerian government opposing humanitarian airlift to Biafra was shot down its plane,¹⁸⁹ and later in Cambodia in late 1970s, by many western states regarding “Vietnam’s invasion of Cambodia and toppling of the genocidal Pol Pot regime as an act of external aggression” and relatedly applying wide range of sanctions including humanitarian aid.¹⁹⁰ Western states, which had restricted engagement with humanitarian emergencies due to the principles of non-intervention and non-interference in internal affairs of another states that was contained in the UN charter, recognizing “the informal role NGOs could play in difficult political environments” used them later in the 1980s in Afghanistan where “some two hundred international NGOs were involved in a discrete cross-border relief operation from Pakistan into war-torn Afghanistan...[with] the tacit support of Western governments...[many of which] worked with the different Mujahedeen groups fighting to expel the Soviet Union” and also in Ethiopia where “major donors moved away from the government as their principal agent... and began to direct humanitarian aid through NGOs and NGO consortia...[and] for the first time the same donors also started to channel assistance through the discrete ERD [Emergency Relief Desk] conduit into rebel-controlled areas.¹⁹¹ Duffield draws attention to the significance of Ethiopia, which he underlines as “the first international humanitarian intervention of the modern, post-Cold War era”, by stating that “Ethiopian sovereignty had been effectively downgraded on two interconnected accounts: first, foreign non-state aid organizations were used in place of government ministries, and, second, through the legitimizing effect of aid transfer, domestic non-state opposition movements gained implicit recognition” and adds that “[t]he political space of contingent sovereignty that had opened in Ethiopia would spread and deepen with the ending of the Cold War.”¹⁹²

Thereby, this period introduced a new era of humanitarian action promoting a more interventionist approach to humanitarian response through NGOs. However, this

¹⁸⁹ Mark Anderson, Kristin Becknell and Joanna Taliano, “History of Humanitarian Emergencies,” in *Health in Humanitarian Emergencies: Principles and Practice for Public Health and Healthcare Practitioners*, eds. David A. Townes, Mike Gerber and Mark Anderson (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 16; Eleanor Davey, John Borton and Matthew Foley, “A History of the Humanitarian System: Western Origins and Foundations,” Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) Working Paper (London: ODI, June 2013), 11, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://cdn-odi-production.s3-website-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/media/documents/8439.pdf>.

¹⁹⁰ Mark Duffield, *Development, Security and Unending War: Governing the World of Peoples* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2007), 72

¹⁹¹ Mark Duffield, *Development, Security and Unending War: Governing the World of Peoples* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2007), 72-74

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 75

interventionist approach was criticized by those arguing that humanitarian aid helps prolong civil wars and delay real solution to the crisis. As expressed by Sadako Ogata, the former head of UNHCR, “[t]here are no humanitarian solutions to humanitarian problems.”¹⁹³ Ignatieff’s similar assessment is as follows:

...[C]overage of humanitarian assistance allows the West the illusion that it is doing something; in this way, coverage becomes an alternative to more serious political engagement. The Afghan civil war cannot be stopped by humanitarian assistance; in many ways, humanitarian assistance prolongs the war by sustaining the populations who submit to its horrors. Only active political intervention by the Great Powers forcing the regional powers bordering Afghanistan to shut off their assistance to the factions is likely to end the war.¹⁹⁴

The post-Cold War period, which is characterized by an upsurge of complex humanitarian emergencies caused by intra-state conflicts, civil wars and violent separatist movements in many regions of the world, led to the rapid expansion of humanitarian aid industry with the deepening involvement of the UN system and regional organizations in all aspects of humanitarianism,¹⁹⁵ the shift of funds from development to humanitarian activities,¹⁹⁶ and the rise of humanitarian NGOs. Following the 1991 UN General Assembly Resolution 46/182 that laid the foundations of current humanitarian system by outlining the guiding principles and the coordination framework for humanitarian assistance within the UN system, the League of Red Cross Societies that had been established during the interwar years became the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) in 1991¹⁹⁷ and the IFRC promptly initiated the efforts to draft a code of conduct for humanitarian workers, resulting in the 1994 “Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-governmental Organizations in Disaster Relief”,¹⁹⁸ the United

¹⁹³ David Rieff, *A Bed for the Night: Humanitarianism in Crisis* (New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2003), 158, Simon & Schuster eBook.

¹⁹⁴ Michael Ignatieff, “The Stories We Tell: Television and Humanitarian Aid,” in *Hard Choices: Moral Dilemmas in Humanitarian Intervention*, ed. Jonathan Moore (Maryland, US: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1998), 298

¹⁹⁵ Michael Barnett, *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2013), 169

¹⁹⁶ Silke Roth, *The Paradoxes of Aid Work – Passionate Professionals* (London: Routledge, 2015), 30

¹⁹⁷ Mark Anderson, Kristin Becknell and Joanna Taliano, “History of Humanitarian Emergencies,” in *Health in Humanitarian Emergencies: Principles and Practice for Public Health and Healthcare Practitioners*, eds. David A. Townes, Mike Gerber and Mark Anderson (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 12

¹⁹⁸ Silke Roth, *The Paradoxes of Aid Work – Passionate Professionals* (London: Routledge, 2015), 35; Marina Sharpe, “It’s All Relative: The Humanitarian Principles in Historical and Legal Perspective,” ICRC Humanitarian Law & Policy, March 16, 2023, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://blogs.icrc.org/law-and-policy/2023/03/16/humanitarian-principles-historical-legal/>

Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs (UNDHA or DHA) was created in 1992,¹⁹⁹ the European Community Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) was founded in 1992, the SPHERE project aiming to develop technical standards for humanitarian organizations was initiated by IFRC and a group of humanitarian NGOs in 1997,²⁰⁰ DHA became the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in 1998 as part of the Secretary-General's reform programme,²⁰¹ and “[i]nternational organizations that once limited themselves to development, including the UNDP and the World Bank, now joined the cause.”²⁰² Additionally, this landmark resolution informed the recognition of the principles of “humanity, neutrality and impartiality” as the UN's humanitarian principles, with “independence” to be added later with the 2003 UN General Assembly Resolution 58/114.²⁰³ Apart from that, unlike the period 1948-1988 when the UN authorized only 5 peacekeeping missions, the period 1989-1994 witnessed 20 peacekeeping missions.²⁰⁴ More importantly, these post-Cold war peacekeeping operations are conducted in situations of ongoing conflict or political instability, unlike the previous UN-led peacekeeping operations that mostly took place after a ceasefire or a peace agreement among warring parties.²⁰⁵

Drawing on “the NGO-encouraged shift in Western humanitarian policy in Ethiopia” in the mid-1980s, the UN also developed ‘negotiated access’, a new tool to respond to complex humanitarian emergencies of the post-Cold War world, which involved “a UN specialist agency playing a lead role in securing an agreement between warring parties, including recognized governments and rebel movements alike, to allow UN agencies and accredited NGOs to deliver humanitarian aid under agreed conditions to civilians living or located in war zones” and this lead agency’s “codifying protocols governing the neutrality and

¹⁹⁹ Logan Cochrane and Alexandra Wilson, “Nuancing the Double and Triple Nexus: Analyzing the Potential for Unintended, Negative Consequences,” *Development Studies Research* 10, no. 1 (2023): 3

²⁰⁰ Silke Roth, *The Paradoxes of Aid Work – Passionate Professionals* (London: Routledge, 2015), 35

²⁰¹ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA/OCHA), “This is OCHA: A Brief History of OCHA,” last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.unocha.org/ocha>

²⁰² Michael Barnett, *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2013), 169

²⁰³ Marina Sharpe, “It’s All Relative: The Humanitarian Principles in Historical and Legal Perspective,” ICRC Humanitarian Law & Policy, March 16, 2023, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://blogs.icrc.org/law-and-policy/2023/03/16/humanitarian-principles-historical-legal/>

²⁰⁴ Eleanor Davey, John Borton and Matthew Foley, “A History of the Humanitarian System: Western Origins and Foundations,” Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) Working Paper (London: ODI, June 2013), 13, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://cdn-odi-production.s3-website-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/media/documents/8439.pdf>.

²⁰⁵ Mark Duffield, *Development, Security and Unending War: Governing the World of Peoples* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2007), 76

impartiality of participating aid agencies.”²⁰⁶ The UN-negotiated humanitarian access operations for civilians in war zones between the late 1980s and the early 1990s (UNICEF-led Operation Life Sudan in 1989, UNDP-led Special Relief Programme for Angola in 1990, WFP-led Operations in Ethiopia in 1990, UNHCR-led Operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1992), also benefited from military protection, indicating the early stages of what would develop into “an expanding and changing civil-military interface.”²⁰⁷

Concerning the issue of funding, the UN-negotiated humanitarian access operations that increased the capacity of aid actors to operate in situations of ongoing conflicts resulted in a significant increase in official humanitarian assistance.²⁰⁸ In the period 1990-2000, “humanitarian aid almost tripled, from US\$2.1 to \$5.9 billion”, although both total aid volume and aid relative to GNI declined.²⁰⁹ Due to the steep increase in the funds allocated to humanitarian assistance, “some organizations which had initially been active in development assistance shifted their activities to relief activities,” such as the WFP that had allocated almost three-quarters of its budget for development activities in 1988 turned into the WFP allocating more than three-quarters of its budget to humanitarian activities in 1998.²¹⁰

With regard to the rise of humanitarian NGOs, the increasing number and scale of humanitarian emergencies and the UN-negotiated humanitarian access operations that provided NGOs with the funds, the logistics resources, and the diplomatic protection not only swelled the number of humanitarian NGOs but also made them migrate from one emergency to another, for instance there were 200 humanitarian organizations in Rwanda in 1994 and almost 250 were in Kosovo in 1999,²¹¹ most of which were nongovernmental. Furthermore, the peacekeeping operations and humanitarian interventions in the 1990s bringing military and civilian aid actors into contact with each other,²¹² “the growing willingness of states to support various forms of humanitarian action”,²¹³ and the reinvention

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 75-77

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 76, 77

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 77

²⁰⁹ Silke Roth, *The Paradoxes of Aid Work – Passionate Professionals* (London: Routledge, 2015), 30, 31

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 30

²¹¹ Michael Barnett, *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2013), 3

²¹² Silke Roth, *The Paradoxes of Aid Work – Passionate Professionals* (London: Routledge, 2015), 31

²¹³ Michael Barnett, *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2013), 169

of some humanitarian NGOs themselves “as strategic actors able to manage and resolve conflict” in response to those questioning “the role of international assistance in prolonging civil wars” and based on the assumption “if humanitarian assistance can prolong civil war then, if properly managed, it could also do the opposite: it could be used to selectively alter the balance of power between social groups in the interests of peace”²¹⁴ stimulated debates on the fundamental humanitarian principles, particularly about neutrality. Mark Duffield states that during the Yugoslav wars of the mid-1990s, “many NGOs reinvented themselves as conflict resolution agencies and donor governments redefined their aid programs accordingly” and “by the end of the 1990s—beginning clearly with the intervention in Kosovo—donor governments had begun to consciously define international assistance, including humanitarian aid, as legitimate tool of foreign policy,” as reflected in the debates on the ‘new humanitarianism’ and also “donor calls for greater ‘coherence’ between aid, trade and politics in securing desired international outcomes.”²¹⁵ ‘New humanitarianism’ as a new approach marks a break from the past by calling the fundamental principles of humanitarian assistance as “the political naivety of the past” and recognizing the political baggage of humanitarian aid from one end to another but by doing this it leads to further overt politicization of aid.²¹⁶ In a speech she delivered in 1999, Clare Short, then the head of UK’s Department for International Development, advocated ‘new humanitarianism’ by stating that “all aid is political, and that some of the ideals of classic humanitarianism were a little old-fashioned (none more so than the cherished classic ideal of neutrality).”²¹⁷ Similarly, Barnett makes the following comment on the politicization of humanitarian sector during the 1990s:

the 1990s were hardly unprecedented—indeed, they contained some well-established patterns. Humanitarianism was not a wholly private affair before the 1990s; over the previous decades states and their international organizations were becoming increasingly prominent funders, coordinators, and deliverers of assistance. The principles of impartiality, neutrality, and independence were not part of humanitarianism’s original DNA; rather, they had fallen into place over decades of action and debate and had not become part of the ICRC’s codes of conduct until the 1960s.... Aid agencies had not taken a no-politics pledge before the 1990s, for they had always been political creatures in one-way or another. In sum, the dilemmas of

²¹⁴ Theory Talks, “Theory Talk #41: Mark Duffield On Human (In)Security, Liberal Interventionism and Aid Compounds,” July 21, 2011, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://www.theory-talks.org/2011/07/theory-talk-41.html>

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*

²¹⁶ Fiona Fox, “New Humanitarianism: Does it Provide a Moral Banner for the 21st Century?” *Disasters* 25, no. 4 (December 2001): 275

²¹⁷ Peter Walker and Daniel Maxwell, *Shaping the Humanitarian World* (London: Routledge, 2009), 73

humanitarianism were no product of the 1990s—they had been present from the beginning.²¹⁸

Mike Lewis from Oxfam also states that “using humanitarian aid for political compliance, or even conditioning aid on such compliance, is neither new nor confined to the military”, and substantiates his claim by mentioning that back in 1992, “then UN Special Representative of the Secretary General in Somalia publicly asserted that he had told the World Food Programme not to offload ten thousand metric tons of food to feed almost 250,000 displaced people ‘[i]n order to teach their leaders [the warlords] a lesson’.”²¹⁹

The 9/11 attacks and the subsequent US-led ‘war on terror’, which heralded a new epoch in global politics, has led to fundamental changes in the international aid system, which in turn greatly impacted the operation of humanitarian aid. Fragile, failing and/or conflict-affected states have increasingly garnered attention from the international donor community as they are seen as “vectors of transmission for terrorism, organised crime and other threats.”²²⁰ A much more strategic role assigned during this period to foreign aid, including humanitarian assistance, in achieving political and security objectives not only precipitated “a full-fledged securitization of aid flows”²²¹ but also made humanitarian assistance a “crime-fighting partner” of counterterrorism²²² while endangering its fundamental principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence. Afghan and Iraqi war theaters witnessed “an increasing direct involvement of military actors in the provision of aid, to the point that humanitarian assistance has become a central tenet in the “hearts and minds” component of current Western counter-insurgency warfare doctrine”, providing humanitarian actors “both an opportunity and a risk for humanitarians—it has led to vastly bigger budgets for humanitarian work, but the money comes at a high risk to the independence and credibility of the agency that accepts it.”²²³ Elizabeth Ferris, in her article evaluating humanitarian

²¹⁸ Michael Barnett, *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2013), 5-6

²¹⁹ Mike Lewis, “Whose Aid is it Anyway?: Politicizing Aid in Conflicts and Crises,” Oxfam Briefing Paper 145, February 2011

²²⁰ OECD, *Concepts and Dilemmas of State Building in Fragile Situations: From Fragility to Resilience* (Paris: OECD, 2008), 11, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.oecd.org/dac/conflict-fragility-resilience/docs/41100930.pdf>

²²¹ Eugenia Baroncelli, “Implementing the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus in a Post-pandemic World: Multilateral Cooperation and the Challenge of Inter-Organisational Dialogue,” *Global Policy*, 14/Suppl. 2 (2023): 24

²²² Michael Barnett and Thomas G. Weiss, “Humanitarianism: A Brief History of the Present,” in *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics*, ed. Michael Barnett and Thomas G. Weiss (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2008), 25

²²³ Peter Walker and Daniel Maxwell, *Shaping the Humanitarian World* (London: Routledge, 2009), 75

assistance in the first decade after 9/11, underlines that the more assertive role of the US military as a provider of humanitarian relief and the US government's increasing instrumentalization of US humanitarian NGOs for its foreign policy objectives contributed negatively to humanitarian system, in which the US has become a major stakeholder.²²⁴ Ferris states that although the US's military involvement in humanitarian assistance is not a new theme, its 'scale' and intentions using humanitarian aid as "a standard "tool" in counterinsurgency operations" are quite new but neither neutral and nor independent of its foreign and security policy objectives.²²⁵ With regard to the US humanitarian NGOs becoming a tool of US foreign and security policy, Ferris draws attention to the "[r]eferences by then-US Secretary of State Colin Powell that NGOs were 'force multipliers' and by the USAID Administrator Andrew Natsios that NGOs were expected to "act as arms of the U.S. government," and adds that it is almost impossible for US humanitarian NGOs being funded by the US to claim any independence from the US government policies.²²⁶ Many Western countries followed the lead of the US in securitizing and instrumentalizing their aid basket, also including humanitarian aid, to fragile, failing or conflict-affected states. For instance, Canada established Stabilisation and Reconstruction Task Force (START) in 2005 to coordinate its aid responses to complex humanitarian crises through connecting its development agency CIDA's humanitarian and development assistance with its Department of National Defence (DND)'s military assistance.²²⁷ This new militarized and politicized humanitarian approach led to questioning of the motives of humanitarian donor community. Vaux underlines that humanitarian aid is not suddenly get 'politicized', indeed it has always been "more closely related to donors' interest than to the needs of the affected communities" and thus "affected by major political trends, and from time to time politics converges more closely with humanitarianism or even takes it over."²²⁸ Similarly, using humanitarian aid in winning hearts-and-minds campaigns, as part of counter-insurgency strategy, seen in countries like Afghanistan and Iraq, is not a new theme, indeed it has several historical precedents, such as "the French provided services in rural areas thought to be sympathetic to the nationalistic cause" during the Algerian independence war, "British troops provided

²²⁴ Elizabeth Ferris, "9/11 and Humanitarian Assistance: A Disturbing Legacy," Brookings Institution, September 01, 2011, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/911-and-humanitarian-assistance-a-disturbing-legacy/>

²²⁵ *Ibid.*

²²⁶ *Ibid.*

²²⁷ Christina Bennett, "The Development Agency of the Future: Fit for Protracted Crises," ODI Working Paper (London: Overseas Development Institute-ODI, April 2015), 14-15, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://cdn-odi-production.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/9612.pdf>

²²⁸ Tony Vaux, "Humanitarian Trends and Dilemmas," *Development in Practice* 16, no. 3&4 (June 2006): 240

medical care and built infrastructure as part of the counter-insurgency campaign against the Malayan communist party” in the 1950s, and US NGOs such as CARE and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) took part in the US government’s political and military efforts during the Vietnam war, CRS even developed close ties with the US-backed regime in South Vietnam, and channeled food aid to US-supported militia group.”²²⁹ The 2016 dated project report written by well-known experts of the humanitarian field state that “[h]istory therefore explodes the oft-cited myth that there was a ‘golden age’ when humanitarianism could operate in a principled manner and enjoy greater security and freedoms as a result” by adding that aid has always been “a way to support client regimes and strategic interests” for Western governments and “funds, legitimacy and power” for all those at the other end of the aid flow.²³⁰ Likewise, in a panel titled “Rethinking Humanitarian Aid”, William Steiger, former chief of USAID, states that there is no such thing as impartial or completely impartial foreign aid and thus “politics has to be considered” in every situation for both ends of the aid flow, namely both the donor and recipient countries, by adding that humanitarian aid system resembles an “oligopoly” as it is a “closed market” consisting of “a relatively small number of mostly UN agencies and international NGOs” to which donors give huge funds without looking at their effectiveness or efficiency.²³¹ Asher Orkaby, in the same panel, draws attention to the negative impacts of humanitarian aid with two examples from Yemen by stating that food aid has pushed Yemeni farmers into “ruinous cycle of poverty” as they can’t compete with free or subsidized food and humanitarian aid has become one of largest economic sectors of Yemen when it received more than \$15 billion humanitarian aid in the period 2015-2019, serving “as a disincentive for [a] peaceful resolution to the conflict, at least by those who are profiting the most from the sector” such as “local political actors and militants, many of whom have come on to serve as the default partners for large-scale humanitarian aid delivery.”²³² Against this background, the post-9/11 developments in the field of humanitarian aid are nothing more but the declaration of the obvious. Although the UN took several steps in response to the politicization and securitization of humanitarian aid such as the 2003 Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship and the 2011 Transformative Agenda for Humanitarian Action, this seems an irreversible process.

²²⁹ Randolph Kent, Christina Bennett, Antonio Donini and Daniel Maxwell, “Planning From the Future: Is the Humanitarian System Fit for Purpose?” Planning From the Future Project, November 2016, 16, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://fic.tufts.edu/wp-content/uploads/pff_report_uk.pdf

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 17

²³¹ Wilson Center, “Rethinking Humanitarian Aid,” Online Panel, October 06, 2021, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/event/rethinking-humanitarian-aid>

²³² *Ibid.*

2.5. Development Aid

The origins of contemporary development aid architecture can be traced back to the colonial era and its pre-1949 afterwards such as non-administrative aid provided to British colonies through the 1929 Colonial Act, the US Department of Agriculture's funding and running agricultural research centres Latin America in in 1930s, the British Colonial Development and Welfare Acts of 1940 and 1945, French aid to its colonies in the 1940s, and various development activities of "voluntary associations—often churches and church-based agencies" namely missionaries, such as building and managing schools and hospitals, mostly with their often funds, the International Labor Organization ILO's demand for "aid funds to be provided in order to raise living standards in poor countries" in the 1940s, and the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration UNRRA's receiving "funds from more than 40 countries in order to help it provide food, medicines and agricultural and industrial goods to recipients in almost 50 countries" in the mid-1940s right after its establishment in 1943.²³³ During the pre-1949 period, Latin American and Asian countries also called "for the establishment of substantial programmes of development assistance," such as the call of the Indian chair of the UN's Sub-Commission on Economic Development in late 1940s "for the UN to provide concessional loans to poor countries unable to obtain loans from commercial sources."²³⁴ Furthermore, the founding documents of the UN contributed to the "development of the notion of a formalized international aid efforts", such as the 1945 UN Charter, "committed all countries to work for the promotion of higher living standards, full employment and economic and social progress and development (Article 57), and to do this by working together cooperatively" and the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights stating that "everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care" (Article 25), and that "everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized" (Article 28)."²³⁵

Against this background, US President Truman's announcement of his Point IV Programme in 1949, which he described as "a bold new program for making the benefits of our [the U.S.] scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth

²³³ Roger C. Riddell, *Does Foreign Aid Really Works?* (United States: Oxford University Press, 2007), 24, 25, 26. For a very detailed historical analysis of the origins of the 'development' visiting Ancient Greece, Christian reinterpretation and the Enlightenment transformation, please see Gilbert Rist, *The History of Development: From Western Origins to Global Faith*, trans. Patrick Camiller, 5th ed. (London: Zed Books 2019), 25-47.

²³⁴ Roger C. Riddell, *Does Foreign Aid Really Works?* (United States: Oxford University Press, 2007), 25

²³⁵ Roger C. Riddell, *Does Foreign Aid Really Works?* (United States: Oxford University Press, 2007), 24-25

of underdeveloped areas” through providing economic aid and technical assistance to the countries in need either directly or in cooperation with the international organizations like the UN and/or the private sector, can be considered as the first step of the institutionalization of development aid that we know today.²³⁶ The Point Four programme, inspired by the success of the Marshall Plan in Western Europe that showed “how an infusion of resources could turn around devastated economies,”²³⁷ was not only “the first bilateral aid programme” but also “the first programme to assist countries outside the framework of colonial links.”²³⁸ The motive behind the Point Four Programme was not only political due to the start of the Cold War rivalry and the decolonization process but also economic as it provided the US with the opportunity of having access to markets in colonies.²³⁹ Wolfgang Sachs states that Truman started ‘the development age’ by calling “the home of more than half of the world’s populations as ‘underdeveloped areas.’”²⁴⁰

Apart from that, the other important developments are the 1949 UN Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance (UN EPTA), which had initially been created as a small fund to assume “advisory social services” but expanded in response to Lebanese request in 1946 to found “UN Advisory Board to provide technical assistance,” aiming to promote economic development of underdeveloped countries and the 1950 Commonwealth of Colombo Plan, “Plan for Co-operative Economic Development in South and South-East Asia” which was developed upon the proposal of the Indian Ambassador to China to the British and Australian Ambassadors for a multilateral fund to support Southeast Asian countries against communism through technical assistance programmes”²⁴¹

The 1940s general consensus on that “economic development required a balanced pattern of growth” and therefore “countries would have to devote attention to the agriculture sectors,

²³⁶ “Harry Truman: The Point Four Program,” USInfo, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://usinfo.org/PUBS/LivingDoc_e/pointfour.htm; “Background Essay on Point Four Program,” Harry S. Truman Library and Museum website, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/InternationalAid_Background.pdf

²³⁷ Thomas Carothers and Diane de Garmont, *Development Aid Confronts Politics – The Almost Revolution* (Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment, 2013), 22

²³⁸ Gerard Van Bilzen, *The Development of Aid* (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 122

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, 136

²⁴⁰ Wolfgang Sachs, “Preface, 2019,” in *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power*, ed. Wolfgang Sachs (London: Zed Books 2019), x.

²⁴¹ Gerard Van Bilzen, *The Development of Aid* (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 136

focusing on expanding agricultural productivity and establishing small-scale industries” in addition to their infrastructure and industrialization investments changed with the 1950s when “the World Bank and the Marshall Plan pointed quickly in the direction of exclusively large-scale infrastructure projects.”²⁴²

During the first decade of the development cooperation (1950-1960), while the gap was deepening between communist and capitalist countries in a bipolar world over the 1949 Chinese Revolution, the Korean War (1950-1953), the formation of COMECON in response to the creation of OEEC under the Marshall Plan (1949), the creation of Warsaw Pact in response to the formation of NATO (1955), the establishment of the ECSC in 1951, the 1956 Hungarian and Polish Crises, the Taiwan Strait Crises in the 1950s, the creation of SEATO in 1954, and the decolonization process was proceeding at full throttle, especially in British and French colonies, the US copying the implementation of principles and procedures from the Marshall Plan provided almost half of all aid (Paul Hoffman, the first manager of the Marshall Plans’ OEEC states, “We have learned in Europe what to do in Asia”), France and Britain provided substantial support to their former colonies, and the post-Stalin Soviet bloc entered the development game by signing trade agreements with more than 200 countries, more than half of which were with developing countries.²⁴³ Although Eisenhower wanted to cut foreign aid in the mid-1950s, Khrushchev’s peaceful coexistence policy together with his “massive programme of trade, aid and technical assistance aimed at the world’s less developed nations” enforced him to change his mind, especially after the Aswan Dam incident.²⁴⁴ US Secretary State John Foster Dulles stated around this time that foreign aid became “an essential part of our overall foreign policy.”²⁴⁵ Another important development of this decade was the US’s introduction of the food aid PL 480 (Public Law 480) upon the demand of its senators coming from agricultural states that had enormous food surplus but famines that developed in various developing countries such as India, after received massive food aid from the US, proved its negative impacts.²⁴⁶ Furthermore donor countries and organization focused on infrastructure building rather than agriculture during this period as “the lack of such infrastructure would make the necessary transport.. for larger agricultural projects rather difficult...[and] a lot of infrastructural investments had a (semi-)military

²⁴² *Ibid.*, 124-125, 127-128

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, 138-145

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 149-150

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 150

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 150, 224

character” but this neglect of agricultural sector also caused the development of famines in some countries such as Ethiopia.²⁴⁷

In the second decade of the development cooperation (1960-1970), development aid began to get institutionalized with the formation of institutions and international organizations like USAID, the British Ministry of Overseas Development and the World Bank’s International Development Association.²⁴⁸ The UN declared the 1960s as the first Development Decade and officially outlined “a strategy for flows of capital to developing countries (both concessional and non-concessional) to reach a target of 1 per cent of the national income of all the industrialized countries,” which started the “[a]id targetry, so much a feature of the subsequent history of aid- giving and the DAC group of donors accepted this target in 1964 but his target included not only development aid but also foreign direct investment.”²⁴⁹ In late 1960s, developing countries demanded the separation of official aid from other flows and then identification of a specific target for official development aid.²⁵⁰

The identification of hunger as the basic problem brought the development aid policies aiming to modernize economy not only focusing on industrialization but also on agriculture (first part of the 1960s on rural development, the latter half on the Green Revolution Approach).²⁵¹ The FAO launched its first “freedom from hunger” campaign in 1960.²⁵² Furthermore, during this period, both official aid levels and growth rate of poor country economies increased, including Sub-Saharan Africa.²⁵³ The 1969 Pearson Report examining the first 20 years of official development aid stated that official aid should reach the target of 0.7 per cent of GNI by 1975 and made the following comments: “though aid can help, it cannot contribute to development—unless developing country governments take measures themselves to address the impediments to development”, “donor involvement in aid-recipient economies needed to be both carefully limited and institutionalized, or else it would create opportunities for friction, waste of energy, and mutual irritation,” with regard to the failure of

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 214, 223-224

²⁴⁸ Thomas Carothers and Diane de Garmont, *Development Aid Confronts Politics – The Almost Revolution* (Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment, 2013), 23

²⁴⁹ Roger C. Riddell, *Does Foreign Aid Really Works?* (United States: Oxford University Press, 2007), 28, 29

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 29

²⁵¹ Gerard Van Bilzen, *The Development of Aid* (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 324

²⁵² Roger C. Riddell, *Does Foreign Aid Really Works?* (United States: Oxford University Press, 2007), 27

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 29

technical assistance TA was not adapted to the needs of the recipient country and not sufficiently focused on helping to build sustainable institutions,” criticized “the politicization of some bilateral aid, leading to the recommendation that there should be a clear separation of development aid from short-term political aid” and warned about “the proliferation of aid agencies, which, they argued, reduced the overall effectiveness of the aid given.”²⁵⁴

In the 1970s, 20 years long exceptional economic growth period ended with the growth rates slowing in developed countries and halving in Sub-Saharan Africa, the African famines, the Bangladesh liberation war that was followed by massive famines, the 1973 Oil Crisis that resulted in considerable balance of payment deficits, the 1979 Islamic Revolution that resulted in another oil crisis, leading several Third World nations to criticize “the existing system of aid distribution” thus the Bretton Woods systems.²⁵⁵ This process produced the “New International Economic Order (NIEO) that was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1974.²⁵⁶ NIEO was proposed by developing countries with the motto of “Trade, Not Aid,” referring to their stance against imposition of “Western modernization models and inequitable trade terms”, but could not achieve what it aimed due to the polarization between developed and developing countries over many issues and Reagan unilaterally declared its death in 1981.²⁵⁷

Meanwhile, Western donor community having “doubts about the ability of development aid to produce economic growth in recipient countries..., even where aid appeared to be contributing to growth, the gains were not trickling down and improving the lives of poor people as much as aid providers had hoped,” launched “basic needs” approach with the aim of poverty reduction.²⁵⁸ Vanessa Pupavac states, “A political vision limiting developing countries to basic needs represented a curb” on the developing countries “flexing their new political authority and seeking to renegotiate their international economic position, such as in

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 30

²⁵⁵ Gerard Van Bilzen, *The Development of Aid* (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 341-344

²⁵⁶ “Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order,” Progressive International, December 13, 2022, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://progressive.international/blueprint/b262a535-7fcd-449e-94b8-73590c3db6a7-declaration-on-the-establishment-of-a-new-international-economic-order/en/>

²⁵⁷ Gerard Van Bilzen, *The Development of Aid* (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 344-346; Vanessa Pupavac, “From Materialism to Non-materialism in International Development: Revisiting Rostow’s *Stages of Growth* and Schumacher’s *Small is Beautiful*,” in *Challenging the Aid Paradigm: Western Currents and Asian Alternatives*, ed. Jens Stilhoff Sorensen (Great Britain: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 66

²⁵⁸ Thomas Carothers and Diane de Garmont, *Development Aid Confronts Politics – The Almost Revolution* (Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment, 2013), 35

OPEC's successful renegotiation of oil prices with the West" and makes the following comment how this new approach is perceived by developing countries."²⁵⁹

Developing countries continued to emphasize the international economic structure, inequitable international trade relations, the role of the state, investment or international aid for industrialisation and technology transfer. Conversely the evolving basic-needs approach focused on local, small-scale approaches improving household non-wage income generation and simple community-level improvements such as village water pumps.

The shift away from industrialisation to basic needs implied the abandonment of the earlier aspiration that developing countries would catch up economically with the advanced industrialised countries. This abandonment had serious implications for the position of developing states within the international system, that is, the perpetuation of unequal capacities between states and the continuing potential for the advanced industrial states to dominate the developing world. Developing countries therefore voiced mistrust over the basic-needs concept after some initial support...²⁶⁰

During 1980, the UN General Assembly endorsed "the guidelines for a Third Development Decade (DD3) that pledged to contribute to the NIEO but could not achieve to do it due to the events in this decade."²⁶¹ The 1980s witnessed a major global recession (stagflation) that severely affect economic of developing countries among all, recurrent African famines, "Reagonomics" and 'Thatcherism' used to refer economic policies based on supply-side economics (deep cuts in taxes and public expenditure), and most importantly the neoliberal structural adjustment programmes imposed on developing countries with high conditionality.²⁶² Riddell explains the logic behind the formulation and imposition of structural adjustment on developing countries with the following words:

As big and interventionist government was believed to be a major cause of the economic woes of the industrialized world, it was a relatively short step to believe that these were also obstacles to the development of poor countries. Best then to seek to reduce the government's role and influence by reducing the aid funds which sustained it, and to give that aid which was provided only on condition that recipients pursue the neo-liberal policies that were being mainstreamed in the industrialized world. The results were dramatic: as the 1980s began, aggregate ODA fell sharply in current price terms, and over the course of the following years (though not all at the same time) all major bilateral donors cut their aid budgets.²⁶³

²⁵⁹ Vanessa Pupavac, "From Materialism to Non-materialism in International Development: Revisiting Rostow's *Stages of Growth* and Schumacher's *Small is Beautiful*," in *Challenging the Aid Paradigm: Western Currents and Asian Alternatives*, ed. Jens Stilhoff Sorensen (Great Britain: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 66

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 67

²⁶¹ Gerard Van Bilzen, *The Development of Aid* (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 416, 487

²⁶² *Ibid.*, 416, 419, 420, 421, 451

²⁶³ Roger C. Riddell, *Does Foreign Aid Really Works?* (United States: Oxford University Press, 2007), 34

However, Emma Mawdsley states that “[u]nder the structural adjustment programmes of the 1980s and early 1990s aid was used to leverage deeply controversial policy changes on recipient countries, with extremely uneven costs and rewards” and adds that post-Washington consensus demand from developing countries, in return of development aid, to follow the policies that developed countries had not done while they were industrializing.²⁶⁴ Mawdsley’s point was correct, as evidenced by Carren Pindiriri, here below:

...with the exception of the Netherlands and Switzerland, all of today’s rich countries used protectionism before and after World War I. Britain, the United States of America, France, and German, among others vigorously used the infant industry protection and Japan only applied the use of tariff protection after 1911 because of the unequal treaties it signed in 1853. The protection of infant industries in a developing country promotes growth of domestic industries which makes the backbone of industrialisation process... While all rich countries used protectionism in their development processes, aid providers through the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) have been advocating for trade liberalisation in poor countries. Trade liberalisation was one of the conditions attached to the World Bank’s economic structural adjustment programmes carried out in Africa during the 1980s and 1990s.²⁶⁵

Throughout the 1980s, the both the number of NGOs and their poverty focused projects swelled with the increasing funds being provided for them.²⁶⁶ Furthermore, towards the end of the 1980s, donors’ political and strategic concerns began to play a less important role in aid disbursements, for instance more than 30% of ODA was allocated to African countries.²⁶⁷ Although this decade is called as “structural adjustment,” it does not mean that other sectors did not get any funding, most donors continued their development cooperation with their partner countries. As last, this decade’s development aid focused on the social sector, infrastructure, and support to productive sectors such as agriculture.²⁶⁸

Later in the 1990s, the deep fall in ODA coincided with the end of the Cold War and the steep increase in humanitarian aid provided in response to post-Cold War complex emergencies. Development aid community resumed projects on poverty after a 20-year pause. Poverty was put back on the agenda of the 1990s development cooperation and aid

²⁶⁴ Emma Mawdsley, *From Recipients to Donors: Emerging Powers and the Changing Development Landscape* (London: Zed Books, 2012), 28

²⁶⁵ Carren Pindiriri, “Aid Effectiveness, Development Theories and Their Influence on the Structure and Practices in Development Aid to 3rd World Countries,” *Zambezia Journal of Social Sciences*, 39/I (2014): 60-81

²⁶⁶ Roger C. Riddell, *Does Foreign Aid Really Works?* (United States: Oxford University Press, 2007), 37-38

²⁶⁷ Gerard Van Bilzen, *The Development of Aid* (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 476

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 477

channeled to first the social sector and later to infrastructure.²⁶⁹ Furthermore, the notion of development-security nexus emerged in the 1990 with the slogan of “you cannot have development without security and security without development is impossible.”²⁷⁰ Duffield argues that this connection is not a new theme as the development-security nexus is “intrinsic to liberal regimes of development” and therefore it has always been in the system with different faces.²⁷¹ Apart from that, migrant remittances became very important as in 1996 “remittances to developing countries were worth more than all overseas development aid and for most of this decade also more important than loans and equity investment.”²⁷²

Following four successive Development Decades, the UN announced Millennium Development Goals (MDG) in 2000, resonating very much of the ones in previous years. With the 9/11 attacks, foreign aid gained much more strategic significance, especially after the release of the 2002 US National Security Strategy that placed “development” as the third pillar together with “defence” and “diplomacy,” which was followed by other countries, poverty reduction became the main purpose of the development aid agenda due to its potential to breed security threats, political and strategic considerations prioritizing ‘war on terror’ became significant in aid allocations, for instance Africa received 50% of all aid during this period, and aid targeting the social sector increased.²⁷³ More importantly, the issue of development aid in fragile settings has gained importance. In the subsequent years, four High-Level Fora (HLFs) aiming to improve aid effectiveness and meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) took in Rome (2003), Paris (2005), Accra (2008) and Busan (2011), produced Rome Declaration on Harmonization, Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, Accra Agenda for Action and Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation respectively.²⁷⁴ Similarly, the OECD-DAC founded Fragile States Group (FSG) in 2003 to facilitate coordination among various international actors to advance “development effectiveness” in fragile contexts and endorsed the Principles for Good

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 555

²⁷⁰ Theory Talks, “Theory Talk #41: Mark Duffield On Human (In)Security, Liberal Interventionism and Aid Compounds,” July 21, 2011, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://www.theory-talks.org/2011/07/theory-talk-41.html>

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*

²⁷² Gerard Van Bilzen, *The Development of Aid* (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 569

²⁷³ White House - President George W. Bush, “The National Security Strategy – September 2002,” last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/nsc/nss/2002/>; Gerard Van Bilzen, *The Development of Aid* (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 636-637

²⁷⁴ For details of these fora and their results, please see OECD, “The High Level Fora on Aid Effectiveness: A History”, <https://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/thehighlevelforaonaideffectivenessahistory.htm>

International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations (the Fragile States Principles-FSP) in 2007.²⁷⁵ The Accra HLF in 2008 produced the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (IDPS) consisting of donors and fragile state governments.²⁷⁶ The International Network on Conflict and Fragility (INCAF), established in 2009 as a subsidiary body of the OECD-DAC, serves as a “unique decision-making forum that brings together diverse stakeholders to support development in the world’s most challenging situations.”²⁷⁷ At the Busan HLF in 2011, 41 countries and international organizations approved the IDPS-prepared “New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States” aiming to develop a new approach for development assistance to fragile states.²⁷⁸ Fragile settings requiring development aid actors to cooperate with other aid sectors, particularly the military, seem a challenge for future’s development agenda. Another important point to underline that, according to the World Bank estimations, “remittances to the global south are likely to be worth \$669 billion, more than ODA and FDI put together.”²⁷⁹

2.6. Linking Humanitarian Aid and Development Aid

The complex relationship between humanitarian and development aid is articulated by Norwegian scholar Jon Harald Sande Lie, who depicted these aid categories as “two distinct civilian segments of the international system” differing in terms of “discursive origins”, “institutional orders”, “particular rationales”, “actors funding mechanisms”, “structure and content regarding how aid is provided and what type of aid is given”, and “relationship to both politics and the host government in the country which they operate”, in the following words: “Increasingly, these segments of the international system rub shoulders—as tectonic plates—affecting, overlapping and challenging each other.”²⁸⁰

²⁷⁵ OECD, *Whole of Government Approaches to Fragile States* (Paris: OECD, 2006), 7, 13; OECD, “Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations,” April 2007, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.oecd.org/dac/conflict-fragility-resilience/docs/38368714.pdf>

²⁷⁶ Rachel Locke and Vanessa Wyeth, “Busan and Beyond: Implementing the “New Deal” for Fragile States,” International Peace Institute (IPI), July 2012, 2, last accessed May 01, 2024. https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/ipi_e_pub_busan_and_beyond.pdf

²⁷⁷ OECD, *International Support to Post-Conflict Transition: Rethinking Policy, Changing Practice* (Paris: OECD, 2012), 15

²⁷⁸ Rachel Locke and Vanessa Wyeth, “Busan and Beyond: Implementing the “New Deal” for Fragile States,” International Peace Institute (IPI), July 2012, 2, last accessed May 01, 2024. https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/ipi_e_pub_busan_and_beyond.pdf

²⁷⁹ Alecsandra Kieren Si, “How Remittances are Worth More than All Development Funding Combined,” Devex, May 06, 2024, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.devex.com/news/how-remittances-are-worth-more-than-all-development-funding-combined-107554>

²⁸⁰ Jon Harald Sande Lie, “The Humanitarian-Development Nexus: Humanitarian Principles, Practice, and Pragmatics,” *Journal of International Humanitarian Action* 5, no. 18 (2020): 4, 5, 10, 11, 12

In order to provide a better understanding of the complex relationship between humanitarian assistance and development cooperation, it is essential to examine the issue in a broader historical context. The origins of this complex relationship between humanitarian and development realms that has produced lengthy discussion on the topic of ‘linking humanitarian and development activities’ can be traced back to the relief efforts in the late 19th century.²⁸¹ The British Empire, employing “laissez-faire capitalism” that were shaped by the Benthamite utilitarianism with “the promotion of efficiency and the reduction of waste”, “Malthusianism” with the positive and preventive checks to the population growth, and “Social Darwinism with “the survival of the fittest” during the greater part of the 19th century, followed “parsimonious [relief] policies that sought to minimize public spending on those widely considered overly dependent upon state” in line with “the philosophy that “indiscriminate” state relief... led to permanent dependency, and discouraged hard work and self-help,” both at home towards the British poor and the Irish famine victims and overseas towards Indians during successive famines claiming the lives of millions of people in British India that were caused by droughts but exacerbated by British colonial policies²⁸² in various fields, including famine relief prioritizing cost-saving rather than life-saving policies; and once the British Empire began to experience at home the effects of “economic downturns in both the agricultural and industrial sectors and the growing influence of Marxism across Europe” in the last two decades of the 19th century, it had to soften its strict application of the laissez-faire principles everywhere under its rule, whose repercussions in British India was the famine relief efforts designed to “reconcile humanitarianism and the ongoing economic development of the British Empire” as “imperial revenue production and saving colonial subjects from starvation were no longer seen to be in tension with each other; rather they were intimately linked projects.”²⁸³ Another noteworthy example is from the early 20th century, western residents (missionaries) in China established the China International Famine Relief Commission (CIFRC)²⁸⁴ after the massive 1920-1921 in order to support

²⁸¹ Claes Lindahl, *Developmental Relief?: An Issues Paper and Annotated Bibliography on Linking Relief and Development*, Sida Studies in Evaluation 96/3 (Stockholm: Sida, August 1996), 8.

²⁸² For detailed information on the colonial policies in India, please see: Naresh Chandra Sourabh & Timo Myllyntaus, “Famines in Late Nineteenth-Century India: Politics, Culture, and Environmental Justice,” Environment & Society Portal, *Virtual Exhibitions* 2015, no. 2. Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society, https://www.environmentandsociety.org/sites/default/files/sourabhmyllyntaus_faminesindia_2015.pdf; Rune Møller Stahl, “The Economics of Starvation: Laissez-faire Ideology and Famine in Colonial India,” in *The Intellectual History of Economic Normativities*, ed. Mikkel Thorup (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 169-184.

²⁸³ Nadja Durbach, *Many Mouths: The Politics of Food in Britain from the Workhouse to the Welfare State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), EPUB eBook, 33-40, 54-55, 66-75, 207-208, 222-263, 285-305

²⁸⁴ For detailed information on the CIFRC, please see Andrew James Nathan, *A History of the China International Famine Relief Commission* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965)

“agrarian and education reform projects in order to prevent further famines and promote economic development.”²⁸⁵ Furthermore, the interwar US natural disaster relief operations in Guatemala, Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic bear similarities with many twentieth-century development assistance projects in key respects as the US Anglo-Americans, drawing on the experience gained during their “civilizing mission” towards its own populations at home (such as the poor ones, African Americans, Native American Indians, immigrants) and later towards other peoples and cultures in sites of “US involvement, intervention, and occupation” abroad (such as China, Cuba, Haiti and Mexico), had gone far beyond merely “assisting in the restoration of predisaster conditions” in these disaster-stricken countries and had tried to make “permanent, structural changes through their humanitarian aid” in the fields of disaster management, health, sanitation, economics and labor.²⁸⁶

However, the post-World War II aid architecture engendering the concepts and ideas in circulation today’s linking debates, such as “relief-reconstruction-development continuum”, and creating the relevant institutional structure and mechanisms still shaping the relationship between these two aid domains, such as the Bretton Woods institutions that had been created in the 1940s with a mandate to support reconstruction and development, most notably the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)²⁸⁷, and other specialized agencies of the UN system - particularly UNICEF transitioning itself from a humanitarian to development agency to make clear that the realization of its humanitarian goals requires the combination of both, for which it won the 1965 Nobel Peace Prize, and also UNHCR dedicating considerable attention to the linking issue by opening up discussion on “the relationship between displacement and development” in the 1960s, constitutes the contemporary basis for the linking debate.²⁸⁸ Moreover, both the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) developed policies to assist the countries affected by natural disasters apart from exogenous shocks long before they concentrated on conflict-

²⁸⁵ Annalisa Furia, *The Foreign Aid Regime: Gift-Giving, States and Global Dis/Order* (UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 39-40

²⁸⁶ Julia F. Irwin, “The “Development” of Humanitarian Relief: US Disaster Assistance Operations in the Caribbean Basin, 1917–1931,” in *The Development Century – A Global History*, ed. Stephen J. Macekura and Erez Manela (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 42, 44, 51-52

²⁸⁷ As of 2016, one of five institutions in the World Bank Group

²⁸⁸ Claes Lindahl, *Developmental Relief?: An Issues Paper and Annotated Bibliography on Linking Relief and Development*, Sida Studies in Evaluation 96/3 (Stockholm: Sida, August 1996), 8; Logan Cochrane and Alexandra Wilson, “Nuancing the Double and Triple Nexus: Analyzing the Potential for Unintended, Negative Consequences,” *Development Studies Research* 10, no. 1 (2023): 2-3; Jeff Crisp, “Mind the Gap! - UNHCR, Humanitarian Assistance and the Development Process,” UNHCR Working Paper No. 43, May 2001, 1-2, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/legacy-pdf/3b309dd07.pdf>.

affected countries, such as IMF's establishment of an Emergency Assistance Policy in 1962 in response to a request from Egypt following a major crop failure and the WB's increasing its emergency recovery activities, particularly in natural disaster-stricken countries, to facilitate their economic recovery starting from 1970s that would lead to the Bank's adoption of Reconstruction Guidelines in 1984.²⁸⁹

Further attention was given to the issue in the 1980s, when the recurrence of major humanitarian crises, most notably the drought-induced famine in Sahel during the early 1970s and the widespread human-made famine in Sub-Saharan Africa in the mid-1980s,²⁹⁰ brought about a dramatic increase in the volumes of official humanitarian aid along with the introduction of the concept of 'complex emergency'²⁹¹, the questioning of the nature, limits, and *modus operandi* of humanitarian realm that was then left mainly to NGOs to fight the symptoms rather the root causes of these emergencies while paying little heed to political, economic and social factors, and the very idea of integrating humanitarian activity and development work to respond more effectively to these emergency situations by defying traditional approach of having a rigid humanitarian-development divide that had produced "organizational, cultural, and budgetary silos" making "coordination and collaboration between the humanitarian and development sectors difficult to achieve", as stated by Kaga and Nakache.²⁹² This period of aid history thereby witnessed the participation of several

²⁸⁹Adele Harmer, "Bridging the Gap? The International Financial Institutions and Their Engagement in Situations of Protracted Crisis," in *Beyond the Continuum: The Changing Role of Aid Policy in Protracted Crises*, Humanitarian Policy Group Research Report 18, (ed.) Adele Harmer and Joanna Macrae (London: Overseas Development Institute-ODI, July 2004), 31-32

²⁹⁰ For information on the 1980s African food crisis, please see Charles McCarthy, "Africa's Food Crisis in the 1980s", *Trocaire Development Review* 1986, <https://www.trocaire.org/sites/default/files/resources/policy/1986-africa-famine-80s.pdf.pdf>, 58-67; Carl K. Eicher, "Facing up to Africa's Food Crisis," in *Africa in Economic Crisis*, ed. John Ravenhill (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1986), 149-180. For detailed analysis of complex humanitarian emergencies worldwide, including the ones in Africa, please see E. Wayne Nafziger, "The Economics of Complex Humanitarian Emergencies: Preliminary Approaches and Findings," Working Paper No. 119, United Nations University/World Institute for Development Economic Research - UNU/WIDER, September 1996.

²⁹¹ For a good discussion on the concept of complex emergency, please see Jose Miguel Albala-Bertrand, "What is a "Complex Humanitarian Emergency"? An Analytical Essay," Working Paper No. 420, Department of Economics, Queen Mary, University of London, October 2000.

²⁹² Gilles Carbonnier, *Humanitarian Economics: War Disaster and the Global Aid Market* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 41-42; Mark Bidder, "Linking Relief and Development: A Conceptual Outline," UNDP Emergencies Unit for Ethiopia, December 14, 1994, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://www.africa.upenn.edu/eue_web/ctinum.htm; Mark Duffield, "Complex Emergencies and the Crisis of Developmentalism," *Institute of Development Studies (IDS) Bulletin* 25, no. 4 (1994): 38-39; Yukie Osa and Atsushi Hanatani, "Addressing the Humanitarian and Development Nexus Since the Cold War," in *Crisis Management Beyond the Humanitarian-Development Nexus*, ed. Atsushi Hanatani, Oscar A. Gomez, and Chigumi Kawaguchi (New York: Routledge, 2018), Taylor & Francis eBook, 50-51; Midori Kaga and Delphine Nakache, "Protection and the Humanitarian-Development Nexus: A Literature Review," *Local Engagement Refugee Research Network Paper* No. 1, December 2019, 2, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3750190>

relief agencies in the “International Relief/Development Project” aiming to integrate relief activities for “famine related emergencies and other natural disasters” with development in the mid-1980s, and the resulting landmark study of Mary Andrew and Peter Woodrow, ‘Rising from the Ashes: Development Strategies in Times of Disaster’ in 1989 which “set the agenda for much work on linking relief with the development in the 1990s” with its emphasis on the following points: aid agencies “should not intervene in a crisis unless it is to support local capacities” as doing nothing is better than doing something badly, relief works cannot be “neutral in terms of development, [t]hey either support it or undermine it” and therefore they “should be held to development standards, “every disaster respond should be based on an appreciation of local capacities and should be designed to support and increase these”, “development agencies can provide creative relief in an emergency, especially in areas where they are already involved in long-term work”, “both relief and development should be more concerned with increasing local capacities and reducing vulnerabilities.”²⁹³ Moreover, in its 1981 dated work called “the States’ of World’s Children”, UNICEF stated that “while the organization would provide a humanitarian response to ‘loud emergencies’ when required, it’s larger commitment was to development projects combating the ‘silent emergencies’ such as poverty, hunger, and lack of access to basic human needs”, and continued this “unique position” during the 1980s and 1990s.²⁹⁴ Notwithstanding that these limited attempts could not achieve to produce significant achievement in overcoming the divide between humanitarian and development aid, they triggered the debate in this matter.

The end of the Cold War had a significant impact on the fields of humanitarian and development aid and sparked further/renewed/keen interest in the issue of bridging the humanitarian-development divide. The upsurge of intra-state conflicts, civil wars and violent separatist movements in the aftermath of the Cold War world shifted the focus of the debate away from natural disasters, which had become major subject of interests with African famines in the mid-1980s, to conflict-related disasters, such as the ones in former Soviet space, the Balkans and the African continent. The debate revolving around how to bridge the humanitarian-development by addressing their main differences in “funding”, “institutions”, and “partnership and coordination” first led to the adoption of the UN General Assembly’s landmark resolution 46/182 of 1991 on “Strengthening of the Coordination of Humanitarian

²⁹³ Claes Lindahl, *Developmental Relief?: An Issues Paper and Annotated Bibliography on Linking Relief and Development*, Sida Studies in Evaluation 96/3 (Stockholm: Sida, August 1996), 9, Annex 2. For further information, please see Mary B. Anderson & Peter J. Woodrow, *Rising from the Ashes: Development Strategies in Times of Disaster* (1989; reis., New York: Routledge, 2019).

²⁹⁴ Logan Cochrane and Alexandra Wilson, “Nuancing the Double and Triple Nexus: Analyzing the Potential for Unintended, Negative Consequences,” *Development Studies Research* 10, no. 1 (2023): 3

Emergency Assistance of the United Nations” that laid the foundations of current humanitarian system by outlining the guiding principles and the coordination framework for humanitarian assistance within the UN system while acknowledging, among other things, that first economic growth and sustainable development are vital for prevention of and preparedness for humanitarian emergencies as many of them “reflect the underlying crisis in development facing developing countries” therefore their “development problems” should be properly addressed within the framework of ongoing humanitarian assistance, and, once a humanitarian crisis takes place, humanitarian assistance “should be seen as a step towards long-term development” and “should be provided in ways that will be supportive of recovery and long-term development” with the early involvement of development aid organizations to secure “smooth transition from relief to rehabilitation and development.”²⁹⁵ This landmark resolution coinciding with the end of the Cold War, the aftermath of which the conflict-related disasters came high on the agenda as more and more conflicts were becoming intra-state rather than inter-state in nature and “less related to the process of state formation, and more to state disintegration”,²⁹⁶ also created in 1992 a new UN agency, the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs (UNDHA or DHA), for the purpose of linking humanitarian and development efforts, though it allegedly did the opposite by systematically rejecting emergency appeals for developmental projects and thus widening the humanitarian-development divide within funding structures until 1998 when DHA became the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).²⁹⁷ Around the same time, the 1992 UN Agenda for Peace,²⁹⁸ a landmark report outlining a framework for strengthening the UN’s capacity for conflict prevention, peacemaking, and peacekeeping in the post-Cold War world and recognizing the interdependence between humanitarian action, development assistance,

²⁹⁵ Yukie Osa and Atsushi Hanatani, “Addressing the Humanitarian and Development Nexus Since the Cold War,” in *Crisis Management Beyond the Humanitarian-Development Nexus*, ed. Atsushi Hanatani, Oscar A. Gomez, and Chigumi Kawaguchi (New York: Routledge, 2018), Taylor & Francis eBook, 52-56; United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), *Resolution 46/182 - Strengthening of the Coordination of Humanitarian Emergency Assistance of the United Nations*, A/RES/46/182, December 19, 1991, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://documents.un.org/doc/resolution/gen/nr0/582/70/img/nr058270.pdf>

²⁹⁶ Claes Lindahl, *Developmental Relief?: An Issues Paper and Annotated Bibliography on Linking Relief and Development*, Sida Studies in Evaluation 96/3 (Stockholm: Sida, August 1996), 9

²⁹⁷ Logan Cochrane and Alexandra Wilson, “Nuancing the Double and Triple Nexus: Analyzing the Potential for Unintended, Negative Consequences,” *Development Studies Research* 10, no. 1 (2023): 3-4; United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA/OCHA), “This is OCHA: A Brief History of OCHA,” last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.unocha.org/ocha>

²⁹⁸ The 1992 UN Agenda for Peace was prepared upon the request of the UNSC. Following the end of the Cold War and the UN-sponsored operations in Iraq and Kuwait in 1991, the UNSC requested the Secretary General to prepare a detailed analysis together with recommendations on how to elevate UN’s capacity to address global peace and security issues in the new post-Cold war environment. For further information on the Agenda, please see Hana Umezawa, “UN-Regional Organisational Cooperation in Peace and Security: Development and Future Prospects,” UNU-CRIS Working Papers, W-2012/6, 6-9, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://collections.unu.edu/eserv/UNU:1704/W-2012-6.pdf>

and peace and security efforts, addressed “non-military sources of instability in the economic, social, humanitarian and ecological fields” as new threats to international peace and security, and called for a more comprehensive approach to respond to these threats through providing better integration between humanitarian and development realms as part of UN’s peacebuilding efforts while highlighting the importance of “smooth transition from relief to development” in post-conflict situations, “impartial provision of humanitarian assistance” in conflict prevention, and “economic and social development as a secure basis for lasting peace.”²⁹⁹ Furthermore, the 1994 UN Agenda for Development that was produced as companion report to the 1992 Agenda for Peace, the 1995 UN Agenda for Peace together with the 1995 Supplement to Agenda for Peace that was built on the original 1992 UN Agenda for Peace, the 1995 UN Agenda for Development, 1996 UN Agenda for Democratization, and the 1997 UN Agenda for Development reiterated the growing interdependence of humanitarian, development, peace and security, and democracy agendas, and thus the necessity of integrating them with a holistic, comprehensive and coherent approach to address complex emergencies having broader political, economic and social dimensions.³⁰⁰

However, the practice worked out somewhat differently and the initial efforts aiming to bridge the humanitarian-development divide went far beyond their original purpose as the altered circumstances of the new unipolar world order in the post-Cold War era enforced several significant changes to aid system. First, “the working conditions for the donor

²⁹⁹ UNGA and UNSC, *An Agenda For Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peace-Keeping - Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to the Statement adopted by the Summit Meeting of the Security Council on 31 January 1992*, A/47/277, S/24111, June 17, 1992, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n92/259/61/pdf/n9225961.pdf>; United Nations Security Council (UNSC), “Note by the President of the Security Council,” S/23500, January 31, 1992, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/196971#files>; United Nations (UN), “Items Relating to An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peace-keeping,” Decision of 28 January 1993 (3166th meeting): statement by the President, 1-3, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://www.un.org/french/docs/cs/repertoire/93-95/CHAPTER_8/GENERAL_ISSUES/28-Agenda_for_peace.pdf; United Nations (UN), *Yearbook of the United Nations 1992*, Vol. 46 (USA: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1993), 34, <https://doi.org/10.18356/b4a11767-en>

³⁰⁰ United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), *An Agenda for Development - Report of the Secretary-General*, A/48/935, May 06, 1994, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/188719>; United Nations (UN), *An Agenda for Peace*, Presented to the General Assembly by UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, [ST/]DPI/1623/PKO (New York: UN Department of Public Information, 1995), last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/170443>; UNGA and UNSC, “Supplement to an Agenda for Peace: Position Paper of the Secretary-General on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations,” A/50/60, S/1995/1, January 25, 1995, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/168325>; United Nations (UN), *An Agenda for Development*, Presented to the General Assembly by UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, [ST/]DPI/1622/DEV (New York: UN Department of Public Information, 1995), last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/170444>; United Nations (UN), *An Agenda for Democratization*, Presented to the General Assembly by UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, [ST/]DPI/1867 (New York: UN Department of Public Information, 1996), last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/230086>; United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), *Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly - An Agenda for Development*, A/RES/51/240, October 15 1997, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/245092>

community, and in particular for the UN and the humanitarian organisations” changed with the borders becoming more open to relief efforts to such a degree that sometimes they were “overriding the sovereignty of states”, the availability of “a broader *repertoire* of aid interventions into disaster areas as compared to the past”, and the humanitarian assistance being “increasingly accompanied by other types of interventions such as peacekeeping, military operations, diplomacy, and others.”³⁰¹ Head of the newly created UN Agency for Humanitarian Affairs (UNDHA) Peter Hansen’s following statement in 1995 gives a clear picture of what changed in the field of humanitarian aid: “The humanitarian boundaries of the international system are becoming increasingly blurred as they extend into areas of governance, peace-keeping and global environmental management.”³⁰² The 1995 UNDHA-ODI co-organized workshop, “Aid under Fire”, calling for “the need for a new paradigm in disaster relief and development in the post-Cold War era” indicates the scale of problem even with its name. Secondly, the international humanitarian and development aid began to realign itself with the emerging circumstances of the post-Cold War era, as reflected in the reorganization of the UN system.³⁰³ Thirdly and finally, the concept of human security entered the policy discourse in the first half of the 1990s³⁰⁴, allowing donor governments “bypass erstwhile client states and work directly at the local level of communities, households and individuals” through their aid implementers.³⁰⁵

Notwithstanding, these landmark documents of the UN laid important groundwork for subsequent efforts to first overcome the humanitarian-development divide and, later, to bridge between these two aid categories, security and peacebuilding. Thereby, since the early 1990s, successive waves/generations of the debate, mainly on bridging the divide between humanitarian and development responses but also on linking these two aid types with foreign policy, security, and peacebuilding, have emerged,³⁰⁶ leading to the development of many new approaches by bilateral and multilateral actors aiming to transcend the divide, based on

³⁰¹ Claes Lindahl, *Developmental Relief?: An Issues Paper and Annotated Bibliography on Linking Relief and Development*, Sida Studies in Evaluation 96/3 (Stockholm: Sida, August 1996), 9-10

³⁰² *Ibid.*, 10

³⁰³ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁴ Claes Lindahl, *Developmental Relief?: An Issues Paper and Annotated Bibliography on Linking Relief and Development*, Sida Studies in Evaluation 96/3 (Stockholm: Sida, August 1996), 10

³⁰⁵ Mark Duffield, *Global Governance and the New Wars: The Merging of Development and Security* (London: Zed Books, 2014), xx.

³⁰⁶ For details of the waves/generations of the debate, please see: Jeremy Shusterman, “Gap or Prehistoric Monster? A History of the Humanitarian-Development Nexus at UNICEF,” *Disasters*, 45, no. 2 (2021): 360; Logan Cochrane and Alexandra Wilson, “Nuancing the Double and Triple Nexus: Analyzing the Potential for Unintended, Negative Consequences,” *Development Studies Research* 10, no. 1 (2023): 3

different interpretations of the resolution's continuum model and the later formulated contiguuum model³⁰⁷, such as “Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development” by EU in 1996 (LRRD), ‘Linking Relief and Development (LRD) or Developmental Relief Approach’ by the US in early 1990s, ‘Relief to Development and Transition’, ‘Gap Approach’ by UNHCR and the World Bank in 1999, ‘Seamless Assistance’, ‘Early Recovery (ER)’ by UNDP in 2005, ‘Resilience Approach’, ‘Humanitarian-Development Nexus (HDN)’, ‘Build Back Better (BBB)’, ‘Whole-of-Government Approach’, ‘New Way of Working (NWoW)’, and most recently ‘Triple Nexus or Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus (HDPN) Approach’.³⁰⁸

However, since much of the debate on the issue of bridging the humanitarian-development divide is originally driven by humanitarian actors rather than development ones as the issue has never become the focal point of development aid, the ‘one-way’ linearity of the LRRD concept namely focusing on “when do I hand over what to whom- and how?” rather than “how to do better development in circumstances where extreme needs are entrenched,” and the insistence on thinking of crisis as outliers rather than norm namely seeing crisis as “unfortunate events” rather than “symptomatic of poverty and political crises,” the efforts linking relief and development mostly failed in the past.³⁰⁹

³⁰⁷ EU had initiated the contiguuum model to indicate the coexistence of varying needs and response stages back in the mid-1990s but since its integration into mostly linear and bureaucratic planning and funding processes has been challenging, the continuum model has tacitly continued to guide many aid programs. For details, please see Commission of the European Communities, *Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD)*, COM (96) 153 Final, April 30, 1996, ii, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:1996:0153:FIN:EN:PDF>; Margie Buchanan-Smith and Paola Fabbri, *Links Between Relief, Rehabilitation and Development in the Tsunami Response - A Review of the Debate* (London: Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC), November 2005), 5, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.humanitarianlibrary.org/sites/default/files/2014/02/lrrd-review-debate.pdf>.

³⁰⁸ Midori Kaga and Delphine Nakache, “Protection and the Humanitarian-Development Nexus: A Literature Review,” Local Engagement Refugee Research Network Paper No. 1, December 2019, 3-4, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3750190>; Jon Harald Sande Lie, “The Humanitarian-Development Nexus: Humanitarian Principles, Practice, and Pragmatics,” *Journal of International Humanitarian Action* 5, no. 18 (2020): 4; Yukie Osa and Atsushi Hanatani, “Addressing the Humanitarian and Development Nexus Since the Cold War,” in *Crisis Management Beyond the Humanitarian-Development Nexus*, ed. Atsushi Hanatani, Oscar A. Gomez, and Chigumi Kawaguchi (New York: Routledge, 2018), Taylor & Francis eBook, 52-56; Oscar A. Gomez and Kawaguchi Chigumi, “A Theory for the Continuum: Multiple Approaches to Humanitarian Crises Management,” in *Crisis Management Beyond the Humanitarian-Development Nexus*, ed. Atsushi Hanatani, Oscar A. Gomez, and Chigumi Kawaguchi (New York: Routledge, 2018), Taylor & Francis eBook, 88-89, 92-107; Miriam Bradley, *The Politics and Everyday Practice of International Humanitarianism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2023), 281-296; Amany Qaddour, Hayley Hoaglund, and Paul Spiegel, *The Humanitarian-Development Nexus: A Framework for Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health, Voluntary Family Planning, and Reproductive Health*, MOMENTUM Integrated Health Resilience Internal Report, (Washington, DC: USAID MOMENTUM, February 2022), 5-6

³⁰⁹ Irina Mosel and Simon Levine, *Remaking the Case for Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development: How LRRD Can Become a Practically Useful Concept for Assistance in Difficult Places*, Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) Commissioned Report (London: Overseas Development Institute-ODI, March 2014), 8, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://odi.cdn.ngo/media/documents/8882.pdf>

The 9/11 attacks, which occurred while the turbulent first decade of the post-Cold War era was coming to an end and the subsequent US-led ‘war on terror’ and marked the beginning of a “new world order” with a reawakened threat perception giving highest priority to the fight against the spread of terrorism and recognizing poverty as one of the most important factors providing a fertile breeding ground for its spread, just as had been done during the Cold War when poverty was identified as one of the key contributing factors to the spread of ‘communist threat’ to other countries, had a great impact on the evolution of the debate and the approaches mentioned above, by triggering a higher level of politicization of western humanitarian and development assistance and a full-fledged securitization of aid flows, especially in conflict-affected poor countries like Afghanistan and Iraq, with the elevation of *development* to the same level of *defence* and *diplomacy* as one of three pillars of the ‘war on terror’ (3D, also known as whole-of-government approaches)³¹⁰ and relatedly the redefinition of the role of humanitarianism as a “crime-fighting partner” of counterterrorism thinking “failed states as sanctuaries and staging platforms for terrorists” and “part of wider “hearts and minds” campaigns, attempting to convince local populations of the goodness of armies invading in the name of stability and freedom” after decades of being used by states as “a substitute for politics and a sop to hopeful publics.”³¹¹

This new period giving humanitarian and development aid to play a much more strategic role as a tool for achieving foreign policy and security objectives started with the US administration changing its aid policy after September 11, which was followed by other major donors. US Secretary of State Colin Powell, in his address to the heads of NGOs at a conference held in late October 2001, after the American invasion of Afghanistan, heralded this new period with the following words: “just as surely as our diplomats and military, American NGOs are out there [in Afghanistan] serving and sacrificing on the frontlines of freedom. NGOs are such a force multiplier for us, such an important part of our combat team.”³¹² Following the UN Conference in Monterrey on Financing for Development held in March 2002, where President George W. Bush, “originally an opponent of U.S. engagement

³¹⁰ Jon Harald Sande Lie, “The Humanitarian-Development Nexus: Humanitarian Principles, Practice, and Pragmatics,” *Journal of International Humanitarian Action* 5, no. 18 (2020): 3; Theory Talks, “Theory Talk #41: Mark Duffield On Human (In)Security, Liberal Interventionism and Aid Compounds,” July 21, 2011, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://www.theory-talks.org/2011/07/theory-talk-41.html>; Gerard Van Bilzen, *The Development of Aid* (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 30-31; Logan Cochrane and Alexandra Wilson, “Nuancing the Double and Triple Nexus: Analyzing the Potential for Unintended, Negative Consequences,” *Development Studies Research* 10, no. 1 (2023): 4-5.

³¹¹ Michael Barnett and Thomas G. Weiss, “Humanitarianism: A Brief History of the Present,” in *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics*, ed. Michael Barnett and Thomas G. Weiss (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2008), 25

³¹² *Ibid.*

in poor and troubled areas of the world that are little strategic importance to the U.S.,”³¹³ announced a new foreign aid initiative/mechanism called the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA),³¹⁴ “the first one since Kennedy’s proposals in the sixties,” with the aim of combating terrorism through poverty reduction and economic growth by providing large-scale development aid to poor countries that adopt political and economic reforms, and Richard Haas, a high-level official of the State Department, described “effective foreign assistance” as an essential tool alongside the military in the ‘war on terror’; the Bush administration published its first National Security Strategy (NSS) in September 2002 that was announcing ‘development’ as the third pillar of US national security, together with ‘defense’ and ‘diplomacy’ by stating both the dangers posed by state fragility and the failure of decades-long massive development aid,³¹⁵ and subsequently took several relevant actions such as significantly increasing US development assistance over the next years, making foreign aid budget justifications that “reflect the war on terrorism as the top foreign aid priority”, and creating a new government aid agency, the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) to administer the MCA in 2004.³¹⁶ Although the establishment of the MCC “to implement aid programmes only in eligible countries, in effect singling out the ‘best performers’ among poor countries” is a new development, the MCA’s approach is not a new one as “the importance of ‘selectivity’ in the choice of aid recipients” based on their commitment to political and economic reforms was an issue being discussed among donor community for decades, which had also constituted the core of Kennedy’s 1961 Alliance for Progress initiative.³¹⁷ Furthermore, considering the reluctance of successive US presidents in addressing “development issues in major speeches or policy statements” for about two decades, even “mentioning ‘development’ in a major government document [such as the 2002 US-NSS] is a change from the recent past”, despite the continuation of the US traditional resistance to “policy benchmarks set in the UN and elsewhere outside the US”

³¹³ Francis Y. Owusu, “Post-9/11 U.S. Foreign Aid, the Millennium Challenge Account, and Africa: How Many Birds Can One Stone Kill?” *Africa Today* 54, no. 1 (Fall 2007): 3

³¹⁴ For detailed information on the MCA, please see Lael Brainard et al., *The Other War: Global Poverty and the Millennium Challenge Account* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2003); Esther Pan, “Foreign Aid: Millennium Challenge Account,” Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), February 07, 2005, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.cfr.org/background/foreign-aid-millennium-challenge-account>; Steven Radelet, “The Millennium Challenge Account: Transforming US Foreign Assistance Policy?” in *Development Finance in the Global Economy*, ed. Tony Addison and George Mavrotas (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 197-215

³¹⁵ White House - President George W. Bush, “The National Security Strategy – September 2002,” last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/nsc/nss/2002/>

³¹⁶ Gerard Van Bilzen, *The Development of Aid* (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 570-571, 573-574, 607-608, 640-642.

³¹⁷ Carol Lancaster and Susan Martin, “The Changing Role of US Aid Policy in Protracted Crisis,” in *Beyond the Continuum: The Changing Role of Aid Policy in Protracted Crises*, Humanitarian Policy Group Research Report 18, (ed.) Adele Harmer and Joanna Macrae (London: Overseas Development Institute-ODI, July 2004), 50

such as “little incorporation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) into US discourse or public statements on foreign aid” and exclusion of “the UN target of 0.7% of gross national product (GNP) to be allocated as foreign aid” from aid discussions in the country.³¹⁸ With USAID’s 2004 White Paper identifying “promoting transformational development”, “strengthening fragile states”, “providing humanitarian assistance”, “supporting US geostrategic interests, particularly in Iraq, ^[1]Afghanistan, Pakistan, Jordan, Egypt, and Israel” among its “five ‘core’ operational goals for US foreign assistance,”³¹⁹ the US made the division of responsibility between its aid agencies: while the MCC would be dealing with ‘good performers’ among low-income countries, USAID would be in charge of responding to “large caseload of ‘poor performers’, as well as humanitarian crises and transition in protracted crises.”³²⁰ Around the same time, “the broader development community in the US” (such as universities, research institutes, non-profit think-tanks etc.) turned its attention to the problem of fragile, failing and failed states, analyzing the causes of state failure and helping USAID formulate related policy responses.³²¹

In line with the adapted phrase of that “when America sneezes, the world catches a cold”, other major donors and international aid agencies followed the US’s move of bringing together diplomacy, defence and development policies and of further concentrating on fragile states. Thereby, “[r]esonating with global concerns such as international security and crime, fragile and failing states have increasingly become a preoccupation of the international community.”³²² After the US-NSS in September 2002 focusing on the security threats posed by failed and failing states,³²³ the European Council adopted the first European Security Strategy (EES) in December 2003 and the Report of the UN Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change was published in December 2004.³²⁴

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 50-51

³¹⁹ Gerard Van Bilzen, *The Development of Aid* (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 574

³²⁰ Joanna Macrae and Adele Harmer, “Beyond the Continuum: An Overview of the Changing Role of Aid Policy in Protracted Crises,” in *Beyond the Continuum: The Changing Role of Aid Policy in Protracted Crises*, Humanitarian Policy Group Research Report 18, (ed.) Adele Harmer and Joanna Macrae (London: Overseas Development Institute-ODI, July 2004), 6

³²¹ Carol Lancaster and Susan Martin, “The Changing Role of US Aid Policy in Protracted Crisis,” in *Beyond the Continuum: The Changing Role of Aid Policy in Protracted Crises*, Humanitarian Policy Group Research Report 18, (ed.) Adele Harmer and Joanna Macrae (London: Overseas Development Institute-ODI, July 2004), 50

³²² OECD, *Whole of Government Approaches to Fragile States* (Paris: OECD, 2006), 7

³²³ For details, please see Susan E. Rice, “The New National Security Strategy: Focus on Failed States,” Policy Brief 116 (Washington DC: Brookings Institution, February 2003), last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/pb116.pdf>

³²⁴ OECD, *Whole of Government Approaches to Fragile States* (Paris: OECD, 2006), 53-54, 17

The World Bank established the Low-Income Countries under Stress (LICUS) Taskforce in 2002 to underline the challenges faced by traditional aid programmes and to develop specific approach to these countries, all of which are considered conflict-prone though only some are conflict-affected, to overcome the challenge of aid effectiveness.³²⁵ Many donor countries developed “cross-departmental strategies and structures” such as the formation of the British Department for International Development (DFID)’s Stabilisation Unit, the establishment of the Danish Whole of Government Board, and the creation of the Canadian Stabilisation and Reconstruction Task Force (START) in 2005 to coordinate its responses to complex crises caused by conflicts or natural disasters through linking its development agency CIDA’s humanitarian and development assistance with its Department of National Defence (DND)’s military assistance.³²⁶ The OECD-DAC also played a crucial role in “encouraging donors to align the conceptual, strategic and technical links between political, security and development objectives.”³²⁷

While four High-Level Fora (HLFs) aiming to improve aid effectiveness and meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) was taking place in Rome (2003), Paris (2005), Accra (2008) and Busan (2011), where a series of principles and commitments agreed in the resulting Rome Declaration on Harmonization, Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, Accra Agenda for Action and Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation,³²⁸ the OECD-DAC established Fragile States Group (FSG) in 2003 to facilitate coordination among bi-/multi-lateral international actors to advance “development effectiveness” in fragile contexts and endorsed the Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations (the Fragile States Principles-FSP) in 2007, which introduced the following principles in order to guide international actors in development cooperation with fragile states: “take context as starting point, do no harm, focus on statebuilding as the central objective, prioritise prevention, recognize the links between political, security and development objectives, promote non-discrimination as a basis for inclusive and stable

³²⁵ Stephen Baranyi and Marie-Eve Desrosiers, “Development Cooperation in Fragile States: Filling or Perpetuating Gaps?” *Conflict, Security & Development* 12, no. 5 (December 2012): 446; Adele Harmer, “Bridging the Gap? The International Financial Institutions and Their Engagement in Situations of Protracted Crisis,” in *Beyond the Continuum: The Changing Role of Aid Policy in Protracted Crises*, Humanitarian Policy Group Research Report 18, (ed.) Adele Harmer and Joanna Macrae (London: Overseas Development Institute-ODI, July 2004), 34-35

³²⁶ Christina Bennett, “The Development Agency of the Future: Fit for Protracted Crises,” ODI Working Paper, (London: Overseas Development Institute-ODI, April 2015), 14-15, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://cdn-odi-production.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/9612.pdf>

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, 14

³²⁸ For details of these fora and their results, please see OECD, “The High Level For a on Aid Effectiveness: A History”, <https://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/thehighlevelforaonaideffectivenessahistory.htm>

societies, align with local priorities in different ways in different context, agree on practical coordination mechanisms between international actors, act fast ... but stay engaged long enough to give success a chance, and avoid pockets of exclusion.”³²⁹ FSP’s emphasis on the interdependence of “political, security, economic and social spheres” and its recommendation to donor governments of adopting Whole-of-Government Approaches (WGAs/WoGAs) that would involve “those responsible for security, political and economic affairs, as well as those responsible for development aid and humanitarian assistance,”³³⁰ prompted donors to integrate political, security, development and humanitarian objectives and activities.³³¹ The motto became “failure in one risks failure in all others.”³³²

At the Third HLF held in Accra in 2008, the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (IDPS) was created by donors and fragile state governments.³³³ The International Network on Conflict and Fragility (INCAF), established in 2009 as a subsidiary body of the OECD-DAC, serves as a “unique decision-making forum that brings together diverse stakeholders to support development in the world’s most challenging situations – such as Afghanistan, Haiti and South Sudan.”³³⁴ At the Fourth HLF held in Busan in 2011, 41 countries and international organizations approved the IDPS-prepared “New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States” aiming to develop a new approach for development assistance to fragile states.³³⁵ This new approach brings together OECD donors and a coalition of seventeen conflict-affected and fragile states, calling themselves the “g7+” , including

³²⁹ OECD, *Whole of Government Approaches to Fragile States* (Paris: OECD, 2006), 7, 13; OECD, “Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations,” April 2007, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.oecd.org/dac/conflict-fragility-resilience/docs/38368714.pdf>

³³⁰ OECD, “Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations,” April 2007, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.oecd.org/dac/conflict-fragility-resilience/docs/38368714.pdf>; Christina Bennett, “The Development Agency of the Future: Fit for Protracted Crises,” ODI Working Paper (London: Overseas Development Institute-ODI, April 2015), 9, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://cdn-odi-production.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/9612.pdf>

³³¹ Christina Bennett, “The Development Agency of the Future: Fit for Protracted Crises,” ODI Working Paper (London: Overseas Development Institute-ODI, April 2015), 9, last accessed May 01, 2024. <http://cdn-odi-production.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/9612.pdf>

³³² OECD, *Whole of Government Approaches to Fragile States* (Paris: OECD, 2006), 7

³³³ Rachel Locke and Vanessa Wyeth, “Busan and Beyond: Implementing the “New Deal” for Fragile States,” International Peace Institute (IPI), July 2012, 2, last accessed May 01, 2024. https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/ipi_e_pub_busan_and_beyond.pdf

³³⁴ OECD, *International Support to Post-Conflict Transition: Rethinking Policy, Changing Practice* (Paris: OECD, 2012), 15

³³⁵ Rachel Locke and Vanessa Wyeth, “Busan and Beyond: Implementing the “New Deal” for Fragile States,” International Peace Institute (IPI), July 2012, 2, last accessed May 01, 2024. https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/ipi_e_pub_busan_and_beyond.pdf

Afghanistan to “apply a different development paradigm to these most challenging of contexts.”³³⁶

Reading of these developments in the post-9/11 aid landscape varies. Despite strong rhetorical emphasis on using foreign aid as “good-in-itself” in the context of the linkage between international terrorism, global poverty and economic growth and the actions taken in that direction, several scholars preferred to focus on the bigger picture behind the rhetoric. For instance, Emma Mawdsley, in her article examining the first five MCA deals, claims that “the newly invigorated security-development paradigm is being used to legitimate more spending on ‘development’ programmes which are primarily intended to serve the interests of US consumers, manufacturers and investors,” with poverty reduction taking a back seat “at best as a secondary objective,” and warns that the US’s “pursuit of “economic hegemony through the extension of and ever-deepening penetration of neo-liberal capitalism (in which the MCA is one small vehicle)” would create adverse conditions where development, like the other two pillars of US national security (defence and diplomacy), “contribute to the erosion of human and political security for the United States and the rest of the world.”³³⁷

Mark Duffield taking foreign aid as part of “liberal regimes of development”, in which “the country or person [seen] to be developed or improved as somehow lacking in something” and “development functions as a means of governing others” through “making the object of development complete and whole [that] usually requires the adoption of desired behavior patterns and attitudes” by using “moral trusteeship” and “paternalism” inherent in development, argues that since “a strong neoliberal ethic underpins Western foreign aid” and “[d]evelopment seeks to make people whole and safe by integrating them into local and international markets”, foreign aid is “a strategic tool through which the West in restructuring North-South relations and, more immediately, attempting to manage the collapsing liberal frontier.”³³⁸ Accordingly, Duffield opposes those presenting the security-development nexus as “a new discovery” by stating that the nexus as “intrinsic to liberal regimes of development” worked differently in the past, such as operating through “states rather than the UN system and NGOs” and using the poverty-communism instead of the

³³⁶ Rachel Locke and Vanessa Wyeth, “Busan and Beyond: Implementing the “New Deal” for Fragile States,” International Peace Institute (IPI), July 2012, 2, 6, last accessed May 01, 2024. https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/ipi_e_pub_busan_and_beyond.pdf

³³⁷ Emma Mawdsley, “The Millennium Challenge Account: Neo-Liberalism, Poverty and Security”, Review of International Political Economy, Vol. 14, No. 3 (August 2007): 487

³³⁸ Theory Talks, “Theory Talk #41: Mark Duffield On Human (In)Security, Liberal Interventionism and Aid Compounds,” July 21, 2011, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://www.theory-talks.org/2011/07/theory-talk-41.html>

poverty-terrorism “as a powerful factor driving Western aid” during the Cold War period, and adds that the present form of security-development nexus just became a clear revelation of what has already been known for decades namely “the role of aid as a relation of governance and tool of foreign policy.”³³⁹ Duffield explains briefly how the present form of security-development nexus emerged and how it evolved into its current situation in crisis with reference to the key events in the aid history by first going back to the early 1990s when “debates within humanitarianism around the alleged role of international assistance in prolonging civil wars” and “the *Do No Harm* thesis” produced the idea of that “if humanitarian assistance can prolong civil war then, if properly managed, it could also do the opposite” (Soviet’s collapse) and then to the mid-1990s when “many NGOs reinvented themselves as conflict resolution agencies and donor governments redefined their aid programs accordingly” (Yugoslavia’s breakup), and secondly visits the late 1990s when “donor governments” began to “consciously define international assistance, including humanitarian aid, as legitimate tool of foreign policy...[leading to] donor calls for greater ‘coherence’ between aid, trade and politics in securing desired international outcomes” (Kosovo intervention) and then the post-9/11 period when the “strategic role accorded aid has morphed into counterinsurgency” and thus aid became “an essential tool for ‘winning hearts and minds’ in contested political environments” with the military actors having adopted the “techniques of conflict management” and taken over “technologies of governance” that were developed by NGOs (Afghanistan and Iraq invasions).³⁴⁰

Following the UN Summit for the adoption of the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Goals (SDGs) in 2015, upon the failure of the MDGs in delivering the expected results, and the UN General Assembly Resolution 70/262 in April 2016 that underlines the need for promoting coherence and complementarity between the UN peace and security efforts and its humanitarian, development and human rights work; the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit was held in Istanbul in May 2016 during which the UN Secretary-General, eight UN Principals, the World Bank and IOM signed a joint Commitment to Action, “Transcending Humanitarian-Development Divides” and agreed New Way of Working, and this summit gave birth to the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) nexus, “an initiative to better link humanitarian and development cooperation through a New Way of Working...[and] then complemented by UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres to include peacebuilding” turning

³³⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

the earlier Humanitarian-Development Double nexus (HD) into a Triple Nexus.³⁴¹ In 2017, the Joint Steering Committee to Advance Humanitarian and Development Collaboration (JSC) was created to support Resident Coordinators, Country Teams and if there is any, peace operations to promote coherent programming.³⁴² OECD-DAC ‘Recommendation on the HDP Nexus’ was adopted in 2019 to be updated regularly, the UN Nexus Academy was established following the dialogue with OECD DAC, and high-level dialogue mechanism was established between the UN agencies and OECD-DAC.³⁴³ Although the HDP nexus is mainly discussed between the relevant humanitarian and development actors, the peace pillar meaning the involvement of security actors and peace operations makes this initiative quite controversial, as this will increase the politicization of humanitarian aid. Humanitarian actors are concerned about some donor requests of including political or security objectives, such as counter-terrorism and migration control, into the programming of large funding instruments, as it had happened in the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa.³⁴⁴ All these above-mentioned developments in the aid industry has had an impact on aiding to Afghanistan as numerous agencies at various levels that got involved in aiding to Afghanistan incorporated the policies or approached into their aid programming or their aid delivery.

Before concluding, when there was a growing interest in bridging the humanitarian-development divide in response to the post-Cold War complex emergencies back in the 1990s, Mark Duffield had interpreted the increasing interaction between these two aid realms as the response of the international aid system that was “shaped in a more certain world” to

³⁴¹ Carina Böttcher and Andreas Wittkowsky, *Give ‘P’ a Chance: Peacebuilding, Peace Operations and the HDP Nexus* (Berlin: Center for International Peace Operations, December 2021), last accessed May 01, 2024, https://www.zif-berlin.org/sites/zif-berlin.org/files/2022-02/ZIF_Studie_HDP_Nexus_EN.pdf; United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), *Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly on 27 April 2016 - Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture*, A/RES/70/262, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n16/119/39/pdf/n1611939.pdf?token=StglLoLgB1Zcyo8mX1&fe=true>; United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA/OCHA), “Chapter A: Why Humanitarian Leadership Matters,” *Leadership in Humanitarian Action: Handbook for the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator*, March 2021, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://rhc-handbook.unocha.org/chapter-a.html>

³⁴² Carina Böttcher and Andreas Wittkowsky, *Give ‘P’ a Chance: Peacebuilding, Peace Operations and the HDP Nexus* (Berlin: Center for International Peace Operations, December 2021), 20, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://www.zif-berlin.org/sites/zif-berlin.org/files/2022-02/ZIF_Studie_HDP_Nexus_EN.pdf

³⁴³ OECD, *DAC Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus*, OECD/LEGAL/5019 (Paris: OECD, 2024), 3, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/public/doc/643/643.en.pdf>; Carina Böttcher and Andreas Wittkowsky, *Give ‘P’ a Chance: Peacebuilding, Peace Operations and the HDP Nexus* (Berlin: Center for International Peace Operations, December 2021), 21, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://www.zif-berlin.org/sites/zif-berlin.org/files/2022-02/ZIF_Studie_HDP_Nexus_EN.pdf

³⁴⁴ Carina Böttcher and Andreas Wittkowsky, *Give ‘P’ a Chance: Peacebuilding, Peace Operations and the HDP Nexus* (Berlin: Center for International Peace Operations, December 2021), last accessed May 01, 2024, https://www.zif-berlin.org/sites/zif-berlin.org/files/2022-02/ZIF_Studie_HDP_Nexus_EN.pdf

“new complex emergencies, characterized by unprecedented levels of abject poverty, political insecurity, conflict, state disintegration and population displacement” that were stretching the capacity of the system to its limits.³⁴⁵ Hailing Duffield, all the abovementioned developments indicate that once again the system is at its limits.

2.7. Conclusion

Having first examined theoretical approaches to aid in social sciences through Maussian gift theory, and then delving into theoretical approaches to foreign aid in international relations by exploring four schools of thought, this chapter scrutinized the origins and evolution of humanitarian and development aid, as well as the complex relationship between these two domains within broader historical context.

Considering the history of aid to Afghanistan, the realist school of thought fits well as it focuses on power dynamics and national interests in aid relationships. This approach adopts non-donor-centric view of aid, suggesting that both aid-giving and aid-receiving countries perceive foreign aid as a political tool and enter into aid relationship with a calculated pursuit of their national interests. For instance, during periods of relative peace in the Cold War, particularly under Daud Khan, the country had been in search of aid from powerful non-neighboring countries not only for developmental purposes but also to support its Pashtunistan cause against Pakistan. Similarly, the country’s unwitting alignment with the Soviets can be attributed to its efforts to counterbalance the US-favored Pakistan in the region. Therefore, it can be argued that while diverse donors have allocated aid driven by their own geopolitical interest, often overlooking the country’s absorptive capacity, socio-cultural context, domestic political dynamics, international coordination and long-term sustainability, Afghanistan has accepted this aid due to its own pursuit of national interest. Moreover, Afghanistan was very well aware of that Maussian reciprocity governs aid relationships, leaving either little or no room for altruism. This understanding was evident in President Karzai’s 2004 Berlin Conference appeal, where he urged donors to view aid not as charity but as an investment in stability, peace-building and development at various levels, which would also lower the defense and security-related costs for many nations. The issue with Afghanistan’s aid-receiving practices is that the country often fails to fully calculate the long-term risks or considers the possible negative consequences but prefers to prioritize short-term benefits or allows self-interested political elites to focus on their own gains rather

³⁴⁵ Mark Duffield, “Complex Emergencies and the Crisis of Developmentalism,” *Institute of Development Studies (IDS) Bulletin* 25, no. 4 (1994): 38

than those of the country or its people. This was particularly evident during the Mujahideen infighting years, when factional leaders pursued personal power at the expense of national stability. This has resulted in Afghanistan becoming a fragile, aid-dependent rentier state, swinging from one local power broker to another and from one superpower's influence to another, leaving the Afghan people trapped in a persistent cycle of crises and challenges.

With regard to the parts focusing on humanitarian aid, development aid, and the debate linking these two realms that entered into aid agenda with the 1980s African famines and gained prominence with the 1990s post-Soviet conflicts, the aid industry has long been political, though often shrouded in a diplomatic veil, with major donors utilizing NGOs to accomplish certain objectives. Recent developments, including the humanitarian-development nexus, development-security nexus, and the increasing military involvement in aid delivery (e.g., PRTs, CERP in Afghanistan), as well as the UN-promoted Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus (HDP nexus), signify a shift away from this diplomatic curtain. This transition reflects the securitization of aid, where humanitarian and development efforts are increasingly integrated with security and political objectives, marking a shift from traditional aid paradigms to a framework where aid is closely linked to broader strategic interests.

CHAPTER 3

SETTING THE SCENE: AFGHANISTAN'S PRE-COLD WAR HISTORY AS PRELUDE TO FOREIGN AID IN AFGHAN CONTEXT

An illiterate man in northern Afghanistan gave me a detailed (and historically accurate) account of the Mongol destruction there while excoriating the memory of that “pure infidel” Chinggis Khan (who he claimed was an Uzbek). He then described a great irrigation system that originally had six major canals, of which only three operated today. “Afghanistan was a much better place then; you should have visited us at that time,” he declared, as if I had just missed this golden age. I agreed, but knew that he was speaking of an age well beyond my own time horizon, since the Mongols had attacked in 1222. But by Afghan standards that was still recent enough to provoke strong emotion; an Uzbek listening to this story vehemently denied that his group had any relationship to the pagan Mongols.³⁴⁶

3.1. Introduction

For some countries, distant past is not all that distant but still has a strong relevance for the present. As one of those countries, Afghanistan's longer-term history, from the most distant past to the most recent past, explains a lot about the current political, economic, and social landscape of the country on which the country's aid architecture is also built. However, in order to identify the underlying causes of the complex political, economic and social situation prevailing in the country, its recent history, particularly after the late post-independence period leading up to the Soviet invasion and then the Mujahideen era, is mostly taken as a reference point without taking into consideration that the country's earlier history had a profound impact on the shaping of its recent history and thus its present. Although the country's recent history remains vital in understanding current political, economic, and social context, a thorough assessment of the country's early history has a great explanatory power for analyzing complex chain of events and significant changes that took place in the country's recent history. An even a closer look also reveals that many core challenges and problems facing Afghanistan from its recent history till today are also deeply rooted in centuries of Afghan history.

Without proper knowledge of the country's early history and its enduring legacies, there is a potential risk of misreading and thus misunderstanding and misinterpreting current events.

³⁴⁶ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 20.

Another potential risk is missing the opportunity of uncovering patterns of both continuity and change over the country's long and eventful history that might otherwise be overlooked, thereby failing to draw useful lessons from these patterns to the benefit of present and also future. To avoid or minimize these risks, current issues and developments related to the political, economic and social domain of the country should be put into a broader historical perspective.

Using broader historical perspective offers a more comprehensive and profound understanding of the country, including its demographic characteristics drawn up by ethnic, linguistic, sectarian, cultural, rural-urban, religious, tribal, and clan divisions, its strategic geopolitical position as a colonial creation, its relations with external powers (both regional and international), its long-standing territorial regional identities, its political dynamics and structure leading to recurrent collapse of state power, its economic underdevelopment, its problematic center-periphery relations, its long search for governmental stability, its poor political institutionalization, its slow social development, its initial modernization efforts and the associated challenges, among others. All these issues are of great importance in exploring the history of humanitarian and development aid to the country.

By taking into consideration the turning points in the historical period under examination, the chapter focusing on the pre-Cold War history of Afghanistan is structured as follows: The first part details the period eventuated in the emergence of modern Afghan state. The second part analyzes the path going to the independence of the country. The third part discusses the relevant conditions that made the country recipient of foreign aid for the first time in its history.

3.2. Emergence of Earliest Foundations of Modern Afghan State in 1880

The limited amount of archaeological researches that have so far been conducted on the Palaeolithic period of Afghanistan to generate comprehensive knowledge about the country's earliest inhabitants but alas have not gone beyond being preliminary work for various reasons, notably the interruption of fieldwork due the turbulent history the country has experienced since the 1979 Soviet invasion but also the paucity of systematic areal investigations, well-documented sites and extensive data on which to base reliable and comparable assessments, presents some vague evidence indicating the probable presence of Lower Palaeolithic human occupation in the country as far back as 50,000 years ago based primarily on Louis Dupree's discoveries in the Dasht-i-Nawur basin of Ghazni Province in

1974, whereas yields good evidence for the existence of Middle, Upper/Late and Epipalaeolithic human populations in northern Afghanistan.³⁴⁷

As regards the later prehistoric periods of Afghanistan, the best available relevant archaeological evidences from the sites north and south of the Hindu Kush in Afghanistan and contextualized in relation to the evidences found from the better documented sites in the regions of former Soviet Central Asia, Iran, and Pakistan immediately bordering Afghanistan, suggests the possibility that the prehistoric populations inhabiting northern and southern Afghanistan experienced a series of transitions from hunting and gathering to early nomadic pastoral and sedentary agricultural way of life through the domestication of plants and animals and then to the adoption of domesticate-based economy during the Neolithic and Chalcolithic periods leading eventually to the development of early urban settlement pattern with stratified social structure in the northern and southern areas of the country as outposts of the Oxus Civilization (ca. 2500/2400-1600/1400 BCE), the Indus/Harappan Civilization (Shortughai: ca. 2500-1700 BCE) and the Helmand Civilization (early fourth to sometime in the second millennium BCE).³⁴⁸ Furthermore, numerous archaeological evidences found both within Afghanistan and abroad, such as but not limited to the presence of the Indus outpost of Shortughai in northern Afghanistan very far from its motherland, the detection of similarities in material culture of the geographically disparate sites located both within and outside the country, and the identification of artifacts or particular raw materials of those artifacts at sites geographically distant from the source areas, most notably the exotic objects-either imported or locally made under foreign influence- found at the ancient settlements of Afghanistan, and the Badakhshan lapis lazuli artifacts found at the sites of nearby and faraway civilizations, indicates that these proto-urban/early urban societies of Afghanistan established either direct or indirect contacts, exchanges, socio-cultural

³⁴⁷ Richard S. Davis, "The Palaeolithic," in *The Archaeology Of Afghanistan: From the Earliest Times to the Timurid Period* (new edition), ed. Warwick Ball with Norman Hammond (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 61-98; Raymond Allchin and Norman Hammond, "Conclusion," in *The Archaeology Of Afghanistan: From the Earliest Times to the Timurid Period* (new edition), ed. Warwick Ball with Norman Hammond (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 610-611; Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), xvii.

³⁴⁸ Jim G. Shaffer, "The Later Prehistoric Periods," in *The Archaeology of Afghanistan: From the Earliest Times to the Timurid Period*, ed. F.R. Allchin and Norman Hammond (London: Academic Press Inc., 1978), 71-186; Henri-Paul Francfort et al., "The Development of the Oxus Civilisation North of the Hindu Kush," in *The Archaeology Of Afghanistan: From the Earliest Times to the Timurid Period* (new edition), ed. Warwick Ball with Norman Hammond (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 99-160; Cameron A. Petrie and Jim G. Shaffer, "The Development of a 'Helmand Civilisation' South of the Hindu Kush," in *The Archaeology Of Afghanistan: From the Earliest Times to the Timurid Period* (new edition), ed. Warwick Ball with Norman Hammond (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 161-259; Raymond Allchin and Norman Hammond, "Conclusion," in *The Archaeology Of Afghanistan: From the Earliest Times to the Timurid Period* (new edition), ed. Warwick Ball with Norman Hammond (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 611-613; Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), xvii-xviii, 262-266.

interactions, and trade relations not only with each other but also with other civilizations within their immediate neighborhood (Central Asia, Iran, the Indus region/South Asia) and beyond (Mesopotamia, Egypt) during the same period, the third millennium BCE in particular.³⁴⁹ Beyond doubt, the country's geographical position at the crossroads of several important natural routes in the prehistoric times and its topography characterized by central highlands surrounded by lowlands, valleys and plains brought significant advantages in both trade and exchanges for these early urban civilizations, but also rendered them vulnerable to migration flows and invasions from the north.³⁵⁰

During the late Bronze Age and early Iron Age (second millennium BCE), these early urban civilizations that also had settlements in northern and southern Afghanistan entered into a phase of permanent decline, which might be triggered by dramatic consequences of either migrations or invasions from the north or climate and environmental changes or economic difficulties mainly caused by changes in inter-regional trade and exchange networks or combination of all these factors and/or some other factors, resulting in significant changes in almost all spheres of life, most specifically in settlement patterns, adaptation strategies, and material culture of people, with extensive de-urbanization, emergence of more pastoral and less hierarchized societies, and disappearance of numerous types of elite material.³⁵¹ From the Middle Iron Age to the Achaemenid conquests of Afghanistan, "the elements of

³⁴⁹ Sophia R. Bowlby and Jevin H. White, "The Geographical Background," in *The Archaeology Of Afghanistan: From the Earliest Times to the Timurid Period* (new edition), ed. Warwick Ball with Norman Hammond (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 57-59; Henri-Paul Francfort et al., "The Development of the Oxus Civilisation North of the Hindu Kush," in *The Archaeology Of Afghanistan: From the Earliest Times to the Timurid Period* (new edition), ed. Warwick Ball with Norman Hammond (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 122, 123, 127, 151, 155, 157-160; Cameron A. Petrie and Jim G. Shaffer, "The Development of a 'Helmand Civilisation' South of the Hindu Kush," in *The Archaeology Of Afghanistan: From the Earliest Times to the Timurid Period* (new edition), ed. Warwick Ball with Norman Hammond (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 186, 246-259.

³⁵⁰ Sophia R. Bowlby and Jevin H. White, "The Geographical Background," in *The Archaeology Of Afghanistan: From the Earliest Times to the Timurid Period* (new edition), ed. Warwick Ball with Norman Hammond (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 60.

³⁵¹ Henri-Paul Francfort et al., "The Development of the Oxus Civilisation North of the Hindu Kush," in *The Archaeology Of Afghanistan: From the Earliest Times to the Timurid Period* (new edition), ed. Warwick Ball with Norman Hammond (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 160; Cameron A. Petrie and Jim G. Shaffer, "The Development of a 'Helmand Civilisation' South of the Hindu Kush," in *The Archaeology Of Afghanistan: From the Earliest Times to the Timurid Period* (new edition), ed. Warwick Ball with Norman Hammond (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 186, 259; Raymond Allchin and Norman Hammond, "Conclusion," in *The Archaeology Of Afghanistan: From the Earliest Times to the Timurid Period* (new edition), ed. Warwick Ball with Norman Hammond (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 612-613; Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 269; Anindya Sarkar et al., "Oxygen Isotope in Archaeological Bioapatites from India: Implications to Climate Change and Decline of Bronze Age Harappan Civilization," *Scientific Reports* 6, no. 26555 (2016): 1-9, last accessed May 01, 2024. <https://www.nature.com/articles/srep26555>; Elise Luneau, "The End of the Oxus Civilization," in *The World of the Oxus Civilization*, ed. Bertille Lyonnet and Nadezhda A. Dubova (London: Routledge, 2021), 1147-1172, Taylor & Francis eBook.

urbanism and sophisticated state structures” are assumed to take place in northern and southern Afghanistan that had hosted previous civilizations.³⁵²

In the mid-sixth century BCE and early fifth century BCE, under the reigns of Cyrus the Great, the founder of the Empire (Cyrus II, r. 559-529 BCE) and Darius the Great (Darius I, r. 521-486 BCE), the Achaemenid Persian Empire (559-330 BCE), after conquering Anatolia, marched eastwards and gradually expanded/enlarged its borders as far as the Indus Valley (Punjab) in the east, incorporating present-day Afghanistan into its eastern satrapies.³⁵³ The Achaemenid period/rule is of great importance for Afghan history mainly due to the following reasons: first and foremost, it marks the beginning of recorded history of Afghanistan; second, it is the beginning of the long-lasting Persian influence in Afghanistan; third, it stimulated the spread of Zoroastrianism in and around Afghanistan.³⁵⁴

Since the times of the Achaemenids, several dynastic empires rising and falling in Central Asia, South Asia (Indian subcontinent) and West Asia (Middle East/ Persia) conquered and dominated some or all parts of the territories that now comprise Afghanistan, and successive and countless waves of foreign nomadic invasions left those lands in ruins over and over again.³⁵⁵ Having mentioned the country’s strategic location and harsh terrain, Stephen Tanner describes Afghanistan as “a land that can be easily invaded but is much more difficult to hold—and to hold together.”³⁵⁶ Nevertheless, Afghanistan was not only a land being exposed to the conquests or invasions of foreign powers but also a birthplace of several empires, most notably the Ghaznavids, Ghorids and Durrani, that ruled vast territories beyond their region.³⁵⁷

³⁵² Warwick Ball et al., “The Iron Age, Achaemenid and Hellenistic Periods,” in *The Archaeology Of Afghanistan: From the Earliest Times to the Timurid Period* (new edition), ed. Warwick Ball with Norman Hammond (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 260-261.

³⁵³ Warwick Ball et al., “The Iron Age, Achaemenid and Hellenistic Periods,” in *The Archaeology Of Afghanistan: From the Earliest Times to the Timurid Period* (new edition), ed. Warwick Ball with Norman Hammond (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 261-263; Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 274

³⁵⁴ Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 8; Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 272, 274.

³⁵⁵ Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 24.

³⁵⁶ Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 3.

³⁵⁷ Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 2; Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), xviii.

Of those empires ruled by outsiders and insiders, the most well-known ones are as follows: Alexander the Great's Kingdom of Macedonia, Seleucid Empire (312-64 BCE) and Mauryan Dynasty (330-150 BCE), Kushan Empire (150 BC- AD 224), Sassanian Dynasty (241-400), Hephthalite Empire known as White Huns (400-565), Arab invasions (652-709), Samanid Empire (819-961), Turkic Ghaznavid Empire (962-1151), Ghorid Empire (1151-1219), Genghis Khan's Mongol Empire (1219-1332), Tamerlane's Timurid Dynasty (1370-1506), Babur Khan's Moghul Empire and Persian Safavid Empire (1506-1709) and Durrani Empire in 1747.³⁵⁸

In the course of his ambitious military campaigns of world conquest that lasted for more than a decade, Alexander the Great (Alexander III, r. 336-323 BCE) of Macedon, began to advance with his army from west to the east and gradually conquered the entirety of the Achaemenid Empire headed by Darius III (r. 336-330 BCE), despite stiff resistance of various groups en route, thereby the Achaemenid satrapies in and around Afghanistan came under the control of Alexander the Great's Kingdom around 330 BCE, though for a very short period of time until his death in 323 BCE.³⁵⁹

After the early death of Alexander who did not name a successor or heir, his massive empire stretching from his homeland of Macedon itself to India fell into four decades of chaos and warfare over the leadership succession, and gradually disintegrated/devolved into several independent Hellenistic kingdoms and city-states with different lifespans, of which the Seleucid Empire founded in Babylon by Seleucus I Nicator (r. 312-281 BCE), one of Alexander's leading generals, would be the only one coming closest to reach the size of Alexander's empire by establishing control over large territories extending from Thrace in the west and to the Indus Valley in the east at its zenith.³⁶⁰

The direct effect of the power vacuum created by Alexander's death in Afghanistan was that its northern parts came under the control of the Hellenistic Seleucid Empire whereas its

³⁵⁸ Meredith L. Runion, *The History of Afghanistan* (Westport, CT, USA: Greenwood Press, 2007), 39-50, 54-63; Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 24.

³⁵⁹ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 274, 276, 278-284; Warwick Ball et al., "The Iron Age, Achaemenid and Hellenistic Periods," in *The Archaeology Of Afghanistan: From the Earliest Times to the Timurid Period* (new edition), ed. Warwick Ball with Norman Hammond (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 263

³⁶⁰ Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 53-56; Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 283, 285; Warwick Ball et al., "The Iron Age, Achaemenid and Hellenistic Periods," in *The Archaeology Of Afghanistan: From the Earliest Times to the Timurid Period* (new edition), ed. Warwick Ball with Norman Hammond (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 263.

southeastern parts came under the control of the Indian Mauryan Empire of Chandragupta Maurya (r. 321-297 BCE), who expanded his empire's western borders to include the areas south of the Hindu Kush in 305 BCE and secured it by defeating Seleucus and signing a peace treaty with him in 303 BCE.³⁶¹ This first pan-Indian empire has a special significance for Buddhism. The third Indian Mauryan Emperor, Ashoka (r. 272-232 BCE), who embraced Buddhist teachings, introduced and promoted Buddhism in the regions under his control by using institutional means, which became as influential as Zoroastrianism.³⁶² In 185 BCE, Sunga coup toppled already declining Mauryan Empire in the aftermath of Ashoka's death, by replacing Mauryan Empire with Sunga Empire and Buddhism with Hinduism in the region.³⁶³ Around 250 BCE, the Seleucid Empire was having hard time because of the Parthian invasions in the east and dynastic squabbles in the center.³⁶⁴ The Seleucid Empire's inability to protect its eastern borders against the Parthians made the Bactria Governorate in Afghanistan declare independence from the Seleucid Empire and create the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom.³⁶⁵ Greco-Bactrian Kingdom gained control over vast lands stretching from northeastern Iran to northwestern India and turned into the Greco-Indian Empire while surviving in complete isolation from the rest of the Hellenistic world.³⁶⁶

The Yuezhi/Yueh-Chih people, a confederation of nomadic tribes from Central Asia, invaded the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom struggling with internal disputes, and established the Kushan Empire in 150 BCE.³⁶⁷ Thereby, the Kushans began to rule Afghanistan and most of northern Indian subcontinent in addition to Central Asia, which lasted nearly four centuries.³⁶⁸ Kushan Empire's rise coincided with the emergence of the Silk Route, and Kushan King Kanishka used this opportunity to enrich its dynasty and spread Buddhism all

³⁶¹ Shaista Wahab and Barry Youngerman, *A Brief History of Afghanistan*, 2nd ed. (New York, USA: Infobase Publishing, 2010), 42, 44-45

³⁶² Nitya Ramakrishnan, *In custody: law, impunity and prisoner abuse in South Asia* (New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2013), 367; Meredith L. Runion, *The History of Afghanistan* (Westport, CT, USA: Greenwood Press, 2007), 42; Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 57.

³⁶³ Meredith L. Runion, *The History of Afghanistan* (Westport, CT, USA: Greenwood Press, 2007), 44.

³⁶⁴ Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 57.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 57-58.

³⁶⁶ Meredith L. Runion, *The History of Afghanistan* (Westport, CT, USA: Greenwood Press, 2007), 45.

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 46.

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

along the Silk Route.³⁶⁹ However, after the decease of King Kanishka, the Empire entered into dissolution period due to internal power struggles and finally the Persian Sassanid Empire gained control over large parts of Afghanistan in AD 241, previously ruled by the Kushans.³⁷⁰ Similarly, the Indian Gupta Empire (AD 320-544) expanding to include the entire Indus Valley region to the west, established control over eastern parts of Afghanistan.³⁷¹ Thereby, after centuries of Greek/Macedonian, Hellenistic, Indian, Parthian and Kushan rules, Afghanistan once again came under the Persian and Indian rule as in the ancient imperial times of Seleucids and Mauryans.

Starting from 400, northern nomadic tribes also known as Hephthalite White Huns invaded vast lands stretching from Persia through Afghanistan and as far to the East as India by destroying Sassanid, Gupta and any remaining of the Kushan Empires along the way and established its rule over those lands.³⁷² However, in 565, the Hephthalites lost control over the conquered lands because of the attacks by another northern nomadic invaders/tribes known as Gokturk in the north and Sassanids in the south.³⁷³ Subsequently, several small kingdoms were established mostly under the resurrected Persian Sassanid rule but led by either Kushan or Hephthalite satraps.³⁷⁴ The Sassanids, the successor of the Parthian Empire, was the last pre-Islamic Persian Empire in the region.

The year 652 marked the beginning of the Arab conquest of Afghanistan and continued until 709, which triggered slow but gradual dissemination of Islamic culture and influence all over the region.³⁷⁵ Around 800s, the Abbasid Caliphate centered in Baghdad began to crumble and this led to the appearance of several small semi-independent Muslim states all over the lands under its rule, thus Tahirid, Samanid and Saffarid eastern dynasties emerged in the Afghan lands, in which ended up with the supremacy of the Samanids over the other two.³⁷⁶

³⁶⁹ Nitya Ramakrishnan, *In custody: law, impunity and prisoner abuse in South Asia* (New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2013), 367.

³⁷⁰ Meredith L. Runion, *The History of Afghanistan* (Westport, CT, USA: Greenwood Press, 2007), 47.

³⁷¹ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 110, 296, 297, 302,

³⁷² Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 70, 72.

³⁷³ Meredith L. Runion, *The History of Afghanistan* (Westport, CT, USA: Greenwood Press, 2007), 47-48.

³⁷⁴ Nitya Ramakrishnan, *In custody: law, impunity and prisoner abuse in South Asia* (New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2013), 367.

³⁷⁵ Meredith L. Runion, *The History of Afghanistan* (Westport, CT, USA: Greenwood Press, 2007), 48.

³⁷⁶ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 312-313.

The Samanids, the first Persian dynasty that appeared in what is now Iran and Uzbekistan after the Muslim Arab conquest, ruled vast lands including Afghanistan until a Turkic slave commander of Khorasan named Alptigin initiated a coup against weakening Samanid Empire in late 900s, which resulted in the establishment of Turkic Ghaznavid Empire under the rule of ‘Mahmud of Ghazna’ having spread Islam and its rule from Afghanistan into India, Persia and Central Asia.³⁷⁷ Dupree calls the period under this indigenous empire as “a true renaissance of juxtaposed military conquests and cultural achievements” in the Early Islamic Period.³⁷⁸

Once the central authority collapsed after the death of Mahmud of Ghazna, the Ghorids overthrew the Ghaznavids in 1186.³⁷⁹ Ghorid Empire ruled the region until being overthrown in 1219 by the Mongol warriors of Genghis Khan who left a trail of devastation in their wake while establishing the largest contiguous empire in world history, stretching from the Sea of Japan to the Carpathian Mountains.³⁸⁰ Genghis Khan’s seizure of the Silk Route improved “communications between the Middle East and Central Asia.”³⁸¹ However, by thirteenth century, after the death of Genghis Khan, the Mongol Empire was divided into four separate khanates among his four sons of which the borders of two of them intersected in Afghanistan: Chagatai Khanate in Western Asia including northeast Afghanistan and Il-Khanate in Persia and Middle East encompassing western Afghanistan.³⁸² Recurrent civil wars together with changes of rulers made the central authority of the khanates weakened at the expense of local leaders in the periphery of the Empire and thereby another actor emerged in Afghan lands in the early fourteenth century. Kart dynasty of Tajiks governing the city of Herat as vassals of Il-Khanates declared independence and ruled much of Western Afghanistan for 50 years.³⁸³ Domination of these Mongol Khanates in Afghanistan that lasted for almost a century and the rule of Kartids in Herat ended with the conquest of

³⁷⁷ Shaista Wahab and Barry Youngerman, *A Brief History of Afghanistan*, 2nd ed. (New York, USA: Infobase Publishing, 2010), 56-57; Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 76.

³⁷⁸ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), XVIII.

³⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 314.

³⁸⁰ Meredith L. Runion, *The History of Afghanistan* (Westport, CT, USA: Greenwood Press, 2007), 49-50.

³⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 59.

³⁸² Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 100; Shaista Wahab and Barry Youngerman, *A Brief History of Afghanistan*, 2nd ed. (New York, USA: Infobase Publishing, 2010), 63-64.

³⁸³ Shaista Wahab and Barry Youngerman, *A Brief History of Afghanistan*, 2nd ed. (New York, USA: Infobase Publishing, 2010), 64.

Tamerlane in the mid-fourteenth century. Hazaras of central Afghanistan are the descendants of these Mongol invaders.³⁸⁴ The systematic destruction of historic cities, large settled regions, towns, villages together with vital irrigation systems and murder of the educated elites carried out by the Mongols in Afghanistan set back this region a hundred years.³⁸⁵

Tamerlane, a Turco-Mongol conqueror claiming to be a descendant of Genghis Khan, marched out of his native Transoxiana in 1363 for the purpose of reviving Genghis Khan's great empire, established the Timurid Empire in 1370 and conquered vast lands stretching from Anatolia to Delhi, India while making Samarkand and Herat capital and culture centers of the Empire.³⁸⁶ Tamerlane's legacy in Afghanistan was mixed due to the fact that, much like Genghis Kahn, Tamerlane destroyed irrigation systems (Helmand) and the cities (Herat and Balkh) in the lands he conquered, but unlike his forebear, he rebuilt those cities with magnificent structures, thanks to the Silk Route's traffic that reached its peak during his reign.³⁸⁷ After the death of Tamerlane, having prepared for a march on China in 1405, the Empire began to decline slowly because of the constant fights over the throne but at the same time showed enormous development in the fields of art, architecture and astronomy during the reigns of his son Shah Rukh (1405-1447), grandson Ulugh Beg (1447-1449) and the last Timurid emperor Husain Baiqara (1470-1506), as called by Dupree as cultural renaissance in Samarkand of Central Asia and Herat of northwestern Afghanistan.³⁸⁸ "Political instability, brought on by the destructive Mongol and Turco-Mongol invasions of the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries A.D., and recurring localized, fratricidal wars broke up the Silk Route trade, and by the fifteenth century European navigators sought new sea routes to the East, which led to the rediscovery, exploitation, and development of a New World."³⁸⁹

By the early sixteenth century, new powerful states began to take shape in each side of Afghanistan, which were Mohammad's Uzbek Shaybanid Dynasty (1500-1599) in the north,

³⁸⁴ Nitya Ramakrishnan, *In custody: law, impunity and prisoner abuse in South Asia* (New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2013), 369.

³⁸⁵ Shaista Wahab and Barry Youngerman, *A Brief History of Afghanistan*, 2nd ed. (New York, USA: Infobase Publishing, 2010), 62.

³⁸⁶ Steven Otfinoski, *Nations in Transition: Afghanistan* (New York, USA: Facts on File, Inc., 2004), 6-7; Shaista Wahab and Barry Youngerman, *A Brief History of Afghanistan*, 2nd ed. (New York, USA: Infobase Publishing, 2010), 64-65.

³⁸⁷ Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 103-104; Shaista Wahab and Barry Youngerman, *A Brief History of Afghanistan*, 2nd ed. (New York, USA: Infobase Publishing, 2010), 65.

³⁸⁸ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 317; Meredith L. Runion, *The History of Afghanistan* (Westport, CT, USA: Greenwood Press, 2007), 61-62.

³⁸⁹ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), XVIII.

Babur's Moghul Empire (1526-1707) in the south and Shah Ismail's Persian Safavid Empire (1501-1732) in the west, and thereby three-cornered competition began among those powers together with constant fights over Herat-Kabul-Kandahar triangle.³⁹⁰ C. Edmund Bosworth explains the importance of this triangle with the following words: "Since it is one component of the triangle Kabul-Kandahar-Herat, possession of which gives military control of Afghanistan, and is also at the end of a route via the modern railhead of Chaman to Quetta and northwestern India, Kandahar has been of strategic and commercial importance all through recorded history."³⁹¹

Of those, an Uzbek khan from Genghisid lineage, Mohammad Shaybani, conquered Transoxiana, western Turkestan, Fergana and Khorasan between 1500 and 1508 while reaffirming its hold over Samarkand and Fergana by defeating Babur several times and putting a final end to the Timurid Empire by conquering its capital Herat.³⁹² However, the expansion of the Shaybanids towards Persia through the capture of Herat, known as the pearl of Khorasan, disturbed Shah Ismail of the Safavids, who consolidated power after defeating the Aqqoyunlu Turcomans in western Persia, and made him invaded Khorasan and killed Mohammad Shaybani in 1510, which led to the dissolution of the short-lived Shaybanid Empire and withdrawal of Uzbek Shaybanids to the North in Tashkent.³⁹³

Zahiruddin Mohammad, mostly known as Babur, a Turko-Mongol conqueror descendant of Genghis Khan and Tamerlane, who had established a small kingdom in Kabul in 1504 after he had lost his father's satrapy in Fergana and Transoxiana to the Uzbek Shaybanids, made an alliance with Shah Ismail of the Safavids in order to regain his lands and began to rule Transoxiana under the suzerainty of Shia Safavids.³⁹⁴ However, disturbances of local Sunni population caused by living under Shia rule, though Babur himself was not Shia, made the Uzbek Shaybanids, who had withdrawn to Tashkent after their defeat, declare war against

³⁹⁰ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 319, 321; Svat Soucek, *A History of Inner Asia* (New York, USA: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 149.

³⁹¹ C. Edmund Bosworth, ed., *Historic Cities of the Islamic World* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2007), 268.

³⁹² Rene Grousset, *The Empire of the Steppes: A History of Central Asia*, trans. Naomi Walford (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 481-482; Svat Soucek, *A History of Inner Asia* (New York, USA: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 149; Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 319.

³⁹³ Rene Grousset, *The Empire of the Steppes: A History of Central Asia*, trans. Naomi Walford (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 482-484.

³⁹⁴ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 319; Rene Grousset, *The Empire of the Steppes: A History of Central Asia*, trans. Naomi Walford (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 483-484.

Babur and the Safavids to regain Transoxiana in 1512, and this time it resulted in the victory of the Uzbeks that would rule Transoxiana until 1599 as in the form of separate khanates.³⁹⁵ Babur, giving up the idea of ruling Transoxiana, went back to Kabul and later in 1525 headed towards India where he established Muslim Indian Moghul Empire with the inclusion of northern India.³⁹⁶ During the rest of the sixteenth century, Afghan lands turned out to be a buffer zone between the Indian Moghuls in the east, the Persian Safavids in the west and the Uzbeks in the north.³⁹⁷

This fierce struggle during the sixteenth century continued in the seventeenth century as well. As a result of these fighting, Afghan cities such as Badakhshan, Balkh, Kandahar and Herat alternated between those powers several times depending on the balance of power in fluctuation by time.³⁹⁸ Despite these frequent alternations regarding the area and the extent of the control, the following picture became more pronounced over time: Indian Moghul Empire ruling Kabul and most of Pashtunistan, the Uzbeks ruling Balkh and the northern Afghanistan, and Persian Safavids ruling mostly western Afghanistan.³⁹⁹ While this three-cornered struggle was shaking up the region, local people divided into numerous tribes and clans survived either by remaining independent or shifting loyalty when it best suited their interests.⁴⁰⁰ In this setting, tribal identity got stronger while any chance of developing relations among different tribes got weaker.⁴⁰¹

In the early seventeenth century, during the struggle between the Moghuls and the Safavids over southern Afghanistan, two prominent Afghan tribal units, the Ghilzais in Kabul-Ghazni-Kandahar line and the Abdalis in the northwestern Kandahar to Herat route, inclined to support the Persian Safavids, despite of belonging to different branches of Islam, mainly

³⁹⁵ Rene Grousset, *The Empire of the Steppes: A History of Central Asia*, trans. Naomi Walford (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 484.

³⁹⁶ Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 105-107; Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 319.

³⁹⁷ Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 112.

³⁹⁸ Rene Grousset, *The Empire of the Steppes: A History of Central Asia*, trans. Naomi Walford (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 484-485; Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 321.

³⁹⁹ Shaista Wahab and Barry Youngerman, *A Brief History of Afghanistan*, 2nd ed. (New York, USA: Infobase Publishing, 2010), 68-69.

⁴⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 69.

⁴⁰¹ Nitya Ramakrishnan, *In custody: law, impunity and prisoner abuse in South Asia* (New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2013), 367.

because of three reasons: Ghilzais had many fights with the Moghuls, Abdalis were already Persianized in cultural terms and the Persians were known as tolerant to other beliefs by these tribes.⁴⁰² However things did not go as planned. When the new Safavid leadership tried forceful conversion from Sunnism to Shiism on the local populace/his Afghan subjects in Kandahar in addition to the negotiations of the Safavid governor in Kanadahar with the Moghuls over handing the city to them, the Ghilzais under the leadership of Mirwais Khan Hotaki revolted against the Safavid rule in Kandahar twice and finally they could achieve to establish the so-called Hotaki dynasty in Kandahar in 1709, independent from the Safavid rule.⁴⁰³ Mirwais Khan, having gained the recognition of the Indian Moghul Emperor as regent of Kandahar, defeated the Safavids in 1711 again and thus became an undisputed authority in Kandahar.⁴⁰⁴

The successful independence movement of the Ghilzais also triggered the same sentiments in the Abdalis as well. The Abdalis in Herat, who had earlier supported the Safavids against Mirwais Khan, also declared their independence from the Safavids in 1716 by taking Herat and flinging back the successive Safavid counter-attacks.⁴⁰⁵ Stephen Tanner states, “The Safavids were fast learning the age-old lesson that entering Afghanistan was a simple task; holding it was quite another.”⁴⁰⁶ However, when the Safavid threat was eliminated, the Abdalis marched on the Ghilzais in Kandahar, which resulted in the defeat of the Abdalis in 1719.⁴⁰⁷

As of 1720, Ghilzai Pashtun leaders succeeding Mirwais Khan, who had put great effort into uniting tribes until his death in 1715 in order to guarantee freedom, preferred territorial expansion towards the Safavid Empire instead of tribal unification and achieved to extend their realm by occupying Isfahan, the Safavid capital, in 1722.⁴⁰⁸ However, the victory came at a price. The relations between the Ghilzai King of Persia and the Ghilzai leader in Kandahar deteriorated in time and the Ghilzai power in Persia, who were cut off from their

⁴⁰² Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 114.

⁴⁰³ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 221.

⁴⁰⁴ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 221-222.

⁴⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 222-223.

⁴⁰⁶ Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 115.

⁴⁰⁷ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 223.

⁴⁰⁸ Meredith L. Runion, *The History of Afghanistan* (Westport, CT, USA: Greenwood Press, 2007), 63-64.

homeland, began to weaken due to the wars fought against the Turks and Russians between 1725 and 1729.⁴⁰⁹ Nadir Khan, a Sunni chief from the Afshar Turks in northeast Iran and the supreme commander of the Safavid King Tahmasp II, who took Abdali tribesmen revolting against the Safavids occasionally to his side in order to avoid the unification of these two tribes against him, defeated the Ghilzais in Persia and then occupied most of Afghanistan.⁴¹⁰ After having declared himself Shah of the Safavids in 1736, Nadir Shah captured Kandahar in 1738 and thus ended the Ghilzai power in Southeast Afghanistan.⁴¹¹ In the following years, Nadir Shah first conquered Delhi by defeating the Mughal army and then much of Transoxiana by crushing the Uzbeks.⁴¹² After the assassination of Nadir Shah in 1747, the Abdali tribes having held a council (*Jirga*) in Kandahar chose his loyal guard named Ahmad Khan from Sadozai branch of the Popalzai tribe (Sadozai sub-tribe of the Abdali confederacy) as their next leader who would rule the Durrani Empire until the British invasion in the early nineteenth century, being renamed as Ahmad Shah “Durr-i-Durran or Pearl of Pearls”.⁴¹³ Since then, the Abdali tribe was also renamed Durrani. Thereby, the fight of two Asian imperialist powers of Persian Safavids and Indian Moghuls over the Afghan land during the 16th and 17th centuries gave birth to the Durrani Empire in 1747, under the leadership of Ahmad Shah Durrani.⁴¹⁴

From the beginning of the Ghaznavids in 962 until the rise of the Durrani Pashtuns in 1747, Afghanistan was ruled by dynasties either of Turko-Mongolian origin or with military that was dominated by Turko-Mongolian groups holding the military advantage of being nomads in comparison to the sedentary groups in the lands they conquered, the organizational sophistication in ruling large-size lands with the formation of steady economies and more centralization, the cultural adaptation abilities and the strictly hereditary dynastic structure, which is rarely challenged, allowing “only the descendants of the charismatic founder the throne” for the sake of state survival.⁴¹⁵ This political structure came into existence with

⁴⁰⁹ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 224.

⁴¹⁰ Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 116.

⁴¹¹ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 226.

⁴¹² Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 226-227.

⁴¹³ Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 117-118; Meredith L. Runion, *The History of Afghanistan* (Westport, CT, USA: Greenwood Press, 2007), 64.

⁴¹⁴ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), XVIII.

⁴¹⁵ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 66-67, 80-81, 85.

centuries-long interaction between a Turko-Mongolian military elite and an older Persian tradition of civil administration, culture and religion.⁴¹⁶ The long-term dominance of these dynastic empires in Afghanistan explains that Turko-Mongolian rulers understood the essence of a Chinese saying of that “while an empire could be won on horseback, it could not be rule from there.”⁴¹⁷

The Pashtun period in the history of Afghanistan as we know it today started with the rise to power of Ahmad Shah Abdali, the founder of the Durrani Empire, following Nadir Shah’s assassination in 1747. Although there are different claims on the prehistory and political history of the Pashtuns in Afghanistan until that time, there is neither any documentation proving their existence as earliest inhabitants of Afghanistan nor any delineation about them until about 1500.⁴¹⁸ Barfield explains this by addressing the fact that “since for so much of its history Afghanistan’s territory was the eastern frontier of various Persian-based empires and then Turko-Mongolian ones. In these empires, people at the margins rarely attracted the attention of the center.”⁴¹⁹ However, the Pashtuns, those in the margins, became the new rulers of Afghanistan under the leadership of Ahmad Shah Durrani for the first time in the country’s history. William Vogelsang states, “Power was no longer the prerogative of the cities; the tribesmen roaming the countryside dominated the political arena.”⁴²⁰ There are four reasons behind this occurrence: Ahmad’s charismatic personality uniting the disobedient Pashtun groups under his leadership, the decline of his two powerful neighbors namely the Safavids and the Moghuls during his reign, high military skills of the Pashtuns and the shift of the economic power from the cities to the countryside.⁴²¹ In addition, the decline of the Silk Road’s importance due to maritime trade in the Indian Ocean that had made the Afghan land open into invasions for centuries and the spread of firearms avoiding the raids of horsemen from the steppes also worked in favor of this Durrani Pashtun chief.⁴²²

After having formed a grand Afghan ethno-tribal confederation with Kandahar as its capital, Ahmad Shah Durrani (1747-1773), during his 25 years long rule, achieved to provide a

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 88.

⁴¹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 90.

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴²⁰ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 233.

⁴²¹ *Ibid.*

⁴²² Shaista Wahab and Barry Youngerman, *A Brief History of Afghanistan*, 2nd ed. (New York, USA: Infobase Publishing, 2010), 73.

fragile political cohesion among the various groups in Afghanistan through setting divided Afghan tribes under Persian and Moghul control free, maintaining ethnic peace and political alliance with non-Durrani Pashtuns and non-Pashtun groups in the country and providing relative consolidation of the Pashtun and non-Pashtun groups into a macro society.⁴²³ For this purpose, Ahmad Shah followed a two-dimensional policy towards various ethnic and tribal groups: first the multi-ethnic tribal accommodation to gain their obedience and second the military conquests to collect treasure and tribute to buy their loyalty.⁴²⁴ By adding the divine claims of Sunni Islam to the hierarchical tribal codes of leadership, obedience of followers and multi-ethnic tribal army, Ahmad Shah created the essential operative mechanism of political legitimacy.⁴²⁵ Ahmad Shah had to go beyond the Afghan lands through offensive operations in order to acquire the necessary fund and proud for the survival of his rule and thus created a large territorial conquest empire stretching from east of Indus to the west of Mashad, and from the Amu Darya in the north to the Indian Ocean in the south by forcing the local rulers in the conquered lands to hand over the collected taxes and wealth instead of directly controlling the conquered lands.⁴²⁶ However, since the established operative mechanism of political legitimacy was built mainly on military force that needed to be funded constantly rather than strong central authority that had all the necessary means to extend its rule over the Pashtun tribes, which was its major component, Ahmad Shah's Empire began its gradual decline and disintegration during the reign of his Durrani descendants, first under the Sadozai clan of the Popalzai tribe and later under the Mohammadzai clan of the Barakzai tribe of the Abdalis.⁴²⁷

Timur Shah Durrani (1773-1793), Ahmad Shah's second son and appointed heir and also the Governor of Herat, tried to fill the power vacuum that was left by his father's death by continuing his father's policies but could not manage to control the inter-/intra-tribal and ethnic rivalries because he did not have the authority, prestige and popularity of his father on tribal leaders.⁴²⁸ Although he transferred the dynastic capital from Kandahar, which was the

⁴²³ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 19.

⁴²⁴ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 21-22.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁴²⁶ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 233-234.

⁴²⁷ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 20; Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 234.

⁴²⁸ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 23.

traditional powerhouse of the Abdalis, to Kabul to avoid the intervention of the tribal leaders, surrounded himself with Tajik administrators and Shia Qizilbash bodyguards, consolidated his position among his own Pashtuns and preserved the Empire's territorial borders as inherited by his father, he could not stop the decline of the Empire.⁴²⁹ Timur Shah's death in 1793 became the beginning of the end for the Sadozai dynasty through a number of violent and turbulent imperial succession struggles among his sons while pushing the country into a long period of intra-ruling family and intra-tribal conflict.

As Timur Shah had not appointed an heir among his 26 sons before his death, Zaman Shah Durrani (1793-1800), the fifth son of Timur Shah from a Yusufzai mother and Governor of Kabul, seized power with a *fait accompli*, which resulted in the years long fight for the throne between him and the primary contestants namely his brothers.⁴³⁰ Zaman Shah's efforts of implementing his one man rule over the Pashtun tribes and consolidation of power forced him to take radical actions that led to the struggle with the Pashtun tribal leaders over their interventions, the constant strife with the Sikhs in Punjab, the destabilization of the harmonious council balance provided by Ahmad Shah Durrani by replacing the multi-clan leaders with his own lineage.⁴³¹ All these actions of him increased the tension in the Empire and a general dislike occurred among the Pashtun tribes towards him, especially among the Barakzais that is one of the most powerful Durrani Pashtun tribes, although he successfully achieved to keep the Empire within the same boundaries as he had inherited. Zaman Shah's older brother from a Popalzai mother, Mahmud Shah Durrani (1800-1803), with the support of Fatih Khan who was the son of a notable Barakzai Mohammadzai named Sardar Payinda Khan serving as a powerful official in the Sadozai/Popalzai courts, defeated Zaman Shah in 1800.⁴³² However, Mahmud Shah Durrani's rule was short-lived as he lost the support of his subjects and could not win the support of other larger groups, despite of his military successes in the fights against the Bukhara Uzbeks and the Ghilzais and, three years later, Shuja Shah Durrani (1803-1809), the seventh son of Timur Shah from a Yusufzai mother, ascended the throne by seizing the capital Kabul and ousting Mahmud Shah.⁴³³ As his predecessors, Shah Shuja's six years long rule were marked by revolts and continuous

⁴²⁹ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 235-236.

⁴³⁰ Meredith L. Runion, *The History of Afghanistan* (Westport, CT, USA: Greenwood Press, 2007), 72.

⁴³¹ *Ibid.*, 72-73.

⁴³² Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 238; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 31.

⁴³³ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 239-240.

fighting with those claiming the throne, not only Mahmud Shah and Fatih Khan but also Timur Shah's another son Abbas Khan and his own nephew Qaysar Mirza.

Meanwhile, Anglo-French confrontation in Europe began to spill over into the Asia. In addition to the strongly expansionist policies of France in the Mediterranean and the Middle East, France took a number of actions which triggered fear in Britain regarding its possessions in India. French Emperor Napoleon signed first the Treaty of Finckenstein with Persian Shah Fath Ali Shah and then the Treaty of Tilsit with Russian Tsar Alexander I in 1807, which increased the possibility of a joint invasion of India for Britain, through Persia and Afghanistan.⁴³⁴ Although this possibility had never been materialized, Britain took counteractions to contain France by signing treaties with the rulers of Persia, Afghanistan and India.⁴³⁵ Thereby, Shah Shuja Durrani and Mountstuart Elphinstone from the British East India Company, signed a treaty of friendship in 1809, which was the first of many agreements with a European power, for the purpose of taking joint action in case the French, Russians and Persians would attack the Indian subcontinent.⁴³⁶ In 1809, the history repeated itself. Mahmud Shah (1809-1818) claimed the throne again and this time got it by defeating Shuja Shah, with the support of Fatih Khan.⁴³⁷ During his second reign, Mahmud Shah had to face two challenges: first, the Empire lost much territory in the north to the Uzbek principalities and in the east to the Sikhs headed by the Governor of Lahore Ranjit Sang, and second, power struggle between the Popalzai Sadozais and the Barakzai Mohammadzais under Mahmud Shah and his all time long supporter Fatih Khan respectively.⁴³⁸ When the Barakzai Fatih Khan, who had given his utmost support to Mahmud Shah in assuming the throne twice and ruled the Empire behind the curtains as his Wazir since 1809, was murdered by Mahmud Shah in 1818, a revolt led by the Barakzais drove Mahmud Shah and his son Kamran Mirza from the capital to Herat where they ruled until 1842.⁴³⁹ From 1819 to 1826, disorder and chaos continued unabated due to the fact that the Barakzais had neither a

⁴³⁴ Martin Ewans, *Conflict in Afghanistan: Studies in Asymmetric Warfare* (London: Routledge, 2005), 13.

⁴³⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴³⁶ Ludwig W. Adamec, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, ed. Jon Woronoff, 3rd ed., Asian/Oceanian Historical Dictionaries No. 47 (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003), 117; Meredith L. Runion, *The History of Afghanistan* (Westport, CT, USA: Greenwood Press, 2007), 74; Kevin Baker, *War in Afghanistan: A Short History of Eighty Wars and Conflicts in Afghanistan and the North-West Frontier 1839-2011* (Kenthurst NSW: Rosenberg Publishing, 2011), 28.

⁴³⁷ Meredith L. Runion, *The History of Afghanistan* (Westport, CT, USA: Greenwood Press, 2007), 74-75.

⁴³⁸ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 241.

⁴³⁹ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 43-44.

strong leader to rule nor any agreement on a successor and all their efforts of installing a puppet regime of a ruler from Sadozai Dynasty like one of Timur Shah's sons to the throne were futile.⁴⁴⁰ During all these years of internal power struggles that paralyzed central authority and ended the Sadozai dynasty, non-Pashtun components of the Empire in most of the northern, southern and eastern provinces including those in the Indian subcontinent escaped from Kabul's control by leaving the Pashtun tribes out of fund that formerly used to subsidize them, while Ghilzais and some other Pashtun tribes along the important trade routes were becoming powerful by controlling these routes and imposing transit dues.⁴⁴¹

Afghanistan reached some stability only in 1826, when the youngest brother of murdered Fatih Khan, Dost Mohammad Khan (1826-1838), achieved to outmaneuver his rivals, took control of Kabul and thereby inaugurated the rule of the Mohammadzai clan of the Barrakzai Abdalis/Durrani that replaced the Sadozai clan of the Popalzai Abdalis/Durrani that had ruled the country since 1747.⁴⁴² Dost Mohammad Khan who assumed the title of 'Amir al-Momineen' (Commander of the Faithful) in 1836 came into action for the purpose of providing unity in Afghanistan under his reign.⁴⁴³ In pursuing this end, he wanted to recapture the lost territories and eliminate all possible threats directed against his rule. In addition to the tribal revolts and disloyalty of his brothers in Kandahar and Peshawar, Amir Dost Mohammad Khan engaged in a direct conflict with the British-supported Sikh ruler Ranjit Singh over Peshawar and once-dethroned Shuja Shah Durrani over the throne and the Russian-supported Persian ruler Mohammad Shah Qajar over Herat and Kandahar, and thereby in an indirect conflict with the British supporting the Sikhs and Shuja Shah, and the Russians supporting the Persians against his rule.⁴⁴⁴ Thereby, the 'Great Game', which referred to the Anglo-Russian rivalry in Central Asia as in the form of advancing their colonial frontiers as far as possible, reached the Afghan lands. Amir Dost Muhammad Khan,

⁴⁴⁰ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 242; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 44.

⁴⁴¹ Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), XVI; Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 243.

⁴⁴² Meredith L. Runion, *The History of Afghanistan* (Westport, CT, USA: Greenwood Press, 2007), 75-76; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 11. 31.

⁴⁴³ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 31.

⁴⁴⁴ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 243-246; Meredith L. Runion, *The History of Afghanistan* (Westport, CT, USA: Greenwood Press, 2007), 75-76; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 31.

first approached the British for assistance in recovering Peshawar from the Sikhs, but upon the British refusal to assist him, the Amir contacted with the Russians providing military support to the Persians in their march on to Herat and Kandahar.⁴⁴⁵ Upon this, the British first made the Persian Shah give up on Herat and Kandahar by pressure in September 1838 and then issued the imperialist Simla Manifesto in October 1838 declaring the British decision of restoring the rule of Shah Shuja, which resulted in the British occupation of Kabul in 1839 igniting the first Anglo-Afghan War.⁴⁴⁶ The fierce resistance of the Pashtun tribes under the lead of Mohammad Akbar Khan, the son of Amir Dost Mohammad Khan, against the British military occupation and the puppet regime of Shuja Shah enforced the British to sign an agreement with the Pashtuns in 1842 for the immediate withdrawal of the British forces from Afghanistan to the east of Indus, which brought the Amir Dost Mohammad Khan back on the throne for another 20 years.⁴⁴⁷

After the first Anglo-Afghan war, Amir Dost Mohammad Khan and the British preferred to develop balanced and semi-friendly relations through the Treaty of Peshawar in 1855 and its addendum in 1857 defining each country's territorial boundaries and forming an alliance against the Persian and Russian threats, and thus the Amir achieved to regain the control of most of the lost territories including Kandahar, Balkh and Herat, with the exception of Peshawar and other Pashtun lands on the right bank of the Indus.⁴⁴⁸ Since the reign of Amir Dost Mohammad Khan (1826–1838, 1842–1863), mostly Britain but also Russia became the dominant factor in the domestic struggle of the country.⁴⁴⁹

During his first and second reigns, Amir Dost Mohammad Khan, made a number of modest reform attempts in domestic politics, both successful and unsuccessful ones, for the purpose of providing political unification of Afghanistan, establishing stability in the country, strengthening his dynastic rule and maintaining a permanent army such as eliminating

⁴⁴⁵ Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), XV; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 31-32; Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 245-246.

⁴⁴⁶ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 246-247.

⁴⁴⁷ Meredith L. Runion, *The History of Afghanistan* (Westport, CT, USA: Greenwood Press, 2007), 77-79.

⁴⁴⁸ Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 34; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 32; Meredith L. Runion, *The History of Afghanistan* (Westport, CT, USA: Greenwood Press, 2007), 78-79.

⁴⁴⁹ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 5.

criminal bands disrupting city trade in Kabul and several rebellious chieftains in Kohistan region, adopting a policy of divide-and-rule towards Shia communities in the country such as Qizilbash and Hazaras, centralizing the administration of justice, restraining the political power of the religious institutions, encouraging interregional and foreign trade, regularizing the disordered customs system and establishing a uniform tax system and eliminating corruption.⁴⁵⁰ Although the first Anglo-Afghan war halted his reform attempts until his second reign by disrupting the country's already weak economy, the following factors also limited the application of his reform attempts:

His limited reforms were by necessity confined to the province of Kabul. Moreover, he was constantly faced with the problem of procuring steady financing and enough cash to carry out the political and economic integration of his kingdom. The loss of Peshawar Valley and Kashmir, on which the Afghan rulers had been dependent for a steady income, was a great blow to his plans for reform. Most of the major Afghan tribes enjoyed tax exemptions, and in some regions of Kabul itself a barter economy prevailed. An increase in indirect taxes, which were mainly in kind, prevented extensive circulation of his new currency and hindered the growth of capital.⁴⁵¹

The relative stability provided in Afghanistan under the reign of Amir Dost Mohammad Khan ended with his death in 1863 and Afghanistan once more fell into a five-year long fratricidal warfare (1864-1869) because the accession to the Kabul throne of Sher Ali Khan, as one of his younger sons and the designated heir, was contested by his two older half-brothers (Mohammad Afzal Khan together with his son called Abdur Rahman and Mohammad Azam Khan) and his full brother named Mohammad Amin Khan.⁴⁵² In 1869, Sher Ali Khan regained the throne with the help of his son Yakub Khan and British financial assistance (1.2 million rupees which was equal to 100,000 pounds), and ruled the country as Amir of Afghanistan until his death in 1879.⁴⁵³ While reviving the "multiethnic accommodationist approach" of the past, Amir Sher Ali Khan (1869-1879) introduced several reforms in domestic politics which he considered of vital importance for the enlargement of his power base and promotion of national cohesion such as establishing a Council of Elders as advisory board on state affairs, a national army composed of professional units and a military school with various tribal and ethnic backgrounds, a

⁴⁵⁰ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 77-79, 81, 82.

⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 79-80.

⁴⁵² Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 136-137.

⁴⁵³ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 257; Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 87.

program for the increase in the production of guns and artillery, a system for collecting land revenues in cash rather than in-kind, friendly relations with the frontier tribes and as part of his transportation development strategy initiated road-building and bridge-repairing projects, first regular postal service between Kabul and Peshawar and the publication of a newspaper.⁴⁵⁴ However, since he was still unable to rule the whole country, his reforms became limited with areas under his direct control such as cities, towns and the areas where troops were stationed.⁴⁵⁵ In his foreign relations, Amir Sher Ali Khan, played on Anglo-Russian rivalry while favorably disposing towards Britain but without antagonizing Russia and established close diplomatic links with the neighboring countries such as Central Asian khanates.⁴⁵⁶ However, most of his projects either did not materialize from the beginning or became unsuccessful in the end, because feudal-tribal dynamics, economic difficulties due to years long wars, ambiguity of his dynasty's future and his inability of getting British assistance or support that he was looking for in his internal actions or foreign assaults made him dependent on the major Afghan tribes and thus he became "unable and unwilling to make a frontal assault on the feudal-tribal institutions of his realm."⁴⁵⁷ Moreover, all these pragmatic domestic and foreign policy steps of Amir Sher Ali Khan could not save his rule from the dangers posed by the throne struggle between him and his sons (Mohammad Yakub Khan and Mohammad Ayub Khan) over his decision to designate his youngest son as heir and the stiffening Anglo-Russian rivalry because of increasing British concerns over the Russian influence in the region due to Tsarist Russia's assertive expansionist policies in Central Asia, Persia and Ottoman Turkey.⁴⁵⁸ Although Britain got assurances from Russia that Afghanistan would remain as buffer zone to both sides, Britain's ongoing suspicion of Russia's intentions towards India through Afghanistan that combined with the British 'Forward Policy' of the 1870s made Britain invade Kabul once again in late 1878 and thereby the second Anglo-Afghan war, which would destroy all the accomplishments of

⁴⁵⁴ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 33; Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 258; Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 86-88.

⁴⁵⁵ M. Hassan Kakar, *A Political and Diplomatic History of Afghanistan, 1863-1901*, ed. Nicola di Cosmo, Devin Deweese, and Caroline Humphrey (Leiden: Brill, 2006), Volume 17, 22.

⁴⁵⁶ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 33; Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 88.

⁴⁵⁷ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 89.

⁴⁵⁸ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 33-34; Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 257-259.

Amir Sher Ali Khan, had started.⁴⁵⁹ Amir Sher Ali Khan fled to the north, where he died in 1879, and his son Mohammad Yakub Khan's succeeded to the throne as new Amir after his release from prison.⁴⁶⁰ However, the country was almost at the edge of collapse.

In order to end the war and further devastation of his country, Amir Mohammad Yakub Khan, signed Gandamak Treaty with Britain in 1879, in which Afghanistan gave the control of its foreign policy and various strategic frontier areas to Britain, which would serve the delineation of the Durand line years later, in addition to allowing the establishment of a permanent British residency in Kabul, in return of British support in case of any external attack and a subsidy of 60,000 pounds per annum.⁴⁶¹ However, this eternal piece and friendship treaty was short-lived. Upon the killing of the British mission members in Kabul by Afghans, British forces occupied Kabul again and Amir Mohammad Yakub Khan was sent to India, but soon after Britain started looking for a new Afghan amir, "suitable to lead the country without handing the land over to Russians", for a dignified withdrawal from Afghanistan because of the enormous cost of keeping British military presence in the country aside of ongoing security problems due to the regional revolts against the imposition of direct British rule.⁴⁶² The return of Abdur Rahman Khan (1880-1901), son of Mohammad Afzal Khan and grandson of Amir Dost Mohammad Khan, from exile provided this opportunity to Britain in 1880.⁴⁶³

3.3. Towards Afghan Independence in 1919

With regard to the beginning of modern Afghan state, there are two different opinions among scholars. Some scholars consider 1747 (Ahmad Shah Durrani/Abdali) as the beginning of the modern Afghan state (Goodson, Runion, Tanner, Saikal) whereas the others (Barfield, Dupree, Gregorian, Kakar) take the year of 1880 (Abdur Rahman Khan). Afghanistan specialist Louis Dupree refutes the claim of former group of scholars as follows:

⁴⁵⁹ Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 203-204; M. Hassan Kakar, *A Political and Diplomatic History of Afghanistan, 1863-1901*, ed. Nicola di Cosmo, Devin Deweese, and Caroline Humphrey (Leiden: Brill, 2006), Volume 17, 4.

⁴⁶⁰ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 260.

⁴⁶¹ Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 8; Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 260-261.

⁴⁶² Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 261.

⁴⁶³ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 35.

The creation of modern Afghanistan began during the reign of Abdur Rahman Khan (1880-1901). While external powers (Britain, Russia) drew the boundaries of Afghanistan, the Amir attempted to spread his influence (if not actual control) over the myriad ethnic groups and tribal kingdoms included inside his boundaries, a process of “internal imperialism”. Indeed, before 1880, the Afghans themselves referred to their area variously as Kabulistan (south of the Hindu Kush to the Indus River), Zabulistan (or Khorasan, including the Hindu Kush, Qandahar, and Herat), and Turkestan (north of the Hindu Kush and east of Herat)... Ahmad Shah Durrani, therefore, created a Durrani empire, not a nation-state. Even before his death, the tribal wars and struggles for individual power within the various branches of the ruling family began, and they continued into the twentieth century.⁴⁶⁴

During his 21-year rule from the beginning of his enthronement in 1880 until his death in 1901, Amir Abdur Rahman Khan, known as “the Iron Amir”, as his predecessor Amir Sher Ali Khan, initiated a number of significant reforms by focusing on Afghan state building.⁴⁶⁵ His concentration on providing order and security at home through reforms was a kind of logic of events rather than a choice because first the country was encircled on each side by the British (south, southeast), the Russians (north, northeast) and the Persians (west) and secondly the country got destabilized severely and once again fell into anarchy as a result of two major wars, foreign occupation and internal conflicts.⁴⁶⁶ His reforms were response to the problems that he identified as the main reasons of the country’s deepening weakness in political, economic, military and social terms over the past years. The Amir also used these reforms in order to secure his own power. Thereby, he killed two birds with one stone.

While implementing his reforms, the Amir used a variety of methods, from the brutal use of force on masses or individuals to marriage alliances, overtaxing, forced resettlements, playing on ethnic, religious and tribal differences, and giving or cutting subsidies or stipends depending on the action of the others. Thus, the Amir restored central authority and established his absolute power by reinstating domestic order not only in Kabul and its surrounding areas but also almost all of present-day Afghanistan, though indirectly.⁴⁶⁷ However, he had to face more than forty revolts against his rule within those 21 years, which were the backlash from his own people over those strictly implemented reforms.⁴⁶⁸

⁴⁶⁴ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), XIX.

⁴⁶⁵ M. Hassan Kakar, *A Political and Diplomatic History of Afghanistan, 1863-1901*, ed. Nicola di Cosmo, Devin Dewese, and Caroline Humphrey (Leiden: Brill, 2006), Volume 17, 5.

⁴⁶⁶ Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 34-35; Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 129.

⁴⁶⁷ Jeffery J. Roberts, *The Origins of Conflict in Afghanistan* (Westport (CT): Praeger, 2003), 25-26.

⁴⁶⁸ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 147.

The Amir's first challenge was dynastic rivalry. Right after the enthronement of the Amir Abdur Rahman, his cousin Mohammad Ayub Khan, Herat's governor, Sher Ali Khan's son and Mohammad Yakub Khan's brother and the victor at the Battle of Maiwand, claimed the throne in 1881 by capturing Kandahar and taking the important clerics to his side.⁴⁶⁹ Amir Abdur Rahman Khan took Kandahar by defeating him and Mohammad Ayub Khan fled to first Herat, then Persia and in the end settled in the British India.⁴⁷⁰ Later in 1888, another dynastic rivalry occurred, his another cousin and long-time supporter Mohammad Ishaq Khan, Turkestan's governor, Mohammad Azam Khan's son, rebelled and declared himself Amir, and upon his defeat, he took refuge in Bukhara under Russian control.⁴⁷¹ Thereby, "the expansionist empires of Britain and Russia became homes to his dynastic rival cousins."⁴⁷²

His second challenge was poor treasury namely lack of resource to finance his reforms, probably the biggest obstacle in his path, so after the negotiations with the British, he secured regular material support in the form of money and military supplies.⁴⁷³ In addition to 3.6 million Indian rupees that he had received during 1880-1881, the Amir began to receive an annual subsidy of 1.2 million Indian rupees as of 1883 to cover the salary of his army and to strengthen the country's northwestern frontier, which would become 1.8 million Indian rupees with the demarcation of the Durand line in 1893 and 1.85 million Indian rupees with the imposition of Wakhan Corridor in 1897.⁴⁷⁴ During his rule, the Amir received 28.5 million Indian rupees from the British including special grants and arms given in 1880, 1881, and 1887.⁴⁷⁵

However, the British subsidies were not enough for his large-scale reforms, especially the military ones that will be detailed later, therefore the Amir started his economic reforms to secure the country's revenues and to centralize economic power in Kabul. For this purpose,

⁴⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 144-145.

⁴⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 144-146.

⁴⁷¹ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 418.

⁴⁷² M. Hassan Kakar, *A Political and Diplomatic History of Afghanistan, 1863-1901*, ed. Nicola di Cosmo, Devin Dewese, and Caroline Humphrey (Leiden: Brill, 2006), Volume 17, 5.

⁴⁷³ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 99.

⁴⁷⁴ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 130-131; Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 11.

⁴⁷⁵ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 153.

he established a single monetary unit named Kabuli rupee, founded a revenue department, standardized tax system, reestablished the workshop program that had been destroyed during the Second Anglo-Afghan War the primary purpose of which was to meet military needs, hired foreign experts and technicians, supported the development of small-scale industries, improved the condition and safety of the trade routes within the country, improved the Afghan postal service, supported Afghan businessmen through subsidies and import bans, and strikingly originated a state monopoly for the production of alcoholic beverages to be exported to British India.⁴⁷⁶ Vartan Gregorian states, “With the systemic collection of land taxes, plus the proceeds derived from customs duties, exports, fines, registration and postage fees, and the revenues brought in by mines, government monopolies, and manufactures, the annual income of Afghanistan rose to more than one million pounds.”⁴⁷⁷

Nevertheless, the following three factors hampered the Amir’s economic reforms and put the country in a disadvantageous situation vis-à-vis its neighbors; 1) Afghan foreign policy under the control of the British that deprived Afghanistan of direct diplomatic relations and trade agreements with Russia, 2) Anglo-Russian commercial competition with Russia’s commercial advances in Central Asia that brought so many disadvantages for Afghanistan, and 3) poor transportation and communication system between Afghanistan and its neighboring trade partners due to the fact that the Amir strongly refused to allow railroads and telegraph lines that would link his country to the outside world because of the constant fear of European imperialism, rooted into the minds and hearts of the Amir and his people.⁴⁷⁸ This fear also made the Amir opposed to any foreign financial activity in his country, opening the country’s mines and minerals to neither any foreign investment nor to the usage of his own country, training of his officers by foreigners or sending young Afghans abroad to study.⁴⁷⁹ Thomas Barfield states, “The amir feared that any economic or transport development would only make the country vulnerable to outside interference. He may have been correct about the danger, but such a strategy was like eschewing the acquisition of wealth because it might attract thieves.”⁴⁸⁰

⁴⁷⁶ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 141-147.

⁴⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 142.

⁴⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 145-147, 154.

⁴⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 155.

⁴⁸⁰ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 153.

Although the Amir's policy of isolationism, deliberate underdevelopment and not allowing any foreign presence in the country including the British stirred so many discussions among the British authorities in Delhi and London, but in the end it was not objected because a strong Afghan state between Russia and British India might have seemed a good option against a possible Russian invasion but also might have been tempting for Russia that could easily invade through newly developed transportation and communication networks as well as a threat for India in the future.⁴⁸¹ Additionally, Britain did not mind the Amir's anti-British attitude within the country whose foreign policy was under British control, and followed the policy of "the less the Afghans see of us the less they will dislike us" as stated by British General Roberts.⁴⁸²

The third challenge of the Amir was the necessity of breaking the resistance to his authority of feudal landlords, tribal chieftains and religious leaders (mullahs) for the purpose of consolidating power. For this purpose, he first initiated the military reforms, which constituted the backbone of all his reforms indeed. By taking Anglo-Indian army model, the Amir created a modern, standing and centralized Afghan army under his control with the regular cash payment system and the material self-sufficiency by destroying the existing army structure, which was "feudal and tribal in character" and "weak in administration, discipline, logistics and armaments."⁴⁸³ Kakar states, "The amir's reforms had many dimensions, and the military attracted most of his attention...Toward the end of his decade-long reign the amir had organized a large regular army. Thus, he became the first Afghan ruler to do so, while his predecessors had relied mainly on irregular army and the notables of the land."⁴⁸⁴

In order to purchase and produce weapons, he benefited from the regular material support of the British as in the form of direct military supplies and money, and also from the reestablished workshops and the other small-scale industries, primary purpose of which to meet the military needs. However, his country was totally dependent on the British not only in purchasing but also in producing military supplies as "all his international imports into

⁴⁸¹ Jeffery J. Roberts, *The Origins of Conflict in Afghanistan* (Westport (CT): Praeger, 2003), 31.

⁴⁸² Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 217.

⁴⁸³ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 139-141.

⁴⁸⁴ M. Hassan Kakar, *A Political and Diplomatic History of Afghanistan, 1863-1901*, ed. Nicola di Cosmo, Devin Dewese, and Caroline Humphrey (Leiden: Brill, 2006), Volume 17, 16-17.

Afghanistan by sea came through Indian ports” and his “arms factories that produced the bulk of the weapons for his army could not operate without importing iron from India.”⁴⁸⁵

As for the purpose of restraining the power of *ulema/mullahs* (Muslim clergy) and strengthening his authority as the leader of the country’s Muslim community, after declaring himself as the ruler with divine rights entitled to liberate Afghan lands from infidel and foreign domination, the Amir banned the *ulema/mullahs* (Muslim clergy) from calling for a *jihad* (holy war) or instructing the ruler on what to do in state affairs by addressing their similar actions in the past as the reason of the collapse of all Islamic nations in the world, and then he slowly turned those mullahs into his civil servants namely integrated them to state bureaucracy by taking control of the *waqf* (religious endowments) to deprive them of the economic self-sufficiency and putting them on a state salary, applying economic sanctions such as cutting their salaries when they could not or did not prevent the revolts in their regions, imposing the mullahs qualification tests for measuring their eligibility for the profession, establishing a royal *madrassa* (religious school) in Kabul and instituting Sharia courts that would be chaired by religious officials appointed and paid by the state.⁴⁸⁶ “All in all, the position of Islam in Afghanistan was strengthened, but that of traditional, religious leaders was drastically weakened. Islam was made subservient to the State.”⁴⁸⁷

In his later years, after he felt that his army was strong enough to move forward, he initiated several military campaigns against the disobedient Pashtun tribes, particularly the Ghilzais, and non-Sunni ethnic groups that revolted or could revolt against his reforms. The Ghilzai Pashtuns who supported Mohammad Ayub Khan back in 1881 revolted against the Amir’s overtaxing themselves in 1886, while the Durrani Pashtuns was enjoying tax-free land grants.⁴⁸⁸ The Amir’s army defeated the Ghilzais and seized their lands. However, next year in 1887, another Ghilzai revolt occurred but again was quelled by his army. By taking the opportunity, in late 1880s, the Amir used the forced resettlements of Ghilzais from Ghazni area to Afghan Turkestan that was inhabited mainly by Uzbeks, Tajiks and Turkmens to weaken the powerbase of this influential Pashtun tribe in their traditional homeland and to

⁴⁸⁵ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 153.

⁴⁸⁶ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 130, 135-137.

⁴⁸⁷ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 267.

⁴⁸⁸ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 148.

create a significant Pashtun presence up there in the north.⁴⁸⁹ He used the same method for other rebellious Pashtun tribes as well and ordered the transfer of those from southern and eastern parts of the country to the north. Barfield explains how this deportation policy turned rebellious Pashtun tribes into loyal subjects of the government with the following words: “The deported Pashtuns were given rich agricultural lands and access to pastures for raising sheep in a territory that had been depopulated... Because these lands were generally much better than those they had lost, and because they were surrounded by other hostile ethnic groups, the former Pashtun rebels of the south became strong supporters of the government in the north.”⁴⁹⁰

Then, the Amir instigated his military campaigns against non-Sunni ethnic groups living in areas that had always been far from the direct control of Kabul.⁴⁹¹ Upon the revolt of Shia Hazaras inhabiting Hazarajat, central Afghanistan, the Amir declared them infidels and his army viciously quelled the revolt in 1891-1893 and their lands were shared among various Pashtun groups.⁴⁹² In 1896, the Amir conquered the remote and inaccessible Kafiristan (Land of Unbelievers) in eastern Afghanistan, forcefully converted its inhabitants, ancient pagan society known as Kafirs, into Islam and renamed the place as Nuristan (Land of Light).⁴⁹³ This conquest also worked in favor of another Pashtun group in Kunar Valley who had been in conflict with the Kafirs.⁴⁹⁴ As a result of these three major military campaigns, different Pashtun groups all over the country emerged not only as the main beneficiary but also as at top of the newly created ethnic hierarchy. Barfield describes this ethnic hierarchy with the following words:

In the eyes of most non-Pashtuns, the Afghan government was now viewed as a Pashtun government and not just a Durrani dynasty. This created an ethnic status hierarchy that would typify Afghan society for the next century. In broad strokes it ranked Pashtuns at the top, followed by Persian-speaking Tajiks, who played a large role in the administration of government, and then Turks, who were largely ignored

⁴⁸⁹ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 133.

⁴⁹⁰ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 157.

⁴⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 150.

⁴⁹² *Ibid.*, 150, 157.

⁴⁹³ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 136.

⁴⁹⁴ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 157.

and rarely found outside their home region in the north. The Shia Hazaras fell at the bottom of this scale and bore the brunt of discrimination imposed by a Sunni majority.⁴⁹⁵

The Amir also initiated various reforms in the legal and administrative fields in order to complement those mentioned above. As legal reforms, the Amir categorized existing, amended and new laws under Islamic laws (Sharia), civil laws (Kanun) and tribal laws, and also established three types of courts dealing with as religious, criminal and commercial issues.⁴⁹⁶ However, since all the court decisions had to be in harmony with each law and also subject to the Amir's approval, the legal system remained archaic and chaotic.⁴⁹⁷ In addition to the anti-slavery law in 1895 targeting the emancipation of mostly the pagan Kafir and Shia Hazara slaves, the Amir also made liberal laws in accordance with his period regulating social life such as registration of marriages, alimony, divorce and right to reject early aged marriages, some of which were in conflict with established customs in the society.⁴⁹⁸ With regard to administrative reforms, the Amir established; 1) a civil administration by dividing the country into four major provinces (Herat, Kandahar, Kabul and Turkestan) and seven administrative districts with governors directly reporting to him, 2) a general consultative assembly composed of sardars (royal family and clan members), *khawanin mulki* (khans, landowners) and mullahs (religious leaders) advising him in state activities, and 3) a selected executive body in charge of implementing the Amir's orders.⁴⁹⁹ All these new administrative bodies together with their members were under his direct control so rather symbolic. Among all these reforms, education couldn't get the necessary attention of the Amir and so little had been done in that field.⁵⁰⁰

What makes Amir Abdur Rahman Khan unforgettable and unforgivable for Afghan people is neither his reforms nor his ruthless measures in implementing those reforms but his signing the Durand Agreement with Britain, which divided the Pashtun area in half between then British India and Afghanistan and thus its Pashtun tribes. After the Panjdeh Incident in 1885, which refers to that Russian advances in Central Asia towards Afghan Turkestan with the occupation of the Panjdeh Oasis, an Afghan territory within the borders of Herat

⁴⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹⁶ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 136.

⁴⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 137.

⁴⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 138-139.

⁴⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 134-135.

⁵⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 149-151.

governorate, by defeating Afghan forces over there, brought Russia and Britain to brink of war, Britain refrained from helping Afghanistan as was required by the Gandamak Treaty of 1879, instead, as in charge of Afghan foreign policy, initiated the establishment of the joint boundary commissions with Russia to determine Afghanistan's northern frontiers.⁵⁰¹

As a result of the negotiations, two treaties were signed to determine northern frontiers, in which the British sacrificed Afghan territories to provide security of British India. The 1887 treaty gave Panjdeh Oasis to Russia and accepted Herat as an Afghan city by determining the current northwestern border of Afghanistan, and the 1895 Treaty (also known as Pamir) added the Wakhan corridor to the borders of Afghanistan with the insistence of the British who bribed the Amir to take it in order to permanently separate India and Russia in exchange of some Afghan territories and accepted the Amu Darya as the boundary line between Russia and Afghanistan.⁵⁰²

Between these two treaties, in 1893, the Amir signed the Durand Agreement that was prepared by Sir Henry Mortimer Durand, then foreign secretary of the British India. The Durand Line divided traditional lands of Pashtun tribes in an irrational way such as "sometimes drawing the line through the middle of villages, grazing grounds or in such a way that farmers lived on one side of the border while their fields were on the other."⁵⁰³ "Some tribal areas lost to British India in the last quarter of the 1800s that are now part of Pakistan include Chitral, Dir, Swat, Bajaur, Khyber, Kurram, Waziristan, Zhob, Loralai, Pishin, Quetta, and Nushki."⁵⁰⁴ Additionally, the Amir did not only give those lands to the British India but also his country's right to intervene in there as well.⁵⁰⁵

⁵⁰¹ Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 35.

⁵⁰² Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 269; Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 217-218; Jeffery J. Roberts, *The Origins of Conflict in Afghanistan* (Westport (CT): Praeger, 2003), 29.

⁵⁰³ Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 218.

⁵⁰⁴ Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 35-36.

⁵⁰⁵ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 158.



Figure 1. Map of Afghan State with Modern Borders Showing the Durand line

Source: Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 156.

With regard to the question of why the Amir signed such an agreement, although there are various theories on it, the one below seems the most convincing among them.

In his autobiography, Abdur Rahman repeatedly states that he never considered any Pushtun areas permanently ceded to Britain and thought the resultant border but a temporary assignment of spheres of influence. His signature can be attributed to two factors. First, the British offered to increase his allowances of money and weapons. Second, Abdur Rahman felt compelled to apply. British forces had already occupied some frontier villages, and the Viceroy Lord Lansdowne had refused to allow any more arms deliveries to Afghanistan, barring agreement. Beset by domestic disturbances, Abdur Rahman could not risk renewed conflict with Britain.⁵⁰⁶

The Durand agreement had serious consequences for Afghanistan such as strengthening of the political position and impact of those major border tribes in Afghan politics due to their role in the defense of the country, the continuation of anti-foreign and anti-British feelings among those border tribes because of British presence in the tribal belt, and increasing

⁵⁰⁶ Jeffery J. Roberts, *The Origins of Conflict in Afghanistan* (Westport (CT): Praeger, 2003), 29.

dependency of Afghanistan on Britain, which got the control of border passes.⁵⁰⁷ With all these agreements, Afghanistan's appearance as a buffer state in the world history as well as delimitation of its borders was completed.

When Abdur Rahman Khan, the Iron Amir, died of natural causes in 1901, his oldest son and designated heir Habibullah Khan (1901-1919), ascended the throne without opposition, and ruled the country as Amir until he got murdered in 1919.⁵⁰⁸ During his reign, the new Amir carried out reforms initiated by his father in a careful manner and introduced further Western technology, but he preferred to relax his father's harsh system by replacing coercion with cooperation. Therefore, Amir Habibullah Khan vigilantly loosened the severe punitive measures of his father by embracing conciliatory approach towards most of the tribal, religious and ethnic leaders. For this purpose, the Amir sought close relations with influential Sufi leaders and promulgated an amnesty for many of those who had been imprisoned and exiled on political grounds by his father.⁵⁰⁹ The amnesty included many political prisoners, Afghan tribal leaders, non-Afghan ethnic groups such as Hazaras and also rival Muhammadzai families such as the Tarzis from Ottoman Syria and the Musahibans (also known as Yahya Khel) from British India who would play crucial roles in Afghan politics in later dates.⁵¹⁰ The religious leaders' recapture of political power together with the return and rise to important positions of the Tarzis and the Musahibans that brought new ideas from India and the Ottoman Empire to the country that had long been isolated from the rest of the world, created three conflicting political cliques in the Amir's entourage that would drag the country into fragmentation in the coming decades.⁵¹¹ These were the religious-conservative clique consisting of the Ulema, Sufi leaders and the Amir's brother Nasrullah Khan, the nationalist-modernist clique composed of Mahmud Tarzi, adviser to the Amir, and the

⁵⁰⁷ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 158-159.

⁵⁰⁸ Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 36.

⁵⁰⁹ Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 17; Nabi Misdaq, *Afghanistan: Political Frailty and External Interference* (London: Routledge, 2006), 60, 62; Peter Tomsen, *The Wars of Afghanistan: Messianic Terrorism, Tribal Conflicts, and The Failures of Great Powers* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2011), eBook, 146-147.

⁵¹⁰ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 181; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 175; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 42.

⁵¹¹ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 430; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 175-177.

Young Afghans including the Amir's youngest son Amanullah Khan who also married with Tarzi's daughter, and the nationalist-conservative clique advocated by Musahiban brothers, most significantly Mohammad Nadir Khan, the oldest one and Commander-in-Chief of the Afghan forces.⁵¹² Tarzi's "extensive and rapid social change" model inspired by Turkish modernization was in clash with Musahiban Nadir's model with "a more moderate indigenous program and a more leisurely timetable."⁵¹³

Amir Habibullah Khan, while enjoying these competing movements in his entourage, initiated several reforms. The Amir's reform program consisted of strengthening central authority, modernizing his army, expanding local industry and trade with Russia and India, promoting modern education system through establishing several schools though mainly in Kabul area, establishing the first state hospital, building hydro-electric plant to produce electricity, launching country's first printing press, publishing the bi-monthly political newspaper (*Seraj-ul-Akhbar Afganiyah*)⁵¹⁴ defending anti-imperialist, pro-independent, nationalist and reformist ideas under the lead of Mahmud Tarzi that would play a significant role in Afghan modernist and nationalist movement, building the new roads to improve trade, constructing the first telephone line between Kabul and Jalalabad, and employing Ottoman, Indian and European professionals to assist him.⁵¹⁵

In terms of foreign relations, the Amir, after strongly rejecting the persistent British demands for renegotiating the terms of his father's agreement with Britain in order to get further concessions from him, signed a new treaty known as the Dane-Habibullah Treaty with Britain in 1905 reaffirming the terms of the existing treaty with the British and got the official recognition of the British as 'His Majesty, Independent King of the State of

⁵¹² Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 177; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 46-47; Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 282.

⁵¹³ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 282.

⁵¹⁴ This newspaper had a great impact on the nationalists in British controlled India and in Russian controlled Central Asia in so much that Britain banned it in India several times. Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 439. For detailed info, please see Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 163-180.

⁵¹⁵ Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 17-18; Nabi Misdaq, *Afghanistan: Political Frailty and External Interference* (London: Routledge, 2006), 61; Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 163, 183-201.

Afghanistan and its Dependencies',⁵¹⁶ which meant the continuation of the flow of subsidies, the unrestricted arms imports, the guarantee for the Afghan territorial integrity and of the control of Afghan foreign policy.⁵¹⁷ The Amir also refused to sign the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 that divided the region including Afghanistan and Persia into formal spheres of influence without consulting those involved and declared it illegal and non-binding.⁵¹⁸ The Amir also maintained his country's neutrality throughout the First World War by resisting both internal and external pressures to enter the war on the side of Central Powers.⁵¹⁹ As last, Afghan-Persian boundary was more or less settled in 1904.⁵²⁰

Following the murder of Amir Habibullah Khan on 20 February 1919, power struggle erupted between the nationalist-modernist group led by Amanullah Khan, the Amir's youngest son and the governor of Kabul, and the religious-conservative group headed by Nasrullah Khan, the Amir's brother holding the support of many tribes and clergy.⁵²¹ Amanullah Khan (1919-1929) seized the power within a very short period of time and succeeded to the throne by taking the army in his side on 25 February 1919.⁵²² Shortly afterwards, he arrested many people of Habibullah's entourage by accusing them being in relation to the murder of his father, later he released all of them except his uncle Nasrullah Khan.⁵²³

The new amir, Amanullah Khan, while informing the British government in India about his enthronement, he also took a status quo changing step in terms of Anglo-Afghan relations by demanding a new treaty recognizing the full independence of Afghanistan.⁵²⁴ When the

⁵¹⁶ Rasanayagam states that 'and its dependencies' is an indication of that the Amir does not recognize the Durand Line. Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 16.

⁵¹⁷ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 271-271; Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 207-208.

⁵¹⁸ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 433.

⁵¹⁹ Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 16.

⁵²⁰ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 432.

⁵²¹ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 227-228.

⁵²² Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 276.

⁵²³ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 227-228.

⁵²⁴ *Ibid.*, 229.

British declined his demand, Amir Amanullah Khan, who gained full control of the country by securing his authority in the main Afghan cities and getting the recognition of major tribal leaders, proclaimed the full independence of his country and launched the Afghan War of Independence on 04 May 1919, thereby the Third Anglo-Afghan War started.⁵²⁵

Although the timing of the war was seemingly advantageous for the Afghan cause because, after the First World War, Britain was war-weary state struggling with several internal disturbances in its colonies including India and the Russian threat in the north had already disappeared with the collapse of the Russian Empire, the situation changed when the British air forces began to drop bombs on Kabul and Jalalabad, and thus both sides agreed on a ceasefire on 28 May 1919.⁵²⁶ After the British-Afghan negotiations in Rawalpindi (August 1919), Mussoorie (April-July 1920) and Kabul (January-November 1921) where the British insistence on keeping Afghanistan within its own sphere of colonial interests clashed with the Afghan determination on complete independence, the Anglo-Afghan Treaty of 1919, which was a peace treaty also known as Rawalpindi Treaty, and the Anglo-Afghan Treaty of 1921, which was a more comprehensive treaty also known as Kabul Treaty, were finally signed.⁵²⁷

With the Rawalpindi Peace Treaty, Britain recognized Afghanistan as an independent and sovereign state but also terminated its annual subsidies to Afghanistan, prohibited Afghanistan to import military items through India, and put the Durand Line as new frontier in order to weaken the rule of Amir Amanullah Khan within his country and to strengthen its hand in the next stages of British-Afghan negotiations to be held in Mussoorie and Kabul.⁵²⁸ Thereby, Afghan independence cost the Amir the end of all British material assistance to Kabul and the acceptance of the Durand Line, though reluctantly.⁵²⁹

⁵²⁵ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 442.

⁵²⁶ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 230-231.

⁵²⁷ Ludwig W. Adamec, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, ed. Jon Woronoff, 3rd ed., Asian/Oceanian Historical Dictionaries No. 47 (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003), 29, 32-34; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 62.

⁵²⁸ Ludwig W. Adamec, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, ed. Jon Woronoff, 3rd ed., Asian/Oceanian Historical Dictionaries No. 47 (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003), 32-33; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 181-182.

⁵²⁹ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 63.

3.4. First Steps of Foreign Aid to Afghanistan as of 1920s

As the head of a newly independent state seeking international recognition and alternative sources of foreign aid for making up the lost British subsidies and countering the perceived British threat, Amir Amanullah Khan moved quickly to establish diplomatic relations with Soviet Russia, Turkey, Iran, Egypt, USA, and certain European powers—specifically Germany, France and Italy, and signed the treaties for recognition, full diplomatic relations, economic-scientific-educational cooperation with almost all of them, except USA, which recognized its independence but refrained from establishing diplomatic relations.⁵³⁰ Among those, the ones signed with the Soviet Russia, Turkey and Persia of that time had a special importance due to the fact that they reinforced the Amir's prestige and popularity within all segments of Afghan society and enhanced the relative Afghan political influence in the region, though for a short time, while putting the country in a better bargaining position vis-à-vis Britain in the Mussoorie and Kabul negotiations.

The first Soviet-Afghan treaty, signed in September 1920 and ratified by the Soviets in February 1921 and the Afghans in August 1921, which was indeed the result of contacts initiated by Afghanistan as of April 1919, included the articles in which the Soviets promised to provide material and financial assistance, unrestricted and tax-free transit of all goods through Soviet Russia, recognition of the independence of Bukhara and Khiva, return of the Russian-annexed frontier territories of Panjdeh and Merv as based on the result of a plebiscite there, in return of that Afghanistan would allow the Soviets to establish five consulates in its territory, and as last each state would abstain from entering into any political agreement or alliance detrimental to the interests of the other.⁵³¹ The financial and material assistance of which the Soviets promised the Afghans included the annual subsidy of one million gold rubles, the construction of telegraph line from Kushka to Kabul through Herat and Kandahar, 5000 rifles and ammunition, anti-aircraft guns, a radio station, installation of a smokeless gunpowder factory, airplanes, building an aviation school and sending Russian experts to Afghanistan.⁵³² Moscow presented “thirteen military planes, pilots, mechanics,

⁵³⁰ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 262, 232-234; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 65.

⁵³¹ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 182; Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 231-232; Jeffery J. Roberts, *The Origins of Conflict in Afghanistan* (Westport (CT): Praeger, 2003), 42.

⁵³² Bogdan Szajkowski, ed., *Documents in Communist Affairs 1980* (London: Macmillan Press, 1981), 333;

transportation specialists, and telegraph operators” as a gift to Amanullah, and also set up telephone lines between both Herat-Kandahar and Kabul-Mazar in 1924-1925.⁵³³ Furthermore, upon a border incident between Moscow and Kabul due to the former’s breach of the latter’s northern borders in 1925, the Soviet-Afghan Treaty of Neutrality and Mutual Non-Aggression was signed in August 1926, and two years later in 1928, Moscow-Kabul air link via Tashkent was established.⁵³⁴ This treaty was to be extended later in the years of 1931, 1936, 1955, 1966 and 1975 under the Musahiban rule.⁵³⁵

The one signed with Turkey in March 1921 in which the Turks pledged to support Afghanistan in the field of education and military by sending its own professionals for minimum five years and recognized the independence of Bukhara and Khiva, also gave a right to each country to say a word in the other’s international agreements.⁵³⁶ The treaty meant a lot for the Amir and his modernist supporters because of the following reason:

This treaty was a most important one for Amanullah and the Afghan modernists, for Turkish military and cultural assistance was consonant with Islamic solidarity and thus represented a channel through which modernity could be ushered into Afghanistan. As the seat of the Caliphate, Turkey had great prestige and could help neutralize the opposition of the traditionalists.⁵³⁷

Furthermore, the treaty with Persia in June 1921 reinforced Afghanistan’s position in the Middle East, increased the prestige of the Amir among his own Shia population, and officially opened its western gate through its articles on customs and postal service.⁵³⁸ These treaties, especially the ones with Turkey and Persia, were warmly welcomed by all sections of the Afghan society, especially by those following the pan-Islamic cause.

Richard K. Debo, *Survival and Consolidation: the Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia, 1918-1921* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1992), 349, 351.

⁵³³ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 451.

⁵³⁴ Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan’s Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 47; Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 451; Paul Robinson and Jay Dixon, *Aiding Afghanistan: A History of Soviet Assistance to a Developing Country* (London: Hurst, 2013), 48.

⁵³⁵ Bogdan Szajkowski, ed., *Documents in Communist Affairs 1980* (London: Macmillan Press, 1981), 333.

⁵³⁶ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 233-234.

⁵³⁷ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 234.

⁵³⁸ *Ibid.*

In addition to the treaties mentioned above, the Amir's active pan-Islamic policies and actions such as providing active support to the independence of Bukhara and Khiva emirates and the anti-British Khilafat independence movement of Indian Muslims aside of the defense of the caliphate provided him a great opportunity of bringing all the Afghans under the same roof, even the most religious-conservative ones⁵³⁹ "Some of the most influential Afghan religious leaders, who had received their training at Deoband, and were both militantly Pan-Islamic and actively anti-British, joined the modernist-nationalists in support of Amanullah's Pan-Islamic policies."⁵⁴⁰ The Amir's strong-minded nationalist, anti-British and pan-Islamic posture together with his triumph in achieving full independence did not just make him a national hero in the eyes of all Afghan people but also make him a popular anti-colonial Muslim figure for those fighting for the same goal in the region.⁵⁴¹ However unexpected political developments such as the Soviet incorporation of Bukhara and Khiva in 1920 and the Turkish abolishment of the caliphate in 1924 together with the some other political and economic considerations enforced the Amir to moderate his militant pan-Islamic policies in due course.⁵⁴² Thereby, the Amir first began to seek the normalization of relations with Britain and then left his ambitious policy and actions towards Soviet Turkestan while readapting the traditional policy of seeking a balance of power.

In these circumstances, Afghanistan signed the Kabul Treaty with Britain in November 1921, which reaffirmed many of what had been agreed in Rawalpindi and established the "neighborly relations" between Kabul and London with mutual exchanges of favors such as tax exemptions for Afghan imports through India in return of keeping Soviet consulates out of Afghan-Indian border regions.⁵⁴³ Later in June 1923, Anglo-Afghan trade agreement was also signed.⁵⁴⁴

⁵³⁹ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 182.

⁵⁴⁰ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 237.

⁵⁴¹ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 63; Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 234-237; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 182.

⁵⁴² Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 182; Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 237.

⁵⁴³ Ludwig W. Adamec, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, ed. Jon Woronoff, 3rd ed., Asian/Oceanian Historical Dictionaries No. 47 (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003), 33-34.

⁵⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 465.

After the Kabul treaty, the Amir concentrated on domestic politics. Having established his legitimacy on all sections of the society, Amir Amanullah Khan, began to modernize his country through initiating a series of ambitious and comprehensive reforms in the education, public health, communications, administrative, judiciary, military, financial and social sectors.⁵⁴⁵ He introduced the Family Code of 1921, the first Afghan Constitution of 1923, the Conscription and Identity Card Act of 1923 and the Penal Code of 1924-1925.⁵⁴⁶

Administrative functions were better organized and centralized. A new tax law was introduced, and the legal system unified. Social reforms included the abolition of slavery; expansion of the educational system, including formal education for women and reformation of the mosque schools; the imposition of universal conscription; and attempts to curtail polygamy, child marriage, and Pashtun customs relating to the treatment of women. Family matters were defined by a written uniform code of law.⁵⁴⁷

Among those reforms, the ones in financial, military, and family affairs caused eyebrows to raise against his rule. With regard to finance, since the British subsidies ended and the national treasury drained as a result of the independence war, the Amir, in search of finding revenue to fund his reforms, resorted to the country's own resources by bringing in-cash tax payment system that led to increase in corruption all over the country, introducing new taxes, increasing existing tax rates, reducing military spending and cutting the allowance previously given to the tribal elites and religious leaders.⁵⁴⁸ In the military sector, the Amir changed drastically the existing conscription system that was based on the supply of one qualified man for every eight ones and brought compulsory military service for all Afghan males by including previously exempted Pashtun tribes including the Mangals and without considering who would support their family during that time.⁵⁴⁹ As for the family affairs, the Amir's reforms for the emancipation of Afghan women through regulating several issues about marriage and women's status stretched the limits of largely traditional, religious,

⁵⁴⁵ For details of those reforms, please see Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 239-254 and Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 20-25.

⁵⁴⁶ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 243, 248, 251; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 184.

⁵⁴⁷ Senzil K. Nawid, *Religious Response to Social Change in Afghanistan: 1919 - 29 King Aman-Allah and the Afghan Ulama* (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, 1999), 81.

⁵⁴⁸ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 183-184.

⁵⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 184.

conservative and tribal Afghan society because those reforms were perceived as an interference to the domain of Pashtunwali and Sharia law.⁵⁵⁰

In March 1924, the Pashtun Mangal tribe in Khost region bordering British India in the southeast revolted against the reforms and the Amir could only suppress the revolt with the moral support of Loya Jirga and the military assistance of other tribes in January 1925.⁵⁵¹ Then, the Amir was forced to either to water down or to revoke some of his reforms that were objected by *Loya Jirga* and to postpone the others in his mind.⁵⁵² Two years later, once the Amir believed that he restored his authority and the relations with tribal and religious leaders, he left the country together with his wife in December 1927 to pay official visits to India, Egypt, Iran and Europe including Soviet Union and Turkey by ignoring the warnings of his Foreign Minister Mahmud Tarzi about the rising opposition.⁵⁵³ During his long trip, he signed diplomatic treaties with several countries, received generous gifts from some of them such as airplanes and tractors, recruited the services of German, Italian, and French experts, and purchased military equipment.⁵⁵⁴ Among those, his visit to Turkey, which resulted in the Turko-Afghan Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation of May 1928, had a great impact on the Amir because of the achievements of the rapid modernization programme initiated by great Turkish leader Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, who kindly advised the Amir to build up a strong as well as loyal army and bureaucracy before starting his comprehensive reforms, and even promised to send Turkish officers to train Afghans but the Amir neither listened him nor waited.⁵⁵⁵

When he finally got back to the country in July 1928, the Amir, as “determined to modernize his country along the lines of the Turkey of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk” but unaware of that “conservative forces at home, purportedly aided by the British, began a campaign

⁵⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 185.

⁵⁵¹ Jeffery J. Roberts, *The Origins of Conflict in Afghanistan* (Westport (CT): Praeger, 2003), 43-44; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 186-187.

⁵⁵² Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 255.

⁵⁵³ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 450.

⁵⁵⁴ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 258; Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 450.

⁵⁵⁵ Ludwig W. Adamec, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, ed. Jon Woronoff, 3rd ed. (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003), 465; Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 451.

condemning his personal life and his modernization programs as anti-Islamic”, announced much more radical and extensive reforms than the previous ones, which trimmed his public support that had already got weakened during his trip abroad due to the skyrocketing taxes, rising corruption and increasing conscription period.⁵⁵⁶ The revolt of the Pashtun Shinwaris of southeastern Afghanistan in November 1928 rapidly overspread with the participation of some other tribes as well as many soldiers of the Amir’s regular army and thus the Amir fled to Kandahar on 14 January 1929 after abdicating in favor of his brother Inayatullah, who could hold the power until 17 January 1929 when a Tajik named Habibullah Kalakani (also known as Bacha Saqqao - son of a water-carrier) from Kohistan, the north of Kabul, seized the capital and declared himself the new monarch with the title of Amir Habibullah Ghazi.⁵⁵⁷ During Habibullah’s short reign (January-October 1929), Afghanistan fell into political anarchy and economic disorder once again because he could neither win the support of majority of the Afghan tribes in spite of his cancellation of all of Amanullah’s reforms, which could only work to legitimize his rule in the eyes of many Afghan religious leaders, nor gain the trust and recognition of foreign powers.⁵⁵⁸ The chaos ended when Mohammad Nadir Khan of the powerful Musahiban family, another heroic figure of the Afghan independence war that held important positions during the reign of Amir Amanullah Khan, overthrew Amir Habibullah Ghazi by recapturing Kabul with the support of the newly formed tribal army on 10 October 1929.⁵⁵⁹ Upon his victory, the *jirga* of the tribal army proposed Nadir Khan to be king and he accepted the offer by assuming the title of Mohammad Nadir Shah on 17 October 1929, notwithstanding the objections raised by the dynasty and supporters of Amanullah Khan who expressed his willingness to resume the throne.⁵⁶⁰ A very interesting dynastic change occurred with the enthronement of Nadir Shah, which ensued the concentration of power within the Musahiban dynasty (1929-1978),

⁵⁵⁶ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 450, 451, 452; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 190.

⁵⁵⁷ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 282; Jeffery J. Roberts, *The Origins of Conflict in Afghanistan* (Westport (CT): Praeger, 2003), 46. After several unsuccessful attempts from his base in Kandahar to recapture Kabul from Habibullah Kalakani, Amir Amanullah left his country for Italy in April 1929, For detailed info on his attempts, please see Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 265-266.

⁵⁵⁸ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 275-281.

⁵⁵⁹ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 283-284.

⁵⁶⁰ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 459; Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 287-290; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 97.

namely Nadir Shah and his extended family.⁵⁶¹ Since three of the five Musahiban brothers (Mohammad Nadir, Shah Wali and Shah Mahmud) belonged to Sadozai Durrani including the new king and remaining two (Mohammad Aziz and Mohammad Hashim) to the rival Mohammadzai Durrani, this period was accepted as “royal dualism”.⁵⁶²

When he came to power, King Mohammad Nadir Shah (1929-1933) had to face with the domestic opposition of both pro-Amanullah elements and some other tribes in the periphery, an impoverished treasury, scattered national army and insecurity of regional powers towards his rule, and in order to address all these problems, he pursued the domestic policy of national gradualism with some oppressive methods and the foreign policy of positive neutrality and friendship.⁵⁶³ For this purpose, as a “pragmatic moderate”, he adopted the policy of limited and gradual social change together with economic development in his vigilant modernization program that was based on the peaceful coexistence of nationalist-reformist forces with religious-conservative ones but also tried to crush all domestic opposition while favoring delicate foreign policy of establishing non-provocative, balanced and friendly relations with all states, especially those in the region and the others, especially Muslim ones, that might extend help to Amanullah and supporters.”⁵⁶⁴

In domestic politics, he discarded most of the reforms of Amanullah Khan in November 1929, especially those on rural taxation, conscription and family affairs, and reinstated many pre-existing rules and practices to please the religious and conservative sections of the society especially in rural areas, imprisoned and executed influential pro-Amanullah figures such as the remaining members powerful Charkhi and Tarzi families, gave the most powerful government posts to his brothers, reconstructed a modern standing army by using existing resources and military aid of Britain, Germany and France, gathered *Loya Jirga* in September 1930 to make his accession confirmed and make the dynastic rights of Amanullah and his heirs nullified, reopened the schools that had been closed during the brief rule of Bacha Saqqao, restructured the entire legal framework of the state with the promulgation of a new constitution in October 1931, and in order to fund his modest modernization program,

⁵⁶¹ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 194, 198.

⁵⁶² Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 104.

⁵⁶³ *Ibid.*, 101.

⁵⁶⁴ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 97, 101, 102; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 198.

he also established a new government revenue system that relies mainly on the heavy taxation of export-import trade namely the merchants and urban sectors rather than rural taxation, after introducing a number of economic reforms for the growth of trade and infant industry such as the formation of first national bank named *Bank-i Milli* in 1932 and the creation of major trade companies as a result of the encouragement of private entrepreneurship as of 1932.⁵⁶⁵ Among those, changing the revenue source would be the very first step of tipping the balance in favor of the Musahiban rulers against rural power holders.

Regarding the foreign relations with two powerful neighbors, Nadir Shah confirmed Amanullah's treaties with the Soviets and the British that recognized his enthronement, renounced all border claims and followed the policy of non-involvement in Soviet Central Asia and in British India by withdrawing the pre-existing support for the anti-Soviet Basmachis and the anti-British national movements including the Pashtuns in east of Durand Line, but he also severely restricted the activities of these two powers in the country by discharging all Soviet experts brought in by Amanullah Khan and prohibiting the employment of British nationals.⁵⁶⁶ He also maintained good-neighbourly relations with Iran. As for the relations with other countries, he continued proactive policy of Amanullah Khan in establishing and maintaining ties with as many countries as possible and thus continued good relations with Turkey, concluded treaties of friendship with Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Japan and many European countries, and tried to get closer to the United States, not only to assert Afghanistan's sovereignty and his rule's legitimacy but also to seek out new powerful allies outside the region who would support the economic development of his country without posing any threat to Afghan territory and counterbalance the influence of Britain and Russia.⁵⁶⁷ Among those countries, the King was particularly interested in having closer

⁵⁶⁵ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 197, 198, 199, 202-205; Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 463; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 100, 101, 107; Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 297, 307-310, 314-320; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 59.

⁵⁶⁶ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 102, 103; Jeffery J. Roberts, *The Origins of Conflict in Afghanistan* (Westport (CT): Praeger, 2003), 53; Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 337.

⁵⁶⁷ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 206-207; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 103; Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 334-338.

contacts with the authorities and investors of the United States, Japan, Germany, France and Italy but his efforts did not yield the desired results because he retained the traditional Afghan policy of not granting any major concessions to those foreign powers and also Afghanistan was far from the sphere of interest of these distant powers.⁵⁶⁸ The only foreign aid that King Nadir Shah received during his reign was the British aid consisting of 175,000 pounds together with arms and ammunitions in 1931 in addition to what had been secured during the reign of Amanullah such as German credits and loans in which the German government accepted the transfer of the remaining funds with an extension of the repayment period for two more years.⁵⁶⁹

All these policies of King Nadir Shah brought stability to Afghanistan within few years while increasing the number and extent of the anti-government opposition, which now included not only pro-Amanullah elements but also disappointed nationalists because of the King's passivity towards British policies in the tribal belt.⁵⁷⁰ Growing internal disturbances among those groups resulted in the murder of King Nadir Shah by an adopted son of Charkhi family in November 1933, after the deadly attacks to Afghan Embassy in Berlin and the British Legation in Kabul during the summer of 1933, which ended up with the death of Afghan envoy who was also Nadir's brother and British Embassy staff.⁵⁷¹

Following the murder of King Nadir Shah, a smooth succession occurred with the accession of his 19-years old son Zahir Shah, who had previously served twice as cabinet, and its acknowledgement by the Musahiban family.⁵⁷² However, King Zahir Shah (1933-1973) ruled the country as a nominal leader for the first two decades of his reign, under the supervision of his paternal uncles, Mohammad Hashim Khan (Premier, 1929-1946) and Shah Mahmud Khan (Premier, 1946-1953), who were holding the real power in their hands.⁵⁷³

⁵⁶⁸ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 334-338; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 206, 207; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 103.

⁵⁶⁹ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 140; Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 297.

⁵⁷⁰ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 338.

⁵⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 339.

⁵⁷² Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 287-288.

⁵⁷³ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 13.

Therefore Louis Dupree calls this twenty years period between 1933 and 1953 as “avuncular period”.⁵⁷⁴

Both premiers continued the basics of domestic and foreign policy behaviors adopted by their brother King Nadir Shah namely gradually conducted political centralization, social and economic change accompanied by a cautious foreign policy.⁵⁷⁵ While following slow-paced modernization program with small doses of reforms at home by taking into consideration the interests of rural power holders, they were also chasing diplomatic and economic relations with other countries, especially physically distant and powerful ones, with an eye to the Soviet and British factors just beyond their borders. However unexpected developments in the world politics such as Great Depression (1929-1939) experienced by the industrialized Western world and a series of events evolving into the Second World War (1939-1945) changed the plans of these Musahiban rulers by having great impact on the country’s domestic and foreign policies.

In his premiership, Hashim Khan focused on economic, military and education reforms. In the field of economy, as a result of the maintenance of the efforts initiated by the deceased king, the Premier achieved a sharp increase in foreign trade whereas a limited expansion of industry sector because of the country’s lingering transportation and energy problems, despite the improvements in roads, power plants and vehicles.⁵⁷⁶ “Despite the growth of capital, the mushrooming of joint-stock companies, the increase in the volume of commercial traffic, and a favorable balance of payments, the structure of Afghan economy remained weak.”⁵⁷⁷ In the education sector, the Premier increased the number and quality of the modern schools, though again majority of which was in Kabul area, and recruited European (French, German, Italian) and Japanese professionals for those schools but could get very limited success due to country’s deep-rooted problems such as “the general socioeconomic conditions in the country, the shortage of classrooms, schools, and teachers, the lack of economic resources, and the opposition of traditionalist elements.”⁵⁷⁸ Moreover, Hashim government proclaimed Pashto as the official language of Afghanistan in 1936 and

⁵⁷⁴ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 477.

⁵⁷⁵ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 106, 114.

⁵⁷⁶ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 361-370.

⁵⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 369-370.

⁵⁷⁸ *Ibid.*,), 352, 357.

encouraged its usage all over the country, which produced immediate problems for the country's administrative, economic and educational infrastructure as well as resentment among non-Pashtun ethnic groups who had already accepted Persian language (Dari) as the *lingua franca*.⁵⁷⁹ As for the military sector, the Premier continued the previous efforts of modernization and mechanization of the Afghan army by opening new military schools and units, equipping the army with European arms, having German and Italian military instructors and experts in the country who would be replaced by Turkish ones after 1939 and sending Afghan officers to several different countries such as Soviet Union, Japan, Italy, India and Turkey for training.⁵⁸⁰

With regard to the foreign policy, Premier Hashim Khan followed the principles of his brother King Nadir Shah: "correct relations with the Soviet Union and Great Britain; close relations with Turkey, Persia/Iran^[581] and other Muslim countries; greater international recognition and wider contacts; and a continued attempt to secure the assistance of distant industrial powers in modernizing the country."⁵⁸² After joining the League of Nations in 1934, Afghanistan signed Saadabad Pact in 1937 together with Turkey, Iran and Iraq, and this five-year lasting regional security pact brought limited but strategic benefits to Afghanistan such as winning the heart of Pan-Islamists and Shias within the country, ensuring that these states would neither harbor nor support Amanullah and his supporters, providing rapprochement with Iran that paved the way for settlement of bilateral border disputes and new cooperation areas, and strengthening relations further with Turkey that resulted in a ten-year extension of the 1928 Turkish-Afghan Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation in 1937 and thus guaranteed the continuation of Turkish assistance to Afghanistan in various fields.⁵⁸³ As for the relations with Moscow that was going through a rough patch due to Stalin's consolidation of power and the Sovietization of Central Asia, and London that was struggling with the economic hardships of the Great Depression and nationalist-liberation movements in its colonies including India during the 1930s, the Premier continued previously adopted Musahiban policies of neutrality, non-involvement

⁵⁷⁹ Senzil Nawid, "Language Policy in Afghanistan: Linguistic Diversity and National Unity," in *Language Policy and Language Conflict in Afghanistan and Its Neighbors: The Changing Politics of Language Choice*, ed. Harold F. Schiffman (Leiden, The Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2012), 36-37.

⁵⁸⁰ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 370-371.

⁵⁸¹ In 1935, Tehran government substituted Iran for Persia as the official name of the country.

⁵⁸² Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 375.

⁵⁸³ *Ibid.*, 375-378.

and non-acceptance of foreign aid from these two immediate neighbors while pushing ahead with great efforts to build and develop ties with distant powers that could both provide support to the country's development and strengthen the country's hand against its powerful neighbors.⁵⁸⁴ Following in his predecessor's path, Premier Hashim continued the earlier efforts of establishing diplomatic relations with the United States and managed to get the first treaty of friendship, diplomatic and consular representations with this country signed in March 1936, and granted its first concession to an American company a year later in May 1937 for the exploration and exploitation of its oil and mineral resources for seventy-five years but the exchange of diplomatic missions took place only in early 1940s due to the American reluctance in getting involved in Afghanistan and the American company ceased its activity in Afghanistan in 1939 on the grounds that it was economically unfeasible.⁵⁸⁵

Premier Hasim also managed to attract the attention of some other non-regional/distant wealthy and industrialized countries such as Germany, Italy and Japan, which would soon create the Axis Alliance to secure and further their own separate expansionist interests, and began to accept offers of development assistance from these three countries in mid-1930s.⁵⁸⁶ As the time went by, Afghanistan's relations with then Nazi Germany got much more developed in comparison with Italy and Japan, due to Germany's increasing economic and military assistance to Afghanistan, and thereby Germans became the most important and influential foreign group in the country.⁵⁸⁷ The main motive behind Nazi Germany's renewed interest in Afghanistan was to use the Afghan card against the British in India by gaining a strong foothold in Afghanistan, influencing Afghan leadership, and get them to abandon traditional Afghan policy of neutrality in favor of the Axis powers when the time came, as had happened during the First World War period.⁵⁸⁸ In 1937, Lufthansa's air link between Berlin and Kabul, making this German company "the only commercial airline [that] landed

⁵⁸⁴ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 108; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 206

⁵⁸⁵ Ludwig W. Adamec, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, ed. Jon Woronoff, 3rd ed. (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003), 466-467; Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 378-379, 381; Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 479; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 207.

⁵⁸⁶ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 478.

⁵⁸⁷ Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 48; Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 478;

⁵⁸⁸ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 207.

on the Kabul airport,” an Afghan-German mine company named “The Afghanistan Mines Ltd.” and Afghan National Bank’s Berlin office, aiming towards promotion of bilateral trade and German investments in Afghanistan, were established.⁵⁸⁹ In subsequent two years, the relations further advanced as follows:

By 1939 there were somewhere between 100 and 300 German experts and technicians in Afghanistan, most of them engineers in charge of road-building projects, hydroelectric power plants, and factories. Germans also occupied important teaching and planning posts, not only in the various industrial projects of the country but also in the Bank-i Milli, the post, telegraph, and telephone system, the Kabul police department, and the Afghan army, where they helped train the officer corps. Several German business houses opened branches in Afghanistan and sent German nationals to staff them....In August 1939 Germany concluded an extensive financial and commercial agreement with Afghanistan: Afghanistan was given long-term credits for the purchase of German machinery for new textile mills and hydroelectric plants, and in return agreed to repay all advances over a ten-year period by furnishing cotton to Germany. Under the terms of this agreement 80 per cent of the materials bought by the Afghan government (through its state bank) were to be financed by the German reich. The agreement-which the Nazi economic journal *Siidostecho* saw as opening unlimited possibilities for German trade and capital in Afghanistan (August 25, 1939)-was a great triumph for Nazi diplomacy.⁵⁹⁰

Having noticed the increasing displeasure of the British and the Soviets about the growing German presence in Afghanistan through its development assistance activities, which were perceived just as “a means of industrializing and modernizing the Afghan economy” by the Afghans, Premier Hashim recruited different professionals of various nationalities, including Soviet and British ones, and signed Soviet-Afghan trade agreement, as proof of his adherence to the neutrality policy.⁵⁹¹ However, the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939 and following events undermined this traditional Afghan foreign policy as well as Afghan hopes for German-assisted modernization plans. Although Afghanistan decided to maintain its neutrality in the Second World War, as it had done during the First World War, and declared it with ‘the Neutrality Act’, Britain and the Soviet Union, voicing concern separately about the presence and activities of the nationals of the Axis Powers in Afghanistan earlier, sent note verbales to the Afghan government in October 1941 demanding the removal of all non-diplomatic Axis subjects from the country, and the Afghans witnessing the Anglo-Soviet invasion of neighboring Iran in August 1941, which,

⁵⁸⁹ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 379-380.

⁵⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 380.

⁵⁹¹ Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 380-381; Ludwig W. Adamec, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, ed. Jon Woronoff, 3rd ed. (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003), 467.

like itself, was benefiting from German technology and expertise to realize its ambitious development plans, grudgingly came to accept this demand.⁵⁹² Following the defeat of Axis Powers at the end of the war, their influence together with their assistance, specifically the Germans, disappeared in the country. Barfield summarizes the impact of the Second World War with the following words: “The war had a devastating impact on the Afghan economy. Its modernization was stopped in its tracks, and capital fled the country for India, prices rose as the economy declined, impoverishing ordinary people and creating social unrest.”⁵⁹³ In May 1946, Premier Mohammad Hashim Khan who ruled the country with “his conservative and authoritarian style” resigned and Defense Minister Shah Mahmud Khan, the youngest Musahiban brother who was relatively liberal and open-minded, succeeded him.⁵⁹⁴

3.5. Conclusion

This chapter has provided crucial background information on the early history of present-day Afghanistan by examining relevant political, economic, and social developments that had occurred between the ancient times when several important dynasties, empires, and civilizations rose and fell in the area now known as Afghanistan and the pre-Cold War years in which the modern Afghan state assuming its present form in 1893 and gaining its independence in 1919 began to make a great effort to integrate itself into international system by establishing and developing relations with other countries as a sovereign power in the international sphere and launching modernization, reform, and national development programs at a rapid and uneven pace in the domestic sphere. In this context, this chapter serves as a baseline to help develop a better knowledge and understanding of the relevant developments in the subsequent periods that will be presented in the following chapters.

⁵⁹² Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), 382-388

⁵⁹³ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 208.

⁵⁹⁴ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 145.

CHAPTER 4

AID TO AFGHANISTAN BEFORE THE SOVIET INVASION

4.1. Introduction

This chapter analyzes the dynamics of international humanitarian and development aid to Afghanistan from the beginning of the Cold War up to the Soviet invasion. To understand the current international humanitarian and development aid landscape in Afghanistan, it is essential to scrutinize the Cold War years before the Soviet invasion in 1979. This period sheds light on why and how Afghanistan, initially seeking foreign aid from distant, non-neighboring global powers like the United States for its ambitious modernization and development programmes in the domestic sphere and the ‘Pashtunistan’ issue in its foreign policy gradually transformed into one of the key playgrounds of the Cold War rivalry. Both the US and the Soviet Union promoted competitive economic development models in the developing and underdeveloped world to advance their conflicting geopolitical interests, resulting in Afghanistan becoming an aid-dependent rentier state, largely in the orbit of the neighboring Soviet Union.

By considering key turning points of this period, the chapter first explores the country’s development and modernization efforts, second details Premier Daud’s strategic use of external aid to achieve his own political and development goals, third examines the emerging negative impacts of Daud’s dependent development model during the years when King Zahir Shah assumed full power, which led to Daud’s coup and the overthrow of Zahir Shah, fourth analyzes Daud’s attempts to mitigate heavy Soviet influence through reengaging in competitive coexistence, and fifth and finally, discusses the country’s transformation into a Soviet satellite state with the Saur Revolution and Daud’s overthrow.

4.2. Afghan Quest for Development and Modernization

The premiership of Shah Mahmud (r. 1946-1953), who retained the main tenets of the domestic and foreign policy behaviors set by his brothers, coincided with the beginning of

dramatic regional and international political changes: the British withdrawal, the partition of India, the establishment of two new states in the Indian subcontinent, one of which was bordering Afghanistan, and the start of the Cold War between the Western Bloc and Eastern Bloc led by the United States and Soviet Union respectively, newly emerged two superpowers after the Second World War. In the immediate post-war period, like his predecessors, Premier Shah Mahmud, approached the United States, thinking that his country would need the political and economic support of this non-neighboring global power carrying no colonial baggage, having everything needed for putting his country's almost halted development and modernization programs back in track, and being expected to replace the British in offsetting the Soviets in the north after its complete withdrawal from India in 1947, as in line with traditional Afghan neutrality policy, but met with the same old disinterest from the American side towards his country.⁵⁹⁵ In order to pave the way for close cooperation with the United States in the future that could help him to hit all the birds with one stone, Shah Mahmud made a highly strategic move by concluding the ongoing negotiations since late 1945 with Morrison-Knudsen, one of the largest American engineering and construction company "specialized in symbols of the future"⁵⁹⁶ with its large-scale civilian and military infrastructure projects both in the US and all over the world, for the implementation of Helmand Valley Development Project (HVDP)⁵⁹⁷ and signing an initial \$17 million contract in 1946 with the newly formed Morrison-Knudsen Afghanistan Inc. (MKA), headquartered in San Francisco, for the improvement of roads from the Pakistani border (Chaman) to the construction area that would facilitate the transport of all the necessary equipment and supplies from the US to Afghanistan and later the construction of Helmand River diversion dams and Boghra Canal system.⁵⁹⁸ In the ensuing years, HVDP

⁵⁹⁵ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 149; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A New History* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2001), 106, 108; Jeffery J. Roberts, *The Origins of Conflict in Afghanistan* (Westport (CT): Praeger, 2003), 165.

⁵⁹⁶ Nick Cullather, "Damming Afghanistan: Modernization in a Buffer State," *The Journal of American History* 89, no. 2 (September 2002): 522.

⁵⁹⁷ Before this Project, Afghanistan had made several earlier attempts to revitalize the Helmand Valley either by itself or with the assistance of Germany and Japan. Following Kandahar Governor's initial attempts in early 1910s using hand labor-based methods, first the German engineers in early 1930s and later the Japanese ones in late 1930s were contracted to provide technical assistance to the extremely underdeveloped irrigation infrastructure of the Helmand Valley, but with the start of the Second World War, the Japanese had to depart, leaving Western-educated Afghan engineers in charge of continuing the work till 1946. For further information, please see: Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 482; U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Retrospective Review of US Assistance to Afghanistan: 1950-1979*, submitted by Maurice Williams, John Kean, Charles Jenkins, Joann Feldmann, and Patricia Fisher-Harris from Devres Inc., Bethesda, MD, USAID Contract No. PDC-0085-I-00-6095, October 31, 1988, 78-79; Mildred Caudill, *Helmand-Arghandab Valley: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow* (Lashkar Gah: USAID/Afghanistan, 1969), 13

⁵⁹⁸ U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Retrospective Review of US Assistance to Afghanistan: 1950-1979*, submitted by Maurice Williams, John Kean, Charles Jenkins, Joann Feldmann, and Patricia Fisher-

would grow in scope, scale and complexity by shifting its focus from irrigation to integrated rural development in the southern Helmand-Arghandab region and would become “one of the most famous (if not infamous)” among many projects of the same or similar kind of the U.S. government agencies responsible for economic aid and technical assistance to countries in need until the project’s termination in 1978.⁵⁹⁹

Explaining the rationale behind the Afghan monarchy’s decision to sign a contract with MKA, some highlighted the national development drive, such as Louis Dupree, who, referring to “previous modern attempts to rejuvenate the Hilmand Valley [that] occurred long before the Americans reinvented foreign aid”, pointed out the Afghani “dream of making deserts bloom again” by solving the historic control problem over the country’s longest river, the Helmand, whose “watershed drains forty percent of Afghanistan’s land area, directly affecting between two and three million people, or about one fifth of the entire population”⁶⁰⁰ and Rajiv Chandrasekaran, who underscored the Afghan monarchy’s ambitious decision to make a huge leap from “primitive, landlocked nation into the modern era by harnessing the raging waters of the majestic Hindu Kush” with the use of the country’s \$100 million worth of revenue from the export of karakul pelts to New York during the Second World War years;⁶⁰¹ while others underscored the desire of getting economic and political support from the U.S., such as Yuri V. Bossin, who stated, “The Helmand Valley project started commercially to strengthen Afghan-American relations, which had only been established in 1942,”⁶⁰² and Ahmad ShayeQ Qassem, who stated, “By drawing the US into Afghanistan through development work, the Afghans envisaged that its political support would come as a corollary to engrained economic interest.”⁶⁰³

Harris from Devres Inc., Bethesda, MD, USAID Contract No. PDC-0085-I-00-6095, October 31, 1988, 79; Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 483; Rajiv Chandrasekaran, *Little America: The War Within the War for Afghanistan* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012), eBook, 42.

⁵⁹⁹ Cynthia Clapp-Wincek and Emily Baldwin, *The Helmand Valley Project in Afghanistan*, AID Evaluation Special Study No. 18, U.S. Agency for International Development (Washington DC: A.I.D. Evaluation Publications, December 1983), vi-vii; U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Retrospective Review of US Assistance to Afghanistan: 1950-1979*, submitted by Maurice Williams, John Kean, Charles Jenkins, Joann Feldmann, and Patricia Fisher-Harris from Devres Inc., Bethesda, MD, USAID Contract No. PDC-0085-I-00-6095, October 31, 1988, 9-10.

⁶⁰⁰ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 482, 483.

⁶⁰¹ Rajiv Chandrasekaran, *Little America: The War Within the War for Afghanistan* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012), eBook, 36-37.

⁶⁰² Yuri V. Bossin, "The Afghan Experience with International Assistance," in *Beyond Reconstruction in Afghanistan: Lessons from Development Experience*, ed. John D. Montgomery and Dennis A. Rondinelli (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 77.

⁶⁰³ Ahmad ShayeQ Qassem, *Afghanistan’s Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 54.

However, for the Afghan monarchy, HVDP was not just simply a development work that was expected to bring about a long awaited US political and economic support to the country, this was only part of the story, it had a much more meaning than that. In order to understand the meaning of initiating such a large-scale and costly infrastructure project in Afghanistan through a flagship American company, it is necessary to first look briefly into central role of water resource development projects, most notably big dams and associated river basin development schemes, in the development history of the 20th century. Beyond their technical functions and material benefits ranging from the provision of water for agricultural (irrigation), domestic (both for humans and livestock) and industrial use to the energy generation, flood control, and navigation/transport, these projects were designed, built and operated to serve various different purposes of the actors involved, mainly the dam-owning governments and their ruling elites but also the foreign governments providing either direct or indirect technical and economic assistance for these projects. Governments and their ruling political elites presented these projects aiming to meet the various needs of their people as tremendous success in establishing human control over nature through the use of technology, either directly as technology owner or indirectly as technology buyer from a third-party, and the hard work and dedication of their fellow citizens working in their construction, which indicated a state's power and capacity and its people's patriotism respectively.⁶⁰⁴ This helped them to re/shape the political, economic, demographic and social landscape of their countries. Foreign governments providing overseas development assistance saw these projects as one of the key instruments that would serve their national political and economic interests in recipient countries. Thereby these projects became one of the most significant symbols of 'modernity/modernization', 'scientific progress', 'economic development', 'national pride', 'patriotism', 'glorification of a leader, leadership or regime' and/or 'superiority of a particular political system or ideology over the others' for many countries around the world during the 20th century, irrespective of their level of development. Some of the purposes varying from country to country are as follows: (India) – in line with independent India's first Prime Minister Nehru's description of dams as the 'temples' of modern India and the national elite's conviction of the critical role of multi-purpose water resource development projects in the country's modernization, turning the material benefits and the symbolism of these projects into the young Indian state's advantage by shaping/designing the political and economic life of the nation through the "use [of] these projects as sources of control and patronage in India's newly established democratic system"

⁶⁰⁴ Nick Cullather, "Damming Afghanistan: Modernization in a Buffer State," *The Journal of American History* 89, no. 2 (September 2002): 520-521; Patrick McCully, *Silenced Rivers: The Ecology and Politics of Large Dams* (London: Zed Books, 2001), 2, 21.

and the protection of “the interests of what has been termed India's “dominant coalition of proprietary classes””: irrigation to rich farmers, electricity to industrialists, and good-paying and prestigious work to skilled professionals (e.g., civil servants and engineers)”;⁶⁰⁵ (Greece) as part of its decades-long post-independence efforts of identity construction, westernization and modernization since the mid-19th century through using its ancient past as the entrance ticket to the Western world that had already identified Greece as the birthplace of its civilization and having access to all the benefits attached to becoming part of the Western club, while disengaging completely from its hundreds years long Ottoman past, developing closer relations with the Western world in various fields, expanding the base of infrastructure projects funded by the western capital to include initially water supply, irrigation and sanitation projects and later power production ones, transferring relevant Western know-how and technology to Greece – although young Greek state’s early efforts were first failed because “the lack of interest of western capital in investing water supply projects in Greece in the nineteenth century” and later, when the U.S. funding became available in 1918 for the Marathon dam project in Athens, these efforts were interrupted by the failed Greek invasion of Western and northwestern parts of today’s Turkey in the period 1919-1921, resulting in the Turkey-Greece population exchange agreement in 1923 and thus the overpopulation problem in Greek cities, mainly in Athens; its later efforts combined with “the domestic and geopolitical changes” enabled the construction of the Marathon Dam, “the first dam project for watering Athens” and “the biggest dam construction at the time in the Balkans”, by an American company during the period 1926-1929, symbolizing Greek state’s desire for a future within the Western club with a strong emphasis on its ancient past as this very modern project was “located on the site of the ancient battlefield of Marathon, was draped with classical ornamentation and symbolism, and was veneered with the same type of marble as that used for the construction of the Parthenon,”;⁶⁰⁶ (South Africa) - alleviating of white poverty and unemployment through the provision of temporary employment opportunities to poor rural white males during the construction phase of large dams and related irrigation schemes and the socio-economic upliftment through the establishment of white-owned agriculture in the newly formed Union of South Africa during the first half of the 20th century, laying the foundations for the formal establishment of apartheid regime in 1948, which turned into creating privileged white population with improved livelihoods and economic well-being and resisting international isolation in reaction to its apartheid policies

⁶⁰⁵ Sanjeev Khagram, *Dams and Development: Transnational Struggles for Water and Power* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), 33, 35

⁶⁰⁶ Maria Kaika, “Dams as Symbols of Modernization: The Urbanization of Nature Between Geographical Imagination and Materiality,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 96, no. 2 (June 2006): 276, 278, 280, 286, 297

through further water and power projects, most notably the Orange River Development Project (ORDP) as the central symbol of apartheid, in the second half of the 20th century;⁶⁰⁷ (Spain) - realizing national hydraulic regenerationist plan, which was developed after the country had lost most of its overseas colonies in late 19th century, signaling the end of Spanish global empire, with the aim of solving social, economic, and political problems facing post-imperial Spain and putting the country on the path of accelerated state-driven modernization and economic development in the 20th century through the construction of multipurpose water infrastructure (Ebro River Basin Authority, 7 years before the Tennessee Valley Authority-TVA) across the country that would improve agricultural production with irrigation expansion, increase energy production, promote industrial growth, and also contribute greatly to reshaping the country's land, people, and power relations around centralized, unified and authoritarian state, peaking during the Francoist period (1939-1975) with the installation of more than six hundred dams using both political prisoners at forced labor and cheap workforce from rural Spain, especially during the second half of the 20th century when the Cold War geopolitics provided Franco, who had pursued a self-reliant development model because of the postwar international isolation on Spain as a result of his active wartime support for the Axis powers, with the political and economic support of the newly emerging US-led Western Alliance that he needed to fulfill his hydraulic dream for Spain, in return of continuing his staunch anti-communism;⁶⁰⁸ (USA) - managing social and economic impacts of the Great Depression of the 1930s in the US through introduction of New Deal programme for fostering economic recovery in various sectors, mitigating high unemployment and poverty, and reforming financial system to prevent depression repeating itself in the US, leading, among other things, to the federally sponsored large construction projects, mostly in the impoverished Western US, that would benefit American society by first creating long-term jobs to millions of unemployed Americans and supplying American households, farmers, and industries in rural regions with cheap and accessible energy through extensive rural electrification, and later during the Second World War, meeting the huge energy demand of the factories producing war materials through the use of this already

⁶⁰⁷ Wessel Visser, "Water as Agent for Social Change, 1900-1939: Two Case Studies of Developmental State Approaches in Establishing Irrigation Schemes," *Historia* 63, no. 2 (November 2018): 40, 56; Sanjeev Khagram, *Dams and Development: Transnational Struggles for Water and Power* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), 165-166. For further details of dams, canals and irrigation schemes in South Africa, please see Johann W.N. Tempelhoff, *South Africa's Water Governance Hydraulic Mission (1912-2008) in a WEF Nexus Context* (Cape Town: AOSIS, 2018)

⁶⁰⁸ Erik Swyngedouw, *Liquid Power: Water and Contested Modernities in Spain, 1898-2010* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2015), 3-4, 11, 13-14, 16, 32, 40-44, 64-65, 68-69, 78, 88, 92, 98, 100, 111, 115-116, 124, 127, 132, 136-137, 139, 140-141, 142-149; Benjamin Brendel, "Dam Construction in Francoist Spain in the 1950s and 1960s: Negotiating the Future and the Past," *Sustainable Development* 28, no. 2 (05 September 2019): 397; Maimuna Mohamud and Herry Verhoeven, "Re-Engineering the State, Awakening the Nation: Dams, Islamist Modernity and Nationalist Politics in Sudan," *Water Alternatives* 9, no. 2 (2016): 182

established structure, in both of which multipurpose big dams (most notably Hoover Dam) and associated river basin development schemes (TVA) played central role;⁶⁰⁹ (USSR) catching up with the Western capitalist states and showing its own people and the world the Soviet/Bolshevik can-do power at home and abroad by accelerating its industrial development that required massive electricity generation (Dnieper Dam as the country's first major dam built in 1927-1932 and rebuilt in 1945-1950 after being destroyed during the Second World War, both with the help of the US General Electric Company) and also solving agricultural problems caused either by the country's inhospitable terrain or by Stalin's forced collectivization of agriculture in the period 1920-1940;⁶¹⁰ and as one of the playgrounds of the Cold War rivalry between the US and the Soviets, promoting competitive economic development models in the Third World countries, particularly in the newly independent ones, through the provision of related development assistance, both technical and financial, to push forward their conflicting geopolitical and economic interests by involving a variety of actors such as their national big dam building bureaucracies, multilateral development banks, UN specialized agencies, and bilateral aid and export credit agencies such as USAID and Eximbank.⁶¹¹

Similarly, the Afghan monarchy initiating this grandiose water development project in the Helmand Valley stretching across the southern half of the country had several purposes other than the project's material benefits and all the possible advantages that come along with closer relations with the US, which were all contributing to its nation-state building efforts. First, by choosing Helmand Valley as the location of the project, where there were still remains and vivid memories of the country's golden age that began with the Ghaznavid Empire, the first regional empire, founded by Muslim Turks in the 10th century but gave rise to Afghanistan's emerging political and cultural role in Islamic civilization by making modern-day Afghanistan its center and the country's present-day Pashtun heartland its capital, and ended with the Mongol invasions of Genghis Khan in the 13th century, leaving behind death and destruction of almost everything the Ghaznavids had built, including a very

⁶⁰⁹ Louis Hyman, "The New Deal Wasn't What You Think," *The Atlantic*, March 06, 2019, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/03/surprising-truth-about-roosevelts-new-deal/584209/>; Encyclopedia, "Water and Power 1928-1941," last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.encyclopedia.com/education/news-and-education-magazines/water-and-power-1928-1941>; Patrick McCully, *Silenced Rivers: The Ecology and Politics of Large Dams* (London: Zed Books, 2001), 15-16,

⁶¹⁰ Today in Conversation, "Dnieper Dam Began Operation (1932)," last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://todayinconservation.com/2020/02/october-10-dnieper-dam-began-operation-1932/>; Patrick McCully, *Silenced Rivers: The Ecology and Politics of Large Dams* (London: Zed Books, 2001), 17-18, 240.

⁶¹¹ Patrick McCully, *Silenced Rivers: The Ecology and Politics of Large Dams* (London: Zed Books, 2001), 255-257. For details, please see: Christopher Sneddon, *Concrete Revolution - Large Dams, Cold War Geopolitics, and the US Bureau of Reclamation* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2015).

sophisticated irrigation system ahead of its time in the very same valley, the Afghan monarchy aimed to reclaim this glorious past by “resurrecting what Genghis Khan had destroyed” and thereby creating “a connection between the Ghaznavid dynasty and the current occupants of the royal palace in Kabul” in the minds of the Afghan people.⁶¹² “Thus the project engaged considerable Afghan national pride and widespread support for the restoration of ancient glories.”⁶¹³ Second, the Afghan monarchy perceived the project as a great opportunity to redraw the Durand Line in favor of Afghanistan, thinking that after seeing the project’s material benefits to Pashtuns on the Afghan side of the border, Pashtuns on the other side of the border, who would have different options after the complete withdrawal of Britain from India in 1947, would sooner or later want to be part of Afghanistan.⁶¹⁴ This would strengthen the hand of the Afghan Musahiban monarchy, which had been trying to establish a modern Afghan nation-state based on Pashtun nationalism since Nadir Shah years, by changing the country’s ethnic composition in favor of Pashtuns, who then constituted “less than half the Afghan population”⁶¹⁵ and helping the monarchy gain the prestige of redressing the historic wrong of the Durand Line in the eyes of Afghan Pashtuns. Third, the Afghan monarchy wanted to benefit from this project to help build a coherent and integrated nation out of traditionally fragmented society by reaching out the Afghan people living self-sufficiently either in cities other than the capital Kabul or in remote rural areas with little or no contact with their government, primarily various non-Pashtun ethnic groups such as Hazaras, Tajiks and Uzbeks, “who did not regard the king as a legitimate ruler”, but also Pashtuns who “were suspicious of his government.”⁶¹⁶ Fourth, if successful in this large-scale integrated rural development project, the Afghan monarchy would move one-step closer to its goal of achieving a modern state capable of fulfilling all the functions required of it by first providing its people with basic public infrastructure and services in education, healthcare, transport (roads, streets, bridges, etc.), telecommunication, electricity, water, decent housing, employment and livelihoods in the newly built orderly

⁶¹² Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 20, 48, 66, 90, 92, 349; Rajiv Chandrasekaran, *Little America: The War Within the War for Afghanistan* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012), eBook, 39-40.

⁶¹³ U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Retrospective Review of US Assistance to Afghanistan: 1950-1979*, submitted by Maurice Williams, John Kean, Charles Jenkins, Joann Feldmann, and Patricia Fisher-Harris from Devres Inc., Bethesda, MD, USAID Contract No. PDC-0085-I-00-6095, October 31, 1988, 10.

⁶¹⁴ Rajiv Chandrasekaran, *Little America: The War Within the War for Afghanistan* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012), eBook, 40

⁶¹⁵ Nick Cullather, "Damming Afghanistan: Modernization in a Buffer State," *The Journal of American History* 89, no. 2 (September 2002): 518.

⁶¹⁶ Rajiv Chandrasekaran, *Little America: The War Within the War for Afghanistan* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012), eBook, 41-42.

central city and its villages, also equipped with mosques, sports areas, hotels, light-industry factories, etc., and later harvesting the resultant economic growth, social progress and human capital development, which would not only help broaden and deepen Kabul's authority and legitimacy and enable the Afghan monarchy to perform core tasks of the modern state, such as collecting taxes, counting the population, administering justice, enacting and enforcing any law, maintaining public order and establishing related new institutions and bureaucracy at various levels, but would also help radically transform Afghan society into a modern one.⁶¹⁷ Moreover, some influential figures in the Afghan monarchy's close circle composed of ministers and advisors, who had been sent by the Afghan government to study at universities in the U.S., desired to bring the country that they greatly admired to Afghanistan to help realize their vision of modern and developed Afghan state.⁶¹⁸ Nick Cullather briefly summarizes symbolic meaning of HVDP with the following words:

Planting a modern city next to the colossal ruins of Qala Bist was a calculated gesture asserting an imagined line of succession from the eleventh- and twelfth-century Ghaznavid dynasty to the royal family presiding in Kabul. The Helmand project symbolized the transformation of the nation, representing the legitimacy of the monarchy, the expansion of state power, and the destiny of the Pashtun race.⁶¹⁹

As for the U.S. side of the story, the USAID's 1988 dated report examining the US assistance to Afghanistan retrospectively would define this first contract between MKA and Afghan government as "the first significant involvement of the United States in Afghanistan" and underlined its importance as "the beginning of technology transfer and cultural exchange that opened Afghanistan to the western world."⁶²⁰ The Helmand project in which the Americans had reluctantly engaged at the beginning in the late 1940s would gradually turn into "a showcase of nation building...to "reclaim" and modernize a swath of territory comprising roughly half the country...[as] part of a larger project—alternately called development, nation building, or modernization—that deployed science and expertise to reconstruct the entire postcolonial world", "the scientific frontier of American power in Central Asia", a textbook case in which the American reputation at stake primarily in

⁶¹⁷ Rajiv Chandrasekaran, *Little America: The War Within the War for Afghanistan* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012), eBook, 34-37, 42-44; Nick Cullather, "Damming Afghanistan: Modernization in a Buffer State," *The Journal of American History* 89, no. 2 (September 2002): 518, 522, 527.

⁶¹⁸ Rajiv Chandrasekaran, *Little America: The War Within the War for Afghanistan* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012), eBook, 43-44, 53-54, 56.

⁶¹⁹ Nick Cullather, "Damming Afghanistan: Modernization in a Buffer State," *The Journal of American History* 89, no. 2 (September 2002): 515

⁶²⁰ U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Retrospective Review of US Assistance to Afghanistan: 1950-1979*, submitted by Maurice Williams, John Kean, Charles Jenkins, Joann Feldmann, and Patricia Fisher-Harris from Devres Inc., Bethesda, MD, USAID Contract No. PDC-0085-I-00-6095, October 31, 1988, 80.

Afghanistan but also in the developing world, and “an economic Vietnam” for the U.S. that had already positioned itself as leader of the new post-war order having moral, economic and political obligations towards other nations, particularly newly independent ones, first with President Harry S. Truman’s 1949 Point Four Program that made ‘development’ a new instrument for achieving its strategic and economic objectives abroad and thus ‘U.S. development aid’ as one of key components of its foreign policy with a special focus on water development projects and later with President John F. Kennedy’s 1960 ‘First Development Decade’ initiative (signature of Foreign Assistance Act and creation of USAID) that aimed “not only to surpass Soviet initiatives but to demonstrate the superiority of American methods of development” with a special focus of agriculture.⁶²¹

However, from the very beginning of the relationship between MKA and Afghan government, many things would not go as planned for a combination of reasons, such as that the Afghan government’s reluctance for a detailed soil and water analysis in the project area, a key precondition for such projects, considering it unnecessary and costly, combined with MKA’s acceptance of proceeding without it, thinking that “the venture was simply too big to fail”, resulted in the project that got off on the wrong foot,⁶²² “misunderstandings arose concerning areas of responsibility and capability of the two parties”, leading both the Afghans without technical expertise and capacity “agreed to undertake some extremely important aspects of the total project” to save some project money and thus could neither “fulfill their engineering obligations” nor “their pride permit them to admit it” and the Americans proceeding without knowing “Afghan cultural patterns” to fail to realize this on time,⁶²³ “MKA management overruled field recommendations”, and some decisions of the Afghan government were “guided by political expediency rather than technical merit.”⁶²⁴ Moreover, both the Americans and the Afghan monarchy’s close circle of ministers and advisers wrongly assumed that the ordinary Afghan people would embrace the project. While the Americans were thinking that “once they completed the demonstration project,

⁶²¹ Nick Cullather, "Damming Afghanistan: Modernization in a Buffer State," *The Journal of American History* 89, no. 2 (September 2002): 513, 523-524, 528, 531-532, 535; U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), "USAID History: Celebrating Sixty Years of Progress," last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.usaid.gov/about-us/usaid-history>

⁶²² Nick Cullather, "Damming Afghanistan: Modernization in a Buffer State," *The Journal of American History* 89, no. 2 (September 2002): 522; Rajiv Chandrasekaran, *Little America: The War Within the War for Afghanistan* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012), eBook, 46.

⁶²³ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 483.

⁶²⁴ U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Retrospective Review of US Assistance to Afghanistan: 1950-1979*, submitted by Maurice Williams, John Kean, Charles Jenkins, Joann Feldmann, and Patricia Fisher-Harris from Devres Inc., Bethesda, MD, USAID Contract No. PDC-0085-I-00-6095, October 31, 1988, 80.

Afghans up and down the Helmand Valley would want to same improvements”,⁶²⁵ the Afghan monarchy’s close circle was expecting to see this same scene even before the completion of the project, accordingly the Afghan villagers would be amazed by the American-style modern town with paved streets, identical stucco houses, hospitals, a community pool, a coeducational school, etc. but also a mosque in Lashkar Gah, Helmand built to host Americans and Afghans working for the project and they “would soon aspire to create for themselves.”⁶²⁶ Arnold J. Toynbee, who had visited the town locally known as “Little America” later in 1960, would describe Lashkar Gah as “a piece of America inserted into the Afghan landscape” or “an America-in-Asia” by adding that “American-mindedness is the characteristic mark of the whole band of Afghan technicians and administrators who are imposing Man’s will on the Helmand River.”⁶²⁷ This sudden injection of modernity into the most conservative region of the country combined with the growing frustration of the Afghan farmers about the project’s material benefits in the following years would put the Afghan monarchy’s ambitious social engineering experiment on a slippery slope.

While the Afghan Musahiban monarchy was taking this very first step towards giving King Amanullah’s modernization experiment, which had costed him his throne in the past, another try with the signature of an initial contract with the MKA in 1946, Britain’s complete withdrawal and the partition of India as Hindu-majority India and Muslim-majority Pakistan were taking place as groundbreaking developments for Afghanistan. Before having taken place, both seemed advantageous for Afghan interests on the surface: Afghanistan was getting rid of British threat along its southeastern borders while getting a great chance of regaining the Pashtun territories in east of Durand Line previously ceded to the British. However it soon became apparent that the British withdrawal would leave the country alone with the Soviet Union in the region, and the Afghans would get disappointed with first the British refusal of Afghan territorial claims by addressing the Durand Line as an international border confirmed by previous Afghan rulers, and then the incorporation of the predominantly Pashtun populated North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) into Pakistan as a result of plebiscite held in July 1947 where only the choice of joining either India or Pakistan were presented to the populace while the Afghan demand of adding the choices of independence

⁶²⁵ Rajiv Chandrasekaran, *Little America: The War Within the War for Afghanistan* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012), eBook, 65.

⁶²⁶ Rajiv Chandrasekaran, *Little America: The War Within the War for Afghanistan* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012), eBook, 48-50, 51-54; Nick Cullather, "Damming Afghanistan: Modernization in a Buffer State," *The Journal of American History* 89, no. 2 (September 2002): 512.

⁶²⁷ Rajiv Chandrasekaran, *Little America: The War Within the War for Afghanistan* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012), eBook, 50, 54; Nick Cullather, "Damming Afghanistan: Modernization in a Buffer State," *The Journal of American History* 89, no. 2 (September 2002): 512.

and union with Afghanistan was being declined by the British.⁶²⁸ Afghanistan, after having protested against the results of the plebiscite as ‘unfair’ because of its limited choices, launched a very active and sometimes even aggressive “Pashtunistan” campaign against Pakistan in almost all spheres, and thus the relations between these two countries got sour in a short span of time, though the establishment of formal diplomatic relations in February 1948.⁶²⁹ Pakistan’s punitive border policy towards Afghanistan, either restricting or delaying Afghan in-transit goods, in response the latter’s Pashtunistan campaign emerged as a new challenge, among others, for the newly started MKA-implemented Helmand Project, which was already having difficulty in transporting all the necessary heavy equipment and supplies from the U.S. to landlocked Afghanistan through Pakistan.⁶³⁰

Based upon these significant developments in its region and the emergence of a positive atmosphere in Washington favorable to the idea of aiding the development of countries in need through the U.S. Export-Import (Ex-Im) Bank loans until the fall of 1948, Afghanistan, which had already been struggling with serious economic problems caused by a slump in export and tax revenues due to the sharp drop in karakul pelt prices with the increasing competition on international markets in the post-war years and the reduction in key agricultural products (cotton, fruits) because of the 1946-1947 drought, also enforcing the country to import 17 thousand tons of wheat from the U.S., and worsened by Pakistan’s punitive border policy, approached the U.S. once again in the fall of 1948 to ask for a substantial loan to continue its ongoing development projects under HVDP and initiate new ones on ambitious scale in various fields that would accelerate the country’s overall economic and social development, and also to express its interest in buying American weapons, both of which would help the country maintain political stability and internal security, especially against tribal rebellions, and provide it with strong positioning in the region not only vis-à-vis the Soviets but also its new neighbor Pakistan over the Durand Line and Iran over the Helmand River’s water use.⁶³¹ However, Afghan government’s all formal

⁶²⁸ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 290.

⁶²⁹ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 120.

⁶³⁰ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 491; U.S. Congress, Committee on Banking and Currency, *Obtaining Financial Aid for a Development Plan: The Export Import Bank of Washington Loan to Afghanistan (September 30, 1953)*, report prepared by Peter G. Franck, 83d Cong., 2d sess., Committee Print (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1954), 2

⁶³¹ Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 28; U.S. Congress, Committee on Banking and Currency, *Obtaining Financial Aid for a Development Plan: The Export Import Bank of Washington Loan to Afghanistan (September 30, 1953)*, report prepared by Peter G. Franck, 83d Cong., 2d sess., Committee Print

and informal contacts with the US government officials, the US Ex-Im Bank, and private American banks to raise these requests did not bring about the desired results; the U.S. government flatly rejected the request on weapons whereas the U.S. Ex-Im Bank preferred instead to inform the Afghans about its loan application procedures and requirements by expressing that it would consider providing loan for individual projects rather than a long-term program with a repayment period of no more than 12 years in Afghanistan's case, because although "the country, though strategically located, had not yet found its place on the checkerboard of the East-West struggle, nor were its resources essential to the United States", "the State Department, whose representative was an ex officio member of the bank's board, recognized the political need for support of the unstable Afghan economy in general and of the work of the American contractor in particular."⁶³²

When President Harry S. Truman announced the Point Four program within the framework of "four major themes [that] would guide American foreign policy in the post-war period" in January 1949, which he described as "a bold new program for making the benefits of our [the U.S.] scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas" through providing economic aid and technical assistance to the countries in need either directly or in cooperation with the international organizations like the UN and/or the private sector financed by the US Ex-Im Bank, the Afghan government, impressed by the Bank's favorable loans provided to Israel, Turkey and Mexico for projects forming part of their comprehensive economic development programs, wanted to "request the same kind of overall program commitment" from the Bank.⁶³³ This would also give both the Afghans, which was displeased with the progress of HVDP that had already drained their \$20 million by September 1949 for the delivery of only half of what was written in the first MKA contract, namely "one short road, one diversion dam, and one incomplete canal", as stated by the U.S. Ambassador in Kabul, Louis G. Dreyfus in a cable to the Secretary of State, and the MKA, which admitted in its letter of September 1949 to the

(Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1954), 2-6; Rajiv Chandrasekaran, *Little America: The War Within the War for Afghanistan* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012), eBook, 45; Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 491.

⁶³² U.S. Congress, Committee on Banking and Currency, *Obtaining Financial Aid for a Development Plan: The Export Import Bank of Washington Loan to Afghanistan (September 30, 1953)*, report prepared by Peter G. Franck, 83d Cong., 2d sess., Committee Print (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1954), 3, 6-7

⁶³³ "Harry Truman: The Point Four Program," USInfo, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://usinfo.org/PUBS/LivingDoc_e/pointfour.htm; "Background Essay on Point Four Program," Harry S. Truman Library and Museum website, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/InternationalAid_Background.pdf; U.S. Congress, Committee on Banking and Currency, *Obtaining Financial Aid for a Development Plan: The Export Import Bank of Washington Loan to Afghanistan (September 30, 1953)*, report prepared by Peter G. Franck, 83d Cong., 2d sess., Committee Print (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1954), 25-26

US Department of State that “there should have been more ... to show for this large expenditure” saw this Point Four program, a great opportunity to put the Helmand project back on track without causing any loss in prestige or embarrassment to any party.⁶³⁴

Although the US Ex-Im Bank representatives had once again informed the Afghans that “in Afghanistan’s case the bank would prefer not to deal with the entire (development) program as unit, but rather with individual projects”, Afghan government submitted an official request for a 55-million-dollar loan with a long repayment schedule in February 1949 to the bank for its \$78.3 million five-year development plan, consisting of extensive development projects in the fields of light industry, mining, hydroelectric power, roadbuilding, transportation services, telecommunications and irrigation, in which MKA assisted the Afghan government in the preparation of an expanded version of HVDP.⁶³⁵ As a result of several months of negotiations between the Afghans and the U.S. Exim Bank after the latter’s rejection of the country’s first loan application on the basis of its excessive amount, long repayment terms, and requirement of a long-term commitment as well as the country’s weak capacity to manage all the projects, the bank agreed to provide only a 21-million-dollar loan with high interest rate in November 1949 that would cover the loan proposal’s irrigation infrastructure part, namely MKA’s Arghandab Dam, Kajakai Dam and Boghra Canal projects, with the condition of creating an independent authority such as the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) in charge of overseeing the projects implementation.⁶³⁶ During this process, MKA president informing the US Ex-Im Bank that “the name of his firm, and indirectly American prestige, were tied up with continuing the Helmand project”⁶³⁷ and the U.S. Ambassador in Kabul Dreyfus warning Washington that “[a]bandoned MK camps will stand as monuments of American inefficiency” played significant roles in convincing the US

⁶³⁴ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 484; Rajiv Chandrasekaran, *Little America: The War Within the War for Afghanistan* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012), eBook, 44-45; U.S. Congress, Committee on Banking and Currency, *Obtaining Financial Aid for a Development Plan: The Export Import Bank of Washington Loan to Afghanistan (September 30, 1953)*, report prepared by Peter G. Franck, 83d Cong., 2d sess., Committee Print (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1954), 34.

⁶³⁵ U.S. Congress, Committee on Banking and Currency, *Obtaining Financial Aid for a Development Plan: The Export Import Bank of Washington Loan to Afghanistan (September 30, 1953)*, report prepared by Peter G. Franck, 83d Cong., 2d sess., Committee Print (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1954), 11, 19, 26.

⁶³⁶ Jeffery J. Roberts, *The Origins of Conflict in Afghanistan* (Westport (CT): Praeger, 2003), 165-166; U.S. Congress, Committee on Banking and Currency, *Obtaining Financial Aid for a Development Plan – The Export Import Bank of Washington Loan to Afghanistan (September 30, 1953)*, report prepared by Peter G. Franck, 83d Cong., 2d sess., Committee Print (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1954), 27-34; Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 484; Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 484.

⁶³⁷ U.S. Congress, Committee on Banking and Currency, *Obtaining Financial Aid for a Development Plan: The Export Import Bank of Washington Loan to Afghanistan (September 30, 1953)*, report prepared by Peter G. Franck, 83d Cong., 2d sess., Committee Print (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1954), 29

Ex-Im Bank to provide this loan.⁶³⁸ Moreover, disappointed with the bank's limitation itself to irrigation projects, the Afghan government took several independent steps on the industrial front by using its own resources, such as contracting with a German company for the construction of a powerplant in Sarobie, Kabul and several investments for the development of textile industry in 1950.⁶³⁹

When the US Ex-Im Bank approved the loan following the Afghan assurances of creating a separate authority holding overall responsibility of projects implementation within the valley as pre-conditioned by the bank, MKA continued its work by beginning to construct the 7-million-dollar Arghandab Dam in January 1950 and the 13.5-million-dollar Kajakai Dam in May 1950.⁶⁴⁰ However, the required water and soil surveys that had been rejected by the Afghan government during the first contract term were not held at this time either because the US Ex-Im Bank refused to fund these critical surveys.⁶⁴¹

As demanded by the US Ex-Im Bank for a more integrated approach, Afghanistan finally founded Helmand Valley Authority (HVA/HAVA) in July 1952.⁶⁴² Furthermore, in June 1953, Afghanistan and the US International Cooperation Administration concluded an initial project agreement for the Helmand Valley Project that was followed by the release of \$18.5 million loan by the US Ex-Im Bank in November 1953.⁶⁴³ Henceforth, with the accelerating involvement of the US government aid agencies, the Helmand Valley Project fully turned into an American project in the eyes of the Afghans and thus became a prestige project for the Americans in Afghanistan.⁶⁴⁴

⁶³⁸ Rajiv Chandrasekaran, *Little America: The War Within the War for Afghanistan* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012), eBook, 46.

⁶³⁹ U.S. Congress, Committee on Banking and Currency, *Obtaining Financial Aid for a Development Plan: The Export Import Bank of Washington Loan to Afghanistan (September 30, 1953)*, report prepared by Peter G. Franck, 83d Cong., 2d sess., Committee Print (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1954), 14, 48

⁶⁴⁰ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 484; U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Retrospective Review of US Assistance to Afghanistan: 1950-1979*, submitted by Maurice Williams, John Kean, Charles Jenkins, Joann Feldmann, and Patricia Fisher-Harris from Devres Inc., Bethesda, MD, USAID Contract No. PDC-0085-I-00-6095, October 31, 1988, 81-82

⁶⁴¹ U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Retrospective Review of US Assistance to Afghanistan: 1950-1979*, submitted by Maurice Williams, John Kean, Charles Jenkins, Joann Feldmann, and Patricia Fisher-Harris from Devres Inc., Bethesda, MD, USAID Contract No. PDC-0085-I-00-6095, October 31, 1988, 80-82.

⁶⁴² Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 484.

⁶⁴³ U.S. Department of State, *United States Treaties in Force 2007 with Index* (New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2009), 1; Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 485.

⁶⁴⁴ U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Retrospective Review of US Assistance to Afghanistan: 1950-1979*, submitted by Maurice Williams, John Kean, Charles Jenkins, Joann Feldmann, and Patricia Fisher-Harris from Devres Inc., Bethesda, MD, USAID Contract No. PDC-0085-I-00-6095, October 31, 1988, 84.

In the early 1950s, Afghanistan approached the US for economic and military assistance once more but rebuffed again because of several reasons but mainly the “Pakistani concern over Afghan intentions, particularly during the Pushtunistan dispute.”⁶⁴⁵ The US developed a modicum of interest in Afghanistan only after concluding a general agreement for technical cooperation (the first Point Four agreement) in February 1951 that led to the beginning of US technical assistance as in the form of providing advisors in agriculture sector, developing education (general, vocational and technical) as well as teacher training in cooperation with the American universities, and the opening of USAID Kabul office in 1952.⁶⁴⁶ The US assistance to Afghanistan, excluding the US Ex-Im Bank loans, in the period 1950-1953 were as follows: \$100,000 (technical assistance) in 1951, \$300,000 (grant) in 1952, \$2,2 million in the field of agriculture and education (\$800,000 in grant and \$1,4 million in loan for the emergency purchase of wheat and flour for famine relief in Afghanistan) in 1953.⁶⁴⁷

One of the reasons of the American minimal interest in the Afghan requests for foreign aid, not only the military one but also the economic one, was the fact that “(b)y the end of 1949, it had become clear that the US, which had initially adopted a neutral stance, was inclined to support Pakistan on the Pashtunistan issue” because of Pakistan’s increasing strategic value for the United States, as a frontier state against the Soviets, rather than Afghanistan.⁶⁴⁸ Therefore, when Afghan declarations and actions over its “Pashtunistan” cause, such as the unilateral abrogation of all Durand-related Anglo-Afghan frontier treaties and giving support to the independence of Pashtun nationalists in NWFP by using different means, were retaliated by Pakistan with either deliberate delays in or de facto blockade on the transit of Afghan export-import goods, including vital fuel supplies to Afghanistan, and the US sided with Pakistan by increasing its aid to this country and showing indifference to Afghanistan’s problems, the ensuing economic hardship of this landlocked country enforced the Afghans to

⁶⁴⁵ Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 49.

⁶⁴⁶ U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Retrospective Review of US Assistance to Afghanistan: 1950-1979*, submitted by Maurice Williams, John Kean, Charles Jenkins, Joann Feldmann, and Patricia Fisher-Harris from Devres Inc., Bethesda, MD, USAID Contract No. PDC-0085-I-00-6095, October 31, 1988, 11, 83, 120.

⁶⁴⁷ U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Retrospective Review of US Assistance to Afghanistan: 1950-1979*, submitted by Maurice Williams, John Kean, Charles Jenkins, Joann Feldmann, and Patricia Fisher-Harris from Devres Inc., Bethesda, MD, USAID Contract No. PDC-0085-I-00-6095, October 31, 1988, C-1; U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants: Obligations and Loan Authorizations, July 1, 1945–September 30, 2015: Total Economic and Military Assistance Workbook 1946-2015: Afghanistan*; US Dept. of State, *United States Treaties in Force 2007 with Index* (New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2009).

⁶⁴⁸ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 120; Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 290-291.

turn to the Soviets for help and thus a four-year trade (barter) agreement with very favorable terms to Afghans, such as providing a much higher exchange rate than any Western country, was concluded in July 1950.⁶⁴⁹ This agreement provided Afghanistan “the duty-free export of goods across Soviet territory” and “the exchange of Afghan agricultural products for petroleum products and other manufactured goods.”⁶⁵⁰ Thereby, “Soviet influence in Afghanistan registered its first major advance”,⁶⁵¹ not only with making Afghanistan “partly dependent on the Soviets for many items formerly imported exclusively from the West”, but also presenting itself as a potential partner in development by offering “to construct several large gasoline-storage tanks, and to take over the oil exploration of north Afghanistan from a Swedish company.”⁶⁵² Although Pakistan changed its retaliatory transit trade policy towards Afghanistan in response to the 1950 Afghan-Soviet agreement and Afghanistan began to benefit from this policy change as in the old days, even more with the increase in transit trade annually, the Afghan-Soviet trade relations continued to expand in both amount and scope and led to the emergence of following picture:

By 1952, Afghan-Soviet trade had doubled, and the Soviets established a trade office in Kabul, something never permitted by previous Afghan foreign-policy makers. The Russians exported enough gasoline to make rationing unnecessary. Tashkent cotton cloth competed successfully with more expensive Indian and Japanese textiles. Russian cement satisfied Afghanistan's needs; previously it had depended upon Pakistani, Indian, or European cement, very expensive items to transport. Soviet technicians (including oil geologists, seismic engineers, veterinarians, and agricultural specialists) entered Afghanistan, though not in great numbers.... The early-bird technicians in 1952 primarily did surveys, some equipped the Kunduz cotton-cleaning plant, while others supervised the construction of 625 miles of improved and new telephone-telegraph lines.⁶⁵³

Apart from the developments taking place in the foreign policy, Premier Shah Mahmud Khan took several modest liberal steps in the political field such as pardoning many political prisoners, allowing the appearance of reformist *Wikh-i Zalmayan* (Awakened Youth) movement in 1947, letting the entry of reformist voices to the national assembly as a result

⁶⁴⁹Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 148; Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 30-31; Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 493

⁶⁵⁰ Martin McCauley, *Afghanistan and Central Asia: A Modern History* (London: Pearson Education, 2002), 11.

⁶⁵¹ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 148.

⁶⁵² Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 493

⁶⁵³ *Ibid.*, 494

of the 1949 dated relatively free elections and enacting the law on press freedom in 1951.⁶⁵⁴ When the royal family got disturbed from the increasing opposition activated by his liberal reforms, Shah Mahmud had to return to the previous autocratic system but it did not save his rule because of the worsening economic situation and the unsettled NWFP issue and he resigned in September 1953 by leaving the premiership to his nephew and the King's cousin Mohammed Daud Khan, the oldest son of Mohammed Aziz who got assassinated in Berlin.⁶⁵⁵

4.3. Competitive Coexistence: “Lighting American Cigarettes with Soviet Matches”

Over the course of his autocratic premiership, Daud Khan (r. 1953-1963) aimed at enlarging and deepening central authority over rural power holders and accelerating his country's development and modernization, and hoisting ‘Pashtunistan’ policy while pursuing traditional Afghan policy of neutrality, non-alignment and non-acceptance foreign aid from neighboring powers.⁶⁵⁶ As being aware of the fact that he needs foreign aid as well as support for the settlement of “Pashtunistan” issue to achieve his aims, Premier Daud, like his predecessors, approached the US several times for the commencement of military aid program and upsizing the allocated economic aid, especially after the announcement of the US military aid to Pakistan in late 1953, but the United States constantly refused his demands for a combination of reasons but mainly because of rapidly growing strategic relations between the United States and Pakistan through newly launched aid deals and anti-Soviet alliance accords, in which the Afghans refused to participate because of its traditional policy of neutrality.⁶⁵⁷ Although Premier Daud's biggest disappointment was on military aid because he was in need of creating modern strong army to realize his reforms at home and adjusting the disrupted balance of power in the region,⁶⁵⁸ the amount of the development aid allocated

⁶⁵⁴ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 114-115; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 145.

⁶⁵⁵ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 116; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 150-151.

⁶⁵⁶ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 121.

⁶⁵⁷ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 122; Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 510-511; Jeffery J. Roberts, *The Origins of Conflict in Afghanistan* (Westport (CT): Praeger, 2003), 190-191.

⁶⁵⁸ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 291; Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 510.

to his country was another source of concern for him. During the same period, the US economic assistance to Afghanistan in the field of agriculture and education slightly increased from \$2,2 million in 1953 to \$2,5 million grants in 1954, but then decreased to \$2 million grants in 1955.⁶⁵⁹

Upon his displeasure with the American aid policy towards Afghanistan, Premier Daud decided to change the traditional Afghan Foreign Policy of non-acceptance of foreign aid from neighboring powers and approached the Soviet Union. Stalin's death in 1953 resulting in some significant changes in Kremlin's attitude towards the Third World was a stroke of luck for Premier Daud. Stalin, initially following Lenin's 'united front' and 'peaceful coexistence' strategies based on establishing tactical cooperation with progressive bourgeois-nationalist movements against imperialism and developing relations with states having different political, economic, and social systems to guarantee the Soviet state's survival respectively, had reacted to dramatic changes in the international arena during his rule by moving towards Stalinist doctrines of 'socialism in one country' namely 'the Soviet Union first, world revolution later' prioritizing Soviet military buildup and economic development to secure the Soviet state's survival and 'two camps', meaning 'either with us or against us' putting all non-aligned nationalist states with belated capitalist development into the imperialist camp while denouncing their leaders as puppets of imperialism, resulting in the Soviets with little or no interest in the Third World.⁶⁶⁰ For instance, Stalin declined post-independence India's repeated requests for closer relations and economic cooperation by calling Indian leader Nehru "a 'nimble servant' of the British."⁶⁶¹ After Stalin's death, the Soviets under Khrushchev's leadership came full circle in their approach towards the Third World by putting Lenin's abovementioned strategies into practice. The Soviets engaged in efforts to establish relations with non-aligned or neutral developing countries, particularly the newly independent ones craving for rapid modernization, even the others loosely attached to the Western Alliance, and offered them aid and assistance that would mainly help

⁶⁵⁹ U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants: Obligations and Loan Authorizations, July 1, 1945–September 30, 2015: Total Economic and Military Assistance Workbook 1946-2015: Afghanistan*

⁶⁶⁰ Alessandro Iandolo, "De-Stalinizing Growth: Decolonization and the Development of Development Economics in the Soviet Union," in *The Development Century – A Global History*, eds. Stephen J. Macekura and Erez Manela (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 202-204; Cissy E.G. Wallace, "Soviet Economic and Technical Cooperation with Developing Countries: the Turkish Case" (PhD diss., London School of Economics, 2014), 24-32, 35; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A New History* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2001), 111

⁶⁶¹ Alessandro Iandolo, "De-Stalinizing Growth: Decolonization and the Development of Development Economics in the Soviet Union," in *The Development Century – A Global History*, eds. Stephen J. Macekura and Erez Manela (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 203.

them achieve independent national economy, economic growth, better living standards and eventually full political independence without begging at their former colonial masters' tables in order to, among other things, to get political, economic and strategic advantages against the US-led Western bloc, especially while the US containment strategy was rapidly surrounding the country by making new allies in the vicinity of Soviet borders.⁶⁶²

The Soviet Union that became newly interested in developing cooperative relations with the Third World countries greatly welcomed its southern neighbor's demands, not only the ones on foreign aid but also on the issue of "Pashtunistan", and subsequently Afghanistan began to conclude several large-scale military and economic aid agreements with the Soviet Union and its European allies as of mid-1950s.⁶⁶³ With regard to the economic assistance, the Soviets increasingly enlarged the scope and size of its aid allocations to Afghanistan, which started with a \$3.5 million loan for the construction of two grain silos, a flour mill and a modern bakery in January 1954, a \$1.2 million agreement for construction of a gas pipeline in northern Afghanistan and four gas storage facilities in July 1954, a \$2 million credit for asphaltting and road-building equipment - "a project that the United States Import-Export Bank had rejected a year earlier" and also a \$5 million loan for building three cement plants - "a project the Afghans had been trying unsuccessfully to negotiate with the Germans and Americans for two decades" through its ally Czechoslovakia in August 1954.⁶⁶⁴ In 1955, when escalating tension between Afghanistan and Pakistan over the issue of "Pashtunistan" brought these two countries to the brink of war, Pakistan closed its border again to Afghan transit trade for about five months, and this prepared the grounds for further Soviet involvement in Afghanistan by giving the Afghans the much-needed aid as well as support on Pashtunistan.⁶⁶⁵ After concluding another five-year duty-free transit agreement with Afghanistan in June 1955, Soviet Secretary General Khrushchev and Premier Bulganin, upon invitation by the Afghan Government, visited Kabul in December 1955 as the third and last stop of their Asia tour, which resulted in bilateral agreements and joint declarations with

⁶⁶² Alessandro Iandolo, "De-Stalinizing Growth: Decolonization and the Development of Development Economics in the Soviet Union," in *The Development Century – A Global History*, eds. Stephen J. Macekura and Erez Manela (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 204-208, 211; Cissy E.G. Wallace, "Soviet Economic and Technical Cooperation with Developing Countries: the Turkish Case" (PhD diss., London School of Economics, 2014), 32-38, 55.

⁶⁶³ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 154-155; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 123.

⁶⁶⁴ Anthony Arnold, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion in Perspective* (New Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann, 1987), 34.

⁶⁶⁵ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 155-156.

three countries visited and a mission report on the outcomes of these visits underlining, among other things, the importance of supporting Third World countries on their path towards political and economic independence from the major Western powers by offering them economic and technical aid, and announced the support for Afghan demands for a plebiscite in the Pashtun territories of Pakistan, the future provision of military aid that had been rejected by the US, the extension of the 1931 Afghan-Soviet Treaty of Neutrality and Mutual Non-aggression for another 10 years until 1966, the donation of a hospital, medical equipments and 15 buses as a gift, and a \$100 million long-term development loan on very soft terms (30 years and repayable in Afghan exports so guaranteeing the continuation of bilateral relations through trade) for an aid package composed of numerous economic projects.⁶⁶⁶ “This \$100 million loan agreement was in fact the initial commitment by the USSR in what proved to be a long-term military and economic program of assistance for Afghanistan.”⁶⁶⁷ The Soviet aid mindset was largely focused on “eye-catching projects.”⁶⁶⁸

In early 1956, Soviet and Afghan authorities jointly identified the following projects for funding and concluded agreements on economic and technical cooperation, and stationing of Soviet specialists in Afghanistan in relation to aid projects: “two hydroelectric plants”, “three automotive maintenance-repair shops”, “a road from Qizil Qala... to Kabul, including the three-kilometer-long Salang Tunnel”, “an airport at Begram and improvements to the Kabul airport”, “three irrigation dams with canal systems”, “a materials-testing laboratory at Kabul”, “a fertilizer factory”, “improvement to port facilities at Qizil Qala” and “the Alchin bridge north of Kunduz.”⁶⁶⁹

In the later years, Soviet-Afghan cooperation further developed through a series of agreements and protocols related to the projects (planning, implementation and training

⁶⁶⁶ Jeffery J. Roberts, *The Origins of Conflict in Afghanistan* (Westport (CT): Praeger, 2003), 206; Ludwig W. Adamec, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, ed. Jon Woronoff, 3rd ed. (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003), 471-472; Timothy Nunan, “Graveyard of Development? Afghanistan’s Cold War Encounters with International Development and Humanitarianism,” in *The Development Century – A Global History*, ed. Stephen J. Macekura and Erez Manela (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 225; Wilson Center Digital Archive. “Information on Khrushchev and Bulganin’s November-December 1955 Trip to India, Burma, and Afghanistan, from the Central Committee of the CPSU to the Central Committee of the SED.” January 11, 1956. German Federal Archives (BArch) SAPMO DY 30/3634, obtained by David Wolff and translated by Stephan Kieninger. Last accessed May 01, 2024. <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/119273>; North Atlantic Council (NAC), “The Economic Offensive of the Sino-Soviet Bloc,” Document C-M(57)116 – No 393, August 21, 1957, 24

⁶⁶⁷ Ahmad Shayeq Qassem, *Afghanistan’s Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 59.

⁶⁶⁸ North Atlantic Council (NAC), “The Economic Offensive of the Sino-Soviet Bloc,” Document C-M(57)116 – No 393, August 21, 1957, 24

⁶⁶⁹ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 508-509; Paul Robinson and Jay Dixon, *Aiding Afghanistan: A History of Soviet Assistance to a Developing Country* (London: Hurst, 2013), 60, 161.

national technical cadres), trade, duty-free transit, border, barter, geographic prospecting, and cultural, technical and economic cooperation.⁶⁷⁰ Among those, the agreement of 1957 on geological surveying in northern Afghanistan, in which the Soviets allocated \$15 million of credits, and the agreement of 1963 on mining and gas exploration in northern Afghanistan instigated natural gas production in the country.⁶⁷¹ Furthermore, Afghanistan signed a very extensive military agreement with the Soviet Union and its ally Czechoslovakia and a trade agreement with another ally Poland in August 1956.⁶⁷² The military assistance provided by the Soviets and Czechs provided Premier Daud to put his plan of rapid modernization of Afghan army into practice but in such a way that the Afghan armed forces would become almost hundred percent Soviet trained and equipped within a decade with the stationing of Soviet military experts at Afghan military that replaced the long-standing Turkish ones, the training of Afghan officers in Soviet military schools and the large supplies of modern military equipment by the Soviets.⁶⁷³ Combined with the military aid provided by the Soviets and Czechs, total aid provided to Afghanistan approximated to some US\$122 million in late 1957.⁶⁷⁴ “From 1957 onwards subsequent agreements provided for US\$436 million in grants and loans over the following 15 years.”⁶⁷⁵ All these developments produced a steep increase in Afghan dependence on the Soviets in the 1950-1960 period: “from nothing to 100 percent for arms, from perhaps 10 percent to 90 percent for petroleum products, and from 17 percent (1951) to nearly 50 percent for total foreign trade.”⁶⁷⁶

Premier Daud’s this highly strategic move of establishing close military and economic cooperation with the Soviets and the resultant Soviet penetration into Afghanistan brought the long-awaited interest of the Americans in the country and thus their substantial assistance

⁶⁷⁰ Ludwig W. Adamec, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, ed. Jon Woronoff, 3rd ed. (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003), 473-478; Paul Robinson and Jay Dixon, *Aiding Afghanistan: A History of Soviet Assistance to a Developing Country* (London: Hurst, 2013), 66-67, 161-162.

⁶⁷¹ Paul Robinson and Jay Dixon, *Aiding Afghanistan: A History of Soviet Assistance to a Developing Country* (London: Hurst, 2013), 65.

⁶⁷² Ludwig W. Adamec, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, ed. Jon Woronoff, 3rd ed. (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003), 473; North Atlantic Council (NAC), “The Economic Offensive of the Sino-Soviet Bloc,” Document C-M(57)116 – No 393, August 21, 1957, 24

⁶⁷³ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 123; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 22; Anthony Arnold, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion in Perspective* (New Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann, 1987), 38.

⁶⁷⁴ North Atlantic Council (NAC), “The Economic Offensive of the Sino-Soviet Bloc,” Document C-M(57)116 – No 393, August 21, 1957, 24

⁶⁷⁵ Ahmad Shayeq Qassem, *Afghanistan’s Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 59.

⁶⁷⁶ Anthony Arnold, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion in Perspective* (New Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann, 1987), 39.

program in the fields other than military. Thereby, “competitive coexistence” game for gaining political influence through economic assistance programs kicked off between the United States and the Soviet Union.⁶⁷⁷ Having signed the technical cooperation agreement with Afghanistan in February 1956, the US announced its first large-scale aid program of capital and technical assistance to this country, amounting to \$143 million for the period 1956-1960, and focusing mainly on 1) Helmand Valley and agricultural development, 2) physical infrastructure development and 3) human capital development but also public administration and natural resources while skyrocketing its average aid level of \$1.4 million per annum in the period 1951-1955 to \$28.6 million per annum in the period 1956-1960.⁶⁷⁸

For the further progress of the Helmand Valley project, of which nearly 68% of the planned work was already completed with the use of first Afghanistan’s own \$20 million and then the Ex-Im Bank loans of \$39,5 million by MKA in 1959, Afghanistan and USAID signed a new project agreement, which started the two-decades of direct US involvement and greater responsibility in the project with higher levels of capital and technical assistance, after replacing MKA with the US Bureau of Reclamation (BuRec) and the Ex-Im Bank funds with the USAID ones.⁶⁷⁹ Moreover, the US initiated a national agricultural development project in early 1960s for capacity building of Afghan Ministry of Agriculture all over the country with the help of American experts.⁶⁸⁰ USAID report of 1988 would evaluate the project with the following words: “The Helmand Valley project became a central priority of US development assistance with total US commitments reaching a level of \$54 million.”⁶⁸¹ Cullather takes the issue from the Afghan side and underlines the burden of the project on Afghan government budget by stating that “The monarchy poured money into the project; a fifth of the central government’s total expenditures went into HAVA in the 1950s and early 1960s.”⁶⁸²

⁶⁷⁷ U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Retrospective Review of US Assistance to Afghanistan: 1950-1979*, submitted by Maurice Williams, John Kean, Charles Jenkins, Joann Feldmann, and Patricia Fisher-Harris from Devres Inc., Bethesda, MD, USAID Contract No. PDC-0085-I-00-6095, October 31, 1988, 4.

⁶⁷⁸ Ludwig W. Adamec, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, ed. Jon Woronoff, 3rd ed. (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003), 473; U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Retrospective Review of US Assistance to Afghanistan: 1950-1979*, submitted by Maurice Williams, John Kean, Charles Jenkins, Joann Feldmann, and Patricia Fisher-Harris from Devres Inc., Bethesda, MD, USAID Contract No. PDC-0085-I-00-6095, October 31, 1988, 11.

⁶⁷⁹ U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Retrospective Review of US Assistance to Afghanistan: 1950-1979*, submitted by Maurice Williams, John Kean, Charles Jenkins, Joann Feldmann, and Patricia Fisher-Harris from Devres Inc., Bethesda, MD, USAID Contract No. PDC-0085-I-00-6095, October 31, 1988, 85.

⁶⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁶⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 85

⁶⁸² Nick Cullather, "Damming Afghanistan: Modernization in a Buffer State," *The Journal of American History* 89, no. 2 (September 2002): 525.

As for the US highway development activities from 1957 onwards, the construction of the roads to the Pakistan border (Kabul-Torkham, Kandahar-Spin Baldak, Kabul-Kandahar, rail extension together with the construction of terminal warehouses in Chaman), and to the Iran border (Herat-Islam Qala) would provide the Afghans “three all-weather overland links to non-communist countries” and also vice versa.⁶⁸³ The US assistance used for the vehicle procurement, assembly and maintenance in Afghanistan by year of 1957 would increase the country’s motor transport industry.⁶⁸⁴ The US comprehensive air transport development program in Afghanistan since 1957 would provide the country’s national airline, Ariana, the ability to operate domestic and international flights, both in the region and to Europe, and fund the construction of five airports and terminal facilities (Kandahar International Airport and national airports at Herat, Jalalabad, Kunduz and Mazar-i-Sharif).⁶⁸⁵

In addition to giving the Helmand Valley a boost and assisting broader country-wide efforts at agricultural development, the US initiated a politically significant regional program of transport assistance in roads, vehicles, and airports-... The regional transit project, estimated at \$26 million, was an effort to strengthen transit and transportation facilities through Pakistan. This included improved transshipment facilities in Karachi, extension of the Pakistan rail-head into Afghanistan and upgrading the road system to Kandahar and Kabul... A further \$27 million was allocated for air transportation facilities, including airport construction, two DC-4 aircraft, and training for personnel at all levels of air control, maintenance and operations. The climax was the prestige establishment of Afghanistan's national airline, with the participation of Pan American Airways (Pan Am), and regularly scheduled air links to the outside world.⁶⁸⁶

The US education assistance that had concentrated on technical, vocational and general education as well as teacher training in the period 1951-1955, expanded rapidly as of 1956 with turning its attention to higher education, which resulted in the US sponsorship over the Faculties of Agriculture, Engineering and Education at Kabul University through the supply of professors, funds and scholarships.⁶⁸⁷

The third major area of priority US assistance was in education and public administration with funding allocations of about \$10 million. Projects were undertaken in the Afghan Institute of Technology; in vocational agricultural training

⁶⁸³ U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Retrospective Review of US Assistance to Afghanistan: 1950-1979*, submitted by Maurice Williams, John Kean, Charles Jenkins, Joann Feldmann, and Patricia Fisher-Harris from Devres Inc., Bethesda, MD, USAID Contract No. PDC-0085-I-00-6095, October 31, 1988, 52-53.

⁶⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 55.

⁶⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 53-54.

⁶⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 11-12.

⁶⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 19, 22, 120-124

and at the Faculty of Agriculture and Engineering; in teachers' education, the teaching of English and university administration. Additionally the US undertook a project for advising the Afghan Ministries of Finance and Planning.⁶⁸⁸

However, Premier Daud did not only benefit from the American aid in education sector but also French and West German ones through their sponsorships over different faculties of Kabul University since 1930s that were mostly in the field of humanities and social sciences, except Sharia Faculty being sponsored by al-Azhar University in Egypt.⁶⁸⁹ This move was indeed a counterbalance to the Soviet predominance in the military and economic sectors. Rubin states that “[a]s with other development projects, the various faculties grew according to the amount of foreign aid available to them, rather than according to any educational program or employment plan.”⁶⁹⁰ In the same period, the Soviet Union preferred to build vocational and practical higher education institutions to produce engineers and technicians because of the necessity of creating human capital for its own development projects and the concerns over the emergence of social discontent and brain-drain induced by white-collar unemployment, mostly observed among the graduates of humanities and social sciences, and thus established Polytechnic Institute in Kabul in early 1960s, which would be followed by auto-mechanical and oil-mining technical colleges in first half of 1970s.⁶⁹¹ As another counterbalance measure, Premier Daud gave the sponsorship of the Police Academy to West Germany against the Soviet supported Military Academy.⁶⁹² Besides, the US technical training program that started for a small number of Afghan military officers in the US in 1958 gradually expanded in the following years.⁶⁹³

The completion of all these major projects initiated during the period of 1956-1960 would take several years and require supplemental US funds. When it comes to the components of the US assistance to Afghanistan, the first place belonged to outright grants, the second to

⁶⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 11-12.

⁶⁸⁹ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 70; Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 42-43.

⁶⁹⁰ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 70.

⁶⁹¹ Paul Robinson and Jay Dixon, *Aiding Afghanistan: A History of Soviet Assistance to a Developing Country* (London: Hurst, 2013), 67.

⁶⁹² Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 70.

⁶⁹³ Jeffery J. Roberts, *The Origins of Conflict in Afghanistan* (Westport (CT): Praeger, 2003), 209; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 21.

Public Law 480 (PL-480)-mostly Type II direct grants,⁶⁹⁴ and the third to loans. Of the US total non-military assistance of \$179.7 million in 1956-1963, \$125.2 million to grants, \$40.1 million to PL-480-II commodities such as wheat and only \$14.1 million to loans (Table 1).

Table 1. US Economic Assistance to Afghanistan (1950-1963)

Fiscal Year	Funding Agency	Funding Account Name	Obligations (Historical Dollars)
1950	Unknown	INACTIVE – Technical Assistance	1,000
1951	Unknown	INACTIVE – Technical Assistance	100,000
1952	Department of Defense	INACTIVE – USAID Grants	300,000
1953	Department of Defense	INACTIVE – USAID Grants	800,000
	USAID	INACTIVE – USAID Loans	1,400,000
1954	Department of Defense	INACTIVE – USAID Grants	2,500,000
1955	Department of Defense	INACTIVE – USAID Grants	2,000,000
1956	Department of Defense	INACTIVE – USAID Grants	13,300,000
	USAID	INACTIVE – USAID Loans	5,000,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title II Grants	1,000
1957	Department of Defense	INACTIVE – USAID Grants	8,600,000
	USAID	INACTIVE – USAID Loans	5,800,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title II Grants	6,600,000
1958	Department of Defense	INACTIVE – USAID Grants	8,000,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title II Grants	6,200,000
1959	Department of Defense	INACTIVE – USAID Grants	19,400,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title II Grants	7,600,000
1960	Department of Defense	INACTIVE – USAID Grants	9,700,000
	USAID	INACTIVE – USAID Loans	700,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title II Grants	100,000
1961	Department of Defense	INACTIVE – USAID Grants	12,800,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title II Grants	18,700,000
1962	Department of Defense	INACTIVE – USAID Grants	38,600,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title II Grants	800,000
	Peace Corps	Peace Corps	1,000
1963	Department of Defense	INACTIVE - USAID Grants	14,800,000
	USAID	INACTIVE - USAID Loans	2,600,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title II Grants	100,000
	Peace Corps	Peace Corps	300,000

Source: Data extracted from the USAID’s U.S. Overseas Loans & Grants (Greenbook) Dataset

Upon a tremendous increase in the US aid offered to Afghans, the Soviets furthered their aid commitments with subsequent agreements, which amounted to \$550 million by 1963.⁶⁹⁵ Thereby, Premier Daud began to exploit the US-Soviet rivalry, while following traditional Afghan policy of neutrality that also made Afghanistan member to the Non-Aligned Movement in 1961, and greatly benefited from the competing aid programs of the Soviet-led

⁶⁹⁴ The PL 480 was the US food aid program that began in mid-1950s “as a means of disposing of burdensome agricultural surpluses” became a US foreign policy instrument in late 1950s with its focus on the US-friendly food-deficit nations. The program had four types: I for concessional sales, II for donations, III for barter and IV for long-term credit sales in dollars. For detailed info on the program, please see: William J. Burns, *Economic Aid and American Policy Toward Egypt, 1955-1981* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1985), 114-118.

⁶⁹⁵ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 509; U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Retrospective Review of US Assistance to Afghanistan: 1950-1979*, submitted by Maurice Williams, John Kean, Charles Jenkins, Joann Feldmann, and Patricia Fisher-Harris from Devres Inc., Bethesda, MD, USAID Contract No. PDC-0085-I-00-6095, October 31, 1988, 31.

and the US-led blocs in the fields other than military.⁶⁹⁶ One of the many samples showing how Premier Daud benefited from this competition is as follows: “they got the Russians to build silos and the Americans to then fill them with wheat... the Afghans arranged for the construction of a fifteen-hundred-mile paved ring road to knit the country together and link it to the outside world. About half the sections were constructed by the United States (mostly east-west) and half by the Soviets (mostly north-south).”⁶⁹⁷

The foreign assistance delivered to Afghanistan provided nearly 90 percent of the Afghan First Five-Year Development Plan (1957-1961), which was prepared as “essentially a shopping list of projects--involved estimated expenditure of \$280 million, mainly for roads, dams, airports, factories, power stations, and schools”,⁶⁹⁸ by the Afghan Ministry of Finance as based on the recommendations of Soviet advisers.⁶⁹⁹ The First Plan was largely financed by the Soviets (54%) and Americans (33%), but also their European allies, UN, Japan, US Ex-Im Bank, Asia Foundation, MEDICO and CARE.⁷⁰⁰ Since then, the ensuing five-year plans in the following years would also be “lists of projects for which foreign assistance was to be solicited than attempts to lay foundations for overall economic policies.”⁷⁰¹ Also, the Afghan dependency on foreign experts, mainly coming from major donor countries, in drafting the Plans and implementing the projects increased. As for the Second Five-Year Development Plan (1963-1967) that had been drafted by the Soviet advisers and reviewed by the American ones in coordination with the newly established Afghan Ministry of Planning and aimed “to continue the construction of a more adequate infrastructure in the transportation and agricultural sectors, to establish some basic industries, and to develop a

⁶⁹⁶ Anthony Arnold, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion in Perspective* (New Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann, 1987), 38; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 121.

⁶⁹⁷ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 209-210.

⁶⁹⁸ U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Retrospective Review of US Assistance to Afghanistan: 1950-1979*, submitted by Maurice Williams, John Kean, Charles Jenkins, Joann Feldmann, and Patricia Fisher-Harris from Devres Inc., Bethesda, MD, USAID Contract No. PDC-0085-I-00-6095, October 31, 1988, 13.

⁶⁹⁹ U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Retrospective Review of US Assistance to Afghanistan: 1950-1979*, submitted by Maurice Williams, John Kean, Charles Jenkins, Joann Feldmann, and Patricia Fisher-Harris from Devres Inc., Bethesda, MD, USAID Contract No. PDC-0085-I-00-6095, October 31, 1988, 30; Nathan Associates, *Economic Advisory Services Provided to the Ministry of Planning, Royal Government of Afghanistan, September 1961 to June 1972: Final Report* (Washington, D.C.: Robert R. Nathan Associates, Inc., July 1972), 9-10; Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 509.

⁷⁰⁰ Yuri V. Bossin, "The Afghan Experience with International Assistance," in *Beyond Reconstruction in Afghanistan: Lessons from Development Experience*, ed. John D. Montgomery and Dennis A. Rondinelli (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 80.

⁷⁰¹ Maxwell J. Fry, *The Afghan Economy: Money, Finance, and the Critical Constraints to Economic Development* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974), 80.

few light consumer industries, mainly for processing agricultural raw materials”,⁷⁰² the Afghan government tripled its projected development expenditure by expecting the same high level of contribution from the Americans and the Soviets, as major donors, to its financing.⁷⁰³ Soviet offer of financing the whole Plan in return of placing Soviet advisers to all Afghan ministries was rejected by the Afghan government.⁷⁰⁴ Notwithstanding, the Second Plan was largely financed by the Soviet Union (66%), which had financed 54% of the First Plan, and following countries financed the remaining: USA (20%), and West Germany (10%) but also Czechoslovakia, China, UN and World Bank (4%).⁷⁰⁵ Premier Daud was trying to create an “economic Korea” out of Afghanistan, “where the competition between East and West benefited local population without endangering its independence.”⁷⁰⁶ However, although the Second Five-Year Plan attracted larger amounts of foreign aid (\$556 million gross aid but only \$398 million net material aid - project aid plus commodity assistance, after deducting \$28 million debt service and \$130 million technical assistance) in comparison to the previous one, it did not achieve to raise the foreseen funds for a number of reasons, most notably because of 1) increasing importance of Vietnam in the Cold War politics as of early 1960s put Afghanistan on the back burner leading to a gradual decline in the foreign aid pouring into this country after 1964, and 2) a significant change in American aid policy towards Afghanistan in the early 1960s by limiting its commitments to large capital projects with those already started in late 1950s because of inadequate absorptive capacity of the country for development projects, and redirecting its new commitments to “alleviating Afghan human and institutional constraints on development.”⁷⁰⁷

⁷⁰² Nathan Associates, *Economic Advisory Services Provided to the Ministry of Planning, Royal Government of Afghanistan, September 1961 to June 1972: Final Report* (Washington, D.C.: Robert R. Nathan Associates, Inc., July 1972), 35.

⁷⁰³ U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Retrospective Review of US Assistance to Afghanistan: 1950-1979*, submitted by Maurice Williams, John Kean, Charles Jenkins, Joann Feldmann, and Patricia Fisher-Harris from Devres Inc., Bethesda, MD, USAID Contract No. PDC-0085-I-00-6095, October 31, 1988, 13.

⁷⁰⁴ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 132.

⁷⁰⁵ Yuri V. Bossin, "The Afghan Experience with International Assistance," in *Beyond Reconstruction in Afghanistan: Lessons from Development Experience*, ed. John D. Montgomery and Dennis A. Rondinelli (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 80.

⁷⁰⁶ Anthony Arnold, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion in Perspective* (New Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann, 1987), 38.

⁷⁰⁷ Yuri V. Bossin, "The Afghan Experience with International Assistance," in *Beyond Reconstruction in Afghanistan: Lessons from Development Experience*, ed. John D. Montgomery and Dennis A. Rondinelli (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 80; Nathan Associates, *Economic Advisory Services Provided to the Ministry of Planning, Royal Government of Afghanistan, September 1961 to June 1972: Final Report* (Washington, D.C.: Robert R. Nathan Associates, Inc., July 1972), 54; Anthony Arnold, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion in Perspective* (New Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann, 1987), 53; U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Retrospective Review of US Assistance to Afghanistan: 1950-1979*, submitted by Maurice Williams, John Kean,

Apart from this, foreign aid pouring into the country, especially in the military field that helped him to create strong and loyal army and police force, provided Premier Daud a great opportunity of enlarging and deepening state authority, particularly over the rural power holders (tribes and religious establishment), whose alliance as in the form of conservative rebellions had posed the greatest threat to the Musahibans and enforced them to adopt the policies of reducing rural taxation by putting the revenue burden on taxation on foreign trade and of pursuing the strategy of limited gradual social change to make these groups politically more subservient and less significant.⁷⁰⁸ By 1959, Premier Daud confronted these rural power holders who stood against his abolishment of compulsory veiling, employment of women in government enterprises, co-education of men and women, enforcement of taxation in Kandahar and road-building in Paktya, and easily overpowered them all.⁷⁰⁹ Premier Daud became “the first Afghan leader ever who managed to elevate the state to the heights of a relatively autonomous institution capable of imposing its rules of behaviour on the bulk of the populace.”⁷¹⁰ Yet, this came with a cost. The Musahiban taxation policy for the purpose of avoiding conservative rebellions, which gradually reduced the share of direct taxes on land and livestock of domestic revenue from 14 percent in 1953 to 5 percent in 1963 though increasing share of indirect taxes on foreign trade of domestic revenue from 39 percent in 1953 to 61 percent in 1963, together with pouring foreign aid, percentage of which as source of financing increased from 7 percent in 1953 to 49 percent in 1963, diminished the importance of tax revenue and laid the grounds of becoming a weak rentier state.⁷¹¹ Amin Saikal states, “Daoud’s skillful manipulation of the internal settings and the growing American-Soviet Cold War rivalry enabled him to put Afghanistan on an accelerated course of modernisation, but at the cost of transforming the country into a ‘rentier state’, with close ties with, and ideological vulnerability to, the Soviet Union.”⁷¹²

Charles Jenkins, Joann Feldmann, and Patricia Fisher-Harris from Devres Inc., Bethesda, MD, USAID Contract No. PDC-0085-I-00-6095, October 31, 1988, 13.

⁷⁰⁸ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 198-199.

⁷⁰⁹ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 131; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 71-72; Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 292-293; Martin Ewans, *Conflict in Afghanistan: Studies in Asymmetric Warfare* (London: Routledge, 2005), 158-159.

⁷¹⁰ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 126.

⁷¹¹ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 59, 60-61, 65, 296-297.

⁷¹² Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 117.

Furthermore, Premier Daud's brinkmanship over Pashtunistan issue began to bring tragic results.⁷¹³ Mounting tension between Afghanistan and Pakistan over Pashtunistan issue as of mid-1960s prompted Pakistan to close its border with Afghanistan once more in 1961 by blocking all transit of Afghan goods, but this time for two years, which severely damaged the Afghan economy, and in the end Premier Daud had to resign for the settlement of the crisis with Pakistan in March 1963.⁷¹⁴

4.4. Afghan Decade of Democracy: Shrinking Foreign Aid and Mounting Political and Economic Problems

Upon the resignation of Premier Daud, King Zahir Shah finally assumed full power after spending so many years under the shadow of first his uncles then his cousin. He appointed Dr. Mohammad Yusuf to form a new government with the duty of "finding a negotiated solution for the rupture with Pakistan; adopting a new constitution; and stimulating economic growth and attracting more foreign aid to continue the process of modernization."⁷¹⁵ Having normalized the relations with Pakistan in May 1963 by playing down the 'Pashtunistan' issue as a result of a series of negotiations held in Tehran and mediated by Iranian Shah, the King signed a new constitution (*Assasi Qanun*) in October 1964, which had been drafted and examined by various committees for more than a year before being approved by the *Loya Jirga* in September 1964, albeit with some amendments, and thus Afghanistan became a constitutional monarchy.⁷¹⁶ Accordingly, the new constitution reinforced the power of the King (Article 9) while banning the Royal House members from the highest legislative, executive and judicial positions (Article 24), established a bicameral parliament (*Shura*) composed of a fully elected National Assembly (*Wolesi Jirga – Shura-e-Milli*) and a Senate (*Meshrano Jirga*) partly elected and partly appointed by the King (Articles 42, 43, 44, 45), brought secular state structure through its articles on the sovereignty that rested with the nation (Article 1) and personified by the King (Article 6), the parliament (*Shura*) that manifested the will of the nation (Article 41) and the supremacy of secular law (Article 69) and secular courts (Article 102) over religious ones within an overall Islamic context, and guaranteed basic individual rights and freedoms aside

⁷¹³ *Ibid.*,132.

⁷¹⁴ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 293-294.

⁷¹⁵ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 134-135.

⁷¹⁶ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 294; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 143-144.

of stating duties of people.⁷¹⁷ However, Afghan experiment with the democracy got off to a very bad start because of first the load quarrels of the parliamentarians, representing the political spectrum ranging from left to right, in the first session of the newly elected *Wolesi Jirga* in late 1965 and secondly subsequent student demonstrations resulting in the death of a few civilians by the government troops and the resignation of Premier Yusuf, and worsened along the line of disruptive parliamentary opposition and student unrest, especially after the 1969 parliamentary elections that the conservative, traditional and tribal figures replacing most of the liberals and all female parliamentarians brought the parliamentary system to a deadlock and the increasing unrest at main education institutes of Kabul became violent and chronic.⁷¹⁸ In order to achieve some stability, Zahir Shah appointed new names to the premiership: Mohammad Hashim Maiwandwal (1965-1967), Noor Ahmad Etemadi (1967-1971), Dr. Abdul Zahir (1971-1972) and Mohammad Musa Shafiq (1972-1973).⁷¹⁹

However, malfunctioning of the National Assembly due to the domination of opportunistic and unqualified parliamentarians with strong tribal loyalties; lack of institutional infrastructure because of the King's reluctance in approving the Political Parties Law, the Provincial Councils Law and the Municipals Councils Act; deteriorating economic conditions as a result of shrinking foreign aid together with the repayment of previously obtained ones at increasing rates in the mid-1960s and the droughts between 1969 and 1972; increasing budgetary concerns because of the traditionalist parliamentarians' objections to the offers of Afghan cabinets for raising the direct taxes on land and livestock that had been on constant decline for decades, which resulted in reliance on indirect taxes on foreign trade and inflation as means of meeting the budget; and the soaring disappointment among the educated Afghan youth due to rising unemployment, low salaries and nepotism alongside their rapid politicization appeared as challenges to the Afghan decade of democracy.⁷²⁰ Besides, this new experiment with democracy initiated by urban and highly educated Afghans rapidly proved of little relevance to the vast majority of Afghans, who were

⁷¹⁷ "Constitution of Afghanistan=Assasi Qanun (1964)," University of Nebraska-Lincoln Digital Commons, May 2005, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1005&context=afghanenglish>

⁷¹⁸ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 295; Hamid Wahed Alikuzai, *A Concise History of Afghanistan in 25 Volumes: Volume 1*. (USA: Trafford Publishing, 2013), 500; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 168, 173; Hamid Wahed Alikuzai, *A Concise History of Afghanistan in 25 Volumes: Volume 1*. (USA: Trafford Publishing, 2013), 500-501.

⁷¹⁹ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 151.

⁷²⁰ *Ibid.*, 157-158, 170.

predominantly rural, traditional and illiterate, and this became quite obvious with very low turnout rates in the elections, especially in the countryside.⁷²¹

Among those factors, growing economic problems aside of mounting disappointment and politicization among the educated Afghan youth constituted the mainstay of the future course of the developments in Afghan history. With regard to the Afghanistan's deepening economic problems, poor economic and development record in previous years, huge disappointment about the Afghan revenue collection efforts along with increased concern over that the situation would not get any better in the future and also waning importance of Afghanistan in the Cold War rivalry with the Vietnam War caused further decrease in foreign aid allocated to the Third Five-Year Plan (1968-1972) in comparison to the previous one, though it had a more modest scope, thus \$408 million gross aid was obtained, but only \$192 million net material aid - project aid plus commodity assistance, after deducting \$95 million debt service and \$121 million technical assistance.⁷²² Although the Third Five-Year Plan, which was mainly prepared by the Soviet advisers by incorporating the recommendations of American advisers under the auspices of the Afghan Ministry of Planning, addressed the country's problems hampering its development together with the necessary policies and actions to be taken in order to overcome those problems in a much more detailed way than the previous ones, and accordingly declared a fundamental change in the country's development strategy by "moving away from infrastructural investments mainly in the transportation and communications sectors and toward rather quicker yielding projects in the agricultural and industrial sectors, with particular emphasis on agriculture", neither the Plan was accepted by the *Jirga* nor its offered measures were properly implemented by the Afghan government, and thus poor performance continued.⁷²³ During the years of the Third Five-Year Plan, a sharp increase in debt repayments from \$28 million to \$95 million together with a significant decline in foreign aid receipts lessened net capital inflows to the country, and mismanaged ineffective government enterprises worsened the existing economic situation of the country.⁷²⁴ Furthermore, the Fourth Five-Year Plan (1973-

⁷²¹ Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 40-41.

⁷²² Nathan Associates, *Economic Advisory Services Provided to the Ministry of Planning, Royal Government of Afghanistan, September 1961 to June 1972: Final Report* (Washington, D.C.: Robert R. Nathan Associates, Inc., July 1972), 53-54, 100-101; Anthony Arnold, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion in Perspective* (New Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann, 1987), 53.

⁷²³ Nathan Associates, *Economic Advisory Services Provided to the Ministry of Planning, Royal Government of Afghanistan, September 1961 to June 1972: Final Report* (Washington, D.C.: Robert R. Nathan Associates, Inc., July 1972), 38, 62.

⁷²⁴ *Ibid.*, 104.

1977) was drafted in 1972 but never implemented due to the coup in 1973, before its ratification.⁷²⁵

Soviet economic aid declined over the years as follows: “from \$44.7 million in 1967-68, to \$30.5 million in 1968-69, to \$28.4 million in 1969-70.”⁷²⁶ Notwithstanding, the Soviet economic aid commitments reached to nearly US\$900 million with the further agreements with Afghanistan, which made around 60 percent of total non-military foreign aid extended to this country in the period 1957-1972.⁷²⁷ The most noticeable decline occurred in American outright grants and loans extended to Afghanistan, and as shown Table 2, “in every year of the democratic experiment, American economic aid declined”, further strengthening the Soviet economic position in Afghanistan to the point that “in 1973 its realized financial commitments were more than three times of those of America.”⁷²⁸

Table 2. US Economic Assistance to Afghanistan (1963-1973)

Fiscal Year	Funding Agency	Funding Account Name	Obligations (Historical Dollars)
1963	Department of Defense	INACTIVE - USAID Grants	14,800,000
	USAID	INACTIVE - USAID Loans	2,600,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title II Grants	100,000
	Peace Corps	Peace Corps	300,000
1964	Department of Defense	INACTIVE - USAID Grants	12,500,000
	USAID	INACTIVE - USAID Loans	9,700,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title II Grants	19,100,000
	Peace Corps	Peace Corps	600,000
1965	Department of Defense	INACTIVE - USAID Grants	10,500,000
	USAID	INACTIVE - USAID Loans	300,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title II Grants	21,300,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title I Food for Progress Credits	600,000
	Peace Corps	Peace Corps	1,300,000
1966	Department of Defense	INACTIVE - USAID Grants	8,200,000
	USAID	INACTIVE - USAID Loans	2,800,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title II Grants	20,800,000
	Peace Corps	Peace Corps	1,500,000
1967	Department of Defense	INACTIVE - USAID Grants	8,300,000
	USAID	INACTIVE - USAID Loans	17,000,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title II Grants	4,200,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title I Food for Progress Credits	1,900,000
	Peace Corps	Peace Corps	1,300,000
1968	Department of Defense	INACTIVE - USAID Grants	7,900,000
	USAID	INACTIVE - USAID Loans	700,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title I Food for Progress Credits	6,200,000
	Peace Corps	Peace Corps	1,600,000
1969	Department of Defense	INACTIVE - USAID Grants	7,600,000
	USAID	INACTIVE - USAID Loans	1,200,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title II Grants	1,500,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title I Food for Progress Credits	3,500,000
	Peace Corps	Peace Corps	1,600,000

⁷²⁵ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 240.

⁷²⁶ Anthony Arnold, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion in Perspective* (New Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann, 1987), 53.

⁷²⁷ Ahmad Shayeq Qassem, *Afghanistan's Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 61.

⁷²⁸ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 158.

Table 2. continued

1970	Department of Defense	INACTIVE - USAID Grants	6,800,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title II Grants	800,000
	Peace Corps	Peace Corps	900,000
1971	Department of Defense	INACTIVE - USAID Grants	8,800,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title II Grants	800,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title I Food for Progress Credits	3,000,000
	Peace Corps	Peace Corps	1,100,000
1972	Department of Defense	INACTIVE - USAID Grants	6,600,000
	USAID	INACTIVE - USAID Loans	3,000,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title II Grants	18,700,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title I Food for Progress Credits	6,100,000
	Peace Corps	Peace Corps	1,300,000
1973	Department of Defense	INACTIVE - USAID Grants	7,600,000
	USAID	INACTIVE - USAID Loans	19,500,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title II Grants	3,600,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title I Food for Progress Credits	6,500,000
	Peace Corps	Peace Corps	1,400,000

Source: Data extracted from the USAID's U.S. Overseas Loans & Grants (Greenbook) Dataset

As mentioned above, during the 1960s, American aid program began to concentrate more on human capital and institution building projects by focusing on Kabul University and the training of civil servants working at different government offices rather than infrastructure assistance, which the Soviets continued to provide at very high levels and “already beyond the Afghan capacity for “absorption,” or for effective use and management” in the eyes of Americans, by thinking of that “the managerial and domestic financial capacity, and related institutions, which appeared to be the major constraint on effective development.”⁷²⁹

Starting from the early 1970s, American aid program shifted its focus to assist the Afghan government in providing services and benefits having direct impact on the lives of rural population by considering that Afghan economic growth so far created either little or no benefit to most of the Afghans living predominantly in rural areas, and thus developed rural development projects by giving priority to basic education and health services, agriculture, poverty alleviation, and small-scale rural infrastructure.⁷³⁰

Despite the lessening of foreign aid, as became apparent with that foreign aid affording nearly 90 percent of the first Five-Year Plan (1957-1961), provided 76 percent of the second Five-Year Plan (1963-1967) and 72 percent of the third Five-Year Plan (1968-1972), Afghanistan continued to be receiving “one of the highest levels of aid on a per capital basis of any country in the world” in the 1960s, as in the 1950s.⁷³¹ Total foreign aid (project aid,

⁷²⁹ U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Retrospective Review of US Assistance to Afghanistan: 1950-1979*, submitted by Maurice Williams, John Kean, Charles Jenkins, Joann Feldmann, and Patricia Fisher-Harris from Devres Inc., Bethesda, MD, USAID Contract No. PDC-0085-I-00-6095, October 31, 1988, 17.

⁷³⁰ *Ibid.*, 17-18.

⁷³¹ *Ibid.*, 30.

commodity and technical assistance) reached to \$1.2 billion during the first three Afghan plans between the years of 1956-1972, of which 50 percent provided by the Soviets, 30 percent by the Americans and the remaining 20 percent by numerous other countries, international organizations and foreign development agencies.⁷³²

In addition to the slowing down of foreign aid, the repayment of the previously obtained loans, both economic and military, emerged as one of the main drains on the Afghan economy as of mid-1960s:

Until 1965, foreign debt repayment was running up to US\$7 million annually. But within five years it rose to US\$25 million, equivalent to almost 30 percent of the country's total export earning at the time. Since the bulk of the Soviet aid was in the form of loans rather than grants, nearly two-thirds of repayments were due to the Soviet Union, which had committed almost US\$900 million in civil aid (around 60 percent of total non-military foreign aid) and around US\$300 million in military loans to Afghanistan from 1957 to 1972. From 1967 onwards, an increasing part of debt to the USSR was being repaid in the form of natural gas exported from the gas fields of Sheberghan to the Soviet republics of Central Asia.⁷³³

Moreover, Hafizullah Emadi quoted the following paragraph from the World Bank report of 1972 in his book to evaluate the Afghan development experience in crisis: "The past fifteen years have been frustrating and disappointing for those concerned with the development in Afghanistan. A relatively large volume of aid sustained high levels of investment to little visible purpose in terms of higher standards of living for the majority of the population...The responsibility for this situation lies with the inadequacies of administrative structure."⁷³⁴ The US-hired consulting company named Robert R. Nathan Associates (RRNA) also made similar evaluations in its final report of 1972 by addressing the need for adequate management: "Resource mobilization, allocation, and utilization have suffered serious defects,... Completed projects do not contribute sufficiently to development..., public industrial enterprises operate at 30 to 40 percent of capacity. Performance targets are not established, nor are adequate financial controls exercised on public enterprises and other projects."⁷³⁵ Martin Ewans sums up all the factors mentioned above with the following words:

⁷³² *Ibid.*

⁷³³ Ahmad Shayeq Qassem, *Afghanistan's Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 61.

⁷³⁴ Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 85.

⁷³⁵ Nathan Associates, *Economic Advisory Services Provided to the Ministry of Planning, Royal Government of Afghanistan, September 1961 to June 1972: Final Report*. (Washington, D.C.: Robert R. Nathan Associates, Inc., July 1972), 54.

The major construction and industrial projects having been completed, the need was for efficient maintenance and management, but local expertise remained in very short supply. Most industries were running considerably below capacity, while, with a limited taxation base, the armed forces were a constant drain on resources, and budgetary deficits were piling up at an unsustainable rate. The government machine remained corrupt and excessively bureaucratic, and proved itself wholly unequal to the task of managing the economy.⁷³⁶

The situation got worse with two successive droughts that resulted in widespread famine and the government's failure in handling the food crisis due to incompetence and corruption in its relief operations funded by foreign aid in the period 1969-1972, which claimed so many lives in the end and hit the rural economy with the loss of livestock.⁷³⁷

As for the increasing disappointment among the educated Afghans, there were so many factors at play. The expansion of state-sponsored education with foreign aid funds, which accelerated under Daud's premiership, caused a rapid increase in the number of students all over the country, especially in Kabul, "that had far-reaching social, economic and political consequences in a socially backward and resource-poor country."⁷³⁸ First, this education thrust turned small part of Afghan youth with mostly rural backgrounds into an isolated and estranged minority in a country "where less than 10 percent of the population and 2 percent of the women could read and write" while weakening "traditional social controls over those who went through it."⁷³⁹ This new urbanized elite got stuck between their rural background-traditional values and urban norms-values.⁷⁴⁰ Secondly, growing number of young people who had moved from rural areas to Kabul for education and then stayed there to find a job at government bureaucracy, which was the only option because of the lack of private sector, became increasingly frustrated because of facing with either nepotism or low salaries or unemployment due to the government's limited ability to employ new graduates, especially

⁷³⁶ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 174-175.

⁷³⁷ Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 63; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 170.

⁷³⁸ Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 43.

⁷³⁹ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 70, 76.

⁷⁴⁰ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 296.

after the decline in foreign aid and the increase in financial difficulties.⁷⁴¹ Saikal states that this situation “created excellent recruiting opportunities for nascent political groups espousing various ideologies, of which the communists were arguably the most active and successful.”⁷⁴² Thirdly, foreign sponsorship of Afghan higher education, especially through giving scholarships to study abroad, created ample grounds for politicization and polarization of Afghan national cadres, which would assume significant role in the politics in the subsequent years, mostly along the lines of the ideology of the host states.

Thereby, various political movements that were ranging from ultra-right to ultra-left and originating from the political drives in the 1950s, began to flourish among Afghan intelligentsia in Kabul during the 1960s, who were mainly employed by the public sector after their graduations and eager to exploit the relatively liberal environment provided by the Constitution, “either in opposition to the government or in response to one another.”⁷⁴³ Among those movements developed around certain personalities that either “operated on an ad hoc basis, without much organizational structure” or “modeled themselves on political parties”, though the Political Parties Law did not exist, the vast majority produced regular political papers after the promulgation of the Press Law in 1965, tried to reach students for their support with special reference to Kabul University, and had a voice at *Wolesi Jirga*, and each of them “endeavoured in one form or another to manipulate the informal groups for the purpose of a parliamentary majority, political expediency and popular legitimacy.”⁷⁴⁴

Of those movements, the Communists and the Islamists gradually became the most influential ones in due course. In 1965, the pro-Soviet Afghan Communists consisting of different circles covertly established the *Hizb-i Demokratik-i Khalq-i Afghanistan* - People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), *Khalq* in short, under the leadership of Babrak Karmal, a Dari-speaking Ghilzai Pashtun with Durrani connections coming from a wealthy family in Kabul, and Nur Muhammad Taraki, a Pashto-speaking Ghilzai Pashtun coming

⁷⁴¹ Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 45; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 158.

⁷⁴² Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 158.

⁷⁴³ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 159; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 82-83.

⁷⁴⁴ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 159.

from a semi-nomadic *kuchi* family in southern Ghazni.⁷⁴⁵ The PDPA had roots in the left-wing part of the reformist *Wikh-i Zalmayan* (Awakened Youth) back in 1947.⁷⁴⁶ Later in the same year, another influential figure, Hafizullah Amin joined the party on the side of Taraki upon the completion of his graduate studies in the USA.⁷⁴⁷ After the *Wolesi Jirga* elections in 1965, which Karmal together with a few of his supporters from the PDPA gained seats but neither Taraki nor his supporters could do so and Karmal's indirect criticism of Taraki following the abolishment of the PDPA's press organ named *Khalq* (Masses/People), which Taraki began to produce right after the Parliament's approval of a liberal press law in 1966, the disagreement between Karmal and Taraki began to appear owing to the differences in class background, strategy to be followed and 'Pashtunistan' issue, and in 1967 the PDPA split into two factions as *Parcham* (Banner) under Karmal and *Khalq* (Masses) under Taraki and Amin.⁷⁴⁸ Barfield summarizes the class and strategy differences as follows:

The largely Pashtun *Khalq* (Masses), under the leadership of Taraki and Hafizullah Amin, recruited heavily among the disaffected Ghilzai Pashtuns in the Soviet-trained military, while the mainly Persian-speaking *Parcham* (Banner), under the leadership of Karmal, had its center of power in the bureaucracy and educational institutions. Though both were Marxist and pro-Soviet, the *Khalq* faction was in favor of an uprising that would bring down the old order and open the way for a quick progression to socialism. *Parcham* was more willing to cooperate with progressive forces within the existing elite and envisioned a slower economic transition. It was multiethnic, but most members were Kabul born, and many were tied by clientage or marriage to the *Musahiban* elite. They attended prestigious secondary schools, but their higher education remained within Afghanistan. By contrast, the *Khalqis* were not only Pashtuns but also eastern Pashtuns who came to Kabul via tribal boarding schools or the military academy. They had no marriage ties with the old elite.⁷⁴⁹

In the next *Wolesi Jirga* elections held in 1969, Hafizullah Amin from the *Khalqis* gained a

⁷⁴⁵ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 160-161; Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 47; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 169-170; Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 296.

⁷⁴⁶ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 82.

⁷⁴⁷ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 170; Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 48.

⁷⁴⁸ Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 48-49; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 171-172; Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 58.

⁷⁴⁹ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 213-214.

seat aside of Karmal, who could be the only one retaining his seat from the previous four parliamentarians of the PDPA.⁷⁵⁰ Also, in late 1960s, another influential figure, a medical student at Kabul University named Najibullah, joined the *Parchamis*.⁷⁵¹

With regard to the difference on the ‘Pashtunistan’ issue, Taraki-led *Khalqis* were supporting the Pashtun cause because they were Ghilzai Pashtuns whereas Karmal-led *Parchams* were either indifferent or against this policy because of its multi-ethnic structure.⁷⁵² In the meantime, as a reaction to the pro-Moscow PDPA factions, two influential informal left-wing political movements favoring “revolutionary forms of political struggle at the expense of parliamentarism” appeared in the scene: the *Shula-i-Jawed* (Eternal Flame), which was founded by the Mahmudi family standing against all forms of imperialism and largely supported by students and workers in Kabul by 1970, and the *Setem-i-Milli* (Against National Oppression), which was established by Taher Badakhshi, a Shia Tajik from Badakhshan and former member of the PDPA’s Central Committee, advocating the necessity of the non-Pashtun peasantry’s struggle against the monarchy plus its Soviet allies and mainly supported by the rural Tajiks in northern Afghanistan.⁷⁵³ The government did not oppose the mushrooming of these leftist groups.⁷⁵⁴

However, instead, the Islamic movement in Afghanistan emerged as “a response to the rise of communism associated with the modernization schemes financed mainly by the Soviet Union.”⁷⁵⁵ Its origins went back to the late 1950s when Professor Ghulam Muhammad Niyazi, the future head of the Sharia Faculty at Kabul University, initiated religious intellectual circles by enlisting teachers and professors of theological education institutions

⁷⁵⁰ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 173; Hamid Wahed Alikuzai, *A Concise History of Afghanistan in 25 Volumes: Volume 1*. (USA: Trafford Publishing, 2013), 500-501.

⁷⁵¹ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 163.

⁷⁵² Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 58; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 172; Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 297.

⁷⁵³ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 172; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 164-165; Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 59.

⁷⁵⁴ M. Nazif Shahrani, "State Building and Social Fragmentation in Afghanistan: A Historical Perspective," in *The State, Religion, and Ethnic Politics: Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan*, ed. Ali Banuazizi and Myron Weiner (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1986), 60.

⁷⁵⁵ M. Hassan Kakar, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion and The Afghan Response, 1979-1982* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 85.

in Kabul Province, upon his return from Al-Azhar University in Cairo where he was influenced by the teachings of *Ikhwan-ul-Muslimin* (Muslim Brotherhood), organized regular meetings and these circles began to enlarge with the participation of newcomers to the meetings as of 1963 namely after the resignation of Premier Daud, who had followed a rigid policy against the religious establishment threatening his modernization efforts.⁷⁵⁶ Niyazi and other religious intellectuals introduced their students the works of Islamists and Islamic movements in other parts of the Muslim world such as Banna, Qutb and Maududi by referring Islam as a brand-new ideology of political and social transformations and challenged the leftist arguments during the meetings.⁷⁵⁷ These founding members of the Islamic Movement in Afghanistan had significant advantages in comparison to the leftist movements because first they had so many features in common with their students such as having rural background and modern education with no connections with ruling elite, and secondly what they talked about was not an alien ideology for the students.⁷⁵⁸ In late 1960s, a group of Islamist students, who were influenced by the teachings of their professors at the government education institutions, established *Sazman-i Jawanan-i Musulman-i Afghanistan* (Afghanistan Muslim Youth Movement) and gradually increased their sphere of influence at the university, which became clear with gaining a majority in the student elections of 1970 that alarmed the leftist movements.⁷⁵⁹ In the early 1970s, the Islamists, both secret circle of professors and open circle of students, jointly established *Jamiat-i Islami Afghanistan* (Islamic Society of Afghanistan) by creating a leadership council consisting of two members of the Sharia Faculty, Burhanuddin Rabbani and Ghulam Rasul Sayyaf as leader and his deputy respectively, and two student activists Gulbuddin Hikmatyar and Habib al-Rahman as in charge of political activities.⁷⁶⁰ Niyazi preferred to remain in the background as the

⁷⁵⁶ M. Hassan Kakar, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion and The Afghan Response, 1979-1982* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 86, 313; David B. Edwards, *Before Taliban: Genealogies of the Afghan Jihad* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 204; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 166.

⁷⁵⁷ David B. Edwards, *Before Taliban: Genealogies of the Afghan Jihad* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 204; Olivier Roy, *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 70.

⁷⁵⁸ M. Hassan Kakar, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion and The Afghan Response, 1979-1982* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 85.

⁷⁵⁹ M. Hassan Kakar, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion and The Afghan Response, 1979-1982* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 86; Ludwig W. Adamec, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, ed. Jon Woronoff, 3rd ed. (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003), 184.

⁷⁶⁰ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 83; Husain Haqqani, "Insecurity Along the Durand Line," in *Afghanistan: Transition Under Threat*, ed. Geoffrey Hayes and Mark Sedra (Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, co-published with the Centre for International Governance Innovation - CIGI, 2008), 225; Olivier Roy, *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 73.

nominal leader of the movement due to his position at the university.⁷⁶¹ This multi-ethnic movement aiming to establish a state based on Sharia Law was critical about the royal establishment, traditional ulema, Pashtun nationalism alongside ‘Pashtunistan’ issue and all kinds of foreign influence in Afghanistan including the Soviets and the West.⁷⁶² Yet, the Islamists also soon faced similar challenges that had caused schism at the PDPA: a disagreement in the strategy to succeed between Tajik Burhanuddin Rabbani-led group, including his fellow Ahmad Shah Massoud, advocating gradualism through a number of methods involving infiltration the key government bureaucracy such as military and Ghilzai Pashtun Gulbuddin Hekmatyar-led group favoring revolution through insurrections, and a hidden division within the movement based on ethno-linguistic differences.⁷⁶³ Apart from the Islamic Movement, another influential religious group among several others was the *Jamiat-i Ulama-i Muhammadi* (Organization of Muslim Clergy, 1972) headed by Sebghatullah Mujaddidi, who was also a graduate of Al-Azhar University but more importantly a member of well-established and respected Naqshi Mujaddidi family.⁷⁶⁴ Since these two prominent Islamist groups formally organized after the 1969 election, they did not have any representation at the parliament, but there was already a well-represented conservative Islamic bloc of traditional religious leaders led by the Mujaddidi family at the parliament.⁷⁶⁵

As result of the emergence of all these anti-system movements indicating growing politicization and polarization among educated Afghan youth, the years between 1965 and 1972 saw numerous ever-increasing political activisms of the Communist and Islamist students all over the country but mainly at the Kabul university and the high schools in Kabul and the provinces, either protesting the royal regime for various ideological and political reasons or violently clashing with each other.⁷⁶⁶

⁷⁶¹ M. Hassan Kakar, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion and The Afghan Response, 1979-1982* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 86; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 83.

⁷⁶² Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 50, 53; Olivier Roy, *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 71, 73-74.

⁷⁶³ Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 53.

⁷⁶⁴ Ludwig W. Adamec, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, ed. Jon Woronoff, 3rd ed. (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003), 263-264.

⁷⁶⁵ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 101; Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 590; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 167.

⁷⁶⁶ Olivier Roy, *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 71; Ahmad Shaye Qassem, *Afghanistan's Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 63; Martin

All these massive political, economic and social problems piling up during the decade long democratic experiment of King Zahir Shah would pave the way for regime change, though his last premier Musa Shafiq, a graduate of both Al-Azhar and Columbia Universities, just began to turn the tide at home in a short span of time while following a very strict neutrality/non-alignment policy to balance the Soviet influence in the country through promoting relations with Tehran, especially with concluding Helmand River Treaty and opting for a rapprochement with Pakistan in settling the long-standing disputes, both of which would have provided the country with great economic benefits in the long-run, aside of continuing the Soviet-Afghan relations on the friendly pattern, though he declined a number of Soviet proposals, including Brezhnev's proposal for Asian Collective Security System.⁷⁶⁷

4.5. Competitive Coexistence Attempts in the Soviet Orbit

In July 1973, former Premier Daud, who had long been dissatisfied with the ongoing developments in the country and gradually developed his own solidarity network at key government agencies since his resignation in 1963, organized a bloodless *coup d'état* with the support of the military wing of the Karmal-led *Parchamis* of the pro-Moscow PDPA, while his cousin King Zahir Shah was in Italy, and seized power by terminating the monarchy along with its democratic experiment, and declared the country a republic.⁷⁶⁸ However, Daud's second term (1973-1978) in Afghan politics neither ended the Musahiban dynastic rule because of his membership to the royal family nor the system's monarchical essence due to his autocratic style.⁷⁶⁹ What made Daud's second term rather interesting in the Afghan political history was the fact that he had to face the results of his overambitious policy of creating an "economic Korea" out of Afghanistan by manipulating great power rivalries in his first term (1953-1963), which gradually turned the country into a weak aid-dependent rentier state with more than 40 percent of its state revenue coming from abroad

Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 173-174; Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 61.

⁷⁶⁷ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 175; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 170-172;

⁷⁶⁸ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 166-167; Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 299-300.

⁷⁶⁹ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 170, 200.

and 80 percent of its investment and development expenditure from foreign grants and loans in the 1956-1973 period, and thus open to foreign influences, particularly of the Soviet Union that provided by far the largest aid and thus secured greater leverage over the country.⁷⁷⁰

Having been elected as President assuming the offices of Premier, Foreign Minister and Defense Minister on 18 July 1973 by the Central Committee assuming executive power right after the coup, Daud reversed the course of democratization by declaring a state of emergency, which resulted in the dissolution of the parliament, suspension of the 1964 Constitution, prohibition of all the opposition groups along with their activities, and closure of all private papers; eliminated those posing a real or potential threat to his new regime either through imprisoning or liquidating the prominent members of the previous regime, several other groups plotting coup against his rule, the leaders and members of powerful opponent groups such as *Jamiat-i Islami Afghanistan* (Islamic Society of Afghanistan), some of whose leaders fled to Pakistan to set up opposition movements, and the King's immediate family to be exiled in return of his formal abdication in August 1973; revived his old three-pillared foreign policy based on neutrality and non-alignment, close relations with the Soviets and full support for 'Pashtunistan', which the latter two had previously given rise to Afghan dependence on the Soviets; and delighted the *Parchamis* and their Soviet patrons with giving important government posts to the people associated with them, even half of the seats in his cabinet, while having some loyal members of the Muhammadzais, the royal family, at senior positions of the government bureaucracy.⁷⁷¹

As of 1974, President Daud began to take cautious steps to readjust the country's domestic political scene and foreign policy leanings for the purpose of increasing his own personal power vis-à-vis the *Parchamis* and reducing his country's dependence on the Soviets without provoking Moscow. Accordingly, while strengthening relations with the Soviets by paying

⁷⁷⁰ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 13; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 65; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 205; Sarajuddin Isar, "A Blessing or a Curse? Aid Rentierism and State-building in Afghanistan," *E-International Relations*, May 23, 2014, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.e-ir.info/2014/05/23/a-blessing-or-a-curse-aid-rentierism-and-state-building-in-afghanistan/>

⁷⁷¹ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 173-174, 176; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 179-180; Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 88-90; Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 300.

his first foreign visit to Moscow in 1974, confirming his commitment to the Afghan-Soviet friendship, signing several agreements on trade, economy, and cooperation in many fields during the period 1974-1977, demanding more Soviet aid for development projects and approving Brezhnev's Asian Collective Security System that had been rejected by his predecessor, President Daud slowly begin to replace the *Parchamis* in the upper levels of government and military with his own loyal men by viewing those at the junior levels not an immediate threat.⁷⁷² Furthermore, President Daud, as a staunch follower of Afghan traditional policy of neutrality and non-alignment determined to distance himself and his country from the Soviets, continued to exploit the American-Soviet Cold War rivalry for his country's development as before, but also added some of the oil-rich Muslim countries in the Middle East and the Gulf that had friendly relations with Pakistan into his portfolio through radically changing his aggressive policy to towards Pakistan over 'Pashtunistan' issue.⁷⁷³ However, President Daud's efforts of gaining an economic benefit from the American-Soviet Cold War rivalry that had worked well before became largely ineffective this time because of diminishing importance of the country of in the eyes of Americans in terms of its holdings and offerings, increasing focus of the Americans on Southeast Asia since 1960s as new cold war playground and American reservations about Daud's leadership due to his close relations with the Soviets alongside his confrontational policy against Pakistan and Iran during his premiership years, all of which produced further cuts in American aid to Afghanistan and later downgrading its embassy in Kabul to a mission category in late 1977.⁷⁷⁴ Even when President Daud approached the Americans in the mid-1970s for greater economic assistance to reduce his country's dependence on the Soviets, they advised him to improve ties with Iran and Pakistan.⁷⁷⁵ The US non-military aid to Afghanistan valued at

⁷⁷² Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 178, 302; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 183; Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 99; Paul Robinson and Jay Dixon, *Aiding Afghanistan: A History of Soviet Assistance to a Developing Country* (London: Hurst, 2013), 162-163; Ludwig W. Adamec, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, ed. Jon Woronoff, 3rd ed. (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003), 488-491.

⁷⁷³ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 216; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 179.

⁷⁷⁴ Yuri V. Bossin, "The Afghan Experience with International Assistance," in *Beyond Reconstruction in Afghanistan: Lessons from Development Experience*, ed. John D. Montgomery and Dennis A. Rondinelli (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 82; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 181; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 28-29; Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 97.

⁷⁷⁵ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 180; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First*

\$120.2 million in the period 1973-1978 by years was as follows: \$38.6 million in 1973, \$14.1 million in 1974, \$21.3 million in 1975, \$13.2 million in 1976, \$21.5 million in 1977, and \$11.5 million in 1978 (Table 3).

Table 3. US Economic Assistance to Afghanistan (1973-1978)

Fiscal Year	Funding Agency	Funding Account Name	Obligations (Historical Dollars)
1973	Department of Defense	INACTIVE - USAID Grants	7,600,000
	USAID	INACTIVE - USAID Loans	19,500,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title II Grants	3,600,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title I Food for Progress	6,500,000
	Peace Corps	Credits	1,400,000
1974	Department of Defense	INACTIVE - USAID Grants	5,000,000
	USAID	INACTIVE - USAID Loans	7,500,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title II Grants	100,000
	Peace Corps	Peace Corps	1,500,000
1975	Department of Defense	INACTIVE - USAID Grants	6,200,000
	USAID	INACTIVE - USAID Loans	10,000,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title II Grants	3,900,000
	Peace Corps	Peace Corps	1,200,000
1976	Department of Defense	INACTIVE - USAID Grants	6,300,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title II Grants	1,500,000
	Peace Corps	Peace Corps	900,000
	Department of Defense (tq)	INACTIVE - USAID Grants	1,500,000
	Department of Agriculture (tq)	Public Law 480 Title II Grants	300,000
	Department of Agriculture (tq)	Public Law 480 Title I Food for Progress	2,500,000
	Peace Corps (tq)	Credits	200,000
1977	Department of Defense	INACTIVE - USAID Grants	20,010,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title II Grants	736,000
	Peace Corps	Peace Corps	746,000
1978	Department of Defense	INACTIVE - USAID Grants	4,989,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title II Grants	642,000
	Department of Agriculture	Public Law 480 Title I Food for Progress	5,100,000
	Peace Corps	Credits	789,000
	Peace Corps	Peace Corps	

Source: Data extracted from the USAID's U.S. Overseas Loans & Grants (Greenbook) Dataset

Unlike the Americans, the Soviets, another traditional source of the Afghan development projects since the 1950s but the one pleased with the return of Daud, promised to provide a loan of \$428 million for the implementation of more than 20 projects, “including irrigation systems, thermal power, and copper smelting plants, expansion of their chemical fertilizer industry, and construction of a grain silo and textile mills,”⁷⁷⁶ aside of “granting an interest-free ten years’ moratorium on the \$100 million debt Afghanistan already owed to them” during his visit to Moscow in June 1974.⁷⁷⁷ However, in addition to the deteriorating relations between Daud and the pro-Soviet PDPA due to the steady purge of *Parchamis* as

Five Years of Soviet Occupation (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 28.

⁷⁷⁶ Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 96.

⁷⁷⁷ Nabi Misdaq, *Afghanistan: Political Frailty and External Interference* (London: Routledge, 2006), 91.

mentioned above, Daud's gradual U-turn in his foreign policy, in the direction of oil-rich states in the Middle East and the Gulf, particularly Iran as a staunch ally of the US in the region, to reduce the Afghan dependence on the Soviets for economic and military aid cooled the Afghan-Soviet relations in a short span of time.

President Daud's rerunning of his previous confrontational policy towards Pakistan over 'Pashtunistan' issue by launching radio broadcasts and newspapers for Pashtuns and Baluchis in Pakistan aside of hosting and extending military and financial support to Pashtun and Baluchi dissidents put the wind up Pakistani leader Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who had already had enough problems because of the deteriorating relations with the US and the Soviets due to the improvement of its relations with China since the early 1970s, the Indo-Pakistani war of 1971 and the armed conflict of 1971 between West Pakistan and East Pakistan resulting in the secession of East Pakistan as an independent state of Bangladesh, and forced him to retaliate in the same way, by creating multi-lingual radio broadcasts for major ethno-linguistic groups of Afghanistan in Pakistan as well as providing sanctuary and same military-financial support to Daud's Islamist opponents, who managed to escape from Afghanistan to Pakistan, including Hekmatyar, Rabbani and his fellow Tajik Ahmed Shah Massoud.⁷⁷⁸ Since the confrontation was centered on the Pashtunistan issue, Bhutto government put Hekmatyar the only Islamist of Pashtun ethnic origin presently in Pakistan into a privileged position rather than the Islamist Rabbani of Tajik ethnic origin by treating the former as main contact person of the exiled Afghan Islamists in search of foreign assistance for their operations.⁷⁷⁹ These Afghan Islamist leaders based in Pakistan launched an anti-Daud campaign consisting of a series of armed uprisings in different regions of Afghanistan in 1975, which was quickly quelled, and the government's subsequent deployment of repressive measures against those involved in the campaign further weakened the resistance.⁷⁸⁰ Additionally, Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, the King of Iran, pro-US rising power in the region especially after a sharp increase in oil revenues in the early 1970s, got disturbed with Daud's antimonarchy rhetoric, objections over the Helmand River Treaty and support for secessionist movements in Pakistan, which all had a destabilizing impact on Iran as well, and took Bhutto's side by providing weapons to Pakistan and deporting almost

⁷⁷⁸ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 175; Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 94-95; Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 299; Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 67-68.

⁷⁷⁹ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 84.

⁷⁸⁰ Olivier Roy, *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 75-76.

one million illegal Afghan laborers to Afghanistan, already struggling with high level of unemployment, to drive President Daud into a corner.⁷⁸¹

Thereupon, in the mid-1970s, President Daud felt obliged to normalize relations with Iran that engendered the return of Afghan labor migrants to Iran and promised \$2 billion in economic aid over ten years to Afghan development projects, “a sum almost equal to the total received from all resources during the Cold War,”⁷⁸² most of which would be used to build road/rail transport network giving Afghanistan access to the sea through Iranian port of Bandar Abbas, and concomitantly stabilized relations with Pakistan through Iran-mediated direct talks, where President Daud moderated his ‘Pashtunistan’ policy and Bhutto put the Afghan Islamists on the shelf, though the ‘Pashtunistan’ dispute remained unsettled and the radio broadcasts continued.⁷⁸³ Iran’s pledge to provide extensive development assistance to Afghanistan was “a U.S.-inspired move to keep American influence in the country through its closest ally in the region,”⁷⁸⁴ and its allocation to build the country’s first and very strategic railroad was to remove “the leverage the Soviets had as the only alternative route to Pakistan for Afghanistan’s overland trade.”⁷⁸⁵

President Daud’s rapprochement with neighboring Iran and Pakistan provided him four significant advantages: 1) promoting friendly relations with the oil-rich anti-communist Gulf and Middle Eastern countries offering economic aid to reduce his country’s dependence on the Soviets, 2) Saudi Arabia’s terminating its financial support to Daud’s Islamist opponents in Pakistan, following in the footsteps of Iran and Pakistan, which triggered split among them in the mid-1970s as Hikmetyar-led *Hezb-i-Islami* (Islamic Party) of mainly Pashtun radicals and Rabbani-led *Jamiat-i-Islami* (Islamic Society) of mostly Dari-speaking

⁷⁸¹ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 175; Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 93-94.

⁷⁸² Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 74.

⁷⁸³ Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 94-95; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 179; Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 68.

⁷⁸⁴ Yuri V. Bossin, "The Afghan Experience with International Assistance," in *Beyond Reconstruction in Afghanistan: Lessons from Development Experience*, ed. John D. Montgomery and Dennis A. Rondinelli (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 82.

⁷⁸⁵ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 75.

moderates, 3) preparing the ground for a major change in domestic politics by strengthening his hand vis-à-vis Moscow's proxies in the country, such as establishing his own party named *Hezb-e Enqelab-e Melli* (National Revolutionary Party) in 1975, turning Afghanistan into one-party state with a strong presidency by summoning *Loya Jirga* in January 1977 that approved a new constitution and elected him president, in all of which President Daud bypassed the *Parchamis*, gave them no role in his new administration, and even further increased the pace and extent of their purge from all state structures, and 4) introducing a very comprehensive 'Seven-Year Economic and Social Development Plan' (1976-1983) consisting of 370 projects,⁷⁸⁶ both carryover and new ones, that would cost at some \$4 billion, more than half of it to be financed by various international donors including the Soviets, but mainly Iran.⁷⁸⁷ Moreover, President Daud turned to countries other than the Soviets, particularly Egypt and India holding Soviet military hardware but also the US, for military training and decreased the number of Russian military advisers in the country to reduce the Soviet influence in the Afghan army.⁷⁸⁸ In response, the Soviets, together with its allies, significantly increased their aid to Afghanistan to outmaneuver the total aid to be provided by anti-Soviet states and encouraged the reunification of the *Khalq* and *Parcham* factions of the PDPA, which would occur in March-July 1977 with the common aim of removing Daud's regime.⁷⁸⁹

However, President Daud was quite determined to reduce the heavy dependence on the Soviets to eliminate its proxies in the country for good and to guarantee necessary support from sources other than the Soviets, particularly the oil-rich Gulf and Middle Eastern states,

⁷⁸⁶ "The Seven-Year Plan listed 126 carryover projects and 244 new projects affecting all Afghan economic and social spheres. The Soviet Union was to sponsor 62 projects; Iran 23; the UN 19; West Germany 16; the World Bank 12; Saudi Arabia 11; Czechoslovakia and the Asian Development Bank eight each; India and Bulgaria seven each; the United States five; Mainland China, Taiwan, UNICEF, and Kuwait, three each; the Industrial Development Bank and Iraq two each; and Sweden, Canada, Yugoslavia, Japan, Romania, Switzerland, and the International Civil Aviation Organization one each." Yuri V. Bossin, "The Afghan Experience with International Assistance," in *Beyond Reconstruction in Afghanistan: Lessons from Development Experience*, ed. John D. Montgomery and Dennis A. Rondinelli (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 82.

⁷⁸⁷ Nabi Misdaq, *Afghanistan: Political Frailty and External Interference* (London: Routledge, 2006), 92-93; Olivier Roy, *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 76-77; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 180; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 177, 181-182; Yuri V. Bossin, "The Afghan Experience with International Assistance," in *Beyond Reconstruction in Afghanistan: Lessons from Development Experience*, ed. John D. Montgomery and Dennis A. Rondinelli (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 82.

⁷⁸⁸ Nabi Misdaq, *Afghanistan: Political Frailty and External Interference* (London: Routledge, 2006), 92; Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 98; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 183.

⁷⁸⁹ Nabi Misdaq, *Afghanistan: Political Frailty and External Interference* (London: Routledge, 2006), 92.

and in place of declining American aid to Afghanistan.⁷⁹⁰ Therefore, when Iran Shah could not provide the aid that had promised in due course of time, but only \$10 million, because of his country's decreasing oil income alongside domestic economic problems, President Daud went to Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Libya, Kuwait, Yugoslavia and India in early 1978 to request more aid, the first two of them, which were perceived as hostile by Moscow, responded positively, and he also planned to visit the US in late 1978 to reinstate American aid to his country.⁷⁹¹ Despite his persistent efforts to find other sources that would provide his country with immediate and massive development and military aid to reduce his country's heavy dependence on the Soviets and thus build right balance in its relationship with them, the Soviets were also very determined not to lose their firm grip on the country in which they had heavily invested for decades and Daud was too late in reversing the process that resulted in the following picture in his country:

With the assistance of the USSR (before April 1978) construction work started on 174 major projects in productive areas... For instance, 60 per cent of public sector production and 60 per cent of power generation was produced through Soviet-made plants. Similarly, 60 per cent of the major roads were constructed and asphalted with the help of the Soviet Union and 65,000 persons were trained in skilled and unskilled jobs. ... In the course of the development plans the government spent 70 billion afghanis, half of which (or more than 2.25 billion dollars) came from the Soviet Union.⁷⁹²

Meanwhile, as of August 1973, President Daud introduced his reform program relying on "centralisation of power, increased state regulation of the economy and a whole cluster of social reforms, including equal rights for men, women and national minorities, expansion of education, better welfare service measures and an anti-corruption drive," aside of an extensive land reform to be implemented within more than 25 years by limiting large-scale landholdings and distributing the lands, either belonging to the state or taken from former owners with compensation, to landless peasants and small landholders, and also decreed "36 laws between 1973 and 1977, including modern civil and penal codes which had been in the

⁷⁹⁰ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 177.

⁷⁹¹ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 180; Yuri V. Bossin, "The Afghan Experience with International Assistance," in *Beyond Reconstruction in Afghanistan: Lessons from Development Experience*, ed. John D. Montgomery and Dennis A. Rondinelli (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 82; Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 71.

⁷⁹² Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London I.B. Tauris, 2005), 66; Raja Anwar, *The Tragedy of Afghanistan: A First-hand Account*, trans. Khalid Hassan (London & New York: Verso, 1989), 91.

offing since the 1960s.”⁷⁹³ However, general deterioration of the economy because of increasing trade deficit, unemployment and rural poverty, and thus the migration of urban and rural Afghans in significant numbers into the oil-rich Middle Eastern and the Gulf countries in search of employment, which began during Premier Shafiq’s term, continued.⁷⁹⁴

In April 1978, the assassination of a PDPA leader, Mir Akbar Khyber, whose funeral turned into a massive anti-government demonstration of the PDPA supporters, and subsequent arrests of the PDPA leaders triggered a bloody coup of PDPA supporters in the Afghan armed forces, “the same group of military officers who had helped him return to power five years earlier”,⁷⁹⁵ in which President Daud, the last Muhammadzai ruler representing the Musahiban dynasty, and his close family members were murdered, the rest of his dynasty were allowed to leave the country as stripped of their citizenship and property, and many of his entourage were either murdered or arrested.⁷⁹⁶ Due to the Afghan month Saur in which the coup took place, the PDPA called the coup as the Saur Revolution (*De Saur Inqlab*).⁷⁹⁷

4.6. Democratic Republic of Afghanistan: A New Era in the Afghan History as a Soviet Satellite State

In May 1978, the first PDPA Cabinet named Revolutionary Council, mainly composed of civilian members of the PDPA and almost equally divided between *Parchamis* and *Khalqis*, proclaimed the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA), by granting both presidency and premiership to Taraki (1978-1979) from *Khalqis* and deputy premiership to Karmal from *Parchamis*.⁷⁹⁸ The DRA’s first move was the elimination of the West German-trained police

⁷⁹³ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 176-177; Victor G. Korgun, "The Afghan Revolution: A Failed Experiment," in *Russia's Muslim Frontiers: New Directions in Cross-Cultural Analysis*, ed. Dale F. Eickelman (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 103.

⁷⁹⁴ Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 84-85, 91-92.

⁷⁹⁵ M. Nazif Shahrani, "State Building and Social Fragmentation in Afghanistan: A Historical Perspective," in *The State, Religion, and Ethnic Politics: Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan*, ed. Ali Banuazizi and Myron Weiner (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1986), 64.

⁷⁹⁶ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 183; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 115.

⁷⁹⁷ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 225; Nabi Misdaq, *Afghanistan: Political Frailty and External Interference* (London: Routledge, 2006), 118.

⁷⁹⁸ Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 80-81.

force that sided with Daud against the coup and the creation of a new police force under the auspices of the Soviet Union.⁷⁹⁹

The Soviets promptly recognized the new regime and greatly increased its influence through flooding the Afghan ministries with their civilian and military advisers aside of signing over 30 agreements with the Afghans at the value of more than US\$14 billion and 25 more agreements with other COMECON states within the six months following the coup, while the Americans refrained from labeling it as communist on the spot due to the fact that the new regime had a soft start by introducing itself as ‘nationalist, democratic and reformist’, following Islamic rituals in public, and inviting all the other victims of previous ‘oppressive’ regime and progressives to contribute to the country’s development, and this gave the Americans enough room to keep the existing bilateral relations in accordance with the Foreign Assistance Act, which allowed aiding only to non-communist countries.⁸⁰⁰ Rodric Braithwaite underlined a major change in the motives of the Soviet aid to Afghanistan under this new regime with the following words: “Before the Afghan Communists came to power, Soviet aid was given more or less on its merits. But thereafter it was distorted by the ideologically driven and ultimately futile attempt to build ‘socialism’.”⁸⁰¹

However the new regime’s easy-going and unifying rhetoric lasted only a very short while and the ‘revolution’ began to devour its own children aside of its ‘enemies’ with the strengthening of radical *Khalqis* vis-à-vis gradualist *Parchamis* at the new government. Apart from “class rivalry, ethnic or linguistic differences between the socially privileged, Persian-speaking Parchamis and the Pashto-speaking Khalqis of more humble origin,” Hyman points to “the vital question of strategy, of how to proceed to further the revolution” as the reason behind the struggle between these ‘revolutionary partners’, which “Parchamis had long been in favour of gradualism, of the more delicate or diplomatic approach for gaining public support, the Khalq leaders, in particular Amin, favoured a vigorous and immediate onslaught on all the problems of the country, without concessions and with no holds barred.”⁸⁰²

⁷⁹⁹ Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 108; Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 14-15.

⁸⁰⁰ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 190; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 189-190; Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 304.

⁸⁰¹ Rodric Braithwaite, *Afgantsy: The Russians in Afghanistan, 1979-89* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 148.

⁸⁰² Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 82

The deadly desire of the *Khalqi* leadership, both for ruling the country as sole power and radically transforming the society, launched “a frenzy of bloodshed at a level not seen in Afghan politics since the nineteenth century.”⁸⁰³ The new government dominated by radical Khalqis initially targeted the *Parcham*-faction members and systematically purged them in greater numbers from government through exiling as ambassadors abroad, dismissing, arresting and executing as of mid-June 1978.⁸⁰⁴ Babrak Karmal, the *Parcham* faction leader who became the DRA’s first Deputy Premier in May 1978, together with four other senior *Parchamis*, were first politically exiled as ambassadors abroad after being removed from the Cabinet in June 1978 and then were recalled to Kabul with the accusations of plotting a coup against the *Khalqi*-dominated government later in September 1978, which resulted in the disobedience of these *Parchami* leaders who decided to take refuge in Eastern Europe.⁸⁰⁵ Other *Parcham* faction members in Afghanistan were not as lucky as the *Parchami* ambassadors abroad. Bruce Amstutz states: “According to Soviet sources 2,000 *Parcham* faction members were imprisoned and close to 500 were executed by the Khalqis before the Soviet intervention.”⁸⁰⁶ By late summer 1978, while Amin as the head of the *Khalqi* security apparatus and the only remaining deputy premier after the elimination of Karmal was becoming more and more powerful, almost all ranks of the new government were filled from *Khalqis*.⁸⁰⁷ All these developments suggested that the Afghan political history was witnessing the return of eastern Pashtuns of tribal origin, Ghilzais in particular but also Paktians, but this time in a significantly different way than in previous decades, as detailed by Barfield here below:

The structure of the new government and its personnel also marked a sharp break with Afghanistan’s long history of Durrani rule... While the government remained as Pashtun dominated as it had ever been, the old Persian-speaking Muhammadzai elite was displaced by eastern, mostly Ghilzai, Pashtuns. They had stronger tribal backgrounds than did the old elite and were native Pashto speakers. These eastern Pashtuns were members of the tribes that had provided the backbone of the resistance against the British that kept Afghanistan independent in the nineteenth century. They began the revolts against Amanullah that put Nadir Shah on the throne

⁸⁰³ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 229.

⁸⁰⁴ Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 81; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 190-191.

⁸⁰⁵ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 39.

⁸⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰⁷ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 191.

in the early twentieth century. During these previous periods they had always willingly ceded power to a Durrani ruler when the fighting ceased. Such Durrani leaders had repaid the eastern Pashtuns by using state power to suppress them... As a result, they were rarely welcomed into the highest levels of government, yet did come to staff important positions within the interior police and military. It was such junior Ghilzai military officers who ousted Daud in 1978, to then claim the top positions in the new regime and finally displace their old Durrani rivals from power after 230 years. Of course as Marxists they did not portray their victory in this old-fashioned way, but it is striking that during the next twenty-three years of intense fighting it would be the eastern Pashtuns, Ghilzais mostly, who would supply most of the leading Pashtun political and military figures on all sides in the conflicts to come, whether as PDPA rulers (Taraki, Amin, and Najibullah), Islamic resistance leaders (Hekmatyar, Abdul Haq, and Jalaludin Haqqani), or Taliban holy warriors (Mullah Omar). By contrast, top-level Durrani leadership on any side was quite rare.⁸⁰⁸

The Khalqis also brutally repressed all other political opponents, both real and potential, from every walk of life representing the whole political spectrum in the country from the far right to the far left, such as Islamists, established ulema, seculars, monarchists, liberals, nationalists, moderates, social democrats, Marxist and Maoist groups, student, teachers, traditional rural landowners, elected and appointed members of the old regime, and minority groups favored by the old regime (Nuristanis) or reacted against the new regime (Hazaras), by means of mass arbitrary arrests, imprisonment, torture and even extrajudicial killings, which resulted in the execution of ten to twenty thousand people during the twenty months of Khalqi rule— including all members of the Islamist movement previously imprisoned by Daud and all males of the highly respected and influential Afghan Naqshbandi (Sufi) Mujaddidi family jailed after the Saur Revolution.⁸⁰⁹ Many Afghan political and religious elites, who were afraid of or at risk of incurring the wrath of the Khalqi regime, began to flee abroad, mainly into the neighboring Pakistan and Iran, and immediately engaged in creating resistance groups that would form the nucleus of the future Afghan jihad. However, most of those who managed to escape went to Peshawar, Pakistan rather than Iran, turning this frontier city into a safe haven for Afghan political exiles and soon later a hub of their opposition activities against the communist government in Kabul. Since the *Khalqi* regime neither recognized the Durand Line nor refrained from extending support to the Pashtun and

⁸⁰⁸ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 225-226.

⁸⁰⁹ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 225, 228; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 194-195; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 115; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 88.

Baluchi dissidents of Pakistan, Pakistan welcomed hordes of Afghan opponents.⁸¹⁰ Among the newly arrived political elites of the old regime and religious figures, the Traditionalists managed to establish their own groups in exile, and together with the already well-established Afghan Islamist groups in Peshawar, Pakistan since Daud years, tried to create unified front against the radical Khalqi regime in June 1978 under the name of National Liberation Front (*Jabha-yi Nejat-i Milli*), Sibgatullah Mojaddidi as the elected leader, with the leaguings together of dissimilar political groups, such as Afghan Islamists (*Jamiat-i-Islami*) and pro-democracy Pashtun nationalists claiming to be social democrats (Afghan Millat), but collapsed within few weeks due to the rivalry among these groups and the elected leader's turning the front into his own party, and the subsequent attempt for unification with the involvement of Hikmetyar in September 1978 under the name of the Islamic Revolutionary Movement (*Harakat-i Inqilab-i Islam*) with Mohammad Nabi Mohammadi as the new elected leader, this time even encouraged by a few million dollars of Saudi financial support, faced the same fate for the same reasons.⁸¹¹ Even more tragically, aside from the problem of unification, the Afghan resistance forces of these different Peshawar-based groups based in Pakistan also clashed with each other in Afghanistan for local dominance and promotion abroad, though mostly triggered by the provocative and aggressive acts of Hikmetyar-led Hezb-i-Islami's commanders.⁸¹² Notwithstanding, the Afghan Islamist groups based in Pakistan launched cross-border attacks into some of the border provinces of Afghanistan with very limited success, and the exchange of fatwas between pro-Khalqi ulama and anti-Khalqi local mullahs took place.⁸¹³

The *Khalqi* radical reform program and complementing actions, particularly in rural areas, soon increased the number of Afghan opponents in Pakistan. When the *Khalqi* government overconfidently launched forceful implementation of its previously announced 'revolutionary reform program', consisting of several radical economic and social measures

⁸¹⁰ Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 115.

⁸¹¹ Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 122, 124; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 89, 92-94; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 180; Olivier Roy, *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 120.

⁸¹² J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 121-122

⁸¹³ Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 124; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 179-180; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 89.

to be implemented in rural areas in order to “destroy rural power structures and re-educate the peasants,” while ignoring “the complexities of Afghan society and the interlocking economic and social relationships on which it depended”, such as the land reform requiring redistribution of land without compensation, abolition of usury and mortgages on land, establishment of cooperatives replacing traditional rural economic relationships, the reorganization of traditional marriage arrangements by abolishing almost all marriage prestations, polygamy and forced marriages aside of setting minimum marriage age, and the implementation of compulsory, country-wide, and co-educational literacy campaign based on Marxist curriculum, all segments of rural communities, from poorest to richest elements, got united against the reforms, particularly the “poorly conceived, structurally flawed, and badly implemented” economic ones because of terrible results beginning to appear.⁸¹⁴ As the main reasons behind the overconfidence of the *Khalqis*, Barfield pinpointed the modern army in their hands and the Musahiban’s success in depoliticizing the rural power holders by adding that the Khalqis missed a very significant point, the Musahibans achieved this by plummeting “their own political and economic footprint in the countryside that there was little to rebel against.”⁸¹⁵

Furthermore, in addition to the secular social reforms on marriage and education, the Khalqi government’s replacing religious salutations in the official statements with Marxist terms and three-colored Afghan flag with red one were also not welcomed by the Afghans knowing nothing about Marxism except it was a ‘Godless’ ideology and strongly believing that only Islamic government had legal authority to rule and a Muslim had the right to rebel against the non-Islamic ones.⁸¹⁶ All these combined, the “apathy with which most of the populace treated the April coup quickly gave way to overt resistance against the Khalqi regime.”⁸¹⁷ The Afghan resistance of this early stage, characterized as mostly spontaneous, apolitical and fragmented in nature with strong local elements such as being funded, armed, and headed by local capacity, first started in late 1978 in distant provinces of Nuristan

⁸¹⁴ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 191-194; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 188-189; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 230; Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 86-89, 93-94; Olivier Roy, *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 90-95.

⁸¹⁵ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 229.

⁸¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 225, 231.

⁸¹⁷ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 190.

(Kunar), Hazarajat and Badakhshan, where central authority had always been weak, and soon became widespread in so much that the resistance were on the rise in 24 out of total 28 provinces of the country, both in Pashtun and non-Pashtun populated ones.⁸¹⁸ The role and participation of the Pakistan-based Afghan groups that were structured around the already well-established Islamist and the newly arrived traditionalist leaders in these local insurgencies were quite limited.⁸¹⁹ Since the Afghan army got weakened with the purges of the higher ranks and the desertion of lower ranks, its reprisals against the resistance of Afghan rural communities became largely ineffective.⁸²⁰ Nevertheless, the imposition of indiscriminate and excessive violence by the Khalqi regime such as the mass murder of nearly 1200 unarmed villagers in Kunar in April 1979 as a form of collective punishment for a rebellion posed a great threat to the Afghans living in rural areas.⁸²¹ As a result of the escalating violence quickly spreading in rural areas, many rural Afghans fled to neighboring Pakistan and Iran where refugee camps rapidly grew with the increasing number of arrivals.⁸²² These camps were soon to become the recruitment base of the armed resistance, particularly for the Afghan Islamists in Pakistan.⁸²³

In the meantime, serious developments occurred in terms of the country's political as well as aid relations with the Soviets and the Americans. In December 1978, the Khalqi regime abandoned traditional Afghan policy of neutrality and non-alignment by concluding an alliance treaty, 'Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation' with the Soviets in December 1978, which would make the country another Soviet satellite state and more importantly prepare the legal ground for Soviet intervention in the future.⁸²⁴ As based on this treaty, several

⁸¹⁸ Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 124; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 190-191; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 179-180.

⁸¹⁹ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 180.

⁸²⁰ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 229-230.

⁸²¹ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 115

⁸²² Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 126-127.

⁸²³ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 191.

⁸²⁴ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 194; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 191.

agreements on economic and technical cooperation amounting more than \$350 million were signed in 1979 for assisting Afghans in exploiting copper and oil deposits, building an electrical transmission line in the north, renovating Kabul airport aside of building six small ones, establishing seven machine-tractor stations and forming five technical education centers, which all required the arrival of numerous Soviet specialists as well as sending many Afghans to the Soviets for training.⁸²⁵

As for the American aid, unexpected developments occurred in February 1979. Following the kidnapping of US Ambassador Adolph Dubs in Kabul by the members of the Maoist type extreme-left wing party named Setem-i-Meli centred in eastern Afghanistan and subsequent killing of him during a rescue operation ineptly performed by the Afghan police and Soviet security advisers without consultations with the US Embassy in Kabul in mid-February 1979, the Carter administration reacted strongly to the incident by announcing a sharp reduction in its economic aid to Afghanistan budgeted for the fiscal years of 1979 and 1980 (almost 80 percent decrease over the planned \$15 million for fiscal 1979 and \$17 million for fiscal 1980) by adding that the reduced aid to be earmarked for the US prestige projects in the humanitarian and development fields such as the Helmand Valley, termination of \$250 thousand military-training program, and withdrawal of most of its diplomatic and aid personnel from the country.⁸²⁶ In mid-August 1979, President Carter signed the International Development Assistance Act of 1979 (Public Law 96-53) suspending all the US assistance programmes in the country until the President certified to the Congress both the Afghan government's official apology and acknowledgement of responsibility for Ambassador Dub's death and the Afghan government's guarantee in providing sufficient protection for all US government personnel on Afghan soil, but leaving the door open for future deals by authorizing the President not to implement this prohibition if the US national interest owing to a significant change in Afghan context were to dictate.⁸²⁷ While the US government was phasing out its aid programmes, Afghan Foreign Minister Shah Wali attending the UN

⁸²⁵ Paul Robinson and Jay Dixon, *Aiding Afghanistan: A History of Soviet Assistance to a Developing Country* (London: Hurst, 2013), 96.

⁸²⁶ Charles Mohr, "U.S. to Slash Aid to Afghanistan, Partly Because of Death of Envoy," *The New York Times*, February 23, 1979, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.nytimes.com/1979/02/23/archives/us-to-slash-aid-to-afghanistan-partly-because-of-death-of-envoy.html>; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 196-197; Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 99-100; Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 162; M. Hassan Kakar, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion and The Afghan Response, 1979-1982* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 56

⁸²⁷ International Development Assistance Act of 1979, Public Law 96-53, *U.S. Statutes at Large* 93 (1979): 378, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/STATUTE-93/pdf/STATUTE-93-Pg359.pdf>

General Assembly meeting in New York met with his American counterpart in September 1979 to discuss how to repair the damaged relations, with particular reference to the restoration of American aid to Afghanistan, but this communication yielded no significant results.⁸²⁸ The US economic assistance to Afghanistan (obligations and commitments, excluding export/import loans) was recorded as \$10.6 million for 1979 and used as follows: \$3.1 million in grants, \$7.2 million in PL 480 II, \$24 thousand for narcotics control and the rest for peace corps.⁸²⁹

Next month, in March 1979, the Soviets got shocked with the slaughter of its personnel and Afghan officials together with their families in Herat where the government lost control for several days due to a major uprising joined by the entire military division.⁸³⁰ Although the city was recaptured with an extensive military operation, this incident alarmed the Soviets.⁸³¹ Within the same month, the Soviets approved to provide “military hardware, wheat and other strategic commodities” to support the regime but declined Taraki’s request for sending Soviet troops to Afghanistan.⁸³² After Herat incident, the regime much hardened its response but failed to prevent the growing counterrevolutionary fervor and nationwide unrest, as evidenced by a rise in insurgent attacks, a large anti-regime rally in the capital, and widespread mutinies in the army.⁸³³

Furthermore, power struggle between Amin, who became Premier in March 1979, and Taraki, still President and PDPA General Secretary, reached its climax with the former’s elimination of Taraki supporters from the cabinet in early September 1979.⁸³⁴ The Soviets

⁸²⁸ U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, “Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Afghanistan,” *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1977-1980, Volume XII, Afghanistan*, Document 68, Washington, September 29, 1979, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v12/d68>

⁸²⁹ U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants: Obligations and Loan Authorizations, July 1, 1945–September 30, 2015: Total Economic and Military Assistance Workbook 1946-2015: Afghanistan*; U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Retrospective Review of US Assistance to Afghanistan: 1950-1979*, submitted by Maurice Williams, John Kean, Charles Jenkins, Joann Feldmann, and Patricia Fisher-Harris from Devres Inc., Bethesda, MD, USAID Contract No. PDC-0085-I-00-6095, October 31, 1988, C-1

⁸³⁰ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 197.

⁸³¹ *Ibid.*

⁸³² Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 191.

⁸³³ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 197-198; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 120.

⁸³⁴ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 192.

watching all these developments with alarm, persuaded Taraki during his visit to Moscow in early September 1979 that it was the time to adopt policies easing the tension, broaden support base of the regime by bringing the *Parchami* leadership back to the government, and replace Amin favoring Stalinist policies with moderate Karmal, but Amin as being already aware of the situation through his men in Taraki's close circle got the support of army and overthrew Taraki upon his return but announced it as a resignation on the grounds of ill health, and declared himself president in mid-September 1979.⁸³⁵

The Soviets, not only got annoyed with radical Amin's rise to power but also Taraki's mysterious death right after his 'resignation' in early October 1979 aside of deteriorating security situation all over the country, tried to get along well with Amin while searching some other ways to get rid of him at the earliest opportunity.⁸³⁶ After two unsuccessful assassination attempts in early December 1979 in which Amin got out alive, Amin made several strategic domestic and foreign policy moves to enlarge his power base and to secure his rule.⁸³⁷ For this purpose, Amin noticeably softened its relentless policies towards the opponents by gearing down purges, releasing several political prisoners, offering amnesty to those fled abroad for political reasons, proposing a new constitution, trying to gain over the religious establishment through reusing religious salutations and restoring mosques and even making overtures to some Mujahideen leaders, while slowly returning to the country's traditional policy of neutrality and non-alignment by trying to mend the relations with Pakistan and the US and to balance his country's relations with the Soviets.⁸³⁸ However, these moves did not bring the results that he expected, neither at domestic nor foreign politics. Even his attempt of restoring traditional foreign policy strategy of "play(ing) one world power against another" or "hedg(ing) bets", which had worked well over the past years, further irritated Moscow.⁸³⁹

⁸³⁵ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 193; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 198-200.

⁸³⁶ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 200-201.

⁸³⁷ *Ibid.*, 201.

⁸³⁸ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 201; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 194; Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 307; Nabi Misdaq, *Afghanistan: Political Frailty and External Interference* (London: Routledge, 2006), 131-132.

⁸³⁹ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 234; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 201-202.

US President Carter's national security directive in July 1979 on the delivery of covert aid to the Mujahideen to support anti-regime elements in Afghanistan, which would later be presented as "a deliberate provocation of the Soviets, taken with the knowledge that it was likely to trigger an invasion" by Carter's national security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski during his interview with the French magazine 'Le Nouvel Observateur' in January 1998, emerged as another major concern for Moscow that had strictly followed the policy of not sending combat forces into Afghanistan until then.⁸⁴⁰ All these developments made the Soviets think that they were about to lose Afghanistan, either to the US to whom Amin was considered about to turn his coat or to the counter-revolutionary Islamist forces, and after having weighed up all the relative risks and the possible consequences of losing Afghanistan versus sending troops into Afghanistan, the Soviets decided to invade the country in late December 1979 and launched the installation of a moderate pro-Soviet communist regime under Babrak Karmal.⁸⁴¹ This was the beginning of a decade-long Soviet era in Afghanistan that would cause a million Afghans dead, three to five million Afghans refugees in neighbouring Pakistan and Iran, and almost equal number of Afghans internally displaced within Afghanistan.⁸⁴²

Before delving into the details of aid dynamics in Afghanistan under the Soviet invasion in the following part, a brief overview of aid figures, main characteristics of aiding to the country, with special reference to the US and the Soviets as two major donors and other donors' aid activities will be provided for the period 1950-1979. Total foreign aid to Afghanistan amounted to \$2.5 billion in the period 1950-1979, 60 percent of which provided by the Soviets, 25 percent by the Americans, 9 percent by the three international development agencies (World Bank, UN agencies and the Asian Development Bank) and the remaining 6 percent by the other donor countries, primarily Western Germany and China.⁸⁴³ With this foreign aid, more than 150 economic projects were completed, mostly for building

⁸⁴⁰ David N. Gibbs, "Afghanistan and the Politics of Quagmire: A Retrospective Analysis of US Policy," in *Rebuilding Afghanistan in Times of Crisis: A Global Response*, ed. Adenrele Awotona (London: Routledge, 2019), 146-148. To see the original interview text with Brzezinski at 'Le Nouvel Observateur', please see *The Nation*, http://thenation.s3.amazonaws.com/pdf/la_nouvel_observateur_brzezinski.pdf or *Les Crises*, <https://www.les-theses.fr/oui-la-cia-est-entree-en-afghanistan-avant-les-russes-par-zbigniew-brzezinski/>.

⁸⁴¹ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 308; Artemy Kalinovsky, "Decision-Making and the Soviet War in Afghanistan – From Intervention to Withdrawal," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 11, no. 4 (Fall 2009): 50-51.

⁸⁴² Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 234, 281.

⁸⁴³ U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Retrospective Review of US Assistance to Afghanistan: 1950-1979*, submitted by Maurice Williams, John Kean, Charles Jenkins, Joann Feldmann, and Patricia Fisher-Harris from Devres Inc., Bethesda, MD, USAID Contract No. PDC-0085-I-00-6095, October 31, 1988, 5, 34, 36.

industrial, energy and transportation facilities but also in the field of agriculture and education.⁸⁴⁴ Yuri Bossin defines the main characteristics of aiding to Afghanistan during this period with the following words:

Foreign assistance is not necessarily a product of philanthropy or even the expectation of an immediate payback or the reward of economic or political privileges. For the most part, foreign aid to Afghanistan was offered with “strings attached.” Sometimes foreign intervention was disguised as foreign aid, usually to establish a strategic foothold in the country. The assistance programs that contributed most to Afghanistan’s economic and social progress came in the form of loans. During several decades following World War II, aid was a major source of economic growth and social reform, and Afghan regimes were able to maneuver successfully among donors and still maintain momentum for increasing economic productivity. There were many projects or programs, supported fully or partially by foreign donors, where the donors’ motives were irrelevant to their contributions.⁸⁴⁵

Since the Soviets and the Americans were major donors providing 85 percent of total foreign aid to Afghanistan, their aid strategies had played significantly important role. Yuri Bossin examining the Soviet and American aid models in Afghanistan during this period states that the Soviets and Americans are differed in terms of aid modality, economic growth strategy for poor countries, and economic rationality as detailed here below:

[1] The U.S.–Soviet economic rivalry produced a competition amid philosophies of assistance and development. Among the Soviets, loans prevailed over grants, while U.S. aid emphasized gifts and donations. The Soviet ratio of credits to gifts was nearly 3.5 to one, including credits extended over 50 years. It was scarcely profit-oriented; the interest rate tended to be lower than that offered by the United States (the Americans were later forced to reduce it in order to compete against the Soviets). In part the Soviet Union preferred loan-based programs because they seemed more appropriate for long-payout projects; usually a single loan financed several independent projects. Except for the Helmand Valley irrigation network, which took 10 years to construct and two decades to complete, all U.S. investments generally assumed a short maturity period. Loans and grants were smaller and targeted at single, self-sufficient projects.

[2] The Soviet and American aid models were derived from conflicting views of the assistance needs of poor countries. The Soviet Union emulated its own experience with industrialization in the 1930s, strongly believing that economic growth should take material form. Most of the Soviet-sponsored projects were aimed at creating production facilities and tangible assets. Investments in management and administration, the trade sector, or learning programs were subordinate in the Soviet view to “capital” investments. This concept resulted in longer payout schedules, larger credits, lower interest rates, and larger equipment expenditures per contract.

⁸⁴⁴ Yuri V. Bossin, "The Afghan Experience with International Assistance," in *Beyond Reconstruction in Afghanistan: Lessons from Development Experience*, ed. John D. Montgomery and Dennis A. Rondinelli (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 82.

⁸⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 75-76.

Americans, on the other hand, while not denying the advantages of industrialization, assumed that applying advanced knowledge, methods, or general “know-how” was a more relevant strategy for Afghanistan.

[3] Soviet and American assistance policies also differed in terms of economic rationality. The United States never sacrificed economic rationality for political reasons as readily as the Soviets did. U.S. loans outnumbered gifts, but Americans never agreed to repayment in commodities as the Soviets did. U.S. aid programs generally worked in a more pragmatic manner than the Soviet ones. The differences in policies especially affected the administration of wheat grants, which were a substantial part of both countries’ aid to Afghanistan. The wheat grants, as well as some other commodity assistance, performed a double function, relieving the food reserve shortage while also providing an extra source of local currency to reinvest in development projects. The funds received from selling wheat in the Afghan market should have been deposited in special bank accounts from which all further transfers were to be donor-controlled. The Afghans resisted this practice implicitly when they asserted a right to control the wheat grants money. The Soviets preferred to ignore the abundant wheat grant embezzlements and financial losses in order to sustain the spirit of Soviet–Afghan cooperation. Americans, in a modest compromise, allowed the Afghans to calculate the wheat grants revenues at a higher Afghani-to-U.S. dollar conversion rate, but still required an American endorsement on all wheat-accounts transactions.⁸⁴⁶

Notwithstanding the existence of two different donor models, namely the Soviets implementing projects with high-visibility, quick results and maximum-use mainly in northern Afghanistan by offering mostly long-term loans with distinctively flexible interest and repayment terms such as interest-free or low-interest loans with very long repayment periods and/or linked to the barter agreements, and the Americans executing projects with low-visibility, long-reaching benefits, bureaucratic slowness in southern Afghanistan by proposing mostly outright grants but also loans with high interest rates, both gave rise to white elephants in the country.⁸⁴⁷

The most well known American white elephants were Kandahar airport and HVDP. When the construction of Kandahar international airport that was envisioned to be a stopover between the regions was completed, the evolution of aircraft technology from the time when the fund was approved in 1956 until its opening in 1962 made the airport unnecessary for stopovers.⁸⁴⁸ Another white elephant, HVDP, which absorbed 25 percent of the allocated US aid and 19 percent of the Afghan national budget in the period 1946-1963, became a huge

⁸⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 86.

⁸⁴⁷ Anthony Arnold, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion in Perspective* (New Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann, 1987), 34, 39; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 24-25; Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 292; Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 50-51.

⁸⁴⁸ Jeffery J. Roberts, *The Origins of Conflict in Afghanistan* (Westport (CT): Praeger, 2003), 208.

disappointment for the Afghans because of the incompetence in planning, budgeting and implementation phases of the project, which caused plummeting agricultural production in relation to waterlogging and salinization of irrigated fields, aside of producing severe rupture between Afghanistan and the United States.⁸⁴⁹ Despite the initial and continuous signals of the failure, the US continued funding the project because HVDP was the US's signature project in Afghanistan symbolizing the US prestige as stated here below:

For reasons of credibility alone, the United States kept pouring money in, even though by 1965 it was clear the project was failing. Diplomats complained about having the United States' reputation hang on "a strip of concrete," but there was no going back. Afghanistan was an economic Korea, but Helmand was an economic Vietnam, a quagmire that consumed money and resources without the possibility of success, all to avoid making failure obvious.⁸⁵⁰

The most significant Soviet white elephants were the Jangalak auto repair workshop in Kabul, the Jalalabad irrigation network in Nangarhar Province, and the Soviet-built bakery in Kabul as detailed here below:

[1] The Jangalak plant was designed to cover 30 percent of Kabul's auto repair needs, estimated at 1,373 vehicles per year. But Soviet engineers ignored the local mentality and tradition. The Afghans exploited commercial vehicles on a two-year basis. In the first year, the vehicle was paid for, and in the second year, it yielded a net profit. Then the vehicle was considered completely amortized, dismantled into parts, and recycled, generating extra income for the owner. The cost of repair at nearly 60 percent of the cost of a new car or truck, discouraged the Afghan owners, and the plant remained idle. An attempt to convert the plant into a hardware production factory generated products that were priced higher than Russian imports.

[2] The Jalalabad irrigation network was designed after scrupulous analysis of the mistakes made by Morrison-Knudsen in the Helmand Valley. Soviet specialists stayed for three years beyond construction to supervise water-shedding and soil maintenance techniques. Although well engineered, the Jalalabad project was based on erroneous economic assumptions. Because the expected wheat crops would have taken 140 years to pay for the project, farmers were encouraged to grow more commercially relevant olive and citrus trees. But this alternative also encouraged sporadic growths of opium poppy plantations in the Jalalabad complex.

[3] The Soviet-built bakery in Kabul was also marginal, producing 64 tons of bread per day, which required wheat imports, mostly under American grants. Such volumes threatened about 220 small private bakeries located throughout the city. However, the Soviet-style loaves were not popular, since the Afghans preferred the oven-baked round nan bread; consequently the bakery began to produce army

⁸⁴⁹ Ahmad Shayeq Qassem, *Afghanistan's Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 54; Paul Robinson and Jay Dixon, *Aiding Afghanistan: A History of Soviet Assistance to a Developing Country* (London: Hurst, 2013), 49.

⁸⁵⁰ Nick Cullather, "Damming Afghanistan: Modernization in a Buffer State," *The Journal of American History* 89, no. 2 (September 2002): 532.

supplies and later introduced new lines of products, such as cakes, candies, and cookies, and became successful by the early 1990s.⁸⁵¹

Apart from the Americans and the Soviets, other donors implemented various aid activities in the country. For instance, West Germany provided loans for “power stations, telecommunications, and the regional development in Paktya province” and grants for the education sector, “which sent German professors to Afghanistan and Afghan students on scholarships in Germany”, and also “provided an economic advisory group to assist the Ministry of Planning, along with the Russians and Americans”; China financed “several agricultural projects, including a chicken farm, carp fishery, sericulture project, tea plantation, along with a Parwan province irrigation, the Bagrami textile mill and a semi-precious stone workshop”; and the oil-rich Middle Eastern countries, most notably Iran and Saudi Arabia, funded “industrial projects” in Afghanistan.⁸⁵² As for the international organizations, the World Bank and Asian Development Bank focused their aid activities on “the agricultural and rural sectors, including irrigation, agricultural credit, livestock, and fruit/vegetable export development, as well as primary education and road maintenance” and the UN agencies “provided technical assistance over a broad range of fields, including agriculture, education, public health, public works, small industries, cartography, etc.”⁸⁵³ The USAID report evaluating various aid efforts in the country in the period 1950-1979 states that although “[r]egular donor meetings were held informally under the auspices of the United Nations Resident Representative” and donors collaborated across various sectors such as the USAID “cooperated closely with the World Bank and other donors on agricultural and rural development projects and with the Canadians, World Bank and United Nations in primary education,” donor assistance was not effectively coordinated, “either among the principal sources of external assistance or with coherent Afghan development priorities.”⁸⁵⁴

4.7. Conclusion

There are two important points to be underlined in the general evaluation of humanitarian and development aid to Afghanistan during this period. First, regarding humanitarian and

⁸⁵¹ Yuri V. Bossin, "The Afghan Experience with International Assistance," in *Beyond Reconstruction in Afghanistan: Lessons from Development Experience*, ed. John D. Montgomery and Dennis A. Rondinelli (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 83-84.

⁸⁵² U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Retrospective Review of US Assistance to Afghanistan: 1950-1979*, submitted by Maurice Williams, John Kean, Charles Jenkins, Joann Feldmann, and Patricia Fisher-Harris from Devres Inc., Bethesda, MD, USAID Contract No. PDC-0085-I-00-6095, October 31, 1988, 34

⁸⁵³ *Ibid.*, 34-35.

⁸⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 35.

development aid during the Cold War era prior the Soviet invasion, Afghanistan's development experience from the 1950s to the 1970s can be characterized as "dependent development." This is due to the country's inability to generate the necessary domestic revenue for development activities, leading to heavy reliance on foreign aid to finance its development expenses. Consequently, Afghanistan became one of the countries taking great advantage of the Cold War competition, receiving highest level of development aid until the early 1970s. Second, Afghanistan's initial pursuit of foreign aid from a non-neighboring global power like the United States for its ambitious domestic (modernization and development) and foreign policy ('Pashtunistan') objectives during the pre-invasion Cold War years steadily transformed the country into one of the new battlegrounds of the Cold War competition between the Americans and the Soviets. Both powers promoted competitive economic development models through development aid to advance their conflicting geopolitical interests, which ultimately led Afghanistan to become an aid-dependent rentier state largely within the Soviet sphere of influence. Although Afghanistan had traditionally maintained a cautious approach toward its powerful neighbors since the British colonial era in India, Daud believed that playing competitive coexistence game could help modernize and develop his country and possibly achieve some success in the Pashtunistan issue. However, this ambitious attempt ended up in a bear trap.

Regarding the most significant aid activities of this period, the Helmand Valley Development Project stands out. Initiated and heavily funded by the Afghans, this project aimed to develop relations with the Americans, promote the Pashtunization of rural lands as part of the country's endogenous statebuilding efforts, and demonstrate the monarchy's power to its people as they had brought American engineers from across the world to build an American-style town in Lashkar Gah, which became known to Afghans as 'Little America'. Additionally, the project location was chosen for its historical significance, as remnants of the Turkish Ghaznavid Empire were still present there, creating a narrative that linked the monarchy to the ancient Ghaznavid rulers. As last, in the pre-1947 period, the monarchy hoped that the project's visibility would encourage Afghans across the border to join Afghanistan rather than Pakistan. However, after 1947, as Pakistan gained favor with the Americans, the monarchy's intentions shifted to counterbalancing Pakistan. Although the Afghans, who had developed aid relationship with the Americans, had numerous interests out of this project, this costly project failed significantly to the level that let aside agriculture nothing could be cultivated from those lands, except opium poppy plant. Interestingly, even though both sides recognized the project's failure due to the American engineers' miscalculations, they continued the project just for the prestige. Another major aid

intervention during this period that involved various actors with divergent interests injecting large amounts of development aid into Afghanistan, often with no coordination and little local knowledge, was in the field of education. Different faculties at Kabul University were funded by separate donors. For a country predominantly based on rural economy, the influx of university graduates without employment opportunities led to social unrest, with some of those protestors later becoming Mujahideen. During this time, the Soviets focused on highly visible projects intended to benefit the Afghan people while the Americans concentrated on building human capital, with the notable exception of the Helmand Valley Project, which became the biggest white elephant.

CHAPTER 5

AID TO AFGHANISTAN AFTER THE SOVIET INVASION

5.1. Introduction

This chapter aims to analyze the impact of humanitarian and development aid on the prolongation, evolution and outcome of the Afghan War, which erupted after the Soviet invasion and took place between the Soviet-installed Afghan government and a coalition of insurgent groups, collectively known as the Mujahideen. The chapter will also address relevant national, regional and international developments, along with the resulting dramatic changes in the country's political, economic, and social spheres.

Amidst the ongoing Cold War, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 profoundly altered the country's trajectory and had a significant, yet adverse, impact on the country, with serious consequences still felt today. Given that both Soviet-led and US-led foreign aid, including humanitarian and development assistance, which were provided to the Kabul regime and Mujahideen respectively throughout the Afghan war, played a crucial role in its prolongation and evolution, and became decisive in its outcome, detailed analysis of the aid relationship between the main aid providers and their Afghan clients during this period is required.

To this end, the chapter first examines the evolving dynamics of aid to Afghanistan as the Soviets shifted from a short-term restoration plan to a long-term state-building strategy, primarily driven by the increasing insurgency. Second, the chapter explores the impact of Gorbachev's withdrawal strategy from Afghanistan on changing aid dynamics. Third and last, the chapter analyzes the US-led aid efforts throughout the period following the Soviet invasion, focusing on Afghan refugees in Pakistan (the Pakistan refugee programme) and Afghans in Mujahideen-controlled areas of Afghanistan (the Afghanistan cross-border humanitarian programme). Since the Soviet Union and the US played key roles in the country during this specific period, including shaping the country's aid architecture, the chapter primarily focuses on these two countries, although other relevant actors are also considered.

5.2. Short-term Restoration Plan

The Soviets initially planned to restore order to Afghanistan within a short period of time and then withdraw their troops, as they had done in Czechoslovakia in 1968, with the assumption that the removal of the Khalqi President Hafizullah Amin together with his closest associates and coercive revolutionary programs that had pushed the Afghan society into revolt and instead the installation of a moderate pro-Soviet government under Babrak Karmal, Afghan exiled leader of the rival Parchami faction, that would take necessary actions to bring political, economic and social stability to the country, coupled with the Soviet troops on Afghan soil whose mere presence would give the necessary psychological boost to the demoralized Afghan army while intimidating the insurgents and whose comprehensive support ranging from safeguarding major cities, vital installations, lines of communication (LOCs), and logistics bases to providing all the necessary non-combat support would enable the Afghan army to conduct successful counter-insurgency operations in the countryside while taking some load off the Afghan army in urban areas, would be enough to ensure the stability and survival of the Soviet-backed Karmal government on its own without a strong Soviet military presence.⁸⁵⁵

In line with this initial plan, while Soviet army was busy with securing the country's major urban centers, vital installations, LOCs, and logistical bases, Babrak Karmal announced his takeover as a "New Phase" of the Saur Revolution with promises of a democratic government by adding that the Soviets would provide urgent economic aid to the country, and then gradually put the new strategy designed to win the hearts and minds of Afghan people into practice.⁸⁵⁶ This new strategy was based on two key recommendations that had previously been proposed by the Soviets to the Khalqi leadership for the regime's survival: broadening the new government's political base and abandoning the old regime's radical policies to make the new government more acceptable to the public whose perceptions seen as key to the political stability at home.⁸⁵⁷ The *Khalqi* leadership, Amin in particular, had

⁸⁵⁵ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 122-123; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 234; Ludwig W. Adamec, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, ed. Jon Woronoff, 3rd ed. (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003), 496; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 127, 131; Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), *The Costs of Soviet Involvement in Afghanistan*, An Intelligence Assessment, February 1987, Release Date: 2000, 1, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/DOC_0000499320.pdf; Artemy Kalinovsky, "Decision-Making and the Soviet War in Afghanistan – From Intervention to Withdrawal," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 11, no. 4 (Fall 2009): 51-52; Lester W. Grau and Mohammad Yahya Nawroz, "The Soviet Experience in Afghanistan," *Military Review* 75, no. 5 (September-October 1995): 19

⁸⁵⁶ Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 48, 51.

⁸⁵⁷ Ahmad Shaye Qassem, *Afghanistan's Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 72.

closed his ears to these recommendations but Karmal did not have much choice. However, Karmal had to face up to two main challenges in realizing this new strategy. First, his ascension to power with the invasion by a foreign power was to make the things quite difficult for him not only because of symbolizing the national shame of Soviet invasion for the Afghan people but also his absolute dependency on the Soviets for his and his regime's survival. Secondly, since his target audience was mixed group of people consisting of conservatives, royalists, nationalists, traditionalists, liberal educated classes, *Khalqis* and *Parchamis* as PDPA rival factions, and non-party leftists, Karmal had to represent a very meticulous balancing act to accommodate these groups with different ideologies, backgrounds, and expectations.

In order to overcome these challenges and gain public sympathy, popular support and political legitimacy for his ascension to power as well as his Soviet-supported regime, Karmal developed an inclusive discourse, particularly towards the *Khalqis*, adopted a conciliatory approach in domestic politics, and took several significant steps in shelving or significantly moderating the previous *Khalqi* regime's radical policies and actions that had alienated almost all segments of the Afghan society.

Karmal's Soviet-backed government started blaming all the evils of the previous government on former PDPA President *Khalqi* Hafizullah Amin whereas paid lip service to the first PDPA President *Khalqi* Mohammad Taraki to win the support of pro-Taraki *Khalqis* who opposed Amin in the past.⁸⁵⁸ Karmal's policy of rehabilitating Taraki while vilifying Amin to secure the cooperation of the *Khalqis* loyal to Taraki relied on the fact that "the new government needed the help of as many Afghans as it could find to run the country—and party members were the only Afghans it could reasonably count on" and "a united PDPA would help confer legitimacy on the Babrak Karmal regime, since the new government would be pictured as having been formed from within the ruling party."⁸⁵⁹ Another factor was the dominance and power of the *Khalqis* in the state security apparatus, most notably in the army.⁸⁶⁰ Furthermore, as an attempt to justify the Soviet invasion, Karmal claimed that Amin was an American agent and that the Soviet intervention targeted to prevent his plan of dismembering Afghanistan by ceding its Pashtun part to Pakistan, which was to be

⁸⁵⁸ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 55-56; Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 94.

⁸⁵⁹ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 56

⁸⁶⁰ Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 47

implemented in cooperation with Hikmetyar.⁸⁶¹ In order to mitigate the reactions to the subsequent presence of the Soviet troops, Karmal regime described the role of the Soviet troops in the country as backup force to the Afghan army by underlining that their presence was to be merely temporary.⁸⁶²

As part of the establishment of a broad-based government that would embrace all segments of the Afghan society, Karmal eliminated pro-Amin *Khalqis* from the party-state apparatus but allowed the other *Khalqis*, who were either pro-Taraki or not closely associated with Amin, to keep their positions or to get some new positions at the Parchami-dominated party and government institutions including the Cabinet but did not permit them to hold key positions or dominance in any party-state apparatus.⁸⁶³ The only exception to this was the Soviet-imposed appointments of prominent pro-Taraki *Khalqi* hardliners with military backgrounds, who had helped the Soviets during the invasion, to key positions in the new cabinet; the ex-chief of the Afghan Intelligence Agency (AGSA) Assadullah Sarwari as Deputy Premier and Vice President of the Revolutionary Council, and the former cabinet members Muhammad Gulabzoy as Minister of Interior and Aslam Watanjar as Minister of Communications.⁸⁶⁴ In addition to the regime-friendly *Khalqis*, Karmal also appointed Sultan Ali Kishmand, a leading Parchami with Hazara ethnicity, as Deputy Premier, to get the support of Shia Hazara community as well as several non-party people to the cabinet and other government institutions.⁸⁶⁵ Another relevant step aiming to win the support of non-party people from different segments of the Afghan society was the establishment of several mass organizations for professional, social, and economic groups, largely modeled on similar organizations in the Soviet Union, which would reinforce the party-state's control over the country in the end.⁸⁶⁶ Meanwhile, like his predecessors Taraki and Amin who had created

⁸⁶¹ Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 52; Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 176

⁸⁶² J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 56.

⁸⁶³ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 55-56; Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 176; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 126-127;

⁸⁶⁴ Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 47, 233-239; M. Hassan Kakar, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion and The Afghan Response, 1979-1982* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 25, 185, 315, 318

⁸⁶⁵ Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 47, 233-239; Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 94.

⁸⁶⁶ Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 53; Ahmad Shaye Qassem, *Afghanistan's Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 74

their own intelligence agencies AGSA (*Da Afghanistan da Gato da Saatane Adara* - Afghan Agency for Safeguarding National Interest) and KAM (*Komite-ye Amniyat-e Melli* - Committee for National Security) respectively, Karmal also moved to establish his own intelligence agency known as KhAD (*Khadamate Ettelaate Dowlati*) and placed a staunch Parchami named Dr. Mohammad Najibullah at its head.⁸⁶⁷

Karmal government also pushed the undo button on the poorly formulated, structurally problematic, and/or badly executed policies and actions of previous Khalqi-run PDPA government that had contributed to internal disintegration both within state and society as well as to poor reputation and bad image of the PDPA among Afghan people, particularly those living in rural areas.⁸⁶⁸ Thus Karmal regime either shelved or moderated the old regime's highly unpopular policies among rural populations, such as the agrarian reform decree (land redistribution and abolition of traditional forms of rural debt), the marriage customs decree (minimum age, consent of both sides, prohibition of almost all marriage prestations), and also the mandatory and co-educational literacy campaign, expressed its adherence to Islam and respect to all aspects of Afghan traditional life, reactivated 'Society of Ulema (*Jamiat-ul-Ulema*)' that had been introduced by King Nadir Shah - King Amanullah's successor and the first Musahiban ruler - back in 1932 to show each and every step of the government was in line with Sharia, restored the country's old tricolor flag in which the green stripe symbolizes Islam by abandoning the Soviet-style red flag of the previous Khalqi government, reinstated religious blessings in the official decrees, released thousands of political prisoners including *Parchamis* and anti-Amin *Khalqis*, and even promised a new constitution allowing multi-party system and parliamentary elections to get the support of the country's educated urban populations.⁸⁶⁹

In April 1980, the new regime sealed its attempts of reconnecting with different groups of predominantly conservative traditional Afghan society and thus legitimating its rule with the

⁸⁶⁷ Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 47

⁸⁶⁸ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 54-56; Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 176.

⁸⁶⁹ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 237; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 122-123; Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 94; Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 101, 177; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 211; Chantal Lobato, "Islam in Kabul: The Religious Politics of Babrak Karmal," *Central Asian Survey* 4, no. 4 (1985): 111, 117.

announcement of the ‘PDPA Theses’ and the ‘DRA Fundamental Principles’, both of which contained no reference to socialism, communism or Marxism but used similar terminology and placed strong emphasis on the special relations with the Soviet Union, and more importantly the latter document was declared as the Provisional Constitution, which officially recognized the significance of Islamic faith, announced the *Loya Jirga* - the traditional Afghan consultative body - as the highest authority of state power that would be created through elections sometime in the future, but until then its role was given to the Revolutionary Council, and granted freedoms of speech, thought, assembly and peaceful demonstrations.⁸⁷⁰ The 1980 Provisional DRA Constitution would be recorded as “the only time in the constitutional history of Afghanistan that Islam was not recognized as the official religion of the country.”⁸⁷¹

However, both the Soviets and the new Soviet-installed Kabul regime faced a very different situation on the ground than they had expected, mainly because of three interrelated reasons. First, the Afghan state machinery in early 1980 was completely different than the one in 1978. Unlike “a weak but growing state in fragile equilibrium with fragmented society” of which the previous regime took over in 1978, the state machinery of the country in 1980 was almost at a standstill due to the severe and rapid deterioration, disintegration and disarray within the state, party, society, economy and army namely every sphere of life during the almost two years of *Khalqi* rule under Taraki and Amin.⁸⁷² This was to appear as one of the most serious long-term challenge in front of the new Soviet-backed regime and thus the Soviets.

Another long-term challenge would be the lack of trained loyal cadres and educated professional classes because of purges, executions and/or being forced to flee abroad by the previous *Khalqi* regime.⁸⁷³ According to the Karmal government’s statement to the Indian news agency PTI in 1980, 40 percent of 8.400 people either confirmed dead or missing during the *Khalqi* rule were “from the Kabul area where most of the country's educated

⁸⁷⁰ William Maley, *The Afghanistan Wars* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 95-96; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 60-62.

⁸⁷¹ Rosa Leda Ehler et al., *An Introduction to the Constitutional Law of Afghanistan*, 2nd ed. (Stanford, CA: Afghanistan Legal Education Project (ALEP) at Stanford Law School, 2015), 24.

⁸⁷² J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 52-55; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 122-123

⁸⁷³ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 123; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 52

element lived.”⁸⁷⁴ Second, a major Soviet objective of providing unity between the PDPA’s two factions under the new regime failed from the very beginning. Despite Moscow’s efforts to foster reconciliation and promote unity within the party, the deep-rooted bitter feud between the *Parchami* and the *Khalqi* factions continued unabated as the former had too many old scores to settle with the *Khalqis* who had suppressed them brutally during the Taraki-Amin period and the latter had resentment over their relegated status and power under the Parchami Karmal regime though the former constituted a majority of the party.⁸⁷⁵ This ongoing intraparty antagonism instigated three failed Khalqi-led military coup attempts in 1980, removal or demotion of *Khalqi* party cadres, military officers, and government officials at various levels, cooperation of some Khalqi officials with insurgents, and mutual assassinations of *Khalqis* and *Parchamis*, and thus reduced Karmal regime’s base of support and paralyzed both the government and the party.⁸⁷⁶ Furthermore, since the *Khalqi* base of support was strong in the Afghan army, this feuding severely diminished the country’s already weak military capacity. Moscow’s actions aimed at weakening the Khalqi power within the army to eliminate the threats to the new regime posed by the Khalqi-dominated army, such as removing the control of arsenals from *Khalqi* officers, collecting heavy weapons from the Afghan army, relocating Khalqi-led army units away from Kabul, and disarming the Afghan army units in and around Kabul,⁸⁷⁷ became another factor further diminishing the army’s capacity. Third, contrary to what the Soviets expected, a large number of Afghans welcomed neither the Soviet-installed new regime nor the “new phase” of the Saur revolution. The first months of the new regime witnessed widespread Afghan hostility in major cities against the Soviet invasion and the Soviet-installed regime in which almost all sections of the urban populations together with the resistance groups organized mass demonstrations, revolts, uprisings and strikes in Kandahar (31 December 1979), Herat (January 1980), Kabul (February, April-May 1980), Kunduz (April 1980) and in many other Afghan cities; civil servants including the high-level ones at the ministries left their jobs in masses; and more importantly a general mutiny, desertion and defection situation developed among various ranks of the large and small Afghan military units all over the country.⁸⁷⁸ The

⁸⁷⁴ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 54.

⁸⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 77-80.

⁸⁷⁶ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 78-80, 69, 265; Eliza van Hollen, “Afghanistan: A Year of Occupation,” *U.S. Department of State Bulletin* 81, no. 2048 (March 1981): 20

⁸⁷⁷ M. Hassan Kakar, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion and The Afghan Response, 1979-1982* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 169.

⁸⁷⁸ Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 178-181; Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 53-55.

Afghan reaction was to continue in the following months by spreading into other cities and towns, and the Moscow-supported Karmal regime's violent suppression of the riots, particularly those in Kabul, by using both Afghan and Soviet soldiers would intensify this reaction.⁸⁷⁹

Apart from further weakening the already decaying Afghan state machinery, these developments had serious consequences for the Afghan army that the Soviets planned to use as key actor in restoring order across the country. As a result of the increased mutinies, desertions and defections within the Afghan army, the country's military manpower, which had already declined by half to less than 60 thousand under the 20-month Khalqi rule, continued to fall sharply.⁸⁸⁰ The armed resistance groups taking full advantage of the situation increased their harassment attacks, especially after the Soviet troops took direct control of the country's urban centers and lines of communications in late January 1980. The attacks targeting "the Soviet embassy in Kabul as well as several Soviet encampments" in late February 1980 became the warning sign forcing Moscow to change its initial military strategy of keeping the involvement of its troops in Afghanistan as limited as possible to engaging the Mujahideen groups directly but as an auxiliary military force acting in complement to the Afghan army during joint combat operations in insurgent-held rural areas as of spring 1980.⁸⁸¹ However, poor fighting capacity, perceptible reluctance and low morale, widespread anti-Soviet and anti-Parchami sentiments, and ongoing bitter factionalism within the remaining Afghan troops as well as similar problems within the new recruits and conscripts in the face of a mounting insurgency compelled the Soviet troops to increasingly assume the main combat burden in these joint counter-insurgency operations as of June 1980, generating the launch of a massive reorganization of the Soviet army in Afghanistan to get prepared for a guerilla warfare and a longer stay than first planned as well as the introduction of several incentive, penalty or enforcement measures to offset the rapid decline in the strength of the Afghan army such as press-gangs in major cities, crash military-training courses, an amnesty for army deserters, a new military penal code, and pay

⁸⁷⁹ Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 181.

⁸⁸⁰ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 230; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 180; Eliza van Hollen, "Afghanistan: A Year of Occupation," *U.S. Department of State Bulletin* 81, no. 2048 (March 1981): 20

⁸⁸¹ Artemy Kalinovsky, "Decision-Making and the Soviet War in Afghanistan – From Intervention to Withdrawal," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 11, no. 4 (Fall 2009): 52-53; Lester W. Grau and Mohammad Yahya Nawroz, "The Soviet Experience in Afghanistan," *Military Review* 75, no. 5 (September-October 1995): 19; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 150

raises and enlistment bonuses for young men.⁸⁸² Moreover, aside of conducting retaliatory attacks on insurgent-held rural areas, the Soviets aiming to stop Mujahideen's repeated harassment attacks on Soviet-DRA controlled cities, supply lines, and logistics bases, began to create "empty or 'safe' zones" around the secured areas with high strategic value such as Panjsher valley north of Kabul through depopulation by using military means in summer 1980 and also began to buy off the Afghan tribes around these areas, particularly those at the Pakistani border, to halt Mujahideen infiltrations in autumn 1980.⁸⁸³ Combined with the involvement of Soviet troops in violent suppression of mass protests, particularly in Kabul, as of spring 1980, despite the initial intention of keeping low profile in their interaction with local population,⁸⁸⁴ all these incidents further intensified hatred towards the Soviets and Soviet-installed regime within the Afghan society. Deteriorating security situation and growing food shortages put rural dwellers in a very difficult situation and forced them to move in masses either to the government-controlled cities, mainly to Kabul, but also to other major cities, or to the neighboring countries, mostly to Pakistan but also to Iran, both of which substantially increased the Afghan internally displaced and refugee population in these locations and thus overstretched the capacities of Afghan cities and neighboring countries hosting these populations.⁸⁸⁵ Moscow, therefore, had to increase its humanitarian aid to the regime-controlled cities. Similarly, UNHCR Pakistan, had to double its 1980 budget from \$55 to \$100 million, nearly half of which was covered by the US alone.⁸⁸⁶

These tragic developments worked in favor of the resistance groups by bringing them new recruits.⁸⁸⁷ Although these resistance groups were not yet powerful enough to pose a serious

⁸⁸² J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 150; Artemy Kalinovsky, "Decision-Making and the Soviet War in Afghanistan – From Intervention to Withdrawal," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 11, no. 4 (Fall 2009): 53-54; Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 64-70; Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 182-184; Eliza van Hollen, "Afghanistan: A Year of Occupation," *U.S. Department of State Bulletin* 81, no. 2048 (March 1981): 20

⁸⁸³ Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 188; Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 185, 188; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 147-148; Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 70-71

⁸⁸⁴ Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 179, 181; Lester W. Grau and Mohammad Yahya Nawroz, "The Soviet Experience in Afghanistan," *Military Review* 75, no. 5 (September-October 1995): 19.

⁸⁸⁵ Samuel Hayfield, "National Security," in *Afghanistan: A Country Study*, ed. Richard F. Nyrop and Donald M. Seekins (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, January 1986), 309; Eliza van Hollen, "Afghanistan: A Year of Occupation," *U.S. Department of State Bulletin* 81, no. 2048 (March 1981): 21-22.

⁸⁸⁶ Eliza van Hollen, "Afghanistan: A Year of Occupation," *U.S. Department of State Bulletin* 81, no. 2048 (March 1981): 22

⁸⁸⁷ Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 53, 55.

immediate threat to the Soviet-installed Karmal regime in 1980,⁸⁸⁸ the Soviet military's ongoing presence in the country and considerable expansion of its role in the restoration of order would provide the fertile ground for the powerful ones to flourish very soon by producing both "an antagonistic public, incensed over their country's occupation by a foreign power and insulted by the imposition of a puppet regime",⁸⁸⁹ and "a wide coalition of Afghan parties [that] were opposed to the Soviet invasion—including royalists, nationalists, regional groups, and even non-PDPA leftists."⁸⁹⁰ The Soviet invasion would bring together all these Afghan groups with different backgrounds, ideologies, and aspirations around a common goal of chasing the Soviets out of Afghanistan.⁸⁹¹ All these incidents proving the unpopularity of the Soviet-installed Karmal regime among Afghans triggered a crisis of political legitimacy for the regime while making it more dependent on the Soviets and rendering the Soviet withdrawal within short period of time nearly impossible.⁸⁹²

While trying to overcome the crisis of political legitimacy at home, Kabul also found itself in the same fight abroad. The two UNGA Resolutions of January and November 1980 that passed with an overwhelming majority, in which the former "strongly deplored the armed intervention and called for the immediate, unconditional and total withdrawal of the foreign troops from Afghanistan"⁸⁹³ and the latter demanded the maintenance of Afghanistan's independence and neutrality, self-determination for the Afghan people, voluntary return of Afghan refugees, and again withdrawal of foreign troops; the expulsion of the DRA from the Organization of Islamic Conference in January 1980; and the lack of full diplomatic recognition given to the Soviet-installed Karmal regime by most of the countries outside the Soviet bloc, including its neighbors Pakistan, Iran, and China, leading those having embassies in Kabul to downgrade their diplomatic representation to charge d'affaires level, were the initial signals that Kabul would also need to gain political legitimacy in the

⁸⁸⁸ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 235; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 122; Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 185.

⁸⁸⁹ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 52.

⁸⁹⁰ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 235.

⁸⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹² Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 180.

⁸⁹³ United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP), "Afghanistan/Pakistan – UNGOMAP- Background," last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/past/ungomap/background.html>

international sphere.⁸⁹⁴ For Moscow, these indications also meant the beginning of serious deterioration in its international image and relations with both the Muslim and the Western countries, particularly the US (end of détente). In response, Moscow and Kabul specified the conditions for Soviet withdrawal on various occasions during the spring 1980, which included the maintenance of security of the new regime in Kabul, the complete elimination of the armed anti-regime elements in the neighboring countries and their attacks on Afghan soil, the international guarantee for non-interference in internal affairs of Afghanistan, by adding that the withdrawal issue should be treated as a matter to be settled only through a bilateral agreement between Moscow and Kabul rather than UN mediation.⁸⁹⁵ The Soviets thus the DRA rejected the second UNGA Resolution of November 1980 mandating the UN Secretariat to seek a political settlement to the Afghan conflict that would lead to the Soviet military withdrawal from Afghanistan, and closed the door to UN diplomacy on this matter.⁸⁹⁶

In the meantime, combined with the conflict-induced disruption of both the already beleaguered agriculture sector representing backbone of the Afghan economy and the traditional trade routes connecting Kabul and other major cities to the surrounding countryside as well as to neighboring Pakistan as a result of the gradual expansion of the warfare; the strikes of the traders, the widespread desertions of industry, government, and trade professionals, and the new government's policy of increasing salaries of government employees frequently to buy their loyalties led to severe inflation and shortages in basic goods and key commodities such as food and fuel in Kabul as early as February 1980.⁸⁹⁷ In order to address shortages and inflation, the government announced its plans underway to increase wheat production capacity and the Soviet donation of 100 thousand tons of wheat to be distributed by the Afghan Ministry of Agriculture at a heavily subsidized price with a newly introduced rationing system in all cities, and subsequently applied the same system for the supply of other basic goods and key commodities in short supply such as vegetable oil, sugar, salt, tea, soap, and kerosene, in which party members and government employees had

⁸⁹⁴ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 329-330, 341-342, 355, 358, 363

⁸⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 284, 324-327, 331, 336, 353, 360

⁸⁹⁶ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 331

⁸⁹⁷ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 139; Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 61-62; Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 182.

certain privileges.⁸⁹⁸ The shortages, inflation, rationing system and subsidized prices were to be ‘the new normal’ of the country.

Furthermore, cessation or suspension of development aid to Afghanistan by the country’s main donor governments- both Western and non-Western ones, UN agencies and international financial institutions in 1980 either for political or for security-related reasons, with few exceptions such as India and UNDP, worsened the already dire socio-economic conditions in the country.⁸⁹⁹ The Soviet Union allocating most of its resources in their military involvement in the country moved to step in to fill the void in the same year by making its Eastern European allies significantly increase their economic and technical assistance to the country in addition to the one that it had provided alone, both of which worth a total of \$350 million but still remained 18 percent less than the previous year; replacing its traditional loan-weighted aid scheme to Afghanistan with the grant-weighted one; and instituting a one-year moratorium on interest payments for the Soviet loans having already very low-interest rates and long repayment periods that caused a great upsurge in the following year’s debt service payments.⁹⁰⁰ The undertaking of the unfinished projects of the international financial institutions and Western development aid agencies by Moscow’s Eastern European allies (Czechs to US-funded Helmand Valley project, Bulgarians to some agricultural projects, and East Germans to communication and power equipment projects) would require significant additional time and effort, especially amid the rapidly worsening security situation in the country.⁹⁰¹

In addition to the abovementioned aid efforts to help the new Afghan government stand on its own feet, the Soviets also furthered their support for the exploitation of Afghan natural resources, particularly natural gas, in line with the post-Khrushchev era Soviet aid policy

⁸⁹⁸ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 139; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 241, 247.

⁸⁹⁹ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 55, 252-254; Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 239.

⁹⁰⁰ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 55, 252-254; Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 63; Anton Minkov and Gregory Smolyneec, “Economic Development in Afghanistan During the Soviet Period, 1979–89: Lessons Learned from the Soviet Experience in Afghanistan,” Technical Memorandum, TM 2007-35 (Canada: DRDC Centre for Operational Research and Analysis, 2007), 21; Robert S. Ford, "The Economy," in *Afghanistan: A Country Study*, ed. Richard F. Nyrop and Donald M. Seekins (Washington D.C.: U.S.Government Printing Office, January 1986), 206

⁹⁰¹ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 55, 254.

towards the developing countries, whereby the Soviet economic needs and interests gained special significance as part of the mutually beneficial aid relationship framework. The completion of the construction of Jarkaduk gas complex in the north to boost gas production to be exported to the Soviets and of the “53 kilometers of looping” on the Afghan-Soviet gas pipeline in the north to secure gas supply in 1980, and significant increase in the share of natural gas sales in domestic revenue and government expenditure should be evaluated in this context.⁹⁰² With these additional Soviet investments on the exploitation of Afghan natural gas, the Karmal government could easily continue supporting its very few key gas-powered establishments such as chemical fertilizer and thermal electricity plants in the north, but more importantly began to generate more revenue by exporting larger volumes of natural gas to the Soviets with higher price to pay some of its outstanding debts to foreign countries, most notably the Soviets, and to gain credits to use in its barter trade arrangement with the Soviets; whereas Moscow, in addition to the abovementioned economically profitable exchange scheme without circulating any hard currency, also benefited from Afghan natural gas by relieving itself of transportation costs from its own distant gas centers to Soviet Central Asia after the total halt of Iranian gas supplies to the Soviets following the 1979 Iranian Islamic Revolution and continuing to enjoy its own resources through selling larger volumes of Soviet gas to Western Europe in hard currency at a much higher price than what it paid for the Afghan gas and providing its Eastern European allies with subsidized and low-priced Soviet gas.⁹⁰³ Furthermore, as the funder, builder, developer, and manager of the Afghan natural gas industry since the start of their exploration and production activities in Afghanistan from the late 1950s to the late 1960s, the Soviets unilaterally determined the increases in price and volume of Afghan gas being exported to Soviet Central Asia, and even billed themselves for the gas they imported from Afghanistan as Afghan officials had no access to the gas meters that were located inside the Soviet border.⁹⁰⁴ Despite the Soviet-instituted further price increases in the Afghan natural gas exported to Soviet Central Asia

⁹⁰² Paul Robinson and Jay Dixon, “Soviet Development Theory and Economic and Technical Assistance to Afghanistan, 1954–1991,” *The Historian* 72, no. 3 (2010): 620; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 113, 130, 162, 297

⁹⁰³ Paul Robinson and Jay Dixon, “Soviet Development Theory and Economic and Technical Assistance to Afghanistan, 1954–1991,” *The Historian* 72, no. 3 (2010): 612; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 246, 252; Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 208-209; Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), *Afghanistan: Dependence on Soviet Economic and Military Aid*, Intelligence Memorandum, January 1973, Release Date: 2006, 8, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP85T00875R001700050003-2.pdf>

⁹⁰⁴ Robert S. Ford, "The Economy," in *Afghanistan: A Country Study*, ed. Richard F. Nyrop and Donald M. Seekins (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, January 1986), 193; Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 163.

after the Iranian Islamic Revolution and the Soviet invasion in the period 1979-1980, the export price of Afghan gas remained way below world prices due to the very low initial prices set for Afghan gas exports to the Soviet Union since late 1960s.⁹⁰⁵ The Soviets explained the reason for low pricing the Afghan gas with its low quality.⁹⁰⁶

Table 4. Afghan Government's Detailed Budget by Years (1978-1980)⁹⁰⁷

	1978	1979	1980
Government Expenditure (GE)	26,397	30,173	31,692
Ordinary and Development expenditure as % of GE	O: 47 D: 53	O: 56 D: 44	O: 62 D: 38
Domestic Revenue (DR): RTC+RNGS	16,630	15,992	26,304
Revenue from Taxes&Customs (RTC)	14,254	12,069	15,846
Revenue from Natural Gas Sales (RNGS)	2,376	3,922	10,458
RNGS as % of DR	14.3	24.5	39.8
RNGS as % of GE	9	13	33
Foreign Aid (FA)	8,975	10,862	8,874
FA as % of GE	34	36	28
Internal Borrowings	792	3,319	3,486

* All figures are in millions of Afghanis, except the percentages.

As for the other energy-producing mineral resources like oil, coal, and uranium and the non-energy-producing ones such as iron, copper, and chrome, the Soviets continued to extend their economic and technical assistance to the new government for exploration, extraction, and development activities of these high-value natural resources that would contribute to the

⁹⁰⁵ Robert S. Ford, "The Economy," in *Afghanistan: A Country Study*, ed. Richard F. Nyrop and Donald M. Seekins (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, January 1986), 200; M. Siddieq Noorzoy, "Soviet Economic Interests in Afghanistan," *Problems of Communism*, Vol. XXXVI (May-June 1987): 54

⁹⁰⁶ Paul Robinson and Jay Dixon, "Soviet Development Theory and Economic and Technical Assistance to Afghanistan, 1954–1991," *The Historian* 72, no. 3 (2010): 614.

⁹⁰⁷ Compiled from Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 113,162, 297; Anton Minkov and Gregory Smolyneec, "Economic Development in Afghanistan During the Soviet Period, 1979–89: Lessons Learned from the Soviet Experience in Afghanistan," Technical Memorandum, TM 2007-35 (Canada: DRDC Centre for Operational Research and Analysis, 2007), 8, 21. The figures presented in Minkov&Smolyneec's study are largely built on Rubin's work. However, Minkov&Smolyneec claims that there are some material and technical calculation errors in some of Rubin's figure and thus create an extrapolated version of Rubin's work with some minor differences in figures that do not change the percentages given in the table.

Afghan and Soviet economies in the same way as Afghan natural gas.⁹⁰⁸ Another relevant step taken towards generating state revenue was the Karmal government's promotion of the farming of cash/commercial crops such as cotton and sugar beets by increasing their purchase prices by 20 to 30 percent in early 1980 which would not only ensure the supply of both agricultural raw materials for state-run industries in Afghanistan and exports to the Soviets but would also make farmers dependent on the government as main purchaser of these products and deprive the resistance groups, which were forcing farmers to produce subsistence crops, of necessary food supplies.⁹⁰⁹ Noorzoy evaluated all these Soviet development aid efforts, particularly in the natural resources exploitation sector, as the continuation of the Soviet policy of creating and nurturing colonial style exploitative and dependent relationship with Afghanistan that had been applied in the Soviet Central Asia.⁹¹⁰ Robinson and Dixon criticized this approach for being the "prevailing Western orthodoxy" and argued instead that the resulting dependency was "more a matter of unintended consequences [of economic realities on the ground] rather than deliberate design."⁹¹¹

While these were happening on the regime front, Afghan anti-government resistance, which was slowly taking shape since the Saur Revolution in 1978, both within Afghanistan and abroad, mainly in Pakistan, was accelerated with the Soviet invasion. As the Afghanistan-based independent local resistance groups representing tribal communities or small geographical areas was strengthening its power with the new recruits over popular resentment against the Soviet invasion, the Pakistan-based Afghan resistance groups that mainly shaped around the already well-established Islamists since Daud years and the newly arrived Traditionalists since Saur Revolution moved quickly to create a coalition against the Soviets and Soviet-installed regime in Kabul, for the third time in early January 1980 and as in the previous one stimulated by the offer of significant amount of aid by the oil-rich Arab states, and six main Peshawar-based parties with diverse background, ideologies and aspirations – the Islamist ones; Burhanadin Rabbani's *Jamiat-i-Islami* (Islamic Society), Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's *Hizb-i-Islami* (Islamic Party), Yunus Khalis's *Hizb-i-Islami* (Islamic

⁹⁰⁸ Robert S. Ford, "The Economy," in *Afghanistan: A Country Study*, ed. Richard F. Nyrop and Donald M. Seekins (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, January 1986), 194-196; M. Siddieq Noorzoy, "Soviet Economic Interests in Afghanistan," *Problems of Communism*, Vol. XXXVI (May-June 1987): 48, 53

⁹⁰⁹ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 124, 137, 144-145; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 241

⁹¹⁰ M. Siddieq Noorzoy, "Soviet Economic Interests in Afghanistan," *Problems of Communism*, Vol. XXXVI (May-June 1987): 47, 54.

⁹¹¹ Paul Robinson and Jay Dixon, "Soviet Development Theory and Economic and Technical Assistance to Afghanistan, 1954–1991," *The Historian* 72, no. 3 (2010): 601-602

Party), and the Traditionalist ones also accommodating secular, nationalists and monarchists that were prohibited from establishing their own separate parties by Pakistan; Sayed Ahmad Gailani's *Mahaz-i-Milli Islami* (National Islamic Front), Sibghatullah Al-Mojadeddi's *Jabha-i-Milli Nijat* (National Liberation Front), and Mohammad Nabi Mohammadi's *Harakat-i-Enqilab-i-Islami* (Islamic Revolutionary Movement) – announced the establishment of “Islamic Alliance for the Liberation of Afghanistan” in late January 1980 but the already fragile alliance developed into a loose structure until mid-1980 because of, first, the withdrawal of Hekmatyar demanding leadership role in the alliance and objecting the membership of two Traditionalist parties led by Gailani and Mojadeddi coming from established Afghan Sufi families (*Qadiriyya* and *Naqshbandiyya* orders) in March 1979 and, second, the limited power assigned to the leader Abdul Rasul Sayyaf, the Islamist with Pashtun ethnic origin, elected in April 1979 and thus to the Alliance by its member parties, already in competition for power and foreign resources, that had experienced the misuse of power by the previous elected leaders Mojadeddi and Mohammadi during the earlier unification attempts in 1978.⁹¹² The concomitant efforts led by some Traditionalist political figures in cooperation with Afghan tribal elders and clan chiefs for the creation of a single political structure based in Pakistan uniting both the six main resistance parties and these traditional leaders that would be accepted as a government-in-exile failed mainly because of the power struggles among the self-serving resistance actors involved.⁹¹³

Of the six parties that formed the Alliance, the Islamist ones having access to the economic and military aid from oil-rich Arab states, particularly Saudi Arabia, through the intermediary of Pakistan - the country that had been greatly favoring these Peshawar-based Islamist parties since the mid-1970s - were soon to establish supremacy over the many autonomous local resistance groups trying to make headway with their limited domestic resources within Afghanistan as well as over the Traditionalist parties led by descendants of established families representing Afghan traditional Islam but also incorporated multiple groups that were not allowed to found separate parties in Pakistan such as seculars, nationalists and royalists.⁹¹⁴ The continuation of international economic and military aid to

⁹¹² J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 88-89, 93-95; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 237; Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 59.

⁹¹³ M. Hassan Kakar, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion and The Afghan Response, 1979-1982* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 96-100; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 96.

⁹¹⁴ Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 59; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 235-237.

these Afghan Islamist parties in Pakistan by significantly scaling up of its volumes in the years following the Soviet invasion, such as from \$24 million of Saudi aid in January 1980 to one billion dollars a year provided by the US-Saudi duo in the mid-1980s, would reinforce the supremacy of these Islamist parties over the others.⁹¹⁵ As time went on, the already intense rivalry among these resistance parties would get pretty heated with more money and weapons pouring into them.⁹¹⁶ Similar trend was also observed among Afghan Shia parties based in and aided by Iran that experienced regime change in 1979.⁹¹⁷

Perhaps most importantly, this very strong foreign backing to the Afghan Islamist parties based primarily in Pakistan but also in Iran after the Soviet invasion was about to change the Afghan political terrain irreversibly and lay the groundwork for many of the problems the Afghan people and their country have had to face for decades to come after the Soviet withdrawal. Thomas Barfield explains this drastic change with the following words: “The Islamist parties thus became the public face of the resistance in the same way that the PDPA was the face of the Kabul government. Neither was representative of the aspirations of ordinary Afghans. The Islamist parties played an insignificant role inside Afghanistan before 1980, and their leaders never established a base of national support there.”⁹¹⁸

5.3. Long-term Soviet-style Statebuilding Project

Realizing that the restoration of order in Afghanistan and the subsequent withdrawal of their military forces from the country within short span of time were unattainable goals due to the major challenges faced on the ground such as the almost total collapse of Afghan state machinery by the actions of the previous Khalqi government, the widespread display of Afghan hostility in major cities against the Soviet invasion and the Soviet-installed Karmal regime, and the ongoing factional feud between the *Parchamis* and *Khalqis* as well as drawing on the lessons from the mistakes of previous Khalqi leadership, especially those of Amin, and the Soviet experience in Central Asia between the 1920s-1940s, Moscow geared up and together with Kabul embarked on devising a comprehensive three-pillar strategy based on a long-term and increased Soviet commitment during the second half of 1980, in

⁹¹⁵ Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 59; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 236.

⁹¹⁶ Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 59

⁹¹⁷ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 236

⁹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

which the Soviet-backed Karmal government would: 1) continue replacing the unpopular policies of previous Khalqi regime with the ones that would broaden support, particularly in rural areas, but in line with the following two pillars, 2) launch a Soviet style party-state building process through introducing political, economic and social initiatives, and 3) implement a comprehensive counterinsurgency strategy based on carrot-and-stick approach by employing “military techniques of coercion” in rural areas and “police techniques of coercion” in urban areas in parallel to offering rewards to the individuals of party-state apparatus in urban areas and to the loyal traditional power holders in rural areas.⁹¹⁹ During this process, “secur[ing] urban centers of power and their lines of communication”,⁹²⁰ Sovietization of the government-controlled areas, and pacification, neutralization, or co-optation of the resistance-controlled or pro-resistance rural areas went hand in hand.⁹²¹

Before getting into the details, it should be underlined that although following Brezhnev’s death in November 1982, the war between Afghan Mujahideen and the Soviet forces along with the Kabul regime de-escalated under Andropov (r. November 1982- February 1983), who had opposed Brezhnev’s invasion decision, and then escalated once again under Chernenko (r. February 1984- March 1985),⁹²² this three-pillar strategy framework that was created under the Brezhnev administration – what I will call ‘Brezhnev’s Afghan Plan’ - was not subjected to any substantial change in the subsequent years of successive Soviet leaders until the Gorbachev era (r. March 1985 – December 1991). Even in his first year, Gorbachev would also give one last chance to ‘Brezhnev’s Afghan Plan’, which would show itself with the bold actions taken by the relevant Soviet and Afghan authorities in the year of 1985 not to waste that chance.

To put this three-pillar strategy into operation, the Soviet-backed Karmal regime took several complementary steps as of late 1980 and early 1981. The regime continued its reconciliatory overtures towards certain segments of the Afghan society (religious, tribal and ethnic communities) to win their support for the regime but this time as part of its newly formulated statebuilding and counterinsurgency efforts. Considering the fact that Afghans were

⁹¹⁹ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 123-124; Ahmad Shayeq Qassem, *Afghanistan’s Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 73.

⁹²⁰ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 142.

⁹²¹ Olivier Roy, “The Lessons of the Soviet-Afghan War,” *Adelphi Papers* 31, no. 259: (1991): 26.

⁹²² Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 252-253, 257.

predominantly agrarian and pastoral society, the government's new land reform of August 1981, a modified version of the original land reform of the previous Khalqi-run PDPA government, became one of the foremost steps taken in that direction. Introduced as a new initiative aiming to eliminate feudalism while respecting the traditional political, social and economic structures of rural society, this new version included the formation of Soviet-style peasant cooperatives with credit and marketing services and the increase in the number of state farms, but more importantly provided certain rights, exemptions and privileges to religious and tribal leaders supporting the regime, large landowners selling their products to the state, military officers, landless peasants or small-scale land holders with sons voluntarily serving in the security agencies, and refugee landowners willing to return.⁹²³ Although the reform targeted a broad audience of rural Afghanistan, the government's main aim was to get the key actors of traditional leadership who could mobilize rural masses against the regime on its side by providing them these incentives in return for their allegiance. This initial move of winning the rural power holders over to the government's side was to be followed by several others. In the field of religion, the Karmal government established the Department of Islamic Affairs (*Edare-e-Shuon-e-Islami*) in 1981 - the successor to the 'Society of Ulema (*Jamiat-ul-Ulema*) reactivated in 1980 - that was upgraded to the Ministry of Islamic Affairs and Endowments (*Wizarat-e-Shuon-e-Islami wa Awqaf*) later in 1985; put these newly-created Afghan religious institutions in close contact with the Soviet Muslim religious institutions through arranging several working visits to the Soviet Central Asian republics; choose pro-government mullahs representing different regions of the country and put them to the government payroll; allowed, organized and even subsidized annual Islamic pilgrimage (hajj) to the Holy City of Mecca in Saudi Arabia; increased religious programmes on both radio and TV during Ramadan; allowed the remaining small number of Islamic tribunals (*Mahkema-e-Sharia*) to operate for the personal affairs of the population in parallel to the revolutionary tribunals; continued Afghan religious education at local and university levels; and both built and renovated several mosques all over the country.⁹²⁴ For the Afghan tribes, particularly the Pashtun ones across the Durand line but also the others around major urban centers and the strategic roads connecting these centers to each other as well as Kabul to the

⁹²³ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 142-143; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 238-239, 316.

⁹²⁴ Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 120; Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 94; Ahmad Shayeq Qassem, *Afghanistan's Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 74; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 279-280; Chantal Lobato, "Islam in Kabul: The Religious Politics of Babrak Karmal," *Central Asian Survey* 4, no. 4 (1985): 113-114, 116-118.

Soviets in the north, upon the failure of military-driven efforts, the Karmal government sophisticated its strategy by conducting targeted meetings with tribal leaders, adopting strict non-intervention policy about tribal customs and traditions, exploiting both the inter- and intra-tribe rivalries to its own advantage, negotiating deals with tribes by offering them incentives such as money, weapons and territorial autonomy in return for their cooperation in various forms, ranging from remaining neutral or just monitoring and reporting the movement of resistance elements to allowing the establishment of government military posts in their territories or supporting the government with their own militia forces in their territories, and later in September 1985 managed to hold the convocation of the High Tribal Jirga with the participation of 4000 delegates, one third of which was from Pakistan.⁹²⁵ Notwithstanding, there were many tribes shifting their allegiances between Kabul and Peshawar like a pendulum in fast, depending on the highest bid offered.⁹²⁶ As regards the ethnic communities, Karmal maintained the previous *Khalqi* government's Decree No. 4 of May 1978 on the reorganization of inter-ethnic relations based on Soviet nationalities policy by recognizing eight major ethnic groups (Baluch, Hazara, Nuristani, Pashai, Pashtun, Tajik, Turkmen, and Uzbek) as equals but taking positive measures mainly towards the smaller ones rather than Pashtuns and Tajiks, such as encouraging the establishment of supreme councils of these groups, promoting radio broadcasts in their native languages, and launching education in their native languages at provincial schools with the education materials imported from the Soviet Central Asian Republics.⁹²⁷ Among these officially recognized ethnic communities, the Shia Hazaras, the religious and ethnic minority subjected to persecution by the country's Sunni Pashtun governments and population in the past, residing in Kabul gained particular importance for the regime as these Kabuli Hazaras welcomed and greatly benefited from the Karmal government's reforms, and in return they became one of the strongest defenders of both the regime and the capital city, Kabul, against the anti-regime

⁹²⁵ Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 76, 91, 139, 167; Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 120; Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 95, 100; Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 192; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 144, 147-148; M. Hassan Kakar, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion and The Afghan Response, 1979-1982* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 174-179;

⁹²⁶ Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 139.

⁹²⁷ Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 16; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 85, 134; Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 85-86; Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 120; Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 99.

elements.⁹²⁸ Another relevant development was Karmal's appointment of Deputy Premier Sultan Ali Kishmand, a leading Parchami figure belonging to Shi Hazara minority, as Premier in mid-1981, leading to several speculations about the possible reasons behind this promotion such as the Soviet insistence to make the regime more acceptable to the Afghan public as well as to put the regime forward as inclusive to the international public, a conciliatory gesture towards the newly established Islamic but anti-American regime in Shia-majority Iran, and further increasing the Hazara support for the regime.⁹²⁹

Apart from these specific targeted measures taken to broaden and diversify support base for the Soviet-installed regime, the Karmal government established National Fatherland Front (NFF - *Jabha-e-Milli- Padar Watan*) in 1981 to enroll non-communist namely non-party segment of Afghan society.⁹³⁰ Another initiative of Kabul for wider support and political legitimacy was the belated convocation of the Loya Jirga, which had been declared as the highest state authority in the interim constitution of April 1980, with the participation of nearly 1800 delegates all over the country in 1985.⁹³¹ However, although Karmal had promised to bring the multi-party system back in his early days, the Soviets and the Karmal government maintained the PDPA's political monopoly.⁹³² The Soviet-backed regime's all these efforts met with only limited success and produced mixed results, and could neither stop nor reduce the insurgency, even increased the insurgency's scope and intensity, because primarily the Soviet invasion but also the party's continuation of its political monopoly, which limited the government's political base, and made Karmal a new 'Shah Shuja' in the eyes of many Afghans, turned the "pervasive but decentralized" rural resistance in the pre-invasion period into "a mass opposition" in the post-invasion period while gathering diverse

⁹²⁸ Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 132;

⁹²⁹ Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 118-119; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 58, 73-74.

⁹³⁰ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 135; Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 119; Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 83, 167; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 85-86

⁹³¹ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 60; Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 60; Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 166-167.

⁹³² Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 177; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 237.

resistance groups around a common goal of expelling the Soviets and their collaborators from the country under the banner of jihad.⁹³³

With regard to the reorganization of the PDPA, the backbone of the Soviet-installed Afghan party-state, Kabul's repeated recruitment drive to expand party membership by lowering entry requirements and offering several incentives to new party members such as good government jobs with high salaries, promotion of those already employed by the government agencies or state enterprises, and some other privileges relatively increased the numbers towards the mid-1980s but at the expense of quality and trustability of party members; the militarization of the party tasks imposed by the ongoing war changed its membership and leadership profiles; and last of all and most importantly, the Soviet-driven efforts of the Karmal government for the reunification of the party's two factions under Parchami leadership did not yield satisfactory results mainly due to the lack of trust on both sides, which mainly reflected in the Parchami faction's increasing supremacy in the leadership and membership cadres of both the party and the government, the continuation of dismissal and demotion of *Khalqi* officials from their party and government posts to be filled with either Parchami or non-party figures, the feud between Parchami Najibullah's KhAD and Khalqi Interior Minister Gulabzoy's *Sarandoy* (paramilitary police force, gendarmerie), and the inter-factional conflict between Khalqi-Pashtun-dominated officer corps and multi-ethnic Parchami top military leadership (Ghilzai Pashtun chief of staff and defense minister in 1980-1982, and Tajik Defense Minister in 1982-1984) in the military command structure, enforcing the appointment of a *Khalqi* commander for chief of staff and later defense minister in January-December 1984.⁹³⁴ Furthermore, the PDPA held a national party conference in March 1982 with the participation of almost 900 elected party delegates and produced a document named an "Appeal to the Afghan People" in which the party's commitment for the reduction of unemployment with establishment of new factories, provision of land, water and education to the peasantry, development of secondary industries, protection of human rights including equality for minorities and emancipation of women based on their voluntary participation, respect for Islam, and restoration of peace and order in the country with the army's efforts were restated.⁹³⁵

⁹³³ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 235, 237.

⁹³⁴ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 63-66, 77-84; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 126-128, 130-131.

⁹³⁵ Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 99.

During this period, the government adopted a number of measures to build up the necessary human resources to run the party and the state in the short-to-medium term and the essential human capital to secure the future of the regime in the mid-to-long term. The main challenges facing both Moscow and Kabul on this issue were not only the country's high illiteracy rate, estimated at around 90 percent, and the enormous loss of trained and educated workforce in almost all sectors during the previous *Khalqi* regime but the continuation of the escape of the remaining small number of educated and skilled nationals from the country mainly because of the escalating civil war after the Soviet invasion.⁹³⁶ To overcome these challenges in the civilian sector, Kabul regime placed a great deal of effort on creating its own well-trained, well-educated and loyal national cadres and officials from very early to young ages through opening boarding schools for orphans, aligning all school curricula and textbooks with the Soviet educational system, investing in the organizations for children and youth as modeled on Soviet Pioneers and Komsomol, and significantly increasing the number of students and trainees both sent abroad, mostly to the Soviet Union but also to Eastern bloc countries, for education and training programmes of different length, as well as in the Soviet-run Afghan education and training institutions.⁹³⁷ However, all these efforts could neither stop the escape of some of those newly trained replacements, nor avoid the Soviet complaints about "the quality of those who remained," or provide "an appropriate supply of qualified personnel anywhere outside of the capital."⁹³⁸ Consequently, "[m]any enterprises virtually came to a stop, government administration barely functioned, and services like medical care became scarce."⁹³⁹ As for the creation of future DRA's loyal, educated, and core cadres, Moscow and Kabul signed an agreement to send ten thousand Afghan children per year to the Soviet Union for long-term education, which drastically increased the number of Afghan children in Soviet schools, allegedly as high as almost fifty thousand in late 1985, but their expected return date to Kabul to fill the ranks of the core party-state cadres was as late as the mid-1990s.⁹⁴⁰

⁹³⁶ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 239-240.

⁹³⁷ Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 98-99; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 136, 140-142; Ahmad Shaye Qassem, *Afghanistan's Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 73-74.

⁹³⁸ Paul Robinson and Jay Dixon, *Aiding Afghanistan: A History of Soviet Assistance to a Developing Country* (London: Hurst, 2013), 127-128.

⁹³⁹ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 240.

⁹⁴⁰ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 141-142, 324; Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 63.

Regarding the security sector, in order to offset the ongoing decline in the strength of the Afghan army, the most prominent actor in the restoration of peace and order across the country, the new regime intensified its efforts to attract and retain new recruits by offering special incentives such as salary increases, educational privileges upon the completion of their military service, and lowering both admission and promotion requirements in the army, and by taking stringent measures to get and keep new conscripts such as lowering the minimum conscription age, operating press gangs in all major cities, calling all reservists to active duty, and raising the length of conscript service as of 1981.⁹⁴¹ Although some of these measures, particularly forced conscription, further increased the Afghans' dislike for the regime as well as the number of individual desertions in the army, these efforts met with some success from 1982 onwards, as evidenced by the modest growth in the army's manpower and operational record as well as the disappearance of mass desertions, but still the army continued to suffer from shortage of army manpower and capacity.⁹⁴² To increase the army's performance, the government sent the high-ranking Afghan army officers to the Soviet Union for training as occurred in the build-up of civilian workforce, but general deterioration in both quality and duration of rudimentary military training of Afghan officers and conscripts in Afghanistan combined with the already lowered admission requirements for the army did not produce the expected results in that sense.⁹⁴³ Similar efforts were also made to build up the strength of the other two key security agencies that grew to take important tasks in the fight against the resistance; the national paramilitary police force (Sarandoy) increased its manpower by offering similar special incentives as in the army and shortening the training duration at Kabul Police Academy, and the new regime's favorite KhAD turned into an impressive security actor with its enormous budget, massive recruitment and training of Afghan personnel inside the country and abroad, mostly in the Soviet Union but also in other Eastern Bloc countries.⁹⁴⁴ Consequently, although the Soviet-backed Karmal regime achieved significant success in building KhAD and some relative

⁹⁴¹ Eliza van Hollen, "Afghanistan: A Year of Occupation," *U.S. Department of State Bulletin* 81, no. 2048 (March 1981): 20; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 132; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 183.

⁹⁴² Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 105-107; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 132.

⁹⁴³ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 131; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 186-187.

⁹⁴⁴ Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 215; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 187. 265-267; Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 97.

success in rebuilding its army and police forces, many problems related to weak capacity and insufficient manpower continued to persist however. The government took several measures to minimize the risks associated with these problems, such as creating civil defense units responsible for the protection of key infrastructure and establishing various militia groups with the recruitment of either party true-believers in urban areas or mercenaries in tribal and border areas.⁹⁴⁵ Another relevant action taken to cope with these problems was the enormous increase over the years in the number and preeminence of mainly Soviet but also Eastern European civilian and military advisers, technicians, and personnel, which deeply irritated Afghans witnessing that they were slowly losing control of their own country, and total blindness or ignorance of some of those advisors to the Afghan context either due to lack of knowledge or superiority complex became another source of resentment among Afghans.⁹⁴⁶ Rodric Braithwaite draws attention to the issue of lack of ownerships as another negative impact of these advisors with the following words: “The plethora of Soviet advisers, their micromanagement of everyday business, robbed their Afghan opposite numbers of any sense of responsibility and initiative... Faced with interference at all levels in the military as well as the civilian bureaucracy, the Afghans often simply shrugged their shoulders and let the Russians take the strain.”⁹⁴⁷

The Karmal government’s all the abovementioned efforts required massive aid effort of the Soviet Union, particularly civilian one, given the continuous worsening of the already dire economic and humanitarian situation in the country. Fully recognizing that they would stay longer than they had expected and the military solution alone would not be enough to defeat the mounting insurgency in the country, the Soviets further increased their economic and technical assistance to Afghanistan, mainly to the government-controlled areas namely the urban centers along with key transportation routes being used to survive those centers.⁹⁴⁸ In

⁹⁴⁵ Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 97.; Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 214; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 189

⁹⁴⁶ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 59, 165-166, 184-185, 240, 264, 268, 284, 288-289, 301, 304, 306, 320, 339; Paul Robinson and Jay Dixon, *Aiding Afghanistan: A History of Soviet Assistance to a Developing Country* (London: Hurst, 2013), 130-132; Rodric Braithwaite, *Afgantsy: The Russians in Afghanistan, 1979-89* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 149-154

⁹⁴⁷ Rodric Braithwaite, *Afgantsy: The Russians in Afghanistan, 1979-89* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 148.

⁹⁴⁸ Paul Robinson and Jay Dixon, *Aiding Afghanistan: A History of Soviet Assistance to a Developing Country* (London: Hurst, 2013), 98; Yuri V. Bossin, "The Afghan Experience with International Assistance," in *Beyond Reconstruction in Afghanistan: Lessons from Development Experience*, ed. John D. Montgomery and Dennis A. Rondinelli (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 87

line with the statist development model that they would like to export to the Third World countries as well as the post-Khrushchev era development aid policy placing ever increasing emphasis on Soviet economic needs and interests in the aid-giving, Moscow continued to direct its development assistance primarily to state-owned industry, infrastructure, and natural resource exploitation sectors, and secondarily to agriculture, education, and handicraft.⁹⁴⁹ Relatedly, several agreements were signed between the two countries during the period 1980-1985 on economic and technical cooperation, trade, geological prospecting and gas industry, cultural and scientific cooperation, creation of three TV studios in Kabul, cooperation among Afghan and Soviet journalist unions, construction of technical training institutions, and building soil-agronomy labs and other agricultural and veterinarian institutions.⁹⁵⁰ This involvement would be quite costly for the Soviets. Apart from the deployment of the 40th Army of nearly 120,000 troops costing \$1 million per day, the Soviets would provide \$300–400 millions of economic aid to the Kabul regime per year as in the form of “credits, grants, vehicles, fuel and support for agriculture.”⁹⁵¹

Although Soviet development aid priorities did not undergo any major changes in comparison with the pre-war period, the Soviets adjusted their aid strategy to the rapidly worsening conflict situation all over the country, particularly in the countryside, by limiting the geographic scope of their development projects to the relatively safe government-controlled areas in northern Afghanistan, specifically “the corridor between Kabul and the Soviet border,” and by designing more targeted transportation, communications, and energy infrastructure projects that would serve to ensure the survival and stability of Kabul government while minimizing the heavy economic cost of their involvement in Afghanistan through delivery of Soviet civilian aid including commodity assistance, supply of material goods required by the Soviet army in Afghanistan, and flow of Soviet-Afghan (barter) trade.⁹⁵² The Soviet-built Khairaton rail and road bridge across the Amu Darya River linking the Soviet city Termez with the Afghan town Jeyretan together with a transshipment facility on the Afghan side, two electric power transmission lines from then Soviet Tajikistan to Northern Afghanistan, expansion and improvement of road and airport infrastructures as

⁹⁴⁹ Paul Robinson and Jay Dixon, *Aiding Afghanistan: A History of Soviet Assistance to a Developing Country* (London: Hurst, 2013), 98

⁹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 163.

⁹⁵¹ Yuri V. Bossin, "The Afghan Experience with International Assistance," in *Beyond Reconstruction in Afghanistan: Lessons from Development Experience*, ed. John D. Montgomery and Dennis A. Rondinelli (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 87

⁹⁵² Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 138-139

seen with the expansion of Kabul airport and the 1964 built Salang Pass Tunnel, delivery of significant number of trucks to the Afghan-Soviet joint transport company known as AFSOTR together with establishing automotive repair shops in Kabul and upgrading already existing one in Jangalak, establishment of radio stations to ensure contact between Kabul and the provinces upon the almost complete destruction of telephone network, construction of new hydroelectric power stations, promotion of mechanization of Afghan agriculture through the establishment of Soviet type Machine Tractor Stations (MTS) to minimize adverse effects of ongoing war on this vital sector, and many others should be evaluated within this context.⁹⁵³

Continued to bearing most of the financial cost of the war against the mounting insurgency, the Soviets also tried to cover the Karmal government's development expenditure and budget deficits, the latter of which worsened very markedly with the severe decline in state revenues from land taxes, export earnings, remittances of Afghan migrant workers, and non-Soviet foreign aid, the significant increase in ordinary expenditures with the requirement to import most of the essential goods, and the soaring defense and security costs such as high starting salaries and frequent salary increases primarily to attract and retain men in the government's security agencies and in the newly created counter-insurgency units such as the *Pader Watan* and urban-tribal militia groups but also to buy the allegiance of other employees, through buying larger volumes of Afghan natural gas at much higher prices than before and also by increasing their foreign aid including commodity assistance, project aid, loans and grants.⁹⁵⁴

With the higher revenue gained from the natural gas sale to the Soviets through increasing its export taxes and hence driving up its export prices, which made natural gas the country's most valuable single export item to the Soviets providing almost half of state income during

⁹⁵³ Yuri V. Bossin, "The Afghan Experience with International Assistance," in *Beyond Reconstruction in Afghanistan: Lessons from Development Experience*, ed. John D. Montgomery and Dennis A. Rondonelli (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 87; Theodore Shabad, "Soviet Builds Bridge Quickly On The Afghan Border," *New York Times*, May 23, 1982, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.nytimes.com/1982/05/23/world/soviet-builds-bridge-quickly-on-the-afghan-border.html>; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 139, 145; Paul Robinson and Jay Dixon, "Soviet Development Theory and Economic and Technical Assistance to Afghanistan, 1954–1991," *The Historian* 72, no. 3 (Fall 2010): 620–621; Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), *The Costs of Soviet Involvement in Afghanistan*, An Intelligence Assessment, February 1987, Release Date: 2000, 11, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/DOC_0000499320.pdf

⁹⁵⁴ Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), *The Costs of Soviet Involvement in Afghanistan*, An Intelligence Assessment, February 1987, Release Date: 2000, 10, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/DOC_0000499320.pdf; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 188–189, 242, 246–248, 255; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 129–130, 138, 297.

the years 1981-1984, Kabul could finance one third of its expenditures in 1981 and 1982 that provided both the repayment of some of its foreign debts, mostly the ones owed to the Soviets constituting 73 percent of its total foreign debt in the fiscal years 1982, but also to the other countries like the US, and the credits for its barter trade with the Soviets, but a steep increase in the expenditures starting from 1983 decreased this share in the subsequent years.⁹⁵⁵

Table 5. Afghan Government’s Detailed Budget by Years (1980-1986)⁹⁵⁶

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986
Government Expenditure (GE)	31,692	40,751	42,119	57,640	65,410	77,055	88,700
Ordinary and Development expenditure as % of GE	O: 62 D: 38	O: 66 D: 34	O: 69 D: 31	-	-	-	O: 74 D: 26
Domestic Revenue (DR): RTC+RNGS	26,304	30,156	30,326	33,388	36,451	39,513	42,576
Revenue from Taxes&Customs (RTC)	15,856	16,300	16,005	18,878	21,751	24,624	27,497
Revenue from Natural Gas Sales (RNGS)	10,458	13,855	14,320	14,510	14,700	14,889	15,079
RNGS as % of DR	39.8	45.9	47.2	43.4	40.4	37.7	35.4
RNGS as % of GE	33	34	34	25.2	22.5	19.3	17
Foreign Aid (FA)	8,874	10,595	11,793	15,276	18,758	22,241	25,723
FA as % of GE	28	26	28	26.5	28.7	28.9	29
Internal Borrowings	3,486	-	-	5,100	10,201	15,301	20,401

* All figures are in millions of Afghanis, except the percentages.

⁹⁵⁵ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 246, 247, 249, 252, 255; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 113, 162, 297; Anton Minkov and Gregory Smolyneec, “Economic Development in Afghanistan During the Soviet Period, 1979–89: Lessons Learned from the Soviet Experience in Afghanistan,” Technical Memorandum, TM 2007-35 (Canada: DRDC Centre for Operational Research and Analysis, 2007), 21

⁹⁵⁶ Compiled from Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 113,162, 297; Anton Minkov and Gregory Smolyneec, “Economic Development in Afghanistan During the Soviet Period, 1979–89: Lessons Learned from the Soviet Experience in Afghanistan,” Technical Memorandum, TM 2007-35 (Canada: DRDC Centre for Operational Research and Analysis, 2007), 8, 21. The figures presented by Minkov&Smolyneec’s study are largely built on Rubin’s work, which are based on DRA’s available official statistical data and covers only the years of 1980-81-82-86-88. However, Minkov&Smolyneec create an extrapolated version of Rubin’s work by claiming that there are some material and technical calculation errors in some of Rubin’s figures and making some further estimations for the missing years in Rubin’s work relying on average growth of revenue from 1982-86 period and of aid from 1986-88,.

The Soviets continued providing essential goods and commodities for the Afghans in the government-controlled urban areas as the escalating fighting in rural areas not only disrupted agricultural infrastructure, products, and distribution systems but also precipitated the massive internal and external displacement of rural population towards the relatively secure aided areas in and around the country during which the rural-urban exodus soared the population of all major Afghan cities, particularly the capital, and hence aggravated the already existing food shortage problem in the cities whereas the rural-abroad exodus of people moving with their animals to seek refuge in neighboring countries caused shortage of livestock within the country, and equally importantly these conflict-induced displacements together with some other factors such as the government's military conscription, the participation in the armed resistance, and the bombing-related casualties resulted in severe shortage of agricultural labor force, all these factors led to dramatic decline in agricultural production across the country.⁹⁵⁷ The Soviets sent two hundred thousand tons per annum of wheat, half of which was in the form of grants and the other half as part of barter trade.⁹⁵⁸

The Karmal government's initial response of supporting the cultivation of the subsistence crops to meet the food needs of the population living in areas under its control along with the cash crops to gain export revenue later turned into the government's favoring the latter over the former by offering farmers several incentives such as steady increase on the purchase price of these crops, irrigation water supply, credit, seeds, fertilizers, and lease of tractors from the newly established tractor stations to fill the vacuum left by the loss of almost half of livestock, all of which were vital for a low-income, water-scarce, and war-torn country such as Afghanistan, as this move would not only provide export revenue but also strengthen Kabul's hand against the resistance and the resistance-controlled majority rural areas by depriving the resistance groups forcing the same farmers to produce subsistence crops of necessary food supplies and giving the regime some leverage over the farmers in the countryside.⁹⁵⁹

Notwithstanding, the agricultural production kept on declining all over the country with the increasing damage to the means and the outputs of agricultural production.

⁹⁵⁷ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 235-236, 241, 243-245

⁹⁵⁸ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 139

⁹⁵⁹ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 241, 243-245; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 32, 124, 144-145, 324

Regarding the industrial production, Premier Keshtmand stated in March 1984 that the “Afghan-Soviet joint enterprises” that had been created after the Soviet invasion became the major actor in the country’s industrial production with its 70 percent share and Barnett Rubin stated that “the Kabul government noted [in April 1986] that Afghan-Soviet cooperative projects accounted for 75 percent of state industry and 60 percent of the country's production of electrical energy; over ninety thousand experts and workers had been trained through work on these joint projects or in the USSR itself,” by adding that most of these projects were located in Kabul or northern Afghanistan, but the persistent attacks against the state enterprises by the armed resistance groups and the exodus of workers abroad crippled the industrial production, and hence most of the country’s industrial production could only respond to the needs of public sector.⁹⁶⁰

Meanwhile, the Mujahideen Alliance struggling for unity collapsed once more in early 1981 due to the usual power struggles among the parties, and Sayyaf having good relations with both oil-rich Arab countries, mainly Saudi Arabia, and the US emerged as the leader of the seventh party recognized by Pakistan.⁹⁶¹ Thereby the composition of the Alliance became the four Islamists parties to three Traditionalist ones. Among the Afghan political groups of different backgrounds and goals opposing the Kabul regime and the Soviet invasion in and out of the country, seven main Sunni groups, particularly the Islamist ones, which had found refuge in Peshawar, Pakistan since the mid-1970s and extended their jihad declaration against the “infidel rulers” of the Kabul regime to the “infidel invaders” of the Soviet Union after the Soviet invasion, formed the backbone and became the face of the Afghan resistance, once Pakistan officially recognized these seven Sunni groups as representative of Mujahideen as well as of refugees in 1981, and agreed to become the main channel of foreign countries (mainly the US, Saudi Arabia, Gulf states and China) pouring money and arms to these groups.⁹⁶² In addition to the main difference between the Islamist groups aiming to establish a state based on Islamic principles and the Traditionalists targeting to restore monarchy, there were also persistent in-group disputes.⁹⁶³ Martin Ewans described

⁹⁶⁰ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 245, 256; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 139, 169

⁹⁶¹ Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 77;

⁹⁶² Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 235-236; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 212-213, 224; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 184; Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 311.

⁹⁶³ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 213, 216.

the fractured nature of Mujahideen groups with the following words: “Neither their shared Muslim faith nor the concept of jihad were strong enough to outweigh their personal, tribal and ethnic antipathies, and all efforts to bring the together into a unified movement failed.”⁹⁶⁴ Yet, what they all had in common was the hatred against the Soviets along with the Soviet-backed regime and the propensity for factionalism.⁹⁶⁵ Apart from the Sunni groups based in Pakistan, Shia Hazara groups holding diverse ideological commitments were also fighting against the Kabul regime under a newly established governing council called *Shura* in virtually autonomous Hazarajat region.⁹⁶⁶ However, as happened among their Sunni counterparts, first the political differences between the pro-Iranian radical Shia parties in exile, which was established and/or supported by the Iranian regime in financial, political and military terms, and the conservative-traditionalist Shia parties of Hazarajat, and then the fight among those radical Shia parties for control of Hazarajat diverted Shia resistance groups’ attention away from the struggle against the Kabul regime and the Soviet invasion.⁹⁶⁷ Although Iran tried to reunify these “warring cliental organizations”, it could not achieve this until late 1980s.⁹⁶⁸ Notwithstanding, all these resistance groups, particularly those based in Pakistan, substantially strengthened in time by increasing their manpower, excelling in guerilla warfare, and more importantly better arming themselves than ever before with sophisticated weapons, especially after March 1985 when the US President Reagan approved the National Security Decision Directive (NSDD) 166 announcing that every possible means would be used for the complete removal of the Soviets from Afghanistan.⁹⁶⁹ With the increased capacity and capability, these armed resistance groups carried out their consecutive attacks on the Karmal regime’s key assets, both existing and newly established ones with the Soviet support.

According to the statement of Afghan Premier Sultan Ali Keshtmand in 1983: “The counterrevolutionary bands sent from abroad have destroyed 50 percent of the country’s

⁹⁶⁴ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 216.

⁹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶⁶ Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 141.

⁹⁶⁷ Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 142-144; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 221-223.

⁹⁶⁸ Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 144.

⁹⁶⁹ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 128; Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 266.

schools, more than 50 percent of our hospitals, 14 percent of the state's transportation vehicles, 75 percent of all communication lines, and a number of hydroelectric and thermal electric stations.”⁹⁷⁰ In the following years, these attacks increasingly continued by bringing the country's Soviet-backed economy to collapse. Mujahideen attacks targeting electrical infrastructure caused major power shortages in the cities and thus negative impact on the country's industrial production; attacks on natural gas infrastructure producing significant amount of all government revenues in the 1980s avoided the production to increase; and attacks on transportation infrastructure as well as vehicles made civilian travel and transport in the country almost impossible and also harmed domestic trade.⁹⁷¹ Although the Soviets tried to fix the damaged or destroyed development infrastructure either by repairing or building new ones, they largely failed because of Mujahideen's recurrent attacks. However, despite the constant Mujahideen attacks, the Soviets put great effort to keep their existing projects going on, especially major ones such as the irrigation project near Jalalabad and the Polytechnic Institute in Kabul, even at the expense of the lives of their own specialists involved, and also initiated several new ones.⁹⁷² The ongoing war situation and accompanying security problems in the country either delayed or canceled many of those new projects on infrastructure, natural resource extraction and state-owned industry.⁹⁷³ For instance, the Soviets had to cancel 37 such projects in the period 1980-1985.⁹⁷⁴

Another significant change that occurred during this period, which might be evaluated as diplomatic track of Brezhnev's Afghan Plan, was Moscow's gradual acceptance of the idea of giving the UN a mediation role in finding a political settlement to the Afghan conflict from 1981 onwards. Several factors were at play in bringing about this change of mind, such as the continuation of the UNGA resolutions calling for the Soviet troop withdrawal that passed each year with a two-thirds majority of the votes, the failure of the Karmal government's efforts in both gaining full diplomatic recognition from most countries and persuading its three neighbors that had continued their non-full-diplomatic recognition

⁹⁷⁰ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 233.

⁹⁷¹ Paul Robinson and Jay Dixon, *Aiding Afghanistan: A History of Soviet Assistance to a Developing Country* (London: Hurst, 2013), 104-107, 122-124.

⁹⁷² Rodric Braithwaite, *Afgantsy: The Russians in Afghanistan, 1979-89* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 147-148.

⁹⁷³ Paul Robinson and Jay Dixon, *Aiding Afghanistan: A History of Soviet Assistance to a Developing Country* (London: Hurst, 2013), 118-119. For a full list of cancelled projects, please see Paul Robinson and Jay Dixon, *Aiding Afghanistan: A History of Soviet Assistance to a Developing Country* (London: Hurst, 2013), 171-172.

⁹⁷⁴ Paul Robinson and Jay Dixon, *Aiding Afghanistan: A History of Soviet Assistance to a Developing Country* (London: Hurst, 2013), 171.

policy towards the Karmal government not to support the Afghan armed resistance groups, the deterioration of Moscow's relations not only with the West and the Muslim world but also with the other socialist states and the Third World countries, widely regarded as quite damaging to Soviet interests, and more importantly the increasing indications that Soviet military and political efforts, let aside economic ones, were far from bringing about the desired results for the survival of the Karmal regime.⁹⁷⁵ In the face of these challenges weakening its initial belief that it could solve the Afghan conflict by using its own means and in cooperation with Kabul, Moscow decided to open the door to UN diplomacy to help secure the new regime's domestic and international position, and made Kabul sit down at the negotiation table.⁹⁷⁶ Thereby, the UN Secretariat, which embarked in February 1981 on diplomatic efforts to bring the relevant parties (Kabul, Islamabad and Tehran) to the negotiation table, as authorized by the second UNGA Resolution of November 1980 for seeking a political settlement to the Afghan conflict, managed to hold the first UN-mediated indirect talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan in Geneva in June 1982 to discuss the previously agreed issues of "the withdrawal of foreign troops; non-interference in the internal affairs of states; international guarantees of non-interference; and the voluntary return of the refugees to their homes", in which Tehran declined to attend as party to the talks by stating that "the Afghan people were not properly represented", but, instead, sent an observer to stay informed, but the UN offer of "bringing representatives of 'Afghan refugees' to the bargaining table" to solve "the Afghan resistance representation issue" was directly rejected by Kabul.⁹⁷⁷ Upon failure to reach a settlement, the second round of the indirect talks between the two sides was convened in April and June 1983 in Geneva, but once more yielded no result.⁹⁷⁸ Notwithstanding, the UN continued its shuttle diplomacy and convinced the both sides to have the third round in August 1984 under a new format called "proximity talks."⁹⁷⁹

⁹⁷⁵ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 284, 341-342, 346, 353, 355, 358, 360, 363, 369; Artemy Kalinovsky, "Decision-Making and the Soviet War in Afghanistan – From Intervention to Withdrawal," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 11, no. 4 (Fall 2009): 58, 72; Jagmohan Meher, *America's Afghanistan War: The Success That Failed* (Delhi, India: Kalpaz Publications, 2004), 160

⁹⁷⁶ Artemy Kalinovsky, "Decision-Making and the Soviet War in Afghanistan – From Intervention to Withdrawal," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 11, no. 4 (Fall 2009): 58-59; J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 331

⁹⁷⁷ J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 331-333, 337, 360.

⁹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 334-337.

⁹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 337-338.

5.4. *Dasvidaniya* Afghanistan: Failure of the Soviet Statebuilding Project

When Gorbachev was selected to succeed Chernenko as the new leader of the Soviet Union in March 1985, he had to face with the mounting insurgency against the Soviet forces and the Kabul regime in Afghanistan, the scanty progress in rebuilding state control in rural areas, the growing Soviet casualties, the enormous financial cost of the invasion draining Soviet sources, the increasing unpopularity of the war at home, and the international cost.⁹⁸⁰ Considering domestic political equilibrium that refrained him challenging Soviet military establishment in his first year,⁹⁸¹ but also being aware of the very fact that “the consolidation of control by the PDPA-controlled party-state was at best a long-term and costly goal,” Gorbachev gave both the Soviet military and Karmal government one-year deadline to make the three-pillar strategy work.⁹⁸² Meanwhile, three successive “proximity talks” were also held in Geneva in the second half of 1985 with some progress,⁹⁸³ and also Soviet and American officials met in Washington to discuss the Afghan conflict in June 1985, the first of its kind between these two governments on this matter since the start of the Geneva talks in 1982.⁹⁸⁴

Upon ongoing failure of the Soviet military-Karmal government duo against the continuing resistance in Afghanistan, Gorbachev gradually began to change track a year later during the first quarter of 1986 and to look for a way out from the Afghan quagmire that already turned into Vietnam for the Soviets. As the Soviet leader favoring a dignified exit option for the Soviet military from Afghanistan as soon as possible in order to use his country’s limited financial resources for its domestic economy rather than supporting “unpopular overseas regimes” like the one in Afghanistan and to fix his country’s international prestige that was severely damaged due to its invasion of Afghanistan, Gorbachev moved to formulate his country’s new Afghan strategy.⁹⁸⁵ Having received the authorization from the Soviet

⁹⁸⁰ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 238.

⁹⁸¹ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 226

⁹⁸² Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 145-146.

⁹⁸³ Adnan Sarwar Khan, “The Geneva Accords on Afghanistan – Pakistan’s Perspective” (PhD diss., University of Peshawar, 1999), xvi-xvii.

⁹⁸⁴ “Negotiations on Afghanistan Renewed in Geneva,” *New York Times*, June 21 1985, accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.nytimes.com/1985/06/21/world/negotiations-on-afghanistan-renewed-in-geneva.html>

⁹⁸⁵ Paul Robinson and Jay Dixon, *Aiding Afghanistan: A History of Soviet Assistance to a Developing Country* (London: Hurst, 2013), 136-137.

Congress to negotiate a peace that would allow the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and to promote a political settlement that would bring internal stability and Soviet-friendly government to Afghanistan in the post-withdrawal period, Gorbachev put this strategy into practice.⁹⁸⁶ Thus, the Soviet leadership under Gorbachev concentrated more on the UN-sponsored indirect talks held between Kabul and Islamabad, in which the Soviets and the Americans participated as guarantor, Iran declined to participate and the Mujahideen was not a party, for the diplomatic resolution of the Afghan war that would also provide its troops a face-saving withdrawal.⁹⁸⁷ Alongside, as part of the exit strategy, the Soviets also began to work on the establishment of a neutral and broad-based government under a repackaged PDPA regime for the post-withdrawal period by first replacing Karmal with Mohammad Najibullah Ahmadzai, commonly known as Najibullah or Dr. Najib, who was another Parchami leader heading KhAD and belonging to the Ahmadzai branch of the Ghilzais Pashtuns.⁹⁸⁸

While both the Geneva talks and the fighting in Afghanistan were going on at one and the same time, President Najibullah (r. 1986-1992), publicly announced the national reconciliation programme in January 1987 consisting of ceasefire, amnesty for political prisoners and insurgents, a coalition government embracing all opposing political elements of the country and acknowledgment of the local authority of the Mujahideen field commanders, which annoyed the PDPA hardliners such as *Khalqis* seeing this policy as betrayal to the revolution.⁹⁸⁹

However, the Mujahideen leaders and field commanders opposed to such a compromise by thinking that they would already overthrow Najibullah regime in the post-withdrawal

⁹⁸⁶ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 146; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 239.

⁹⁸⁷ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 238-239; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 200-201; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 232.

⁹⁸⁸ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 146; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 239; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 212, 229; Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 121.

⁹⁸⁹ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 146-147; Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 318-319; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 239.

period.⁹⁹⁰ Notwithstanding, President Najibullah continued the policy of national reconciliation by declaring a new constitution at a *Loya Jirga* held in November 1987, which changed the state's name back to the Republic of Afghanistan, established multi-party system and bicameral parliament composed of senate and national assembly, and stated Islam as state religion; proclaiming a selective amnesty for Mujahideen in January 1988; holding parliamentary elections in the Kabul-controlled areas in April 1988, which the PDPA lost its majority position and a new government under a trusted non-party premier Hasan Sharq was formed in May 1988.⁹⁹¹

As part of their dignified exit strategy, the Soviets further increased their economic and technical assistance to Afghanistan during the period 1986-1988 along the same lines in the past so as to get the country prepared economically for the post-withdrawal period.⁹⁹² Thereby, in the period 1986-1988, Afghan-Soviet agreements on trade and economic cooperation, equipping auto-transport enterprises, private sector development, agricultural supplies, communications, energy, geological prospecting, gas industry, and economic and technical cooperation were to be recorded.⁹⁹³ Furthermore, in line with his reforms at home, Gorbachev changed the Soviet aid policy in the following way: “for the very first time, the Soviets provided funds for the Afghan private sector,” “Soviet authorities delegated aid responsibilities from the central government to Soviet republics and regions (oblasts) and to individual organizations,” and “short-term humanitarian relief took increasing precedence over long-term development assistance.”⁹⁹⁴ First, Gorbachev leadership decided on that “the private sector could not be ignored in a country as underdeveloped as Afghanistan...some accommodation with capitalism was indeed necessary... to reach out politically to private entrepreneurs as part of the National Reconciliation Programme.”⁹⁹⁵ Accordingly, the agreement providing aid to projects with the participation of the private sector was signed in April 1987.⁹⁹⁶ Secondly, Moscow aiming to “make aid more accessible for the Afghan periphery”, while bypassing central governments, initiated “direct assistance programs from

⁹⁹⁰ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 239.

⁹⁹¹ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 319.

⁹⁹² Paul Robinson and Jay Dixon, *Aiding Afghanistan: A History of Soviet Assistance to a Developing Country* (London: Hurst, 2013), 136-137.

⁹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 163-164.

⁹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 136-137.

⁹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 140.

⁹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 163.

Soviet oblasts (administrative regions) to the Afghan provinces” for the delivery of agricultural, industrial and electrical equipment, the support for education, the provision of medical assistance, and cultural exchange, which failed because neither Soviet oblasts nor the Afghan periphery had qualified human resources to manage and implement these programs.⁹⁹⁷ Thirdly, Soviet humanitarian aid continuing since the early 1980s became increasingly important, especially after the Soviets had decided to withdraw their troops. Robinson and Dixon states: “Building communism was no longer the aim. Preventing the people from starving was the best the Soviets could do.”⁹⁹⁸ From 1987 onwards and in line with the National Reconciliation Programme, the Soviets increased their humanitarian and development aid in the form of the delivery of in-kind goods or assistance (wheat, consumer goods, foodstuffs, kerosene and other material goods, medical assistance, demining, constructing and repairing infrastructure such as mosques, schools, hospitals, canals etc.) to the urban centers despite the ongoing attacks of Mujahideen trying to cut the transportation links of these centers “to prevent the arrival of food, fuel, and other necessities” as well as to the rural areas including some of those beyond the control of the Kabul regime through the “agitprop” military units of the Soviet army.⁹⁹⁹ Moreover, upon the first consolidated appeal for the UN launched Operation Salam in June 1988 to raise around \$1.2 billion in order to meet relief and rehabilitation needs in Afghanistan during the period 1988-1989, the Soviets pledged to give \$600 million in-kind assistance to Afghanistan at the pledging conference held in October 1988 with some additional pledges in 1989, which included “commodities ranging from food and fertilizers to various types of household goods as well as machinery and equipment, to be utilized in Afghanistan through the Office of the Coordinator” but also was criticized by the newly established UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian and Economic Assistance Programmes Relating to Afghanistan (also known as UN Operations Centre in Afghanistan - UNOCA) as “more tuned to the supply of available Soviet goods than to actual demand.”¹⁰⁰⁰

⁹⁹⁷ Yuri V. Bossin, "The Afghan Experience with International Assistance," in *Beyond Reconstruction in Afghanistan: Lessons from Development Experience*, ed. John D. Montgomery and Dennis A. Rondinelli (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 87; Paul Robinson and Jay Dixon, *Aiding Afghanistan: A History of Soviet Assistance to a Developing Country* (London: Hurst, 2013), 142, 144

⁹⁹⁸ Paul Robinson and Jay Dixon, *Aiding Afghanistan: A History of Soviet Assistance to a Developing Country* (London: Hurst, 2013), 147-

⁹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 147, 151-152.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Office of the United Nations Co-ordinator for Humanitarian and Economic Assistance Programmes Relating to Afghanistan (UN Operations Centre in Afghanistan - UNOCA), *Second Consolidated Report*, (Geneva: UNOCA, October 1989), 10; William Maley, "Reconstructing Afghanistan: Opportunities and Challenges," in *Recovery From Armed Conflict in Developing Countries*, ed. Geoff Harris (London: Routledge, 2002), 238.

Meanwhile, regarding the assistance provided by those other than the Soviets to the Afghan population in the government-controlled areas of Afghanistan, only some UN agencies, few small western NGOs and the Afghan Red Crescent Society continued operating due to the complex reasons mentioned below:

Virtually all western development programmes in Afghanistan terminated after the Soviet occupation at the end of 1979... Whilst some UN agencies such as FAO, WFP and UNICEF continued to maintain offices in Kabul and run programmes in areas held by Government and Soviet troops, agencies such as ICRC and the World Health Organisation (WHO) were actually requested to leave the country, though the ICRC was eventually able to restart a programme based in Kabul in 1987. Western NGOs were regarded with suspicion and for the most part were not permitted to work in Afghanistan by the regime in Kabul. For many years the only official charity organisation was the Afghan Red Crescent Society, the Sara Miasht, which used funds raised from private sources within Afghanistan and those provided to it by the League (now International Federation) of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in Geneva.¹⁰⁰¹

Meanwhile, the Geneva Accords, consisting of two agreements between Afghanistan and Pakistan (one on non-interference and non-intervention in each other's internal affairs and another on the voluntary return of refugees in Pakistan), the Soviet-American declaration on international guarantees, and the fourth and last agreement on the Soviet military withdrawal timetable were signed in April 1988.¹⁰⁰² The Soviets started to withdraw their troops in May 1988 and ended completely in February 1989.¹⁰⁰³ Although the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan was celebrated by the US, Pakistan, the Mujahideen and many others around the world for different reasons, the Soviet invasion and subsequent conflict had devastating consequences for the country and its people. Apart from one million dead, millions injured, and a large number of displaced persons and refugees, "[t]he intelligentsia had been killed and technocrats had fled," "[f]ields and villages were ravaged and turned to graveyards," "[t]he traditional agricultural economy was destroyed and replaced with the booming narcotics trafficking business," and "[s]muggling was the only multibillion-dollar industry left in the country."¹⁰⁰⁴ Furthermore, except the completion of the Soviet military

¹⁰⁰¹ Nigel Nicholds and John Borton, "The Changing Role of NGOs in the Provision of Relief and Rehabilitation Assistance: Case Study 1- Afghanistan/Pakistan," Working Paper No. 74, London: Overseas Development Institute – ODI, January 1994, 43.

¹⁰⁰² William Maley, "The Geneva Accords of April 1988," in *The Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan*, ed. Amin Saikal and William Maley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 17-19.

¹⁰⁰³ Nabi Misdaq, *Afghanistan: Political Frailty and External Interference* (London: Routledge, 2006), 165.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Aisha Ahmad, *Jihad & Co.: Black Markets and Islamist Power* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 58-59.

withdrawal, which would have happened with or without the Accords because the Soviets had already decided to withdraw and even negotiated it with the US directly through bilateral channels, the UN-led Geneva Accords providing diplomatic cover for this already taken decision to withdraw did not bring any substantial results in regards to the peaceful settlement of the Afghan conflict.¹⁰⁰⁵ In line with pursuing policy of positive asymmetry, both the Soviets and the Americans continued to provide covert military aid to their respective clients.¹⁰⁰⁶ Reading these developments well, William Maley makes the following comment in 1989 on where this policy would ultimately lead to: “The continuation of ferocious military exchanges well after the Accords came into force grimly confirmed what was obvious from the day the Accords were published—that for many Afghans, they offered only the peace of the grave.”¹⁰⁰⁷ Similarly, the UN efforts to achieve peaceful settlement through promoting the formation of a new broad-based transitional government for the post-withdrawal period with the support of relevant internal and external actors also got nowhere.¹⁰⁰⁸

5.5. US-led Aid Efforts: A Response to Massive Humanitarian Need or Non-lethal Component of Aid to the Mujahideen?

The turning point in the Afghan war came with the re-election of Reagan by a landslide for a second term of office in Washington in January 1985 and the election of Gorbachev as new president upon the death of Chernenko in Moscow in March 1985. During Reagan’s second term, the US intensified its ongoing efforts to enforce a Soviet withdrawal in a less covert way.¹⁰⁰⁹ In March 1985, President Reagan approved National Security Decision Directive (NSDD) 166, a new policy and strategy paper in order to provide the complete removal of

¹⁰⁰⁵ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 235; Ahmad Shaye Qassem, *Afghanistan’s Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 80; Barnett R. Rubin, *Afghanistan from the Cold War through the War on Terror* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 40.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 240-241; Nigel Nicholds and John Borton, “The Changing Role of NGOs in the Provision of Relief and Rehabilitation Assistance: Case Study 1- Afghanistan/Pakistan,” Working Paper No. 74, London: Overseas Development Institute – ODI, January 1994, 23.

¹⁰⁰⁷ William Maley, “The Geneva Accords of April 1988,” in *The Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan*, ed. Amin Saikal and William Maley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 25.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Diego Cordovez, “Epilogue: The Withdrawal and After” in *Out of Afghanistan: The Inside Story of the Soviet Withdrawal*, ed. Diego Cordovez and Selig S. Harrison (New York, USA: Oxford University Press, 1995), 365-387.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Nigel Nicholds and John Borton, “The Changing Role of NGOs in the Provision of Relief and Rehabilitation Assistance: Case Study 1- Afghanistan/Pakistan,” Working Paper No. 74, London: Overseas Development Institute – ODI, January 1994, 21

the Soviets from Afghanistan by using all possible means, such as getting the most out of the intelligence to support the US covert action program as well as to exploit Soviet weaknesses caused by its invasion of Afghanistan, increasing international political pressure on the Soviets to withdraw their forces from Afghanistan, continuing good working relations with the supply-route country Pakistan, better management of the flow of supplies to Mujahideen forces in Afghanistan against corruption problem, supporting the development of Mujahideen-run social services within Afghanistan not only for humanitarian reasons but also for lessening refugee burden on Pakistan and maintaining civilian logistical support for Mujahideen inside Afghanistan, encouraging better political coordination among Mujahideen parties, and most importantly improving the military effectiveness of Mujahideen forces by substantially increasing its covert military aid to Mujahideen.¹⁰¹⁰ In the mid-1980s, the volume of foreign financial and military assistance to these Afghan Islamist parties in Pakistan would skyrocket to “a billion dollars a year” with the funds provided by the US-Saudi duo and with the agency of Pakistan as main delivery and distribution channel of money and arms to these groups within its borders.¹⁰¹¹

Regarding the humanitarian aid provided to the Afghan refugees in Pakistan (Pakistan refugee programme) and the Afghans in Mujahideen-controlled areas of Afghanistan (Afghanistan cross-border humanitarian programme), both of which constituted the backbone of the Mujahideen’s fight against the Soviet-backed regime in Kabul, several actors including states, government agencies, international organizations and non-governmental agencies from all over the world involved in these two humanitarian operations based on their capacities and agendas. Yet muddling of humanitarian and Cold War political agendas of some of those actors caused a big challenge for the relief efforts both in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Among those actors, Pakistan as a host country to the largest group of Afghan refugees neighboring Afghanistan and the US as a major donor country of these humanitarian operations cold-warring the Soviets became significant in leading these multinational aid efforts.

With the emergence of massive humanitarian needs due to the Afghan refugee flows into Pakistan, which increased substantially with the Taraki coup in April 1978 and exacerbated after the Soviet invasion in December 1979, Pakistan that was managing to provide

¹⁰¹⁰ White House, *National Security Decision Directive Number 166: U.S. Policy, Programs and Strategy in Afghanistan* (Washington: White House, 27 March 1985), last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsdd/nsdd-166.pdf>

¹⁰¹¹ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 236.

assistance to the Afghan refugees all alone appealed to the UN for assistance, and thereafter comprehensive emergency relief assistance programme for Afghan refugees began in the period 1979-1980 with the active involvement of the Pakistani authorities and the UN agencies, notably UNHCR together with WFP for food aid.¹⁰¹² Once the “exodus grew in 1980,” UNHCR’s budget soared from “\$55 million to \$210 million, of which almost half was for food.”¹⁰¹³ In the following years, the program’s scope and budget enlarged with a steady flow of refugees increasing from 1.4 million by 1981 to 3.5 million by 1989.¹⁰¹⁴ The annual cost of assisting the Afghan refugees in Pakistan to the international community throughout the 1980s was estimated at about \$300-\$400 million, nearly one-third of which was supplied by the U.S. alone, the largest bilateral donor, and the remaining by the multilateral donors (mainly the UN), non-governmental organizations (NGOs)¹⁰¹⁵ and other bilateral donors, notably Pakistan as the refugee hosting country, Saudi Arabia, Gulf states, Western European countries, Japan, Canada, and Australia.¹⁰¹⁶ On the same issue, Jon Bennett gives following figures based on rough estimations:

Although figures are notoriously difficult to verify, it has been estimated that assistance to refugees in Pakistan alone cost the international community an average of \$300 million annually throughout the 1980s. Of this, perhaps \$230 million was provided by bilateral donors, the UN and NGOs and \$70 by the Government of Pakistan. From their own resources NGOs contributed about \$10-15 million annually, though, like many other areas of the world, it is impossible to determine how much of this was actually spent at field level.¹⁰¹⁷

The launch of the program in the aftermath of the Soviet invasion and subsequent developments provided Pakistan a great opportunity for pursuing its own political agenda composed of “using the Afghan resistance and population to polish its own standing in the

¹⁰¹² J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 226-227; Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 109.

¹⁰¹³ Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-1983* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984), 189.

¹⁰¹⁴ Helga Baitenmann, "NGOs and The Afghan War: The Politicisation of Humanitarian Aid," *Third World Quarterly* 12, no. 1 (1990): 63.

¹⁰¹⁵ NGOs refer to national organizations (Afghan and Pakistani ones) as well as international organizations from all over the world (American, Western European, Arabic, Japanese, Australian, Canadian etc.).

¹⁰¹⁶ Helga Baitenmann, "NGOs and The Afghan War: The Politicisation of Humanitarian Aid," *Third World Quarterly* 12, no. 1 (1990): 64; Yuri V. Bossin, "The Afghan Experience with International Assistance," in *Beyond Reconstruction in Afghanistan: Lessons from Development Experience*, ed. John D. Montgomery and Dennis A. Rondinelli (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 88; Jon Bennett, "Afghanistan: Cross-Border NGO Coordination, 1985-93'," in *Meeting Needs: NGO Coordination in Practice*, ed. Jon Bennett (London: Earthscan, 1995), 5.

¹⁰¹⁷ Jon Bennett, "Afghanistan: Cross-Border NGO Coordination, 1985-93'," in *Meeting Needs: NGO Coordination in Practice*, ed. Jon Bennett (London: Earthscan, 1995), 5.

international community and, at the same time, to improve the odds of having a more benevolent government of Afghanistan in the future.”¹⁰¹⁸ By masterfully using the presence of this entire Afghan population on its territory as ‘a political asset’ in the positioning itself as the new regional bulwark against the Soviet threat in the region, replacing the US-allied Iranian monarchy that was overthrown by the Iranian Islamic revolution in 1979, Pakistan got rid of the US sanctions against itself due to its nuclear program and became the third largest recipient of US military and economic aid with more than \$7 billion in total during the 1980s, received an equal amount of aid from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states, and evaded previous international pressure in relation to its poor record on human rights and democracy, which all brought significant advantages to General Zia’s military dictatorship in domestic politics as well.¹⁰¹⁹ In order to create an Afghan government that would not pose any threat to Pakistan in the future, Pakistan started its own ‘Afghan state-building process’ from the camps. Pakistan’s policy of making membership in one of the seven recognized Mujahideen parties, which had been politically insignificant for the Afghans both in Afghanistan and Pakistan during the most of 1970s, a precondition for obtaining refugee status and thus assistance brought these Mujahideen parties international recognition as legitimate representatives of Afghan refugees and thus funding, especially to some of those best serving the Pakistani political interests aside of fighting effectively against the Soviet and Afghan forces.¹⁰²⁰

Furthermore, Pakistan also imposed the condition of channeling all UN aid through its own authorities for granting UNHCR access to its territory and thus strengthened its control over the Afghan refugees and thus Mujahideen parties as being the only intermediary between them and the international community.¹⁰²¹ Pakistan established the Chief Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees (CCAR) together with its field offices under the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON) to administer not only all humanitarian aid received through the UN but also the refugee population in most aspects from policy decision to camp

¹⁰¹⁸ Rüdiger Schöch, “Afghan Refugees in Pakistan during the 1980s: Cold War Politics and Registration Practice,” UNHCR Research Paper No. 157, June 2008, 14, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/legacy-pdf/4868daad2.pdf>

¹⁰¹⁹ Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 152-153; Ahmad Shayeq Qassem, *Afghanistan's Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 81-84.

¹⁰²⁰ Rüdiger Schöch, “Afghan Refugees in Pakistan during the 1980s: Cold War Politics and Registration Practice,” UNHCR Research Paper No. 157, June 2008, 7, 9, 14, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/legacy-pdf/4868daad2.pdf>

¹⁰²¹ *Ibid.*, 5, 8, 12, 14.

management.¹⁰²² Goodson details the external support provided to Pakistan in managing its heavy refugee protection burden as follows:

In 1987 the overall daily expenditure for the upkeep of 3 million Afghan refugees was \$1.13 million (\$367 million per year). Pakistan provided about 45 percent of this amount, the UNHCR provided 25 percent, the WFP about 25 percent, and voluntary agencies and direct bilateral assistance the rest. Pakistan assisted the early refugees unilaterally; after the Soviet intervention, the UNHCR, WFP, and other organizations began to help Pakistan cope with the deluge of refugees that followed. A division of responsibility gradually developed whereby Pakistan emphasized village administration and transport of relief goods, the WFP operated in its traditional area of food provision, and the UNHCR coordinated international aid and supervised the implementation of relief efforts.¹⁰²³

Although Pakistan's refugee registration practice was a clear violation of the UNHCR's humanitarian principles and despite the rapid politicization and militarization of the Afghan refugee population in the camps with the accommodation of Mujahideen fighters being registered as refugees in the state-run camps, the UNHCR continued its emergency humanitarian aid program due to its humanitarian duty, Pakistan's non-signatory status to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 protocol, and more importantly the US pressure in maintaining its programme in these challenging circumstances by not interfering much with Pakistan's refugee policy, which was quite important because the US was the programme's largest single and the UNHCR's most important donor.¹⁰²⁴ Accordingly, while working through the Pakistani national authorities as having no direct operational task and thus no direct responsibility for the Afghan refugees, the UNHCR coordinated international aid, supervised the implementation of the relief effort, assisted the Commissionerate both in establishing the infrastructure for the camps and supplying the humanitarian goods and services for the refugees in camps, and also supported development and income-generating projects in cooperation with the NGOs that it had contracted to undertake projects as its implementing partners in the field.¹⁰²⁵ Furthermore, since more than three million Afghan

¹⁰²² Rüdiger Schöch, "Afghan Refugees in Pakistan during the 1980s: Cold War Politics and Registration Practice," UNHCR Research Paper No. 157, June 2008, 5, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/legacy-pdf/4868daad2.pdf>; Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 109.

¹⁰²³ Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 151-152.

¹⁰²⁴ Rüdiger Schöch, "Afghan Refugees in Pakistan during the 1980s: Cold War Politics and Registration Practice," UNHCR Research Paper No. 157, June 2008, 11, 14, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/legacy-pdf/4868daad2.pdf>; Helga Baitenmann, "NGOs and The Afghan War: The Politicisation of Humanitarian Aid," *Third World Quarterly* 12, no. 1 (1990): 67-68.

¹⁰²⁵ Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 109, 127; Rüdiger Schöch, "Afghan Refugees in Pakistan during

refugees, who crossed the border into Pakistan in the early 1980s, imposed a heavy burden on Pakistan's already fragile economy, infrastructure and ecology, especially in its border settlements, the Income-Generating Project for Afghan Refugees (IGPAR), US\$86 million programme, was launched "to create a range of durable assets in refugee-hosting areas and to alleviate the poverty of both the Afghans and Pakistanis."¹⁰²⁶ IGPAR, undertaken jointly by the Pakistani government, the World Bank and UNHCR, provided more than 21 million person-days of employment between 1984 and 1994, nearly half of which benefited Afghan refugees, and completed nearly 300 separate projects in Pakistan's three border provinces, "mainly in areas such as reforestation, watershed management, irrigation, flood protection, road repair and construction."¹⁰²⁷ IGPAR's long-term objective in providing training to Afghan refugees was to donate them with "the skills and experience needed to reconstruct their own country if and when repatriation became possible."¹⁰²⁸ In addition to all these, Pakistan benefited from the UNHCR's presence by using it as a shield against accusations of its state-run refugee camps turning into main source of the Mujahideen's military activities.¹⁰²⁹

Similar to Pakistan, the US involvement in Afghan refugee relief efforts in Pakistan, which was administered by the Department of State (DOS), was not only on humanitarian grounds but also on political grounds. The US geopolitical interest of strengthening its position in the region vis-à-vis the Soviets through easing political and economic pressure on its regional ally Pakistan and helping the maintenance of a support structure for the Mujahideen played a significant role in its aid policy towards the Pakistan refugee programme.¹⁰³⁰ The US channeled its humanitarian assistance to the Afghan refugees in Pakistan through grants to

the 1980s: Cold War Politics and Registration Practice," UNHCR Research Paper No. 157, June 2008, 5, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/legacy-pdf/4868daad2.pdf>; Helga Baitenmann, "NGOs and The Afghan War: The Politicisation of Humanitarian Aid," *Third World Quarterly* 12, no. 1 (1990): 64, 67.

¹⁰²⁶ Jeff Crisp, "Mind the Gap! - UNHCR, Humanitarian Assistance and the Development Process," UNHCR Working Paper No. 43, May 2001, 3, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/legacy-pdf/3b309dd07.pdf>.

¹⁰²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰²⁹ Rüdiger Schöch, "Afghan Refugees in Pakistan during the 1980s: Cold War Politics and Registration Practice," UNHCR Research Paper No. 157, June 2008, 13, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/legacy-pdf/4868daad2.pdf>

¹⁰³⁰ Steve Galster, "Afghanistan: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1973-1990," in *Volume II: Afghanistan: Lessons from the Last War*, ed. John Prados and Svetlana Savranskaya, National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 57, George Washington University, October 09, 2001, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB57/essay.html#18>

the UN agencies, notably the UNHCR, as well as to its favored NGOs such as the Cooperative for American Relief Everywhere (CARE), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Church World Services (CWS), and International Rescue Committee (IRC), and urged its allies to address their contributions to the same addresses not only for economic reasons but also for political concerns related to the possible negative consequences of high visibility of the US funding, such as damaging the credibility of Mujahideen as an indigenous movement and the impartiality of its favored NGOs.¹⁰³¹ Goodson provides the following information on the US aid efforts for Afghan refugees in Pakistan:

Although a surface examination of the relief effort emphasizes its multilateral characteristics, the United States provided a substantial portion of the funding, for it saw the Afghan crisis of the early 1980s as a golden opportunity to sting the Soviet Union at little cost to itself. Thus, the US provided the largest share of humanitarian assistance to maintain the refugees, who were critical to the refugee-based insurgency strategy. For example, by 1982 the US was providing 30 percent of the UNHCR budget, 40 percent of the WFP budget, and 33 percent of the NGO budgets. Frequent shortfalls were met by emergency pledges of food aid from the US. From 1980 through 1987, US contributions to Afghan relief totaled \$534.8 million. Beginning in 1985 the US began to provide limited humanitarian aid directly to Afghanistan through the resistance parties. Administered by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the US Information Agency (USIA), programs to provide aid in transportation, medicine, education, food, and agriculture were begun, as well as a media training program in 1987. Overall during the 1980s, when military and economic assistance are included, Pakistan became the third largest recipient of US assistance (after Israel and Egypt), receiving more than \$7.2 billion during the decade.¹⁰³²

As a major donor, the US also exerted strong influence over the refugee situation in Pakistan by using its funding power over the UN agencies and NGOs, as summarized here below:

As in other Third World countries, US government involvement has not been limited to funding NGOs, but has also included advising them on their programmes; serving as an intermediary between the NGOs and Pakistan; encouraging certain NGOs to ask for US government funds; and monitoring those receiving US government grants. Many NGOs, in turn, have coordinated their efforts with US government policy...When Pakistan decided in the early 1980s that only the UNHCR and the ICRC could be funded by US-owned rupees, the US embassy in Islamabad stated

¹⁰³¹ Yuri V. Bossin, "The Afghan Experience with International Assistance," in *Beyond Reconstruction in Afghanistan: Lessons from Development Experience*, ed. John D. Montgomery and Dennis A. Rondinelli (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 88; Steve Galster, "Afghanistan: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1973-1990," in *Volume II: Afghanistan: Lessons from the Last War*, ed. John Prados and Svetlana Savranskaya, National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 57, George Washington University, October 09, 2001, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB57/essay.html#18>; Helga Baitenmann, "NGOs and The Afghan War: The Politicisation of Humanitarian Aid," *Third World Quarterly* 12, no. 1 (1990): 69.

¹⁰³² Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 152-153.

that this qualification 'obviously limits our ability to support Volag [NGO] projects in Pakistan'. To maintain its influence, the US embassy suggested bringing CWS (Church World Services) and IRC (International Rescue Committee) activities under the umbrella of the UNHCR. When the US mission in Geneva asked for UNHCR cooperation, the UNHCR agreed to act as a conduit, as long as it was not held accountable, since the 'health programs and overall objectives would be seriously impaired if outside funding of Volags were to cease'... The US government has had ties to all major NGOs. An example of what these ties entailed is provided by the Inter-Aid Committee (IAC), a relief agency sponsored by the CWS and CRS, but considered a Pakistani organisation by the UN and Pakistan, While the IAC has received funding from forty churches and NGOs, it has ultimately been tied to US government interests. Since it was considered in 1980 to be the most 'successful' NGO involved in refugee assistance by the US embassy in Islamabad, the embassy has tried to 'steer' donors to the IAC, while the two main NGOs behind it—the CRS and the CWS—have also received US government funds for activities in Pakistan.¹⁰³³

Concerning the US-led assistance provided to the Afghan population in the Mujahideen-controlled areas of Afghanistan, during the first half of the 1980s, a small number of international and Afghan NGOs in Pakistan was brought into play to conduct clandestine cross-border assistance operations because the international organizations like UN and ICRC were constrained by sovereignty issues from providing aid to those areas and the established international NGOs were largely reluctant to engage themselves in such illegal operations with high security risks.¹⁰³⁴ Among the NGOs operationally involved in cross-border activities, there were 1) specialist medical French NGOs conducting projects in other war zones such as the Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) that became the first ones operating cross-border programmes in Afghanistan; 2) solidarity and advocacy NGOs that constituted the majority of those early cross-border NGOs and were established specifically for the Afghan relief operation, mainly in Europe but also in the US and the Muslim World, after the Soviet invasion in 1979 such as the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) and 3) Afghan NGOs such as the Society of Afghan Doctors (SAD).¹⁰³⁵ The main beneficiaries of the assistance provided by these cross-border NGOs are not only Afghan civilians but also

¹⁰³³ Helga Baitenmann, "NGOs and The Afghan War: The Politicisation of Humanitarian Aid," *Third World Quarterly* 12, no. 1 (1990): 69.

¹⁰³⁴ Jonathan Goodhand, "Aiding Violence or Building Peace? The Role of International Aid in Afghanistan," *Third World Quarterly* 23, no. 5 (2002): 842; Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 130; Nigel Nicholds and John Borton, "The Changing Role of NGOs in the Provision of Relief and Rehabilitation Assistance: Case Study 1- Afghanistan/Pakistan," Working Paper No. 74, London: Overseas Development Institute – ODI, January 1994, 55.

¹⁰³⁵ Nigel Nicholds and John Borton, "The Changing Role of NGOs in the Provision of Relief and Rehabilitation Assistance: Case Study 1- Afghanistan/Pakistan," Working Paper No. 74, London: Overseas Development Institute – ODI, January 1994, 49, 55; Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 127.

Afghan combatants living within Afghanistan.¹⁰³⁶ Their main objective was to support the Afghans both in their resistance against the Soviet forces and Kabul regime as well as in their survival strategy that would prevent further displacements.¹⁰³⁷ These cross-border NGOs provided primarily emergency medical assistance to those affected by the war including injured Mujahideen and cash-for-food assistance to Afghans including Mujahideen commanders but also some small scale rehabilitation and reconstruction assistance.¹⁰³⁸ Despite the very limited information available for that period due to the fact that “[t]here was considerable secrecy as to the involvement of bilateral donors and NGOs were seen as convenient middlemen, obscuring the original source of funding,”¹⁰³⁹ the cost of the early cross-border operations was estimated to be something between \$5 million and \$10 million.¹⁰⁴⁰ The scale of assistance provided by these cross-border NGOs remained relatively modest until the mid-1980s.¹⁰⁴¹ The main recipient of this very limited cross-border humanitarian assistance was Eastern Afghanistan due to the close proximity to Peshawar in where most of the aid agencies and the Mujahideen parties were based.¹⁰⁴²

Following the approval of NSDD 166 of March 1985, the U.S. launched its Cross-border Humanitarian Assistance Programme (CBHAP) in 1985, providing extensive funding to the NGOs involved in cross-border projects and also supplied Stingers to Mujahideen forces in 1986 making some parts of Afghanistan safe enough for many other NGOs to start projects

¹⁰³⁶ Helga Baitenmann, "NGOs and The Afghan War: The Politicisation of Humanitarian Aid," *Third World Quarterly* 12, no. 1 (1990): 71.

¹⁰³⁷ Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 127; Helga Baitenmann, "NGOs and The Afghan War: The Politicisation of Humanitarian Aid," *Third World Quarterly* 12, no. 1 (1990): 71.

¹⁰³⁸ Nigel Nicholds and John Borton, "The Changing Role of NGOs in the Provision of Relief and Rehabilitation Assistance: Case Study 1- Afghanistan/Pakistan," Working Paper No. 74, London: Overseas Development Institute – ODI, January 1994, 51, 53; Helga Baitenmann, "NGOs and The Afghan War: The Politicisation of Humanitarian Aid," *Third World Quarterly* 12, no. 1 (1990): 71.

¹⁰³⁹ Jonathan Goodhand, "Aiding Violence or Building Peace? The Role of International Aid in Afghanistan," *Third World Quarterly* 23, no. 5 (2002): 842.

¹⁰⁴⁰ Nigel Nicholds and John Borton, "The Changing Role of NGOs in the Provision of Relief and Rehabilitation Assistance: Case Study 1- Afghanistan/Pakistan," Working Paper No. 74, London: Overseas Development Institute – ODI, January 1994, 49.

¹⁰⁴¹ Nigel Nicholds and John Borton, "The Changing Role of NGOs in the Provision of Relief and Rehabilitation Assistance: Case Study 1- Afghanistan/Pakistan," Working Paper No. 74, London: Overseas Development Institute – ODI, January 1994, 48; Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 128.

¹⁰⁴² Jonathan Goodhand, "Aiding Violence or Building Peace? The Role of International Aid in Afghanistan," *Third World Quarterly* 23, no. 5 (2002): 842.

there.¹⁰⁴³ Unlike Afghan refugee relief program that was managed by the US Department of State, the CBHA was to be administered by USAID. The US developed this program in response to the Soviet depopulation campaign in rural areas of Afghanistan with the aim of providing those inside Afghanistan with the necessary means to survive there, which would avoid further refugee flows to Pakistan but also give the Mujahideen field forces inside Afghanistan the needed material and moral support.¹⁰⁴⁴ An American advisor put this fact less diplomatically with the following words: “We've taken a lesson from Mao. The Soviets are trying to kill the fish [rebels] by draining the sea, and we're trying to keep the sea full.”¹⁰⁴⁵ Later in 1986, with the decision of channeling most of its cross-border humanitarian aid through the Mujahiddeen parties also known as the seven-party alliance that established the Afghan Interim Government (AIG), the US also aimed to increase unity among those parties as well as to make them develop capacity to perform civil governmental functions.¹⁰⁴⁶ Baitenmann specified that, “Reagan administration officials openly stated that the aid was meant to reinforce the Alliance's unity,” and USAID officials elaborated further with stating that “humanitarian assistance to the civilian population enabled them to continue to live inside their own country and support the resistance fighters, and that it enabled the Alliance to provide humanitarian services and commodities, with the ultimate aim of developing an institutional capacity to perform the civil functions of government.”¹⁰⁴⁷

Asger Christensen mentioning that the US established a separate USAID programme unit for the management of the CBHA provides the following information on the programme's budget and its three-tiered components:

This became by far the largest cross-border operation providing around 250 million dollars worth of aid between 1985 and 1989... From 1989 to 1993 the yearly funding of cross-border assistance was between 60 and 100 million dollars. The US assistance comprised three components. One was donations of wheat to resistance-

¹⁰⁴³ Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 128-129; Helga Baitenmann, "NGOs and The Afghan War: The Politicisation of Humanitarian Aid," *Third World Quarterly* 12, no. 1 (1990): 71.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Steve Galster, “Afghanistan: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1973-1990,” in *Volume II: Afghanistan: Lessons from the Last War*, ed. John Prados and Svetlana Savranskaya, National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 57, George Washington University, October 09, 2001, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB57/essay.html#18>

¹⁰⁴⁵ Helga Baitenmann, "NGOs and The Afghan War: The Politicisation of Humanitarian Aid," *Third World Quarterly* 12, no. 1 (1990): 74.

¹⁰⁴⁶ Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 129.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Helga Baitenmann, "NGOs and The Afghan War: The Politicisation of Humanitarian Aid," *Third World Quarterly* 12, no. 1 (1990): 76.

controlled areas. Another consisted of transport of humanitarian supplies – such as medicines donated by either the US government or American NGOs from the USA to Pakistan – and of Afghan war wounded from Pakistan to hospitals in the USA, Europe and the Middle East for free medical treatment. The third component was assistance for cross-border projects implemented either by NGOs or for the most part through the seven-party Alliance... The American assistance comprised food, commodities and cash, as well as funding for educational materials and services, basic health services, agricultural rehabilitation and inputs, and repair of the road system...¹⁰⁴⁸

Elaborating on the components of the USAID-managed CBHA, Baitenmann stated that the donations of wheat were sent across the border into resistance-controlled areas of Afghanistan within the framework of the newly launched 'PL-480 Title II Assistance' in 1986; the humanitarian supplies were provided by the US Department of Defence (DOD) Humanitarian Relief Program and thus delivered in cooperation with the DOD underlining that these supplies were indeed "excess DOD stock such as food and medicines" and "humanitarian goods" donated by the American NGOs, the transportation of the wounded Afghans to hospitals abroad was conducted with the help of several NGOs, the Humanitarian Assistance Program that was "initiated with \$8 million in 1985 and channeled through NGOs" reached "\$45 million in fiscal year 1988" with the US decision of including the Alliance into the picture as an additional channel in charge of channeling the great majority of the funds, "despite the NGOs' superior capacity to channel the aid more quickly and effectively", with an expected further increase to "\$68 million in fiscal year 1989."¹⁰⁴⁹ The funding that were provided for the Alliance in this program were "earmarked for health, education, commodities, agriculture and technical assistance."¹⁰⁵⁰ Furthermore, going beyond its usual mandate, "USAID's Office for Disaster Assistance (OFDA)" launched a separate program for Afghanistan to deliver both medical aid and cash-for-food through cross-border NGOs.¹⁰⁵¹ All throughout this process, the US predominantly engaged European NGOs instead of American ones. Baitenmann attributes this choice to the relatively small number of US NGOs involved in cross-border operations and the considerable dependence of many European NGOs on US funding, and adds that as these European NGOs cannot accept US funds directly due to the US government's explicit policy of strengthening

¹⁰⁴⁸ Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 129.

¹⁰⁴⁹ Helga Baitenmann, "NGOs and The Afghan War: The Politicisation of Humanitarian Aid," *Third World Quarterly* 12, no. 1 (1990): 75-76.

¹⁰⁵⁰ *Ibid.* 76.

¹⁰⁵¹ *Ibid.*

the Alliance, USAID utilized the International Rescue Committee (IRC) “as an intermediary.”¹⁰⁵²

During the four years period of 1989-1992, the yearly funding of the CBHAP was between 60 and 100 million dollars.¹⁰⁵³ However, the CBHAP brought so many critiques along with. The first one was its contribution to the political instrumentalization of NGOs during the Afghan war, as detailed here below:

Much of the US aid has been an extension of the war effort, and NGOs have been used as the instruments of this policy. When the USA has wanted to strengthen certain commanders, it has done so through NGOs. Afghanaid is a good illustration: it receives 65-70 per cent of its annual budget from US government sources, including DOS funds specifically for aid to the Panjshir Valley where the militarily effective forces of Commander Massoud operate. In addition a US contractor, Volunteers in Technical Assistance (VITA), has helped Afghanaid to develop strategy options for deploying resources inside and to conduct a survey of the Panjshir in collaboration with the Swedish Committee.¹⁰⁵⁴

The second critique was that the US injecting enormous amount of aid money into the region with no monitoring mechanism did more harm than good by instigating corruption and failing to deliver aid to those in need. Harrison provides further details on this issue below:

Peter Rees, director of Britain's Afghan Aid—one of some fifty-eight private voluntary organizations carrying on cross-border aid from Pakistan—said that “the U.S. aid package is putting a lot of money into the political arena and away from direct humanitarian aid.” The most pervasive criticism of U.S. cross-border aid was that its multi-tiered distribution network invited corruption. Aid officials were unable to monitor what happened to their money and supplies, it was argued, and the problem was aggravated by the existence of a network of middlemen. One official of a private voluntary organization pointed out that AID relied on distribution receipts provided by the seven parties, “and the Americans don't know where these receipts come from.” A U.S. official privately told journalist Edward Girardet that only 15 to 25 percent of the cross-border aid actually reached the interior. The rest, he said, was skimmed off by Afghan and Pakistani middlemen.¹⁰⁵⁵

The third critique was that the cross-border assistance provided to Afghanistan until 1989 brought further fragmentation to the country and its people, as explained here below:

¹⁰⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵³ Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 129.

¹⁰⁵⁴ Helga Baitenmann, “NGOs and The Afghan War: The Politicisation of Humanitarian Aid,” *Third World Quarterly* 12, no. 1 (1990): 76.

¹⁰⁵⁵ Selig S. Harrison, ““Bleeders,” “Dealers,” and Perestroika,” in *Out of Afghanistan: The Inside Story of the Soviet Withdrawal*, ed. Diego Cordovez and Selig S. Harrison (New York, USA: Oxford University Press, 1995), 206.

The 'first generation' of aid programming in Afghanistan consisted primarily of humanitarian relief, much of it in the form of food aid. While aid mitigated humanitarian distress it also inadvertently (and in some cases consciously) followed the political, economic and social fault lines of the conflict...

Politically motivated opposing flows of aid accentuated the bifurcation of Afghan society and strengthened unaccountable elites. Western aid was part of a conscious strategy to undermine the communist government. By avoiding official structures and working with commanders at the local level, NGOs inevitably accentuated national-regional tensions and legitimised military strongmen. Access depended on accepting the legitimacy and control of Mujaheddin groups in rural areas. The pattern of distribution reflected political ties and proximity rather than absolute humanitarian need. Consequently urban populations controlled by the government and populations in the central highlands were largely bypassed in favour of populations in the east.

Systematic patterns of aid manipulation developed, particularly with regard to food aid, which was easier to monetise. The relationships forged between aid agencies and commanders were prone to corruption and political favouritism. Liberal distributions of US wheat were made to resistance commanders, and aid convoys were taxed by various armed groups at check-posts. Some donors were reported to have accepted 'wastage levels' of up to 40% on cross-border programmes. The aid and arms pipelines provided the capital, which subsequently led to the expansion of smuggling and other businesses. Humanitarian assistance, it has been argued also led to a 'culture of dependency' in both urban and rural populations as food production in Afghanistan fell by half to two-thirds.¹⁰⁵⁶

Another critique on the US aid was that when the Peshawar-based Mujahideen parties disapproved the Pakistani CAR-managed schools with regular curricula, which were established in the early 1980s with the funding of several donors including the US, Germany, Netherlands, Canada and UNHCR in order to provide basic education for Afghan refugee children in the camps, and alternatively founded their own religious schools, also known as madrassas, with the funding of some external supporters; the US, seeing the potential benefit of supporting the latter option in its proxy war against the Soviets in Afghanistan, began to sponsor the Mujahideen's Islamic education model as of 1986 for the Afghans not only in Pakistan but also in the Mujahideen-controlled areas of Afghanistan through the USAID's comprehensive Education Sector Support Project (ESSP), in which the USAID-contracted Education Program for Afghanistan at the University of Nebraska at (UNO) financed a series of pro-Mujahideen and anti-Soviet primary education textbooks fostering violence, militancy and religious extremism that were prepared and distributed by the ESSP-created but Mujahideen-operated Education Center for Afghanistan (ECA) in addition to its other activities such as the distribution of mine awareness materials; the literacy training to Mujahideen in the refugee camps and the training of future teachers of primary schools in

¹⁰⁵⁶ Jonathan Goodhand, "Aiding Violence or Building Peace? The Role of International Aid in Afghanistan," *Third World Quarterly* 23, no. 5 (2002): 842-843.

Afghanistan.¹⁰⁵⁷ From 1986 to 1992, “the distribution of 9 million textbooks for primary schools, of which 6 million were to the refugee camps and 3 million within Afghanistan” was completed.¹⁰⁵⁸ Craig Davis evaluates these education textbooks as an effort both “to counterbalance the Marxist ideology of the communist series” that had been developed during the Afghan communist governments namely from Taraki’s 1978 Government until the end of Najibullah’s in 1992, and “to indoctrinate young Afghan children in Islamic militancy,” by giving the following samples from the textbooks:

Thus, this subtraction problem, from a third-grade mathematics textbook: “One group of mujahidin attack 50 Russian soldiers. In that attack 20 Russians were killed. How many Russians fled?”

A fourth-grade mathematics textbook poses the following problem: “The speed of a Kalashnikov bullet is 800 meters per second. If a Russian is at a distance of 3,200 meters from a mujahid, and that mujahid aims at the Russian’s head, calculate how many seconds it will take for the bullet to strike the Russian in the forehead.”¹⁰⁵⁹

Dana Burde provides the following analysis on the first versions of the UNO textbooks that had been published with the US grants during the period of 1986-1992:

Although the conflict with the Soviets was already underway when these textbooks were created, the US intervention supported and reinforced it by instilling norms of violence and solidifying the links between violence and religious obligation or jihad. In addition, these textbooks contributed to the radicalization of young Afghans in a way that fueled later violence during the civil war of the 1990s and the insurgency of the early 2000s.¹⁰⁶⁰

This history demonstrates that simply including education in international aid interventions is insufficient to create peace- the content of the intervention must also support this goal.¹⁰⁶¹

This US-funded controversial education project would continue until mid-1994, though the books were revised by eliminating some violence-related passages and images in the 1991-1992 period.¹⁰⁶²

¹⁰⁵⁷ Dana Burde, *Schools for Conflict or for Peace in Afghanistan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 72-81. For detailed analysis of the UNO textbooks, please see Craig Davis, "'A' Is for Allah, 'J' Is for Jihad," *World Policy Journal* 19, no. 1 (Spring, 2002): 90-94.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Nigel Nicholds and John Borton, “The Changing Role of NGOs in the Provision of Relief and Rehabilitation Assistance: Case Study 1- Afghanistan/Pakistan,” Working Paper No. 74, London: Overseas Development Institute – ODI, January 1994, 79.

¹⁰⁵⁹ Craig Davis, "'A' Is for Allah, 'J' Is for Jihad," *World Policy Journal* 19, no. 1 (Spring, 2002), 92-93.

¹⁰⁶⁰ Dana Burde, *Schools for Conflict or for Peace in Afghanistan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 81.

¹⁰⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 84-85

¹⁰⁶² Dana Burde, *Schools for Conflict or for Peace in Afghanistan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 72-82; Craig Davis, "'A' Is for Allah, 'J' Is for Jihad," *World Policy Journal* 19, no. 1 (Spring, 2002), 93.

5.6. Conclusion

In the overall assessment of humanitarian and development aid to Afghanistan during this period, two important points need to be underscored. First, international humanitarian and development assistance provided to Afghans after the Soviet invasion between the 1980s and early 1990s was “politically partisan” as many NGOs (the US’s Volag project) worked directly with the Mujahideen groups and the UNHCR continued its emergency humanitarian aid program for Afghan refugees in Pakistan, despite Pakistan’s refugee registration practice being a clear violation of the UNHCR’s humanitarian principles with Pakistan’s making membership in one of the seven recognized Mujahideen parties a precondition for obtaining refugee status and thus humanitarian aid, mainly because of the pressure of the US, then the UNHCR’s most important and the program’s largest single donor, in maintaining the program by not interfering much with Pakistan’s refugee policy. This, along with other factors related to Pakistan’s refugee policy, provided these Mujahideen parties international recognition as the legitimate representative of Afghan refugees and thus funding, though these parties had been politically insignificant for Afghans during the most of 1970s, and also allowed the rapid politicization and militarization of the Afghan refugee population in the camps. The most important points to be underlined from this period are that first although the Afghan people have always been conservative, they had not been interested in the calls and actions Islamist groups in the 1970s, which later became Mujahiddin parties in the 1980s. The real radicalization of the Afghan society started in the Afghan refugee camps, which also triggered radicalization in Pakistan, and one of the factors was the politicized aid distribution. This also shows that the impact of donors on aid agencies. As last, due to the American-led volag project, aid workers in Afghanistan later became the target of attacks as Afghans learnt the rules of the game, even the female ones that had been untouchable in earlier decades.

The second point, the Soviet initial plan of restoration of order under a newly installed pro-Soviet government under Babrak Karmal and the subsequent withdrawal of troops within a short period of time following the 1979 invasion turned into a long-term Soviet engagement in the early-to-mid-1980s due to the almost total collapse of the Afghan state machinery by the previous Khalqi government, the widespread display of Afghan hostility in major cities against the Soviet-installed Karmal regime, and the ongoing factional feud between the *Parchamis* and *Khalqis*, but once this engagement became too costly for the Soviets in all aspects, then they decided to withdraw their troops from Afghanistan, marking the end of a decade-long conflict that had profound political, economic, social and humanitarian

consequences for Afghanistan and the wider region. During their long-term engagement in Afghanistan as part of reconstruction or statebuilding process, the Soviets continued to focus on their pre-invasion development priorities but adjusted their aid strategy to the rapidly worsening conflict situation all over the country, specifically in the countryside such as limiting the geographic scope of their development projects to the relatively safe government-controlled areas between Kabul and the Soviet border and developing more targeted transportation, communications, and energy infrastructure projects that would help ensure the survival and stability of the Soviet-installed Kabul regime. The Soviets also provided massive humanitarian aid to the Afghans in the government-controlled areas. Apart from that, the flow of Soviet-Afghan (barter) trade helped reduce the heavy economic cost of their involvement in Afghanistan.

CHAPTER 6

AID TO AFGHANISTAN AMID ITS TURBULENT POST-COLD WAR TRANSFORMATION

6.1. Introduction

This chapter explores the changes in aiding to Afghanistan in the period 1989-2001. The initial part of this chapter examines aid-related developments during President Najibullah's three years following the withdrawal of Soviet troops in 1989. It studies the struggle between the Najibullah regime, which strengthened its powerbase and maintained its survival by skillfully utilizing the ongoing Soviet aid to execute its Machiavellian tactics, and the Mujahideen groups, once favored by US-led foreign backers. These groups initially received increased aid to deliver the final blow to the Najibullah regime after the Soviet withdrawal but gradually lost this support due to various factors.

The second part focuses on the Mujahiddin infighting years, during which the disappearance of the Soviets from the history resulted in the fall of Kabul to Mujahideen forces. These forces were in violent disagreement over who should rule the country, and the disengagement of the Americans following the Soviet collapse without brokering a settlement between Mujahideen groups, left a vacuum that regional actors filled. This situation led to a general decline in aid and donor interest in the country, contributing to the prolongation of the civil war.

The third part scrutinizes international aid efforts during the Taliban's transformation from a perceived stabilizing force amidst post-Soviet chaos following its emergence in 1994 to a controversial entity for the international community due to its associations with international terrorist groups and human rights violations stemming from strict Sharia enforcement.

The deteriorating relations between the Taliban and the international aid community had a profound impact on aid efforts in Afghanistan, presenting complex dilemmas for the latter to navigate.

6.2. President Najibullah's Post-Soviet Afghan Government: Changing Dynamics of Aid in a Fragmenting State

Once the Soviets troops departed completely, the war entered into Afghanization process by transforming itself into a full-scale civil war but the warring parties continued to be funded by the superpowers. After the withdrawal of their troops in February 1989, the Soviets decreased the amount of aid that they had previously given to Afghanistan, but since they were determined to support the survival of Najibullah regime in the post-withdrawal period, they continued to supply Kabul regime with all sorts of aid including food, fuel, cash and arms, which was estimated by the Western sources at the value of \$250-300 million per month and of \$3-4 billion per year, until the end of 1991.¹⁰⁶³ Despite having lost a great deal of interest in Afghanistan after the Soviet withdrawal and expecting the fall of the Kabul regime to Mujahideen soon after the Soviet withdrawal like so many others, Washington, which had provided \$3 billion in economic, humanitarian and covert military assistance to Afghans from 1980 until the end of Soviet invasion in February 1989, continued its humanitarian assistance to Afghans valued at \$150 million in cooperation with Pakistan and Mujahideen as well as its military assistance to Mujahideen through Pakistan in the amount of \$700 million for the year 1989 in addition to \$600 million of the Saudis in 1989, for the purpose of matching the Soviet aid provided to Kabul regime (positive symmetry), balancing Iran that made a strong comeback to the Afghan political scene with the end of its war with Iraq, and promoting cohesion among the US-friendly Mujahideen groups to take over the government after the expected collapse.¹⁰⁶⁴

Contrary to widespread expectations, Najibullah government did not fall immediately, mainly because of the failure of ill-conceived strategy of the relevant American and Pakistani authorities vis-à-vis the Najibullah regime using the continuing aid from the Soviets. The American and Pakistani joint strategy for the post-Soviet-withdrawal Afghanistan, which relied on the formation of an Afghanistan Interim Government (AIG)

¹⁰⁶³ Barnett R. Rubin, *Afghanistan from the Cold War through the War on Terror* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 54, 56; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 147, 149.

¹⁰⁶⁴ Elaine Sciolino, "U.S. To Keep Up Aid to Afghan Rebels," *The New York Times*, February 25, 1989, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://www.nytimes.com/1989/02/26/world/us-to-keep-up-aid-to-afghan-rebels.html>; Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 138; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 182; White House, *National Security Directive 3: U.S. Policy Toward Afghanistan* (Washington: White House, 13 February 1989), last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsd/nsd3.pdf>; Kenneth Katzman, "Afghanistan: Issues and Policies," in *Afghanistan: History, Issues, Bibliography*, ed. Cary Gladstone (Huntington, New York: Novinka Books, 2001), 14.

consisting of only Peshawar-based Sunni Mujahideen groups, mostly Ghilzai Pashtuns, in February 1989 and then putting the AIG in power by launching a Mujahideen military offensive against Kabul regime in Jalalabad in March 1989 in order to hasten its collapse became a huge failure in the end for both Mujahideen and its foreign sponsors.¹⁰⁶⁵ This was mainly because of the following reasons: 1) the strategy overlooked the inter/intra ethnic, sectarian and political dynamics inside the country as well as within Mujahideen itself by excluding Shia Mujahideen groups that formed the Unity Party (*Hizb-i-Wahdat*) with the efforts of Iran later in June 1990 and some of the influential Mujahideen field commanders from the political equilibrium, and making Dari-speaking northern groups and Durrani Pashtuns underrepresented in the AIG, 2) the strategy overestimated the Mujahideen's power vis-à-vis the Kabul regime and ignored the warnings of the majority of Mujahideen field commanders who opposed to the strategy from the beginning by addressing their inexperience for traditional warfare in these conditions.¹⁰⁶⁶ When Najibullah forces heavily defeated the Mujahideen without Soviet troops in May 1989, Najibullah strengthened and even enlarged his powerbase.¹⁰⁶⁷ However, Mujahideen, whose credibility was severely weakened with the failure at Jalalabad, began to simmer with the personal and ethnic rivalries, which resurfaced with the Soviet departure, escalated after the failed Jalalabad offensive and turned into "a major feud" between Rabbani-and-Massoud's Jamiat-i-Islami and Hikmetyar's Hezb-i-Islami with the murder of thirty commanders of Massoud's Supervisory Council of the North (Shura-i Nazar-i Shamali) by one of Hikmetyar's commanders in July 1989 (Farkhar massacre), and Pakistan-backed Hikmetyar withdrew from the AIG upon strong reactions in the autumn of 1989.¹⁰⁶⁸ Having considered all these negative developments within Afghanistan, the steady improvement in the Soviet-American relations especially after fall of communism in Eastern Europe in June-November 1989 that made the Soviets no more a significant threat for the US and thus Afghanistan no more a key East-West issue, and growing skepticism and criticism in Washington towards the efficiency of the past military aid extended to Mujahideen not only because of its failure against Kabul regime but also the explicit anti-Americanism of the Mujahideen's radical extremist groups

¹⁰⁶⁵ Olivier Roy, *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 211.

¹⁰⁶⁶ Olivier Roy, *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 211-212; Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 144; Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 322-323.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 241.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 241-242; William Maley, *The Afghanistan Wars* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 176-177.

headed by Hikmetyar and Sayyaf to which Pakistan had funneled the great majority of military aid; the Americans launched diplomatic talks with the Soviets on a UN-sponsored political settlement in Afghanistan that would exclude the extremists of each side including Najibullah, Hikmetyar and Sayyaf, while continuing their military assistance to Mujahideen in 1990 but by significantly decreasing its amount and limiting the recipients with Mujahideen's non-extremist groups, though Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and other Arab countries went on pouring money to those extremist groups.¹⁰⁶⁹ However, neither the military offensives of different Mujahideen groups during 1989-1990 nor the US-Soviet dialogue could bring any substantial result.

Furthermore, Hikmetyar's alliance with Kabul regime's radical *Khalqi* army chief and defence minister General Shah Nawaz Tanai, also a Ghilzai Pashtun, who defected to Pakistan following his failed coup attempt against Najibullah in March 1990, damaged the spirit of jihad that was gradually weakening since the Soviet withdrawal and more importantly worsened dissention among the Mujahideen.¹⁰⁷⁰ Upon this, Mujahideen's major field commanders in Afghanistan organized a National Commanders Shura (NCS), held meetings in the second half of 1990 not only for coordinating military strategy but also for taking the initiative from Mujahideen's discredited, inefficient and foreign-influenced leaders based in Pakistan such as Hikmetyar and Sayyaf, who had ordered their commanders to boycott the NCS, and approved the plan to capture the regime's provincial outposts to set up regional administrations in nine zones, instead of making direct attacks on Kabul.¹⁰⁷¹

Meanwhile, a significant change occurred in the US policy on Afghanistan. In addition to several factors waning the support within the US government for the Mujahideen such as recession at home, decline of the Cold War, rise of opium production in some Mujahideen-controlled areas, military stalemate in Afghanistan, and a change in American foreign policy priorities with the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq in August 1990; the alignment of some Mujahideen leaders such as Hikmetyar, Sayyaf and Rabbani with Saddam Hussein during

¹⁰⁶⁹ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 182, 251; William Maley, *The Afghanistan Wars* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 179; Minton F. Goldman, "President Bush and Afghanistan: A Turning Point in American Policy," *Comparative Strategy* 11, no. 2 (1992): 177.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 243; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 182-183.

¹⁰⁷¹ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 182, 254.

the Gulf War became the final straw¹⁰⁷² and the US together with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait stopped all the military and other support going to these groups, most of which had been going to the ISI's favorite Hikmetyar and Wahhabi units, and instead the US increased its aid to Mujahideen field commander Massoud until the U.S.-Soviet agreement on the termination of all military aid to the Afghan combatants at the end of 1991.¹⁰⁷³ However, this would not put the extremist groups like Hikmetyar's Hezb into a difficult situation because of the opium revenues, which increased with the revival of trade and agriculture in the countryside after the Soviet withdrawal, as well as the aid still coming from private sources in the Arab Gulf countries, aside of continuing Pakistani assistance.¹⁰⁷⁴ This situation had some serious results as in the following way: "As the Islamist fighters with foreign funding—and opium revenues—became even more autonomous from the local society, various forms of imported radical fundamentalism also grew, especially among eastern mountain Pashtuns. For the first time, large numbers of Arab radical Islamist "mujahidin" entered the eastern provinces, strengthening nationalist resentments and extremist tendencies."¹⁰⁷⁵

Despite all these material and financial supply worth of millions of dollars per year, Mujahideen forces failed short of toppling Najibullah regime. This failure was not only related to the escalating dissension among Mujahideen groups but also to the smart steps taken by President Najibullah in order to provide his regime's survival. Rubin states, "As the direct Soviet presence diminished, political and economic means by which the state could pacify and control the people grew in importance, and military means diminished."¹⁰⁷⁶ Therefore, President Najibullah, after gaining a significant victory against the Mujahideen in Jalalabad, employed following Machiavellian tactics by greatly benefiting from the Soviet aid (food, fuel, money and arms) for the maintenance of his regime's survival; ending

¹⁰⁷² Unlike these three pro-Saddam Mujahideen parties, around 300 Afghan fighters from the Mujahideen parties of Khalis, Mojaddedi and Gailani joined the US-led coalition in Saudi Arabia. Peter Tomsen, *The Wars of Afghanistan: Messianic Terrorism, Tribal Conflicts, and the Failures of Great Powers* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2011), eBook, 658.

¹⁰⁷³ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 182-183; Richard Weitz, "Moscow's Endgame in Afghanistan," *Conflict Quarterly* XII, no. 1 (Winter 1992): 29; Peter Tomsen, *The Wars of Afghanistan: Messianic Terrorism, Tribal Conflicts, and the Failures of Great Powers* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2011), eBook, 657-658; Elaine Sciolino, "U.S., Deeming Policy Outmoded, May Cut Off Aid to Afghan Rebels," *The New York Times*, May 12, 1991, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://www.nytimes.com/1991/05/12/world/us-deeming-policy-outmoded-may-cut-off-aid-to-afghan-rebels.html>

¹⁰⁷⁴ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 183.

¹⁰⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷⁶ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 147.

communist state building programs in urban areas and counterinsurgency in rural areas, purchasing either loyalties or neutralities of local Mujahideen and/or qawm-based militia leaders by giving incentives such as complete authority in their areas aside of money and weapons, adopting the policy of ‘divide et impera’ against his opponents both in the party and in the countryside, replacing previous communist discourse with Islam, nationalism and democracy, appointing more trusted non-party people to the government, and renaming the PDPA as the Homeland Party (*Hizb-i-Watan*), and portraying the “Peshawar Islamists” as “Pakistan’s clients”.¹⁰⁷⁷ Although these policies provided President Najibullah another three years at the presidential post, some of them also resulted in the further erosion of state control in rural areas, the heightened ethnic tension, and also the ethnic realignment of the Khalqis and Parchamis with different resistance groups- Khalqis with Hekmatyar’s Hizb-i-Islami and Parchamis with Rabbani’s Jamiyat-i Islami.¹⁰⁷⁸ There were also serious economic consequences for the country and its people enforcing them to find new survival strategies. The Najibullah government printing money to cover the costs of maintaining his regime’s survival and the losses caused by the decline in Soviet aid and reduced natural gas revenues due to poor maintenance and the departure of Soviet technicians, led to skyrocketing food prices, rapid inflation, and a devalued currency, which in turn fueled smuggling of consumer goods and opium cultivation as “the main expanding source of cash incomes”, with more secure roads facilitating the growth of both legal and illegal trade and economic activities.¹⁰⁷⁹

Following the failed coup attempt in Moscow in August 1991 resulting in the elimination of Soviet hardliners, the Soviets revised their Afghanistan policy by first signing the Soviet-American agreement in September 1991 in which both sides declared the joint cessation of military supplies to their Afghan clients as of January 1992 and the support for a UN-sponsored interim government to be established through intra-Afghan dialogue; secondly issuing a joint statement with the representatives from four of the seven resistance parties

¹⁰⁷⁷ Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), xxi, 124; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 147-149; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 205; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 241-242, 244-245.

¹⁰⁷⁸ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 148-149, 175; Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 323; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 206.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Barnett R. Rubin, *Afghanistan from the Cold War through the War on Terror* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 56-57.

visiting Moscow in November 1991 in which Moscow reaffirmed its pledges in its agreement with Washington even by accepting an “Islamic interim government”, denounced its 1979 invasion, and promised to withdraw its remaining military advisers in return of the release of Soviet prisoners-of-war captured by Mujahideen; and thirdly stopped its financial assistance to Kabul.¹⁰⁸⁰ Right after these significant developments, the Soviets disintegrated in December 1991. With this monumental historical event, the survival strategy of President Najibullah relying on the “redistribution of Soviet aid” to support his regime collapsed and thus he lost “the ability to control factionalism and ethnic conflict in his own ranks.”¹⁰⁸¹ Although he resorted to use ethno-politics in order to restore his authority over the country in the absence of Soviet aid by trying to replace some Tajik and Uzbek senior military officers in northern provinces with loyal Pashtun officers mostly coming from his southern home region of Paktya, Paktika and Khost in January 1992, this move backfired by triggering further defections not only among non-Pashtun but also Pashtun members of state and party bureaucracy, many of whom realigned themselves with various competing Mujahideen factions largely based on ethnic and regional affiliation.¹⁰⁸²

After a while, defected leaders Lt. General Abdul Rashid Dostum (Uzbek) and Major General Sayyed Mansur Naderi (also referred to as Sayeed Mansur Kayani – Ismaili Shia) entered into a coalition with the non-Pashtun forces of Mujahiddin field commanders Ahmad Shah Massoud and Ismail Khan (both Tajiks), and Abdul Ali Mazari, head of Shia Hizb-i Wahdet in the north against the Najibullah regime and began to control most of northern, western and central Afghanistan.¹⁰⁸³ Similarly, the Pashtun high-ranking officials such as Defence Minister Watanjar, Interior Minister Paktin, Vice-President General Rafi and the Northern Zone’s Chief Commander Atsak joined Hekmatyar’s Mujahideen forces in the south.¹⁰⁸⁴ Several field commanders of the seven Peshawar-based Sunni Mujahideen groups including Hikmetyar’s Hizb-i Islami also began to control Pashtun provinces in southern,

¹⁰⁸⁰ Richard Weitz, “Moscow’s Endgame in Afghanistan,” *Conflict Quarterly* XII, no. 1 (Winter 1992): 32-33; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 265-267.

¹⁰⁸¹ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 248; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 175.

¹⁰⁸² Ahmad Shaye Qassem, *Afghanistan’s Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 80-81.

¹⁰⁸³ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 206-207.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Ahmad Shaye Qassem, *Afghanistan’s Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 80-81.

southeastern and southwestern Afghanistan.¹⁰⁸⁵ Thereby, the Najibullah regime entered the collapse phase in the early 1992. Even the UN-mediated peace plan, which was being negotiated among all the relevant internal and external actors since the beginning of the Soviet withdrawal and took its final form in haste right after these dramatic changes in the country with President Najibullah's approval of stepping down for a transition process namely a UN-brokered conference of Afghans for the formation of a pre-transition council until the creation of a new government after having democratic elections was overtaken by these developments severely shifting the balance in favor of Mujahideen.¹⁰⁸⁶ The last blow to the Najibullah regime came with the entry of the Mujahideen forces, Massoud together with Dostum from the north and Hikmetyar from the south, to Kabul in April 1992 without a fight, which marked the bloodless victory of the Mujahideen against the Najibullah regime.¹⁰⁸⁷ President Najibullah was forced to take refuge in the UN compound in Kabul after being avoided to leave the country at the Kabul airport and disappeared from the scene.¹⁰⁸⁸ Thereby, another episode began in the Afghan history, but this time with new actors in a very different political structure, as the products of years long war in the country. In regards to the contours of this radical change, Amin Saikal states that "resistance leadership structures in microsocieties, particularly in the countryside, experienced a dramatic change" as traditional authority figures such as "khans, mullah, and Sufi figures" were increasingly replaced by Mujahideen commanders connected to "institutions beyond the traditional localised continuum" such as "Islamic parties and groups, foreign countries, and international organisations," which would lead to significant difficulties in rebuilding the political landscape after the collapse of Najibullah's regime.¹⁰⁸⁹

With regard to the changes in the country's aid context during this period, larger areas inside Afghanistan, especially those in Northern, Western and Central parts that were previously beyond the reach of cross-border operations, became accessible for international assistance following the completion of the Soviet withdrawal in February 1989.¹⁰⁹⁰ The UNOCA

¹⁰⁸⁵ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 206-207.

¹⁰⁸⁶ Diego Cordovez, "Epilogue: The Withdrawal and After," in *Out of Afghanistan: The Inside Story of the Soviet Withdrawal*, ed. Diego Cordovez and Selig S. Harrison (New York, USA: Oxford University Press, 1995), 368, 386; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 246-247.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Ahmad Shayeq Qassem, *Afghanistan's Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 81.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Nabi Misdag, *Afghanistan: Political Frailty and External Interference* (London: Routledge, 2006), 3;

¹⁰⁸⁹ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 208.

¹⁰⁹⁰ Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 136.

adopted “humanitarian encirclement” policy (delivering aid from different entry points in neighboring countries), initiated “cross-line projects” (delivering aid from government-controlled to Mujahideen-controlled areas) and started “Afghanisation” of aid through encouraging the formation of Afghan cross-border NGOs and began to use them as implementing partners.¹⁰⁹¹ Alongside the emergence of new Afghan NGOs, there was also a sharp rise in the number of international NGOs providing cross-border assistance during 1989 and 1990.¹⁰⁹² The funds allocated to the cross-border assistance significantly outnumbered those to the refugee assistance in Pakistan.¹⁰⁹³ Both the UN and the donor countries continued to rely on these increasing number of Afghan and international NGOs involved in cross-border assistance.¹⁰⁹⁴ Furthermore, in line with an increase in the number of Afghan and international cross-border NGOs, many NGO coordination mechanisms emerged; first ACBAR (Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief) and then similar others SWABAC (South-West Afghanistan Bureau for Agency Coordination) and ANCB (Afghan NGO Coordination Bureau, ICC- Islamic Coordination Council).¹⁰⁹⁵

In accordance with the UN’s Operation Salam, donor in-kind contributions were to be delivered to executing UN agencies whereas donor cash contributions were to be channeled through the Afghanistan Emergency Trust Fund (AETF) managed by UNOCA.¹⁰⁹⁶ However things did not go as planned and UNOCA had only limited control over the resources provided for the Operation Salam. Because “the majority of funds were 'earmarked' for use by UN agencies rather than UNOCA itself, and even within the unearmarked category the bulk of the funds were, at the request of the donors, held in the form of a reserve for use in

¹⁰⁹¹ Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 133-134; Jon Bennett, "Afghanistan: Cross-Border NGO Coordination, 1985-93'," in *Meeting Needs: NGO Coordination in Practice*, ed. Jon Bennett (London: Earthscan, 1995), 4; Jonathan Goodhand, "Aiding Violence or Building Peace? The Role of International Aid in Afghanistan," *Third World Quarterly* 23, no. 5 (2002): 843.

¹⁰⁹² Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 136.

¹⁰⁹³ Jon Bennett, "Afghanistan: Cross-Border NGO Coordination, 1985-93'," in *Meeting Needs: NGO Coordination in Practice*, ed. Jon Bennett (London: Earthscan, 1995), 4; Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 137.

¹⁰⁹⁴ Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 134.

¹⁰⁹⁵ Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 144.

¹⁰⁹⁶ Nigel Nicholds and John Borton, “The Changing Role of NGOs in the Provision of Relief and Rehabilitation Assistance: Case Study 1- Afghanistan/Pakistan,” Working Paper No. 74, London: Overseas Development Institute – ODI, January 1994, 59-60.

activities related to refugee repatriation and could only be allocated to programmes with the agreement of the donor.”¹⁰⁹⁷ There are various reasons behind this approach. Bennett states, “The reasons are complex, but can be summarised in terms of three constraining factors: the reluctance of donors to invest too much authority and financial strength in UNOCA itself; the extent to which individual UN agencies failed to cooperate among themselves and with UNOCA; and the tensions that existed between UNOCA and the NGO community.”¹⁰⁹⁸ Mainly due to the continuation of the fighting between Najibullah regime and Mujahideen after the Soviet withdrawal but also because of this problematic donor approach, the scale of the voluntary repatriation programme remained limited by the end of 1990 as the funding required for repatriation activities was significantly less than originally anticipated and many donors also withheld their support for rehabilitation efforts in the agricultural, communications, and social services sectors in Afghanistan.¹⁰⁹⁹ UNOCA’s Third Consolidated Report (1990) condemned donor organizations for “making their support for rehabilitation activities inside Afghanistan conditional upon the return of the refugees.”¹¹⁰⁰ Despite all the abovementioned problems, the substantial increase in the in-kind and cash allocations to the UN’s Operation Salam made the UN another important donor, in addition to the US that had been the largest donor for cross-border assistance since 1985.¹¹⁰¹ Bennett notes that the most significant increase in international assistance came after the signing of the Geneva Accords and the launch of the UN’s Operation Salam programme, and elaborates as follows:

The scale of cross-border programmes reached an estimated \$300 million in 1989 and \$400 million in 1990. Substantial sums were made available to NGOs, either directly from bilateral donors or as implementing partners of the various UN agencies. The Office of the United Nations Coordinator for Humanitarian and Economic Assistance Programmes Relating to Afghanistan (UNOCA) dealt with the coordination of the UN programme as a whole and the allocation of a special Trust

¹⁰⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 60.

¹⁰⁹⁸ Jon Bennett, "Afghanistan: Cross-Border NGO Coordination, 1985-93'," in *Meeting Needs: NGO Coordination in Practice*, ed. Jon Bennett (London: Earthscan, 1995), 6.

¹⁰⁹⁹ Nigel Nicholds and John Borton, "The Changing Role of NGOs in the Provision of Relief and Rehabilitation Assistance: Case Study 1- Afghanistan/Pakistan," Working Paper No. 74, London: Overseas Development Institute – ODI, January 1994, 59.

¹¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰¹ Jonathan Goodhand, "Aiding Violence or Building Peace? The Role of International Aid in Afghanistan," *Third World Quarterly* 23, no. 5 (2002): 843; Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 137; Jon Bennett, "Afghanistan: Cross-Border NGO Coordination, 1985-93'," in *Meeting Needs: NGO Coordination in Practice*, ed. Jon Bennett (London: Earthscan, 1995), 6; Nigel Nicholds and John Borton, "The Changing Role of NGOs in the Provision of Relief and Rehabilitation Assistance: Case Study 1- Afghanistan/Pakistan," Working Paper No. 74, London: Overseas Development Institute – ODI, January 1994, 61.

Fund for projects not covered by the specialised agencies. In addition, individual UN agencies raised money through their own separate appeals from time to time.¹¹⁰²

Along with the UN emerging a key donor in 1989 and the contributions from the US, a substantial share of the overall assistance was provided by European Union funds, bilateral aid from European governments, and funding from the Gulf countries.”¹¹⁰³

Another important development, the main component of cross-border assistance changed from cash-for-food, which constituted the largest part earlier, to rehabilitation, reconstruction and development.¹¹⁰⁴ The key motivation of cross-border assistance shifted from solidarity to service delivery.¹¹⁰⁵ Jonathan Goodson noted that this shift led NGOs to distance themselves from favored relationships with specific commanders from the jihad years, test “local institutional development approaches, through district or village-based shuras,” and focus on aid management, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.¹¹⁰⁶

Between 1990-1992, actual namely received funding experienced a significant decline due to the factors such as donor fatigue, continued conflict, decreased geopolitical interest, and other global priorities, and consequently “donors increasingly channeled limited resources through NGOs and individual UN agencies,” leading to UNOCA struggling to sustain “its only remaining programme in the field, the demining operation” through the Trust Fund.¹¹⁰⁷

The end of the Cold War with the unexpected collapse of the Soviets in December 1991 led to significant loss of interest in this war-ravaged poor country, which was no longer a buffer state between rival alliance systems, and thus the aid previously pouring into the warring parties in Afghanistan came to a halt. When the Soviets passed into history in December 1991, their aid to Afghanistan that had already been on the decline since the withdrawal of their troops in February 1989 ended for good. As for the US, Barfield stated, “the United States wished no further involvement in a resourceless country on the verge of collapse that

¹¹⁰² Jon Bennett, "Afghanistan: Cross-Border NGO Coordination, 1985-93'," in *Meeting Needs: NGO Coordination in Practice*, ed. Jon Bennett (London: Earthscan, 1995), 4.

¹¹⁰³ Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 137.

¹¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 128, 139.

¹¹⁰⁵ Jonathan Goodhand, "Aiding Violence or Building Peace? The Role of International Aid in Afghanistan," *Third World Quarterly* 23, no. 5 (2002): 843.

¹¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰⁷ Jon Bennett, "Afghanistan: Cross-Border NGO Coordination, 1985-93'," in *Meeting Needs: NGO Coordination in Practice*, ed. Jon Bennett (London: Earthscan, 1995), 7.

had become strategically irrelevant.”¹¹⁰⁸ Rubin addressed another important point by stating, “Foreign aid to Afghanistan from competing, Euro-Atlantic powers ceased, and along with it the century-old project of building a foreign aid-funded, Pashtun-led, centralized buffer state.”¹¹⁰⁹ As an Afghan aid worker at an international NGO in Afghanistan, who holds both insider and outsider perspective, M.H. Atmar comparing the humanitarian response of the donors during the period when Afghanistan was one of the focal points of geopolitical interest with the subsequent period when such interest waned states the following:

Over years of crisis in Afghanistan, the principle of impartiality of humanitarianism has systematically fallen victim to political considerations of donor states. In other words, political expedience of the donor states has determined the purpose, extent and type of ‘humanitarian response’ rather than human needs alone. During the Cold War period, Afghanistan received the highest per capita aid in its history in a most unprincipled manner. The United States alone provided military and humanitarian aid worth over US\$600 million per annum after 1986... According to independent studies, donors were prepared to accept up to 40% wastage...; and some others argue that only 20-30% of the humanitarian aid reached its intended beneficiaries and the rest went astray mostly feeding war efforts... While human needs were equally dire in the communist-held and resistance controlled areas of the country, the West was prepared to provide aid only to the latter. Humanitarian aid was thus mandated to play a complementary role as part of the wider Cold War politics to ‘make the Russians bleed’... With the withdrawal of the Red Army and despite the continued human suffering, the rapid fall in humanitarian budgets made it obvious that it was not the plight of the Afghans that mattered.¹¹¹⁰

While Atmar focuses on the politicization of aid to Afghanistan during the Cold War, Jonathan Goodhand draws attention to how the developments from the late 1980s to early 1990s, following the Soviet withdrawal, established several key elements of the contemporary aid regime in the country with the following words:

The primary actors within the aid system were the official aid donors, United Nations agencies, the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement and NGOs. The architecture of aid in Afghanistan was extremely complex and heterogeneous, involving a range of different actors and diverse co-ordination mechanisms that developed in an ad hoc and often competitive fashion. The aid community used the motif of the ‘failed state’ to assume and justify its role as a ‘surrogate government’. Given its fractured (and sometimes fractious) nature and the lack of substantive

¹¹⁰⁸ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 251.

¹¹⁰⁹ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 265.

¹¹¹⁰ Mohammed Haneef Atmar, “Politicisation of Humanitarian Aid and Its Consequences for Afghans” (paper presented at Politics and Humanitarian Aid: Debates, Dilemmas and Dissension Conference, London, February 01, 2001), 2-3, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/events-documents/3772.pdf>

Afghan involvement at a policy level within the aid system, the challenges of improving co-ordination and accountability have been central to debates on aid effectiveness from the early 1990s to the present day.¹¹¹¹

The downfall of the Najibullah regime in April 1992, which was the immediate result of the Soviet collapse ending the Cold War, opened another chapter in the history of aid in Afghanistan that would be examined in the following part.

6.3. Mujahideen Infighting Years: Plummeting Aid in a Failing Statehood

Following the collapse of the Soviet client regime and the Mujahideen takeover in April 1992, Afghan people continued to suffer during the Mujahideen infighting years. The Mujahideen period was characterized by first severe elite fragmentation mainly because of clashing personal ambitions, high level of distrust and even animosities within the power-seeking elite aside of the tribal, ethnic and sectarian antipathies between their groups that resulted in a continuous fighting, confusing and constantly shifting set of alliances and treacheries based on Machiavellian calculations and failed attempts to form a broad-based government; secondly regionalization of forces turning many former Mujahideen commanders into regional power holders namely local warlords and their regions into autonomous warlord fiefdoms as in the nineteenth century Afghanistan suffering from severe decentralization; thirdly further deterioration of the economic collapse; and fourthly intensive and manipulative meddling of regional actors.¹¹¹²

The vital “question of political legitimacy in Afghanistan” namely “who had the right to rule and on what basis”, which has always been a major issue in the Afghan history but aggravated with the Saur Revolution in 1978 and the Soviet invasion in 1979 and remained unsettled after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989, became a major issue of contention among the Mujahideen groups after the collapse of the PDPA regime in 1992 because of the total destruction of the old dynastic tradition favoring the continuation of centralization process that had been initiated by the Iron Amir as well as the political and military empowerment of almost all ethnic and regional groups without “any overarching political unity among

¹¹¹¹ Jonathan Goodhand, "Aiding Violence or Building Peace? The Role of International Aid in Afghanistan," *Third World Quarterly* 23, no. 5 (2002): 843-844.

¹¹¹² Martin Ewans, *Conflict in Afghanistan: Studies in Asymmetric Warfare* (London: Routledge, 2005), 131; Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 75; William Maley, "The Reconstitution of the Afghan State," in *Afghanistan: Identity, Society and Politics since 1980*, ed. Micheline Centlivres-Demont (London: I.B. Tauris&Co Ltd, 2015), 67-70; William Maley, *The Afghanistan Wars* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 200-201; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 171.

themselves” over the past years, and thus the already war-weary, aid-dependent and depleted country without a unifying national identity and functioning national institutions fell into chaos again.¹¹¹³ Barfield explained the country’s impasse with the following words:

Unfortunately the successful resistance strategy of making the country ungovernable for the Soviet occupier also ended up making Afghanistan ungovernable for the Afghans themselves. While the Afghans had recovered from many earlier periods of state collapse, the body politic was now afflicted with an autoimmune disorder in which the antibodies of resistance threatened to destroy any state structure, regardless of who controlled it or its ideology. Compounding this problem was a centuries-old structural weakness: the dependency of all Afghan governments on outside aid for financial stability.¹¹¹⁴

From the outset of the post-Najibullah Mujahideen era in April 1992, the power struggle among various rival Mujahideen groups and commanders rapidly escalated into fighting in and around Kabul due to its symbolic significance and strategic importance for the combatants by turning the capital that had survived several years of the Afghan war relatively undamaged into a major battlefield.¹¹¹⁵ Even while the Pakistan-based Mujahideen leaders were negotiating the interim government to be established, a fighting for the control of the capital was about to erupt between Massoud-led multi-ethnic but predominantly non-Pashtun forces (northerners) and Hikmetyar’s Pashtun Hizb-i-Islami forces, both of which positioned on the opposite outskirts of the capital.¹¹¹⁶ When Hikmetyar brought his secret takeover plan into action with the cooperation of *Khalqi* Pashtuns in the army and Sarandoy, largely composed of Ghilzai Pashtuns, by exploiting Pashtun ethnic fears that had skyrocketed after the quick and easy advance of Massoud-led northerners towards Kabul as well as the fall of Kabul to the multi-ethnic *Parchami* rebel army forces led by *Parchami* senior officials asking Massoud to enter Kabul as head of state and had not calmed down despite Massoud’s reassuring the NCS Pashtun commanders of not seizing power unilaterally; Massoud, not planning to enter the capital until a power-sharing agreement among Pakistan-based Mujahideen leaders was in place, had to order the forces under his authority that were positioned to the north of the Kabul to enter the city, defeated

¹¹¹³ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 6.

¹¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹⁵ Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 74-75; William Maley, *The Afghanistan Wars* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 201.

¹¹¹⁶ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 247.

Hikmetyar's Khalqi-Hizbi Pashtun forces within few days and captured Kabul.¹¹¹⁷ And this was the beginning of Afghan civil war. Ahmed Rashid states that this civil war was largely influenced by Kabul's fall to "the better organized and more united Tajik forces of Burhanuddin Rabbani and his military commander Ahmad Shah Masud and to the Uzbek forces from the north under General Rashid Dostum" rather than to the well-armed but fragmented Pashtun factions from Peshawar, marking a severe "psychological blow" as the Pashtuns lost control of Kabul for the first time in 300 years.¹¹¹⁸

However, despite Masud's forces controlling the capital, their grip was far from complete due to other Mujahideen groups occupying the suburbs, Hikmetyar's forces remaining ready to attack from the south, and some of the forces under Masud's command were not fully loyal to him but to various allied resistance groups with conflicting goals for Afghanistan's future.¹¹¹⁹ Thereby, Kabul and its environs fell to the heterogeneous Mujahideen resistance groups in competition: Masud's forces controlled northern Kabul, Hezb-e Wahdat's forces held western Kabul, Dostum's troops secured the area around the Bala Hissar fortress and Teppe Meranjan, and Sayyaf's forces took the Paghman area.¹¹²⁰ Goodson describes the sharing of Kabul by these Mujahideen groups in the period 1992-1993 as the city's "Beirutization," noting that this transformed Kabul into "an armed camp," leading to a severe decline in living conditions, irregular power and water provision, and food shortages.¹¹²¹ Among these groups, Masud's Shura-i Nazar and Sayyaf's Ittehad-e Islami favored the creation of a strong state, Abdul Ali Mazari-led Hezb-e Wahdat opposed it to maintain Hazara autonomy and Dostum's Jumbesh-e Melli Islami aimed for northern autonomy, with Iran-backed Shia Hezb-e Wahdat and Saudi-backed Sunni Ittehad-e Islami being particularly antagonistic towards each other.¹¹²²

In late April 1992, the Mujahideen party leaders, except Hikmetyar, signed the Pakistan-brokered peace and power-sharing agreement, 'Peshawar Accord', to establish the

¹¹¹⁷ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 270-271.

¹¹¹⁸ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 21.

¹¹¹⁹ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 213-214; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 271; William Maley, *The Afghanistan Wars* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 202.

¹¹²⁰ William Maley, *The Afghanistan Wars* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 202.

¹¹²¹ Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 75.

¹¹²² William Maley, *The Afghanistan Wars* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 202.

framework and procedures for the provisional period of the Islamic State of Afghanistan (ISA) – (*Dowlat-e-Islami-e-Afghanistan*) in the following way: first Mujaddidi, the leader of small Pashtun Mujahideen party named the National Liberation Front (*Jebha-i-Milli Nijat*), would preside over the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan, in which the ministerial offices would be distributed among the members of major Mujahideen Sunni parties,¹¹²³ for two months until late June 1992 as the head of the 51-member Transitional Council (*Shura-i-Intiqali*) / Islamic Jihad Council (IJC) in charge of taking over power from the rulers of Kabul; secondly, Rabbani, the leader of Jamiat-i-Islami, would take over the portfolio of Mujaddidi and serve as President and Head of the 10-member Leadership Council (*Shura-i-Qiyadi*), comprising major Mujahiddin party leaders, for a further four months until late October 1992; thirdly, after six months under the presidency of Mujaddidi and Rabbani, a large Shura would be summoned to establish an interim government that would pave the way for general elections within eighteen months.¹¹²⁴ However Mujaddidi-led Council's arrival in Kabul from Peshawar and proclamation of the Islamic State of Afghanistan on 28 April 1992, which was first recognized by Pakistan and followed by the others, intensified power struggle among various Mujahideen groups.¹¹²⁵ In the following years, alliances were continuously formed and dissolved, and cease-fires were negotiated only to be repeatedly violated.¹¹²⁶ All these conflicts among these groups held back the reconstruction of the state.

First, Hikmetyar took the floor with his own wish list. Although he initially seemed to agree to the premiership role offered in the Accord brokered by the civilian government of

¹¹²³ Distribution was as follows: The Premiership to Hekmatyar (Hezb-i-Islami), Defense Ministry to Massoud (Jamiyat-i-Islami), Interior Ministry to Sayyaf (Ittehad), Foreign Affairs to Gailani (Mahaz), Justice to Muhammad Nabi (Harakat-i-Enqelab), Education to Mawlawi Khales (Hezb-i-Islami Khales), and further decision to be taken for the allocation of some other ministries to the Mujahideen Shia parties. Gilles Dorronsoro, *Revolution Unending: Afghanistan, 1979 to the Present*, trans. John King (London: Hurst & Company, 2005), 239; "Peshawar Accord," United Nations Peacemaker, April 24, 1992, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/AF_920424_PESHAWAR%20ACCORD.pdf

¹¹²⁴ Ahmad Shayeq Qassem, *Afghanistan's Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 91; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 214; Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 73-74; William Maley, *The Afghanistan Wars* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 197-198; Cary Gladstone, "Afghanistan," in *Afghanistan: History, Issues, Bibliography*, ed. Cary Gladstone (Huntington, New York: Novinka Books, 2001), 8; Gilles Dorronsoro, *Revolution Unending: Afghanistan, 1979 to the Present*, trans. John King (London: Hurst & Company, 2005), 239; "Peshawar Accord," United Nations Peacemaker, April 24, 1992, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/AF_920424_PESHAWAR%20ACCORD.pdf

¹¹²⁵ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 271-272; Gilles Dorronsoro, *Revolution Unending: Afghanistan, 1979 to the Present*, trans. John King (London: Hurst & Company, 2005), 239; Martin Ewans, *Conflict in Afghanistan: Studies in Asymmetric Warfare* (London: Routledge, 2005), 131.

¹¹²⁶ Martin Ewans, *Conflict in Afghanistan: Studies in Asymmetric Warfare* (London: Routledge, 2005), 131.

Pakistan, Hikmetyar, after taking the support of the ISI and Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan, refused this power-sharing agreement that would not give him a leading role in state administration by deciding to prevent Kabul from becoming secure base for the Mujahideen coalition government.¹¹²⁷ In early May 1992, Hikmetyar demanded Dostum's withdrawal from Kabul, which was also agreed by Rabbani-Massoud duo, but Dostum refused to leave and thus gave Hikmetyar the pretext to launch his first of many large-scale bombardments of Kabul that would continue on-and-off until 1995 by causing many civilian casualties as well as displacement of many more, destruction of the much of the capital's economic and military infrastructure, and serious food shortages.¹¹²⁸ In response, government forces also launched strike against at Hikmetyar's forces in the south. In late June 1992, Mujaddidi reluctantly handed over the presidency to Rabbani.¹¹²⁹ However, tension did not decrease with this transfer of power. Once President Rabbani dismissed Hikmetyar's deputy, who had been sent to serve as premier in the government, Hikmetyar again started shelling the capital in early August 1992.¹¹³⁰ In late October 1992, Rabbani achieved to get the approval of the Leadership Council on the extension of his term for about two months in order to summon the Shura, and when the Shura finally convened in late December 1992, despite the boycotting of the most of the parties, he also managed to get himself reelected as president for two years, which was responded by Hikmetyar with heavy shelling of the capital.¹¹³¹ Secondly, Mazari's Shia Hazara Hezb-e-Wahdat and Dostum's Uzbek northern forces that had allied with the government since the very beginning but had been left out by their powerful allies in the Accord's main power-sharing arrangements in varying degrees, raised demand separately for winning a strong place in the new political system as well as for establishing a federal type of government. Dostum requested the ISA to recognize his newly

¹¹²⁷ Ahmad Shayeq Qassem, *Afghanistan's Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 91-92; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 215; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 249.

¹¹²⁸ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 215; Gilles Dorronsoro, *Revolution Unending: Afghanistan, 1979 to the Present*, trans. John King (London: Hurst & Company, 2005), 239; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 250-251; Ahmad Shayeq Qassem, *Afghanistan's Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 92; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 272-273.

¹¹²⁹ Gilles Dorronsoro, *Revolution Unending: Afghanistan, 1979 to the Present*, trans. John King (London: Hurst & Company, 2005), 240.

¹¹³⁰ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 251.

¹¹³¹ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 273; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 251.

established party, ‘National Islamic Movement’ (Jumbesh-e-Melli-Islami),¹¹³² on par with other Mujahideen groups and to include it into the government aside of demanding regional autonomy in the northern provinces under his control.¹¹³³ Similarly, Mazari asked for more representation in the government while claiming autonomy in the country’s main Hazara regions namely Hazarajat.¹¹³⁴ However the ISA’s reluctance in meeting these demands due to some domestic and foreign policy concerns would turn both of them into its bitter enemies in the very near future.¹¹³⁵ Massoud’s move to disarm Hezb-i-Wahdat militia in Kabul in December 1992, which resulted in Wahdat’s boycotting the Shura, turned into street fighting between these former allies in early 1993, in which Massoud got the military support of Ittehad aside of gaining support of undecided Harakat-i-Enqelab to the government whereas Wahdat had to ally itself with Hikmetyar.¹¹³⁶ Another crack came up with the start of fighting between Mazari’s Iran-backed Shia Hezb-i-Wahdat and Sayyaf’s Saudi-supported Sunni Ittihad-i-Islami in Kabul costing many lives.¹¹³⁷ All these conflicts eventually undermined the Peshawar Accords and cast doubt on the prospect of a unified Afghan state.¹¹³⁸

In order to end the Mujahideen infighting, influential external actors, primarily Pakistan but also Saudi Arabia and Iran, pressured the parties to compromise and thereby another peace and power-sharing settlement agreement, ‘Islamabad Accord’, in which Rabbani was to remain president for eighteen months, Hikmetyar was to assume premiership again and a

¹¹³² Since Rabbani refused Dostum’s initial demand of the recognition and inclusion of his movement into the government by the reason of that his movement was not a political party, Dostum changed his movement into a party. Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 172.

¹¹³³ Ahmad ShayeQ Qassem, *Afghanistan’s Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 97-98; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 215.

¹¹³⁴ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 215; Gilles Dorronsoro, *Revolution Unending: Afghanistan, 1979 to the Present*, trans. John King (London: Hurst & Company, 2005), 242.

¹¹³⁵ Ahmad ShayeQ Qassem, *Afghanistan’s Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 97-98.

¹¹³⁶ William Maley, *The Afghanistan Wars* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 202-203; Gilles Dorronsoro, *Revolution Unending: Afghanistan, 1979 to the Present*, trans. John King (London: Hurst & Company, 2005), 242-243.

¹¹³⁷ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 272; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 215; William Maley, *The Afghanistan Wars* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 202; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 250.

¹¹³⁸ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 266.

cabinet was to form after joint consultations, was signed in March 1993 but soon after it failed because of not addressing the root causes of the conflict.¹¹³⁹ Goodson states, “Despite the Islamabad accord, the rival mujahideen groups and ^[L]_[SEP] militias could never settle on an acceptable power-sharing arrangement, and fighting flared repeatedly between groups who allied with each other in various and constantly shifting combinations.”¹¹⁴⁰ These developments also led to the creation of the United Nations Special Mission for Afghanistan (UNSMA) in December 1993 headed by Tunisian former Foreign Minister Ambassador Mahmoud Mestiri to mediate between the conflicting parties but this newly established political office could not change anything.¹¹⁴¹

In January 1994, despite having almost nothing in common, Mazari’s Iran-backed Hezb-i-Wahdat and Dostum’s Uzbekistan-backed Junbesh-i-Islami sided with Hikmetyar’s Pakistani-backed Hezb-i-Islami and formed a new anti-government alliance under the name of the Council of Coordination (Shura-i-Hamahangi), which was also supported by Mujaddidi, and launched a series of coordinated onslaught on Kabul to topple down the Jamiat-dominated government until the arrival of Taliban.¹¹⁴² Hikmetyar and his new allies devastated Kabul with indiscriminate shelling by the end of 1994, reducing half of the city to ruins and causing the deaths of around 25,000 people.¹¹⁴³

While all these tragic events were happening in and around the capital, the entry of the Mujahideen forces into the provinces during March-April 1992 period, which resulted in the peaceful transfer of power from local government military units to the Mujahideen through either capitulation or power-sharing arrangements, brought a new political distribution at the provincial level in the rest of the country, and the fall of Kabul to competing Mujahideen groups accelerated this regionalization namely decentralization process proceeding to the emergence of regional power centers administered by the Mujahideen-affiliated

¹¹³⁹ William Maley, *The Afghanistan Wars* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 199; “Afghan Peace Accord (Islamabad Accord) – and Annex on the Division of Powers,” United Nations Peacemaker, March 07, 1993, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://peacemaker.un.org/node/643>

¹¹⁴⁰ Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 74.

¹¹⁴¹ Barnett R. Rubin, *Afghanistan from the Cold War through the War on Terror* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 40, 45; William Maley, "The Dynamics of Regime Transition in Afghanistan," *Central Asian Survey* 16, no. 2 (1997): 176.

¹¹⁴² Ahmad Shayeq Qassem, *Afghanistan's Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 99; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 216.

¹¹⁴³ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 216.

strongmen.¹¹⁴⁴ As a result of the country's division into regional and local forces operating independently from the government leaders in Kabul, the following picture emerged: Jamiat commander Ismail Khan took control of Herat and the western regions; Kandahar was divided among various commanders of different parties who united to drive out Hezb-i Islami, leading to anarchy that lasted until the Taliban took over; Mazar-i Sharif was controlled by Hezb-i Wahdat, Jombesh and Jamiyat-i Islami, resulting in instability until the alliance between Jombesh and Jamiyat dissolved in January 1994, after which the weakened Jamiyat was expelled; Masud controlled the northeastern region; Hezb-i Islami (Khaless) established a strong presence in Jalalabad; Harakat-i Enqelab dominated in Ghazni; Hikmetyar's Hezb-i Islami managed to retain strongholds only in Laghman and Charasiab, south of Kabul; Hezb-i Wahdat controlled most of Hazarajat; and Kunduz was fiercely contested between Jamiat commander Masud and Jombesh leader Dostum.¹¹⁴⁵ Among them, the non-Pashtun regions experienced higher security and economic prosperity compared to the Pashtun regions due to their stronger local economies and more effective administrative structures.¹¹⁴⁶

With the intensification of the Mujahideen infighting in Kabul, these political regions became much more autonomous and powerful as in the nineteenth-century Afghanistan namely before the start of centralization under the rule of Iron Amir.¹¹⁴⁷ However, despite the similarities with the nineteenth century decentralized Afghanistan, the new circumstances were considerably different from the past. Rubin explains these differences by stating that the regional structure of Afghanistan that had existed prior to Abdul Rahman Khan resurfaced with modern weaponry and new political and military formations, but unlike before, there was not great power backing a Pashtun dynasty, the country was no longer a buffer state between competing empires or alliances, and “[b]illions of dollars worth of

¹¹⁴⁴ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 247; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 274; Gilles Dorransoro, *Revolution Unending: Afghanistan, 1979 to the Present*, trans. John King (London: Hurst & Company, 2005), 240.

¹¹⁴⁵ Neamatollah Nojumi, *The Rise of The Taliban in Afghanistan: Mass Mobilization, Civil War, and The Future of The Region* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 115; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 252; Gilles Dorransoro, *Revolution Unending: Afghanistan, 1979 to the Present*, trans. John King (London: Hurst & Company, 2005), 240-241; Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 75.

¹¹⁴⁶ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 6, 253.

¹¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

modern weapons that had outlasted the strategic interests of their providers circulated in a devastated country with neither national institutions nor national identity.”¹¹⁴⁸

In this new political environment, the local elites pledged symbolic loyalty to Kabul while largely pursuing their own agenda.¹¹⁴⁹ Even the regional power holders controlling the landlocked country’s transit gateways with its neighbors, such as Ismail Khan in the West and Dostum in the North, established independent ties with foreign countries through bypassing the central government in Kabul, gained significant revenues out of transit-trade with bordering states and used the revenues to strengthen their own autonomous regions.¹¹⁵⁰ Notwithstanding, since there was not any national army left to enforce the central authority over these autonomous regions due to its collapse through disintegration and absorption into the country’s regional-ethnic power networks and also Kabul itself was in chaos due to the ongoing Mujahideen infighting, the Rabbani government did not want to lose even this very symbolic loyalty and returned the favor by sending these regional forces the banknotes still being printed in Russia and transported to Kabul, which was almost the only thing owned by the government lacking any revenues such as tax, trade or foreign aid.¹¹⁵¹

Furthermore, the collapse of the national army, which deprived the Afghan state of the most effective coercive tool in its hand against these autonomous entities presenting challenge to state authority, also paralyzed the state against serious deterioration of law and order in the hands of local armed groups, somehow affiliated with Mujahideen, by turning some parts of Afghanistan into the near anarchy during 1992-1994, which was indeed the result of the widespread dissemination of modern weapons throughout Afghanistan over the past fifteen years.¹¹⁵² Volgelsang states that various local warlords set established control along

¹¹⁴⁸ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 266.

¹¹⁴⁹ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 253.

¹¹⁵⁰ Ahmad Shayeq Qassem, *Afghanistan’s Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 97-101.

¹¹⁵¹ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 253; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 265, 272; Neamatollah Nojumi, *The Rise of The Taliban in Afghanistan: Mass Mobilization, Civil War, and The Future of The Region* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 115; William Maley, "The Reconstitution of the Afghan State," in *Afghanistan: Identity, Society and Politics since 1980*, ed. Micheline Centlivres-Demont (London: I.B. Tauris&Co Ltd, 2015), 69.

¹¹⁵² William Maley, "The Reconstitution of the Afghan State," in *Afghanistan: Identity, Society and Politics since 1980*, ed. Micheline Centlivres-Demont (London: I.B. Tauris&Co Ltd, 2015), 68-69; Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 99-100.

highways outside Kabul to collect taxes and annoy travelers, adding that Qandahar was particularly troubled, with only Ismail Khan in Herat and General Dostum in Mazar-i-Sharif able to maintain order in their areas.¹¹⁵³ Goodson's following personal experience underlines the seriousness of the situation: "I well remember riding a bus from Kabul to the Khyber Pass in August 1992 and passing through nineteen different checkpoints representing a hodgepodge of groups en route."¹¹⁵⁴

With regard to Afghanistan's war-weary and shattered economy already lacking a sound fiscal basis, the ongoing war and chaos during the Mujahideen era, which also caused many casualties and displacements mainly in and around Kabul, caused further damage to the already badly impaired economic system and infrastructure in the country's rural-agricultural and urban-merchant sectors.¹¹⁵⁵ Bossin states that the Najibullah regime's collapse in 1992 "did little to stop the decline of the Afghan economy" as the weakening central power, ongoing political turmoil, and military actions caused widespread destruction and displacement, leaving only six of 366 economic projects, including about 150 funded by foreign aid, still operational by the mid-1990s.¹¹⁵⁶

Considering the very fact that subsistence agriculture and stockbreeding were the backbones of the predominantly rural Afghan society, not only the widespread severe damage to these key sectors during the Afghan war back in the 1980s but also the heavy landmine contamination throughout the country inherited from that period, adversely affected the resumption of these agricultural and stockbreeding activities by rendering economic reconstruction in rural areas almost impossible aside of continuing to increase physical and food insecurity across the country.¹¹⁵⁷ William Maley notes that landmines have nearly

¹¹⁵³ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 325.

¹¹⁵⁴ Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 100.

¹¹⁵⁵ U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, *Afghanistan: Is There Hope for Peace?: Hearings before the Subcommittee on Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs*, 104th Cong., 2d sess., June 6, 25, 26, and 27, 1996 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996), 13, 112; William Maley, "Reconstructing Afghanistan: Opportunities and Challenges," in *Recovery From Armed Conflict in Developing Countries*, ed. Geoff Harris (London: Routledge, 2002), 234-235.

¹¹⁵⁶ Yuri V. Bossin, "The Afghan Experience with International Assistance," in *Beyond Reconstruction in Afghanistan: Lessons from Development Experience*, ed. John D. Montgomery and Dennis A. Rondinelli (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 88.

¹¹⁵⁷ William Maley, "Reconstructing Afghanistan: Opportunities and Challenges," in *Recovery From Armed Conflict in Developing Countries*, ed. Geoff Harris (London: Routledge, 2002), 59, 162, 227, 230-231; U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, *Afghanistan: Is There Hope for Peace?: Hearings before the Subcommittee on Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs*, 104th Cong., 2d sess., June 6, 25, 26, and 27, 1996 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996), 49-50; Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The*

obliterated the country's "pre-war self-sufficient food distribution systems" and its centuries-old "irrigation and livestock transfer systems."¹¹⁵⁸

Furthermore, since most of the fighting was over Kabul rather than the countryside during the Mujahideen era, the return of Afghan refugees, majority of which were assumed to be farmers mainly originating from the Pashtun areas of eastern Afghanistan, became possible but sudden and mass return of nearly 1.4 million Afghan refugees from Pakistan (1.2 million) and Iran (200,000) back home after the collapse of the Soviet client regime in 1992, in addition to the estimated 300,000 from Pakistan in the 1990-1991 period, worsened the humanitarian situation in the countryside and triggered violent land disputes in some areas such as Khost.¹¹⁵⁹ In the following few years, the humanitarian situation worsened further due to continued displacements from Kabul amid Mujahideen infighting, which also slowed down returns as of 1993; Iran's forced repatriation policy for Afghan refugees in the 1993-1995 period; and Pakistan's closure of its borders to further influx of Afghan refugees in late 1993.¹¹⁶⁰

The new Afghan state's inability of gathering sufficient revenues on central basis to fulfill its obligations towards its citizens not only because of the newly erupted civil war but also the loss of traditional sources of financing, such as taxes, domestic borrowings, natural gas sales to the Soviets and foreign aid, severely crippled the state's capacity and thus made the state unable to provide assistance as well as basic goods and services to its people.¹¹⁶¹ All these developments increased the illegal economic activities and the dependency of urban and rural populations including returning refugees on humanitarian aid.¹¹⁶² The illicit cash-

Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 117.

¹¹⁵⁸ William Maley, "Reconstructing Afghanistan: Opportunities and Challenges," in *Recovery From Armed Conflict in Developing Countries*, ed. Geoff Harris (London: Routledge, 2002), 162.

¹¹⁵⁹ Barnett R. Rubin, *Afghanistan from the Cold War through the War on Terror* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 30; Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 112-114, 116-117.

¹¹⁶⁰ Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 156-157.

¹¹⁶¹ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 60, 113, 296-297; William Maley, "Reconstructing Afghanistan: Opportunities and Challenges," in *Recovery From Armed Conflict in Developing Countries*, ed. Geoff Harris (London: Routledge, 2002), 229; Barnett R. Rubin, *Afghanistan from the Cold War through the War on Terror* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 55; William Maley, "The Reconstitution of the Afghan State," in *Afghanistan: Identity, Society and Politics since 1980*, ed. Micheline Centlivres-Demont (London: I.B. Tauris&Co Ltd, 2015), 69.

¹¹⁶² Barnett R. Rubin, *Afghanistan from the Cold War through the War on Terror* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 30, 53-54.

producing activities such as predation along the highways, opium production, and smuggling that began to expand since the Soviet invasion but especially after the Soviet withdrawal, now became the most important part of the Afghan economy providing both resource to armed groups and livelihood to rural families.¹¹⁶³

In order to recover from the scars of the past and current wars, Afghanistan needed substantial aid from the international community. However, this enormous increase in the needs of the recipient country did not match with the general decline in donor interests. Especially, with the disappearance of two world superpowers, the Soviets and the Americans, from the Afghan scene through the former's dissolution and the latter's disengagement mainly due to the former's collapse, "Afghanistan found itself without world-power patrons for the first time in 150 years and hence had no significant sources of outside revenue with which to fund a central government."¹¹⁶⁴ The US, the only remaining superpower as well as a major donor, did not even reopen its embassy in Kabul that had been closed since 1979, decreased its aid to Afghanistan though the figures vary,¹¹⁶⁵ and completely ended its bilateral assistance program to Afghanistan (also known as CBHAP) in mid-1994 with the closure of its USAID Pakistan office, as enforced by the Pressler Amendment, running both Afghanistan and Pakistan programs since the merger of these two missions right after the closure of the Office of the AID Representative for Afghanistan in July 1993.¹¹⁶⁶ After that, the US continued providing aid to Afghanistan primarily through the UN, most of which went to refugees but also to medical assistance, food, demining, and agriculture, but not at the desired or required levels.¹¹⁶⁷ Rashid's comments on Washington's disappearance from the Afghan scene are as follows:

¹¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 116, 103-104.

¹¹⁶⁴ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 6.

¹¹⁶⁵ Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 137; U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, *Afghanistan: Is There Hope for Peace?: Hearings before the Subcommittee on Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs*, 104th Cong., 2d sess., June 6, 25, 26, and 27, 1996 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996), 1, 125, 197; Kenneth Katzman and Clayton Thomas, *Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy*, CRS Report No. RL30588 (Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, December 2017), 68, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL30588.pdf>

¹¹⁶⁶ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 251; U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Audit of the Close-out of USAID/Pakistan & Afghanistan*, Audit Report No. 5-391-95-012 (Singapore: USAID Regional Inspector General for Audit, June 20, 1995), 1, 16, 28-29, 30-31.

¹¹⁶⁷ U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, *Afghanistan: Is There Hope for Peace?: Hearings before the Subcommittee on Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs*, 104th Cong., 2d sess., June 6, 25, 26, and 27, 1996 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996), 1, 42, 125, 182, 197.

After providing billions of dollars' worth of arms and ammunition to the Mujaheddin, the USA began to walk away from the Afghan issue after Soviet troops completed their withdrawal in 1989. That walk became a run in 1992 after the fall of Kabul. Washington allowed its allies in the region, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, free rein to sort out the ensuing Afghan civil war. For ordinary Afghans the US withdrawal from the scene constituted a major betrayal, while Washington's refusal to harness international pressure to help broker a settlement between the warlords was considered a double betrayal. Other Afghans were furious at the USA for allowing Pakistan a free hand in Afghanistan. The US strategic absence allowed all the regional powers, including the newly independent CARs, to prop up competing warlords, thereby intensifying the civil war and guaranteeing its prolongation. The pipeline of US military aid to the Mujaheddin was never replaced by a pipeline of international humanitarian aid that could have been an inducement for the warlords to make peace and rebuild the country.¹¹⁶⁸

When the US and Gulf aid to Afghanistan dwindled between 1992 and 1994, leading to reduced funding for the UN and the NGOs managing Afghan relief and reconstruction efforts since the collapse of the Soviet client regime in 1992, this shortfall was partially offset by a substantial increase in funding from the European Union and bilateral European assistance.¹¹⁶⁹ Despite the increase in European aid, diminished superpower interest in Afghanistan led to a significant decline in international resource commitments, rendering "the idea of a 'Marshall Plan' for Afghanistan, once vigorously promoted by supporters of Afghan reconstruction" a distant hope,¹¹⁷⁰ and also resulting in minimal donor response to UN Appeals for Afghan rehabilitation.¹¹⁷¹ Maley notes that by the mid-1990s, UN appeals were consistently underfunded: the 1993–94 Appeal aimed for US\$121 million but achieved only \$56.6 million by September 1994; the 1994–95 Appeal sought US\$ 106.4 million but received only \$79.2 million by September 1995; and the 1995–96 Appeal requested US\$124 million but only raised US\$65.2 million by December 1996.¹¹⁷² This decrease in overall assistance had serious consequences for the Afghan reconstruction efforts.¹¹⁷³

¹¹⁶⁸ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 175-176.

¹¹⁶⁹ Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 137; Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 101.

¹¹⁷⁰ William Maley, "Reconstructing Afghanistan: Opportunities and Challenges," in *Recovery From Armed Conflict in Developing Countries*, ed. Geoff Harris (London: Routledge, 2002), 237.

¹¹⁷¹ Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 153-154.

¹¹⁷² William Maley, "Reconstructing Afghanistan: Opportunities and Challenges," in *Recovery From Armed Conflict in Developing Countries*, ed. Geoff Harris (London: Routledge, 2002), 239.

¹¹⁷³ Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 137.

Apart from the Soviet collapse ending the Cold War and the outbreak of the Mujahideen infighting, there were various reasons behind this general decline in donor interest shrinking funds. Maley points out the “past UN incompetence” and “donor fatigue” as the reasons of the regularly undersubscribed multilateral relief programs, and the ongoing “instability” in the country as the reason why Western governments do not want to make any bilateral aid commitments.¹¹⁷⁴ He elaborates further by stating that there are several factors contributing to donor fatigue such as intense competition from other humanitarian crisis, Afghanistan’s geopolitical isolation from the primary regions of Western concern as “it is not ‘middle’ enough to be part of the Middle East, and not ‘Asian’ enough to part of the Asia-Pacific Region,” its lack of former colonial patron, and the often poorly understood complexities of its internal affairs.¹¹⁷⁵

With regard to the composition of the assistance provided to Afghanistan under Mujahideen rule; despite emergency assistance remained as a component in the overall assistance and even with an increase in the 1993-1994 period because of further displacements from Kabul, the main emphasis of the late 1980s on the assistance for rehabilitation, reconstruction and development continued.¹¹⁷⁶ As for the geographical focus of overall assistance during these years, although UNDP-Kabul and in-country programmes gained prominence in Afghan reconstruction efforts compared to the UNOCA¹¹⁷⁷ and cross-border programmes in the early 1990s, heavy fighting in the capital resulted in the closure of all UN offices along with many international NGOs in Kabul during the 1992-1993 period and their relocation to Pakistan, while political instability in eastern Pashtun-dominated border areas had a significant negative impact on the overall assistance.¹¹⁷⁸

¹¹⁷⁴ William Maley, "The Reconstitution of the Afghan State," in *Afghanistan: Identity, Society and Politics since 1980*, ed. Micheline Centlivres-Demont (London: I.B. Tauris&Co Ltd, 2015), 69.

¹¹⁷⁵ William Maley, "Reconstructing Afghanistan: Opportunities and Challenges," in *Recovery From Armed Conflict in Developing Countries*, ed. Geoff Harris (London: Routledge, 2002), 245-246.

¹¹⁷⁶ Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 139.

¹¹⁷⁷ In 1993, UNOCA (UN Operations Centre in Afghanistan) was placed under the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) that was established in 1992 and renamed as UNOCHA (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan). Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 131; Jon Bennett, "Afghanistan: Cross-Border NGO Coordination, 1985-93'," in *Meeting Needs: NGO Coordination in Practice*, ed. Jon Bennett (London: Earthscan, 1995), 7.

¹¹⁷⁸ Jon Bennett, "Afghanistan: Cross-Border NGO Coordination, 1985-93'," in *Meeting Needs: NGO Coordination in Practice*, ed. Jon Bennett (London: Earthscan, 1995), 7; Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 230.

On the issue, Asger Christensen states that although the collapse of the Kabul regime in April 1992 made most of the country suddenly accessible, ongoing conflict in Kabul and political instability in Kandahar soon restricted access to large parts of central, northern, and southwestern provinces, leading to eastern provinces becoming the primary recipients of aid, and the aid efforts in the 1993-1994 period to address this situation failed to a great extent, leaving central, northwestern, and western provinces underfunded compared to eastern provinces.¹¹⁷⁹

Barfield points out that due to indifference and inadequate aid from the international community, the country was unable to recover as it had done repeatedly in the past.¹¹⁸⁰ This situation left the country to the tender mercies of its neighboring states or political forces within them, all of which had their own divergent interests as well as agendas and thus were quite eager to fill the void by lending support to their protégés within the country in order to put them either predominant or influential position in the country.¹¹⁸¹

The Mujahideen infighting reaching a stalemate also provided the necessary ground and opportunity for the large-scale interference of these neighboring actors in Afghan affairs, particularly the Mujahideen infighting.¹¹⁸² So the following picture emerged: While the Rabbani government was struggling to gain control over the country's foreign affairs by developing relations with India, Iran, Russia and the Western countries; Hikmetyar's Sunni Pashtun Hezb-i-Islami continued to be supported by Pakistan's Jamiat-i-Islami and ISI; Mazari's Shia Hazara Hezb-i-Wahdat by Iran; Sayyaf's Sunni Pashtun Ittehad by Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states; Dostum's Jumbesh by Uzbekistan and Russia; and also some of the regional power holders affiliated with Mujahideen groups established independent political and economic relations with the neighboring countries while paying little attention to Kabul.¹¹⁸³ Gilles Dorronsoro states, "Relations between outside states and their Afghan

¹¹⁷⁹ Asger Christensen, *Aiding Afghanistan: The Background and Prospects for Reconstruction in a Fragmented Society* (Copenhagen S, Denmark: NIAS, 2001), 138.

¹¹⁸⁰ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 6.

¹¹⁸¹ William Maley, "The Reconstitution of the Afghan State," in *Afghanistan: Identity, Society and Politics since 1980*, ed. Micheline Centlivres-Demont (London: I.B. Tauris&Co Ltd, 2015), 69-70; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 250.

¹¹⁸² Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 6.

¹¹⁸³ Ahmad Shayeq Qassem, *Afghanistan's Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 96-97, 99-100.

clients were based upon mutual instrumentalisation.”¹¹⁸⁴ As a result of these interest-based relations, these neighboring countries increased political instability of the Afghan state and internal rifts of the Mujahideen through supporting their Afghan clients not only against the Rabbani government but also against each other.¹¹⁸⁵ Any deterioration in the Rabbani government’s approach to their protégés also had a negative impact on the bilateral relations between Afghanistan and these states.¹¹⁸⁶ Furthermore, these interest-based relations with little regard to Kabul provided the regional ethnic power holders more autonomy and power vis-à-vis Kabul.¹¹⁸⁷ In short, the impact of external powers on various Mujahideen groups in Kabul as well as regional ethnic power holders affiliated with Mujahideen groups further exacerbated the existing situation within the country.

6.4. The Rise and Demise of the Taliban Regime: Repoliticizing Aid

While the Mujahiddin groups were tearing each other apart, another significant actor was about to appear on the Afghan political scene in 1994: the ‘Islamic Movement of Taliban’ (*Da Afghaništano da Talibano Islami Tahrik* in Pashto).¹¹⁸⁸ There are various scenarios on the early development of the Taliban movement ranging from being a product of a complicated set of interests of foreign actors such as Pakistan, the US and Western oil companies to a spontaneously developed indigenous movement or “accidental force and a local affair” aspiring to restore peace, security, law and order in the name of Islam in Afghan lands where anarchic violence, criminality, lawlessness, and disorder reigned after 1992.¹¹⁸⁹

¹¹⁸⁴ Gilles Dorransoro, *Revolution Unending: Afghanistan, 1979 to the Present*, trans. John King (London: Hurst & Company, 2005), 236.

¹¹⁸⁵ Ahmad ShayeQ Qassem, *Afghanistan’s Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 101; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 250.

¹¹⁸⁶ Ahmad ShayeQ Qassem, *Afghanistan’s Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 98, 101.

¹¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 99-101.

¹¹⁸⁸ William Maley, *The Afghanistan Wars* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 218.

¹¹⁸⁹ Robert D. Crews and Amin Tarzi, "Introduction," in *The Taliban and the Crisis of Afghanistan*, ed. Robert D. Crews and Amin Tarzi (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008); Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 257; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 253-255; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), xii, xviii; Neamatollah Nojumi, *The Rise of The Taliban in Afghanistan: Mass Mobilization, Civil War, and The Future of The Region* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 121; Rasul Bakhsh Rais, *Recovering the Frontier State: War, Ethnicity, and State in Afghanistan* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009), 65; Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 279; Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 25-29; Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans*

Whatever the real reason or reasons behind the emergence of Taliban movement as a new political force in 1994, the chaotic situation inside the country due to the failures of the Mujahideen groups both in establishing a stable functioning state headed by a nationally accepted leader or broad-based government and in providing basic security for life and property of the people created an ample ground for its occurrence. After the fall of the Najibullah regime namely the disappearance of the common enemy that was the only thing holding the rival Mujahideen groups together, the newly formed Mujahideen coalition government under Rabbani's presidency marking the power shift to the Tajik minority could neither manage to keep the country united nor avoid the engagement of the Mujahideen groups exploiting 1) the collapse of the Afghan central state along with its institutions, 2) the massive and unrestrained supplies of weapons from both sides during the Cold War and 3) the support of manipulative regional powers in a self-interested, violent, and Machiavellian struggle for power among each other, and this produced the stalemated civil war taking place mainly in Kabul and its environs, the fragmentation of the country into warlord fiefdoms ruled by former mujahideen-turned-warlords, most of whom aggressively abused the population at will and the loss of respect for the Mujahideen groups among the Afghans who had previously seen them as heroes of anti-Soviet jihad.¹¹⁹⁰ Ahmed Rashid summarizes the country's situation by stating that before the Taliban's rise in late 1994, Afghanistan was disintegrated into warlord fiefdoms, marked by endless fighting, shifting alliances, and widespread bloodshed, which were divided as follows: President Burhanuddin Rabbani's predominantly Tajik government held Kabul, its surroundings and the north-east of the country, while Ismael Khan controlled three provinces in the west centered on Herat, Uzbek general Rashid Dostum ruled six provinces in the north, Hazaras held central Afghanistan, and "Pashtun south and east there was even greater fragmentation, with one large fiefdom based in Jalalabad, which ruled three provinces bordering Pakistan; a small area adjacent to Kabul controlled by Hikmetyar; while in the south, multiple commanders ruled."¹¹⁹¹

So either as a local response to the abovementioned appalling conditions or by making use of the severe popular discontents about these conditions with a well-defined secret agenda

(Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 326-327; Ahmad Shayeq Qassem, *Afghanistan's Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 102-103.

¹¹⁹⁰ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 171; Nabi Misdaq, *Afghanistan: Political Frailty and External Interference* (London: Routledge, 2006), 168; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), xii

¹¹⁹¹ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 21; Ahmed Rashid, *Descent into Chaos: The US and The Failure of Nation Building in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia* (New York: Viking Penguin, 2008), 12.

composed of ethnic, religious or political motives; the movement calling itself ‘Taliban’¹¹⁹² started in a remote village of Kandahar during the second half of 1994 with a small armed group comprised largely of Afghan Pashtun refugee students but also graduates from Deobandi madrasas that had sprung up mostly with Saudi funding in rural areas and Afghan refugee camps along the Afghanistan border in Pakistan in the 1980s, who gathered around Mullah Muhammad Omar, a former Mujahideen warrior, a minor cleric and an ethnic Pashtun.¹¹⁹³ Actually, the graduates of these madrasas had joined the Mujahideen against the Soviets until their withdrawal and later against the Najibullah regime through the existing Peshawar party structure but when the Mujahideen failed in uniting and running the country that resulted in a brutal civil war and endless cycle of violence pitting Muslim against Muslim, causing tremendous human casualties and destroying what was left from the Soviet invasion, then this new actor got involved in the process against those Muslims who, in their eyes, had gone wrong and betrayed the country.¹¹⁹⁴ So spontaneously or not, this new player in Afghan political scene “appeared at a time when the public [particularly the Pashtuns in the south] had reached the point of desperation from the excessive aggression of the warlords and were also exhausted from the long war against the communists, Soviets and then amongst their own leaders.”¹¹⁹⁵ Nancy Dupree states, “The avowed purpose of the Taliban Islamic Movement is to complete the unfinished agenda of the jihad: to install a pure Islamic state, cleansed of evils perpetrated by their predecessors.”¹¹⁹⁶ The Taliban’s promises of peace, security of life and property, justice, law and order in the name of Islam aroused interest of many local communities in Kandahar as well as the cross-border trade

¹¹⁹² ‘Taliban’ is the Persian and Pashtu plural of the Arabic word ‘Talib’ meaning Islamic/religious student. Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History: Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 143.

¹¹⁹³ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 220-221; Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 326-327; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 253; Neamatollah Nojumi, "The Rise and Fall of the Taliban," in *The Taliban and the Crisis of Afghanistan*, ed. Robert D. Crews and Amin Tarzi (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008), 105; Neamatollah Nojumi, *The Rise of The Taliban in Afghanistan: Mass Mobilization, Civil War, and The Future of The Region* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 118-122; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 255, 257; Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 179; Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 89-90; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), xii.

¹¹⁹⁴ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 1, 25; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 255; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 253

¹¹⁹⁵ Nabi Misdaq, *Afghanistan: Political Frailty and External Interference* (London: Routledge, 2006), 178.

¹¹⁹⁶ Nancy Hatch Dupree, "Afghan Women Under the Taliban," in *Fundamentalism Reborn?: Afghanistan and the Taliban*, ed. William Maley (London: Hurst & Company, 1998), 145.

communities on both sides of the border, and its each successful step towards delivering on its promises by helping the local disputes, ending the power of the petty ex-Mujahideen warlords and atrocities of local armed groups, disarming the heavily armed militias, crushing the warring tribal groups and removing the predatory checkpoints on the main highways in Kandahar brought increasing support of not only these communities but also of some national and regional actors for different reasons.¹¹⁹⁷

After developing its material capabilities with the voluntary charitable donations from businessmen and traders, particularly those based in Quetta, as well as individuals through mosque-madrassa systems, and enlarging its sphere of influence within Kandahar during the summer of 1994, the Taliban decided to launch its first military campaign for the removal of predatory checkpoints installed by several local warlords on commercial roads in Kandahar and made its first move against Hikmetyar's forces at Spin Boldak.¹¹⁹⁸ The Taliban's decision of targeting this border town and Hikmetyar's men at its first serious military operation was based on the following factors. Spin Boldak was a crucial trading hub, functioning as a major transit points for Pakistani traders to either deliver goods to Afghanistan or smuggle them back to Pakistan.¹¹⁹⁹ In 1993, Benazir Bhutto aiming to establish a route to Central Asia first focused on the northern route from Peshawar to Tashkent through Kabul and Mazar-e-Sharif but then shifted to southern route from Quetta to Ashkabad through Kandahar and Herat due to ongoing fighting in the north and only needing bribes for commanders in the south.¹²⁰⁰ The Taliban's capture of strategic border town of Spin Boldak along the Quetta-Chaman road from Hikmetyar's forces that "were the main cause of resentment for the transit trade community" would provide the Taliban with increased support from their business backers seeking a check-point free corridor, help the Taliban develop relations with Pakistan that had largely ignored the Taliban in favor of Hikmetyar, and supply the under-equipped Taliban with crucial military supply as Spin

¹¹⁹⁷ Rasul Bakhsh Rais, *Recovering the Frontier State: War, Ethnicity, and State in Afghanistan* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009), 65-66; Neamatollah Nojumi, *The Rise of The Taliban in Afghanistan: Mass Mobilization, Civil War, and The Future of The Region* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 118, 121; Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 1, 25; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 257; Aisha Ahmad, *Jihad & Co.: Black Markets and Islamist Power* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 69, 81.

¹¹⁹⁸ Aisha Ahmad, *Jihad & Co.: Black Markets and Islamist Power* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 69, 83-86, 88.

¹¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 88.

¹²⁰⁰ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 26-27.

Boldak housed a huge arms depot.¹²⁰¹ After talking to Ismail Khan and Pakistani Consul General Amir Sultan Tarar in Herat and President Rabbani, the Taliban attacked Hikmetyar's garrison at Spin Boldak in mid-October 1994 and seized both the border post and the nearby large armory within a very short time.¹²⁰² With this successful move, the Taliban reached its initial goals of guaranteeing more support from the business and trade community, reaching huge military resources, and catching the attention of Islamabad. The Taliban's success at Spin Baldak worried the Kandahar warlords, including Hikmetyar, who criticized Pakistan for supporting the Taliban, but they remained divided and continued to fight among themselves instead of coming together to confront the Taliban.¹²⁰³

By turning this situation into their own advantage, the Talibs gradually began to push forward toward Kandahar in late October 1994 by removing checkpoints on roads, eliminating the local warlords and disarming the local armed groups en route.¹²⁰⁴ In early November 1994, once the Taliban rescued the Pakistani government's test-convoy exploring the overland trade route between Pakistan and Central Asia through Afghanistan, which was held up near Kandahar city by a few local warlords while it was going from Quetta to Ashkhabad, they guaranteed Pakistani government's support and then the movement marched into Kandahar and seized the city without a battle within a few days, allegedly either by persuasion or fear of being outmatched by the Taliban or large cash payments to surrender or Rabbani government's order to its governors and commanders in the key southern provinces including Jamiat commander Mullah Naqibullah (Naqib Akhundzade) in Kandahar to give way to the Taliban forces as part of Kabul's grand strategy against Hikmetyar.¹²⁰⁵ With the fall of Kandahar, the country's second largest city, Taliban gained significant advantages such as the capture of heavy military equipment, including numerous

¹²⁰¹ Aisha Ahmad, *Jihad & Co.: Black Markets and Islamist Power* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 89.

¹²⁰² Aisha Ahmad, *Jihad & Co.: Black Markets and Islamist Power* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 87-89; Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 25-27.

¹²⁰³ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 28.

¹²⁰⁴ Neamatollah Nojumi, *The Rise of The Taliban in Afghanistan: Mass Mobilization, Civil War, and The Future of The Region* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 134.

¹²⁰⁵ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 28-29; Neamatollah Nojumi, *The Rise of The Taliban in Afghanistan: Mass Mobilization, Civil War, and The Future of The Region* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 118; Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 327; Aisha Ahmad, *Jihad & Co.: Black Markets and Islamist Power* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 90-91; Ahmad Shayeq Qassem, *Afghanistan's Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 107; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 254-255.

tanks, military vehicles, six Mig-21 fighters, and six transport helicopters from the Soviet era, the establishment of a toll system at Spin Boldak, and the influx of 12,000 new recruits, including Afghan Pashtuns and Pakistani volunteers from JUI madrassas.¹²⁰⁶ Most importantly, with this victory, the Taliban got the Pakistani government's not only full attention but also unlimited support to go ahead while leading Islamabad to question its long-time favorite Hikmetyar's possible role in Afghanistan's future. All things considered, although Pakistani hand in the emergence of the Taliban was up to debate, its role in the rise of this new force was evident.

Once they took Kandahar, the Taliban established their own administration in the city. "A *shura* was formed in the city under the leadership of Mohammad Omar [Kandahar *Shura* or Inner *Shura*], and this came to form the effective government of those parts of the country controlled by the Taliban" in the following years.¹²⁰⁷ The Taliban restored law and order in Kandahar, one of the most conflict-ridden cities all over the country but also enforced their own austere version of Sharia, both of which brought two significant changes to the lives of ordinary Kandaharis as follows:

Having captured Kandahar, they brought the endemic criminality and factionalism there to a speedy end. Local leaders were shot or imprisoned; guns were impounded; roadblocks were demolished; the city was cleaned up and life improved. On the other hand, the Taliban soon began to impose the strictest interpretations of Islamic law and custom. Criminals had their hands or feet amputated; women were forbidden to work; girls were excluded from schools; the ubiquitous wearing of the *burqa* was decreed; games, music, and television were banned; punctilious attendance at the mosque was enforced.¹²⁰⁸

After gaining full control of Kandahar, the Taliban organized military operations towards the surrounding provinces in the south.¹²⁰⁹ The Taliban faced no central government or organized military opposition in the south, allowing them to fill "the lawless vacuum of southern Afghanistan" where no powerful regional leader existed to enforce order.¹²¹⁰ Rabbani government's continuation of its non-confrontational even cooperative attitude

¹²⁰⁶ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 29.

¹²⁰⁷ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 257.

¹²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 256-257.

¹²⁰⁹ Neamatollah Nojumi, *The Rise of The Taliban in Afghanistan: Mass Mobilization, Civil War, and The Future of The Region* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 118.

¹²¹⁰ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 258.

towards the Taliban in their advance northwards for the purpose of either eliminating or at least weakening Hikmetyar's Hezb-e-Islami that was daily bombarding and blockading the capital since 1992, without taking any risk of ethnic conflict, as seen in Ghazni where Rabbani forces allied with the Taliban against the attacks of Hikmetyar's forces, greatly served the interests of the Taliban.¹²¹¹ The Taliban's following discourse and actions also contributed to their rapid expansion:

...., Taliban leadership announced that the goal of their movement was not to pursue political power or control the government but to restore peace and security in the country. They also announced that when peace and security was achieved in Afghanistan they would allow the people of Afghanistan to form a national Islamic government. The call for peace and security and an end to the civil war was a long desire for Afghans inside and outside, and this declaration was a perfect match. This Taliban leadership's political call for peace and security not only deactivated many political groups in Afghanistan, it also successfully created a confusing environment among the remaining political groups... This confusion provided a great environment for the Taliban to move forward and influence many areas across the country.

...[Furthermore], the Taliban made agreements with the local communities that if they submitted their loyalty to them, they could continue their normal lives. At the same time, they integrated the local armed forces under their military organization and supported them with a generous cash flow that came from external sources.¹²¹²

Consequently, the Taliban gained control over 12 southern provinces within the first three months after capturing Kandahar and thereby reached the environs of Kabul in the north and of Herat in the west.¹²¹³ Tanner states, "In areas under their control, the Taliban replaced utter anarchy with strict order under extremely conservative Islamic principles."¹²¹⁴ However, this new situation neither created a big obstacle for the aid providers nor drew much attention of the international media. Atmar and Goodhand state that the Taliban decrees enforcing their own strict interpretation of Sharia in the Pashtun South namely their heartland areas "clash less with local practices and they have usually been less harshly applied."¹²¹⁵

¹²¹¹ Ahmad Shayeq Qassem, *Afghanistan's Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 107-108; Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 327.

¹²¹² Neamatollah Nojumi, *The Rise of The Taliban in Afghanistan: Mass Mobilization, Civil War, and The Future of The Region* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 134-135.

¹²¹³ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 31.

¹²¹⁴ Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 280.

¹²¹⁵ Haneef Atmar and Jonathan Goodhand, *Aid, Conflict and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan: What Lessons Can Be Learned?* (London: International Alert, February 2002), 25.

With regard to the ‘Taliban impact’ on the ongoing humanitarian programmes in the newly held Pashtun areas, N.H. Dupree states that “through patient dialogue, aid providers operating in provincial Taliban-held Pushtun communities, where secluded female behaviour was already the norm, were frequently able to continue their programmes after an initial hiatus.”¹²¹⁶ The UN officers Bruderlain and Ahmed make the following detailed analysis approving Dupree’s views:

From 1994 to the take over of Herat in September 1995, these constraints had a limited impact on the work of the agencies in Afghanistan. On the contrary, some agencies active in the countryside under the control of the Taliban were pleased with the new authorities. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), which were engaged in the rural rehabilitation programmes, were impressed by the capacity of the Taliban to restore a minimal order and guarantee the security of the agencies in these areas. Under the previous regime of factions, the different groups exerted considerable pressure on the agencies active in the areas under their control. Expensive military escorts were indispensable and the numerous checkpoints scattered along the road, as well as the number of undisciplined fighters wandering in the countryside, complicated the work of these agencies.

The stringent policies regarding women and access to schools did not raise much interest at first from these operational agencies, and later on from the UN system. The rural areas under the Taliban control until September 1995 were among the most conservative regions of Afghanistan. The policies of the Taliban were in line with these traditions and with the *modus operandi* of the local rural population under the factions. For example, because of the prevailing insecurity under the mujahidin commanders and the lack of resources, education was extremely limited and concentrated on boys, who will provide a living for their future family. Girls’ education was seen as secondary, and presented serious threats to the security of the girls over a certain age who had to travel sometimes significant distances on unsafe roads to attend their classes...

FAO and UNOPS experience with the Taliban in this period was one of cohabitation and mutual observation... Taliban representatives were regularly informed of the work and of the agendas of the agencies... Other agencies, such as the World Food Program (WFP) and UNICEF, did not consider the recent decisions on the gender issue as constituting a definite precedent. The regime was young and unexperienced. In general, the Taliban movement was considered to be an unusual offspring of the various factions that was, in their view, hardly sustainable.¹²¹⁷

The Taliban kept marching forward to the north instead of remaining a peripheral force in the south. Rubin explains the Taliban’s move northwards by stating that if the Taliban had ceased their expansion after establishing order in southern Pashtun areas, they could have allied with “other ethnoregional coalitions” in negotiating a decentralized Afghan state but Pakistan’s preference for a centralized state, coupled with the US interests in stabilizing

¹²¹⁶ Nancy Hatch Dupree, "Afghan Women Under the Taliban," in *Fundamentalism Reborn?: Afghanistan and the Taliban*, ed. William Maley (London: Hurst & Company, 1998), 146.

¹²¹⁷ Claude Bruderlein and Adeel Ahmed, *Report of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) Mission to Afghanistan (30 March - 5 May 1997)*, (New York: United Nations, 15 June 1997), 23-25.

Afghanistan for oil and gas exports from Central Asia while keeping sanctions on Iran, led both Pakistan and the US to support the Taliban's pursuit of a centralized state.¹²¹⁸ Yet, a major challenge waiting for the Taliban was up in the north where they would face powerful warlords and intricate political and ethnic divisions, unlike the easily conquered, chaotic Pashtun south where there were only minor commanders.¹²¹⁹ However, the Taliban had two significant advantages. First, they were not as in their early days. During their rapid and successful advance from the south to the north, the Taliban gained more strength by 1) increasing their manpower with the influx of thousands more young Afghan Pashtun madrasa students rushing out of the refugee camps in Pakistani border region to join them (the real Taliban), the incorporation of the defected commanders together with their militias (former jihad fighters), and the participation of former communist regime officers; 2) enlarging their arsenal through capturing the massive quantities of small arms, tanks, helicopters etc. of those armed groups; and 3) by winning the hearts-and-minds of the exhausted and war-weary Afghan population through restoring peace, security and order along with the enforcement of their specific rigorous interpretation of Sharia law on Afghan society.¹²²⁰ Secondly, a failed state still suffering from violent conflicts among the power-seeking and self-interested elites provided perfect conditions for the Taliban who excelled at taking advantage of internal rivalries among their adversaries, enticing defections with promises of positions within their own administration, or bribing militia leaders with a substantial amount in cash."¹²²¹

When the Taliban reached the environs of Kabul in early 1995, the city had been under heavy bombardment and blistering attack for about a year by a new anti-government alliance known as the Shura-i Hamahangi (Coordination Council) consisting of Hikmetyar's Hezb, Dostum's Jumbesh and Mazari's Wahdat.¹²²² The Taliban drawing near to Kabul drove

¹²¹⁸ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), xiii-xiv.

¹²¹⁹ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 33.

¹²²⁰ Aisha Ahmad, *Jihad & Co.: Black Markets and Islamist Power* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 92; Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 31-32, 35; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), xiii; Anthony Davis, "How the Taliban Became a Military Force," in *Fundamentalism Reborn?: Afghanistan and the Taliban*, ed. William Maley (London: Hurst & Company, 1998), 55.

¹²²¹ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 259.

¹²²² Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 216; Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 33-34.

Hikmetyar's Hezb-e-Islami forces away from the southern environs of Kabul, including their headquarters at Charasiab, and then Massoud's forces took full control of those areas left by Hikmetyar's forces before the Taliban arrived but later upon the demand of the Taliban promising not to attack Kabul, Rabbani-Massoud duo handed over Charasiab to the Taliban as a continuation of goodwill gesture.¹²²³ The removal of Hikmetyar's Hezb-e Islami, whose power had been deriving from 'its ability to threaten Kabul rather than from a strong support base', as a military threat temporarily strengthened Rabbani's position and raised the Taliban's prestige among the skeptical Kabulis with the end of daily bombardments and blockade aside of meeting the demand of cross-border trade communities supporting the Taliban movement since its very early days, but also triggered a 'significant elite restructuring' that would make things much easier for the Taliban.¹²²⁴ The Taliban gained a significant advantage to move into the capital city in March 1995 when Massoud's forces launched a full-scale offensive against Mazari's Hezb-e Wahdat forces, Hikmetyar's Shia Hazara ally now deprived of his support and thereupon Wahdat turned to the Taliban for help by surrendering its positions and heavy weapons to them; but this instant alliance did not end well because the murder of Mazari and his close aides by the Taliban became the beginning of the feud between Shia Hazaras and Sunni Pashtun Talibs and more importantly one-on-one bloody street fight between the Taliban flooding into the western suburbs of Kabul and Massoud's forces not allowing the Taliban to replace Hazaras there resulted in the victory of Massoud's forces, Taliban's withdrawal from the area to Charasiab with heavy casualties and the end of Wahdat's presence in Kabul.¹²²⁵ Upon the Taliban's retaliatory heavy bombardment of Kabul from Charasiab, proving that they were not any different than Hikmetyar.¹²²⁶ Soon after in late March, Massoud succeeded to push the Taliban out of Charasiab to the southern parts of Logar beyond rocket range, and with the departure of Dostam's last forces from their positions in Kabul towards north; thereby for the first time

¹²²³ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 327; Ahmad Shayeq Qassem, *Afghanistan's Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 108; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 258-259.

¹²²⁴ William Maley, "The Dynamics of Regime Transition in Afghanistan," *Central Asian Survey* 16, no. 2 (1997): 174; Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 34; Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 327.

¹²²⁵ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 257; Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 35; Abdulkader Sinno, "Explaining the Taliban's Ability to Mobilize the Pashtuns," in *The Taliban and the Crisis of Afghanistan*, ed. Robert D. Crews and Amin Tarzi (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008), 65.

¹²²⁶ Ahmad Shayeq Qassem, *Afghanistan's Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 109.

since 1992, Massoud forces under the ISA was in complete control of Kabul and its environs where life returned to normal with the end of rocket attacks.¹²²⁷

Meanwhile, the Taliban's successful advance from Kandahar towards Herat during February-March 1995 period and Dostum's opportunistic attacks from the north to seize Ismail Khan-controlled Badghis worried the Kabul regime of that Ismail Khan fighting on two fronts might lose Herat to the Taliban and prompted Massoud rush to help Ismail Khan in defending Herat against the Taliban forces; thereby these two powerful figures in cooperation achieved to make the Taliban suffer heavy casualties and retreat losing some of the areas they had captured earlier.¹²²⁸ However, the course of the events changed in August 1995 when Ismail Khan launched an attack against the Taliban and moved close to Kandahar by overstressing his limited resources but met with an unexpectedly strong response by the Taliban forces that had strengthened their combat capacity during the summer of 1995; and consequently the Taliban defeating Ismail Khan's forces captured his Herat-based fiefdom where they established their own administration based on strict Sharia law in September 1995.¹²²⁹ Ismail Khan fled to Iran, Rabbani publicly accused the Pakistani government of involvement through supporting Taliban, and Iran voiced its concern over the advance of a Sunni movement like the Taliban.¹²³⁰ Pakistan-brokered confidential Taliban-Dostum agreement that made Dostum send his Uzbek technicians to Kandahar to repair Mig fighters and helicopters captured by the Taliban a year earlier in Kandahar, thus founding the Taliban's first airpower, and Dostum's planes initiating a bombing campaign against Herat were two important factors that contributed to the Taliban's victory in Herat.¹²³¹ Another important factor to be underlined, the Taliban recruited thousands of seasoned ex-Mujahiddin fighters with the help of veteran Mujahideen commander Jalaladin Haqqani during the summer of 1995.¹²³² Last but not least, notwithstanding Rabbani's accusations

¹²²⁷ Ahmad Shayeq Qassem, *Afghanistan's Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (UK: Ashgate, 2009), 109; William Maley, *The Afghanistan Wars* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 204.

¹²²⁸ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 36; Abdulkader Sinno, "Explaining the Taliban's Ability to Mobilize the Pashtuns," in *The Taliban and the Crisis of Afghanistan*, ed. Robert D. Crews and Amin Tarzi (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008), 65-66.

¹²²⁹ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 258.

¹²³⁰ Willem Vogelsang, *The Afghans* (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 328.

¹²³¹ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 39.

¹²³² Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 149; Neamatollah Nojumi, *The Rise of The*

against Pakistan, he also had a considerable share in the fall of Ismail Khan's fiefdom to the Taliban. While Ismail Khan was fighting with the Taliban on the front lines, Rabbani government initially sending a large group of armed Kandahari and Helmandi ex-Mujahiddin forces to his aid later abandoned him to his fate.¹²³³ Barfield noted that if Rabbani had joined the northern attack, the Taliban might have been driven out of the country, but instead, his efforts focused on undermining Ismail Khan in Herat by supporting his rivals to displace him.¹²³⁴

By adding Herat and the entire western provinces into the areas in their hands, the Taliban also seized Ismail Khan's huge amount of military equipment as well as jet fighters, secured the transit road and thus transit trade between Pakistan and Central Asia, and began to control more than half of the country including the border region with Iran but with some challenges in relation to the ruling predominantly non-Pashtun areas for the first time.¹²³⁵ With regard to how the Taliban treated Heratis, Rashid states that they imposed harsh rule on Herat by arresting hundreds, closing schools, and enforcing stricter social bans and Sharia law even greater severity than in Kandahar, and also placed the city under the control of Durrani Pashtuns, many of whom could not speak Persian, making communication with Heratis difficult.¹²³⁶ In response to the Taliban excesses, Herati women who were completely driven indoors as being banned from bazaars, bathhouses, work, school namely from all public settings, protested the Taliban excesses in October 1996 but the Taliban religious police violently suppressed it.¹²³⁷

Meanwhile, the Taliban takeover of Herat and their enforcement of stringent gender discrimination policies in employment and education under Sharia law on Herat was the

Taliban in Afghanistan: Mass Mobilization, Civil War, and The Future of The Region (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 146.

¹²³³ Neamatollah Nojumi, *The Rise of The Taliban in Afghanistan: Mass Mobilization, Civil War, and The Future of The Region* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 143-148.

¹²³⁴ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 259.

¹²³⁵ Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 219; Neamatollah Nojumi, *The Rise of The Taliban in Afghanistan: Mass Mobilization, Civil War, and The Future of The Region* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 148; Abdulkader Sinno, "Explaining the Taliban's Ability to Mobilize the Pashtuns," in *The Taliban and the Crisis of Afghanistan*, ed. Robert D. Crews and Amin Tarzi (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008), 66.

¹²³⁶ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 40.

¹²³⁷ *Ibid.*, 113.

beginning of tense relations between the Taliban and some members of the international aid community having great presence in Herat through several reconstruction programs and providing almost all the health care and social services in the war-torn country. The international aid community considering the Taliban movement controlling the Pashtun South as “a rural Pushtun phenomenon”, “young and inexperienced” and “hardly sustainable”, and the movement’s gender discrimination policies over there as temporary began to change its perception of the movement with the Taliban’s Herat victory.¹²³⁸ And the subsequent enforcement of the Taliban’s gender policies in Herat forced some members of the international aid community to decide on suspending their programs. Rashid states, “The international media and the UN largely chose to ignore these events in Herat, but several Western NGOs realized the profound implications for their future activities. After a long internal debate and fruitless negotiations with the Taliban in Herat, UNICEF and Save the Children suspended their educational programmes in Herat because girls were excluded from them.”¹²³⁹ First, in November 1995, UNICEF announced the suspension of its education assistance to the Taliban-controlled areas due to Taliban’s ban on female education.¹²⁴⁰ UNICEF’s reference to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child that had been signed by the country’s past government in taking this position did not mean anything to the Taliban recognizing only the validity of Sharia law and perceiving “the UN human rights instruments” as “vehicles of Western cultural imperialism.”¹²⁴¹ Later, in March 1996, Save the Children decided to suspend its operations in Herat for the same reasons and invited other humanitarian agencies in the country to consider doing the same thing for “every non-emergency programme in sectors where women’s employment was prohibited.”¹²⁴² There are two complementary factors behind the deterioration of the relations between the Taliban and some members of the international aid community. First one is the location factor. Since Herat, a modern, cosmopolitan urban center populated by traditionally liberal-minded educated people and flourished with the existence of security and booming economy in the

¹²³⁸ Claude Bruderlein and Adeel Ahmed, *Report of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) Mission to Afghanistan (30 March - 5 May 1997)*, (United Nations, May 1997), 25.

¹²³⁹ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 113.

¹²⁴⁰ Ludwig W. Adamec, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, ed. Jon Woronoff, 3rd ed. (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003), 520.

¹²⁴¹ Nancy Hatch Dupree, "Afghan Women Under the Taliban," in *Fundamentalism Reborn?: Afghanistan and the Taliban*, ed. William Maley (London: Hurst & Company, 1998), 147.

¹²⁴² Nancy Hatch Dupree, "Afghan Women Under the Taliban," in *Fundamentalism Reborn?: Afghanistan and the Taliban*, ed. William Maley (London: Hurst & Company, 1998), 147. For details please see, Claude Bruderlein and Adeel Ahmed, *Report of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) Mission to Afghanistan (30 March - 5 May 1997)*, (United Nations, May 1997), 25.

pre-Taliban years under Ismail Khan was completely different than the Taliban's previously captured traditional, conservative and predominantly rural Pashtun South that could only reach security with the arrival of the Taliban; the international aid community that easily managed to continue its work in the Taliban-controlled Pashtun South where the movement's gender discrimination policies had already been in line with the local customs and with the survival strategy of the local population during the chaotic pre-Taliban years, now had serious concerns about how to operate under these new conditions in a city like Herat. Second one is time factor. N.H. Dupree explains this factor by stating that since 1994, international aid providers have repeatedly sought clarifications on women's education and employment from the and, in response, the Taliban have consistently maintained that providing education for all, including women and girls, is an Islamic duty but they point to the lack of separate facilities and street security as temporary obstacles, pledging to resolve these issues once law and order are established, while criticizing the international aid community for tying assistance to these issues.¹²⁴³ However, this call for the conditionality of assistance was declined by most of the aid agencies thinking of that such an action "would jeopardize large populations in need of assistance," instead, they raised the women's situation in every meeting with the Taliban authorities who got irritated by this issue and in response questioned the silence of the international community against "excessive violations against women by the Mujahideen" in the previous years.¹²⁴⁴ Also, the Taliban exploited divisions within the aid community to their advantage, leading to increased restrictions on females, as explained by Ahmed Rashid below:

The suspension of these aid programmes did not deter the Taliban, who quickly realized that other UN agencies were not prepared to take a stand against them on the gender issue. Moreover they had succeeded in dividing the aid-giving community. UN policy was in a shambles because the UN agencies had failed to negotiate from a common platform. As each UN agency tried to cut its own deal with the Taliban, the UN compromised its principles, while Taliban restrictions on women only escalated. 'The UN is on a slippery slope. The UN thinks by making small compromises it can satisfy the international community and satisfy the Taliban. In fact it is doing neither,' the head of a European NGO told me.¹²⁴⁵

Having gained significant political, military and strategic advantages vis-à-vis Rabbani government with the capture of Ismail Khan's Herat-based fiefdom in September 1995, the

¹²⁴³ Nancy Hatch Dupree, "Afghan Women Under the Taliban," in *Fundamentalism Reborn?: Afghanistan and the Taliban*, ed. William Maley (London: Hurst & Company, 1998), 146.

¹²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 147.

¹²⁴⁵ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 113.

Taliban now in complete control of southern and western Afghanistan, shifted their focus back to the capital. The Taliban launched a series of strong attacks on Kabul from the south during October and November 1995 period that claimed many civilian lives due to their rockets, bombs and artillery pouring into the city but Massoud-led government forces achieved to push them back in late November 1995 by inflicting heavy losses on them, and the Taliban thereupon positioned in a wide arc around southern Kabul to spend the winter and resorted once more to daily rocket bombardment of Kabul to increase the pressure on the city that caused enormous human and material damage.¹²⁴⁶ Rashid states, “Camped outside the capital, the Taliban had been rocketing Kabul mercilessly throughout the year. In April 1996 alone, the Taliban fired 866 rockets, killing 180 civilians, injuring 550 and destroying large tracts of the city – a repetition of Hikmetyar’s attacks in 1993–95.”¹²⁴⁷ Upon this, in the midst of winter, the UN launched “an emergency airlift of food” into Kabul.¹²⁴⁸

While all these were happening on the front line, significant political developments were taking place in Rabbani’s Kabul and Taliban’s Kandahar. President Rabbani, as of early 1996, began peace talks with Hikmetyar, Dostum and Khalili, who became the new leader of the Hezb-i Wahdat after Mazari’s death, in order to establish a new inclusive coalition government against the Taliban threat and also lobbying activities for international support and increased military aid in the neighboring countries (Iran, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan) as well as regional powers having anti-Taliban stance (India, Russia), all of which ended up well towards August 1996 with Rabbani’s forging a renewed alliance with Hezb-e Wahdat, bringing Hikmetyar to the new Kabul government as prime minister, making Dostum agree to a truce that would provide reopening the strategic Salang highway connecting Kabul to the north of country, and getting the requested support of the region states (Iran, Russia, India).¹²⁴⁹ However, among all those successful moves towards broadening the government’s power base, Rabbani’s rapprochement with Hikmetyar, who had acted as a total spoiler in the past by relying heavily on the Pakistani support and even

¹²⁴⁶ Anthony Davis, "How the Taliban Became a Military Force," in *Fundamentalism Reborn?: Afghanistan and the Taliban*, ed. William Maley (London: Hurst & Company, 1998), 63-65; Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 258-259.

¹²⁴⁷ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 47.

¹²⁴⁸ Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 283.

¹²⁴⁹ William Maley, *The Afghanistan Wars* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 215-216; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 222-223; Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 43-45, 47.

had rained rockets on Kabul for years but now agreed to join the ISA as prime minister just because the Pakistani support shifted from him to the new favorite Taliban, would have a tremendously detrimental impact on the fight against the Taliban in the days to come.

Meanwhile, Taliban leader Mullah Omar, who declined the Pakistani proposal of creating an anti-Rabbani alliance with the participation of the opposition groups, summoned all the Pashtun religious leaders in the Taliban-controlled areas to Kandahar in March 1996 to decide the future course of action, which resulted in the declaration of *jihad* against the Rabbani government and the acclamation of Mullah Omar as “the ‘Amir-ul Momineen’ or ‘Commander of the Faithful’, an Islamic title that made him the undisputed leader of the *jihad*” in April 1996.¹²⁵⁰ Rashid states, “No Afghan had adopted the title since 1834, when King Dost Mohammed Khan assumed the title before he declared jihad against the Sikh kingdom in Peshawar.”¹²⁵¹

Furthermore, in response to the military aid of Russia, Iran and India to the Rabbani’s anti-Taliban coalition, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia increased their arms supplies to the Taliban.¹²⁵² This increasing interference of the external actors worried the US government, which had lost its interest in Afghanistan after the end of the Cold War by leaving the floor to its allies Pakistan and Saudi Arabia but had to develop a renewed interest in this country after the American oil giant Unocal and its Saudi partner Delta signed an agreement with Turkmenistan in October 1995 for the construction of a gas pipeline from Turkmenistan to Pakistan and beyond through Afghanistan, and thus Washington underlining its neutrality and non-intervention policies towards the country began to move on several fronts for the purpose of making the pipeline project acceptable to all Afghan factions and convincing these factions to restore peace and political stability in the country through economic opportunities that would come along with the project.¹²⁵³ Even “Unocal had announced it would give humanitarian aid as ‘bonuses’ to the Afghan warlords, once they agreed to form a joint council to supervise the pipeline project. Again the implication was that Unocal was ready to dish out money to the warlords.”¹²⁵⁴ Although Unocal’s purpose was purely

¹²⁵⁰ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 41-43.

¹²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 42.

¹²⁵² *Ibid.*, 44-45.

¹²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 45-46, 165-166, 175-176, 178, 181, 261-262.

¹²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 166.

economic, Washington's support to the Unocal's pipeline project was not only economic but also political because it was also targeting to transport the "newly accessible Central Asian oil and natural gas to the world markets, all while bypassing key rivals, Russia and Iran."¹²⁵⁵

The Taliban moved quickly to seize Kabul before the new anti-Taliban alliance got strengthened with the participation of more opposition figures by adopting a new strategy of approaching Kabul on target from the east instead of the south.¹²⁵⁶ Accordingly, the Taliban forces, launching a massive military campaign over the strategic Ghilzai Pashtun-majority provinces in the eastern Afghanistan during August-September 1996 period, first captured Hikmetyar-controlled Paktia province together with Hezb-e Islami's main arms depot over there; secondly seized Nangarhar province under the rule of the multi-party *Shura*, headed by the Hezb-e Islami (Khaless) commander Haji Ghadir, without any serious local resistance due to the *Shura*'s splintering into pro- and anti-Taliban groups; thirdly took the neighboring provinces of Laghman and Kunar again with little or no local resistance, all of which put increased pressure on Rabbani government now surrounded by the Taliban in almost all directions except the north.¹²⁵⁷

Shortly afterwards, the Taliban, moving on their real target, 'Sarobi', a very strategic district on the Kabul-Jalalabad highway and Hikmetyar's stronghold but most importantly the new linchpin of Kabul's defense on the eastern front chosen by Massoud, took it by defeating the government forces who got weakened with the defection of Hikmetyar's forces to the Taliban.¹²⁵⁸ With these actions, the Taliban gained the control of almost two-thirds of the country, including several strategic posts on along the Pakistan border and a critical supply route from Pakistan to Kabul, got closer to the strategic military and energy facilities of the government, and increased their military power enormously through the capture of military

¹²⁵⁵ Robert D. Crews and Amin Tarzi, "Introduction," in *The Taliban and the Crisis of Afghanistan*, ed. Robert D. Crews and Amin Tarzi (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008), 5.

¹²⁵⁶ Neamatollah Nojumi, *The Rise of The Taliban in Afghanistan: Mass Mobilization, Civil War, and The Future of The Region* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 149; Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 47.

¹²⁵⁷ Neamatollah Nojumi, *The Rise of The Taliban in Afghanistan: Mass Mobilization, Civil War, and The Future of The Region* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 149-150; Nabi Misdaq, *Afghanistan: Political Frailty and External Interference* (London: Routledge, 2006), 184; Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 187; Anthony Davis, "How the Taliban Became a Military Force," in *Fundamentalism Reborn?: Afghanistan and the Taliban*, ed. William Maley (London: Hurst & Company, 1998), 66

¹²⁵⁸ Anthony Davis, "How the Taliban Became a Military Force," in *Fundamentalism Reborn?: Afghanistan and the Taliban*, ed. William Maley (London: Hurst & Company, 1998), 66-67; Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 151-152.

outposts and large arms depots.¹²⁵⁹ In late September 1996 when the Taliban forces began attacking Kabul from the east, Rabbani's commander Massoud managed to evacuate most of the government forces and army inventory from the city that had become indefensible to his northern strongholds at Panjsher Valley in order to continue the fight from there.¹²⁶⁰ Thus the Taliban entered Kabul on 27 September 1996 without a battle. Few days after the Taliban takeover of Kabul, in October 1996, UN Undersecretary General for Political Affairs Mr. Murrack Goulding remarked that the Taliban's military advances appeared more as a result of their opponents' reluctance to fight than actual military victories, and added that the Taliban received some degree of welcome upon entering these cities.¹²⁶¹ Massoud's successfully held evacuation plan from Kabul before the Taliban entered the capital not only avoided a massive war that would perish the war-weary Massoud-led government forces and cause enormous civilian casualties, but also allowed the Rabbani government to keep Afghanistan's seat at the United Nations in the future.

Thereby, the following picture emerged in the Afghan political landscape: the South including Kabul and Herat controlled by the Taliban and the North controlled by the following forces: Tajik Massoud's forces in the northeast (Jamiat), Hazara Khalili's forces in Hazarajat (Wahdat) and Uzbek Dostum's forces in the northwest (Jumbesh). These three forces soon patched up their differences to counter the Taliban's thrust and formed an anti-Taliban alliance 'the Supreme Council for the Defense of the Motherland' (Supreme Defense Council) on 10 October 1996.¹²⁶² Dorronsoro underlines that this did not indicate "a political transformation" as the alliance consisted of parties opposed to each other in ideology, constituency and political ambitions, with military coordination remaining largely theoretical.¹²⁶³ Rubin comparing this new anti-Taliban alliance composed of odd bedfellows with the Taliban notes that:

The Taliban are the only group that appears to have an effective national state

¹²⁵⁹ Zaheeruddin Abdullah, "Afghan City Captured By Rebels," *Washington Post*, September 12, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1996/09/12/afghan-city-captured-by-rebels/1262090f-fe30-4e03-a549-bb1f78aeeb27/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.fc7193aa9551

¹²⁶⁰ Anthony Davis, "How the Taliban Became a Military Force," in *Fundamentalism Reborn?: Afghanistan and the Taliban*, ed. William Maley (London: Hurst & Company, 1998), 68; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 224-225.

¹²⁶¹ Voice of America (VOA), "Afghanistan: UN Peace Through Political Process." October 02, 1996. Last accessed May 01, 2024. <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/afghanistan-un-peace-through-political-process>

¹²⁶² Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), xix.

¹²⁶³ Gilles Dorronsoro, *Revolution Unending: Afghanistan, 1979 to the Present*, trans. John King (London: Hurst & Company, 2005), 254.

building strategy. The areas under the domination of the Taliban are controlled, though unevenly, by a single central authority that enjoys something close to a monopoly of armed force in those areas. While the Taliban are as driven by factionalism, personal rivalries, and disagreements as any other group, these differences have so far been pursued within a unitary, centralized structure. This gives them a decisive advantage in mobilizing the resources under their control. The groups composing the northern alliance, however, have each maintained their own military formations and commands, and factional disputes have led to their split into competing military groups.¹²⁶⁴

In the rest of the year, heavy fighting took place between the Taliban trying to advance northwards and this newly established anti-Taliban Northern Alliance.¹²⁶⁵ These developments right after the fall of Kabul also sharpened existing tensions in the region by triggering further polarization among the regional powers in accordance with their interests and security perceptions. Rasid states that “Iran, Russia and four Central Asian Republics warned the Taliban not to move north and publicly declared they would help rearm the anti-Taliban alliance” whereas “Pakistan and Saudi Arabia sent diplomatic missions to Kabul to see what help they could offer the Taliban.”¹²⁶⁶

While all these were happening on the front line and in the regional politics, the Taliban in Kabul began state-building efforts in earnest. The Taliban quickly set up a six-member Provisional Council, though not included a single Kabuli, headed by the Taliban’s Deputy Chief Mullah Rabbani (second in command to Mullah Omar) to rule the capital that subsequently grew in stages into a cabinet of acting ministers (Kabul *Shura* or Central *Shura*) but the ultimate decision-making authority and thus the real power remained in the hands of Mullah Omar, the Taliban’s founding, spiritual and military leader who would also become ‘Emir’ in October 1997 when the ‘Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan’ (IEA) was proclaimed, and his ten-member Interim Ruling Council or Supreme Council (Kandahar *Shura* or Inner *Shura*) that had been established back in 1994, both the Emir and his *Shura* continued to be based in Kandahar by turning this southern Pashtun province into the country’s new power center.¹²⁶⁷ Barfield evaluates the emergence of this two-track

¹²⁶⁴ Barnett R. Rubin, *Afghanistan from the Cold War through the War on Terror* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 12.

¹²⁶⁵ Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 153.

¹²⁶⁶ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 53-54.

¹²⁶⁷ Arthur S. Banks and Thomas C. Muller, eds., *Political Handbook of the World: 1998: Governments and Intergovernmental Organizations as of January 1, 1998 (with Major Political Developments Noted through April 1, 1998)* (Binghamton, NY: CSA Publications, 1998), 6; Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 51. For detailed info on the Taliban Shuras in Kandahar and

government structure “poorly adapted to ruling a country or running bureaucracy” as the direct result of the Taliban’s self-perception “as returning to the early days of Islam, in which the community was ruled by a small council of religious leaders” and the continuation of this bizarre structure in the latter years of the Taliban, albeit some cosmetic changes, as proof of the Taliban’s reluctance “to make the transition from a social movement to a government.”¹²⁶⁸ Despite its flaws, the Taliban government reflected a new phenomenon in the Afghan political history: “As the first government run by clerics, the Taliban marked a sharp break with Afghan political tradition. Religion had always played a significant role in Afghan politics, but previously Muslim clerics had always been servants of the state, and not its masters.”¹²⁶⁹ However, the Taliban government, seeking international recognition and Afghanistan’s UN seat after taking Kabul, failed to achieve either, not only because the Rabbani government was still asserting its authority within the Afghan territory and clashing with the Taliban forces, but because the Taliban’s human rights violations that had attracted relatively little attention back in the past became an international issue within the days of their capture of Kabul.¹²⁷⁰

The Taliban’s brutal execution of former president Najibullah together with his brother within hours of their arrival in Kabul on the grounds that they were ‘anti-Islamist communist criminals’ after forcibly removing them from the UN compound where they had been living in refuge since Najibullah’s Soviet-backed regime had been overthrown by the Mujahideen forces in 1992,¹²⁷¹ which was evaluated by Rashid as “a premeditated, targeted killing designed to terrorize the population,”¹²⁷² due to the public display of their battered corpses in the downtown Kabul, sparked an international reaction. The international community, particularly the Muslim world, condemned this public murder, which embarrassed their allies

Kabul, please see Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 98-99, 100-101, 220-221.

¹²⁶⁸ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 261.

¹²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 263.

¹²⁷⁰ William Maley, *The Afghanistan Wars* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 236-237, 243-244. For a very detailed analysis of the Taliban’s international legal status, please see Rüdiger Wolfrum and Christiane E. Philipp, “The Status of the Taliban: Their Obligations and Rights under International Law,” In *Max Planck Yearbook of United Nations Law*, Volume 6 (2002), ed. Armin von Bogdandy and Rüdiger Wolfrum (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2002), 559-601.

¹²⁷¹ Associated Press, “Guerillas Take Afghan Capital as Troops Flee,” *The New York Times*, September 28, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.nytimes.com/1996/09/28/world/guerillas-take-afghan-capital-as-troops-flee.html>

¹²⁷² Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 50.

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, and humiliated the UN, leading to a UN statement on the grave violation of its immunity and jeopardized peace efforts, while the Taliban responded by issuing death sentences for Dostum, Rabbani and Masud.¹²⁷³ Notwithstanding, within few days of the Taliban's violation of UN sanctuary and brutal executions, the UN sent its new special peace envoy Norbert Hall, replacing former envoy Mestiri upon his resignation in May 1996 over the failure of the UN peace plan, to Afghanistan where he had separate meetings with the Taliban leaders and Dostum to broker a peace agreement.¹²⁷⁴

The Taliban's subsequent act of the enforcement of strict Islamic rule in Kabul, which has long been the symbol of modernity in Afghanistan, through successive decrees together with severe punishments for lawbreakers resulted in the following situation in Kabul:¹²⁷⁵

Within 24 hours of taking Kabul, the Taliban imposed the strictest Islamic system in place anywhere in the world. All women were banned from work, even though one quarter of Kabul's civil service, the entire elementary educational system and much of the health system were run by women. Girls' schools and colleges were closed down affecting more than 70,000 female students and a strict dress code of head-to-toe veils for women was imposed. There were fears that 25,000 families which were headed by war widows and depended on working and UN handouts would starve. Every day brought fresh pronouncements. 'Thieves will have their hands and feet amputated, adulterers will be stoned to death and those taking liquor will be lashed,' said an announcement on Radio Kabul on 28 September 1996.

TV, videos, satellite dishes, music and all games including chess, football and kite-flying were banned. Radio Kabul was renamed Radio Shariat and all music was taken off the air. Taliban soldiers stood on main streets arresting men without beards... None of the Shura members had ever lived in a large city, most had never even visited Kabul, but they were now running a vibrant, semi-modern, multi-ethnic city of 1.2 million people in which Pashtuns were only a small minority. As the newly formed Taliban religious police went about their business of enforcing 'Sharia', Kabul was treated as an occupied city.¹²⁷⁶

Gutman states that despite the abovementioned picture, "there was also a positive side of the ledger: security was enhanced, roads were reopened, food and fuel prices fell, and commerce

¹²⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷⁴ Douglas Bakshian, "UN Peace Envoy Meets Taleban and Food Reaches Kabul," VOA, October 02, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/un-peace-envoy-meets-taleban-and-food-reaches-kabul>; William Maley, "The Dynamics of Regime Transition in Afghanistan," *Central Asian Survey* 16, no. 2 (1997): 176.

¹²⁷⁵ For details of the Taliban decrees targeting to engineer the society in Kabul in accordance with the strict Islamic Sharia, please see "Appendix 1: A sample of Taliban decrees relating to women and other cultural issues, after the capture of Kabul, 1996" in Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 217-219.

¹²⁷⁶ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 50-51.

resumed.”¹²⁷⁷ With the end of fighting and of rocket attacks in Kabul and the opening of the all the main roads into Kabul for the first time in three years, the UN World Food Programme (WFP) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) would be able to move hundred tons of food, medicine, and other supplies to Kabul, which also helped bringing food prices down and created enormous supply of the other materials.¹²⁷⁸ Therefore, “some residents were cheered by the end of fighting and the arrival of the Taliban, while others worried over the prospect of strict Islamic rule.”¹²⁷⁹

While Kabulis were divided like this, so did the international community. Professor of War Studies at King’s College in London Lawrence Freedman’s following statements give the dilemma of the international community towards the new rulers of Kabul: “Any regime which publicly hangs the body of a former president and imposes stern Islamic law is likely to ring international alarm bells, yet the seizure of Kabul by Taleban is also being greeted with some relief as it provides the best hope of ending almost two decades of war.”¹²⁸⁰ Freedman also warns the international community with the following words: “For the moment, Taliban can build on a popular hope that a stable government might at last be in place. The more it seeks to impose an uncompromising theocracy, the greater the risk of a return to instability.”¹²⁸¹ This ‘relief’ and ‘hope’ mentioned by Freedman prompted rather moderate international reaction to the new rulers of Kabul in the very early days whereas the imposition of ‘an uncompromising theocracy’ changed this attitude. Since the Taliban controlling substantial part of the country including Kabul appeared as the only group having capacity and desire to end the civil war and to restore peace and security in the country, both of which would also help bring stability to the region, the internationally community attaching priority to peace, security and stability initially developed inclusive approach

¹²⁷⁷ Roy Gutman, *How We Missed the Story: Osama Bin Laden, the Taliban, and the Hijacking of Afghanistan* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2008), 77.

¹²⁷⁸ World Food Programme, “WFP Moves Food into Kabul,” Reliefweb, September 30, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/wfp-moves-food-kabul>; Associated Press, “Guerillas Take Afghan Capital as Troops Flee,” *The New York Times*, September 28, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.nytimes.com/1996/09/28/world/gerillas-take-afghan-capital-as-troops-flee.html>; Douglas Bakshian, “UN Peace Envoy Meets Taleban and Food Reaches Kabul,” VOA, October 02, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/un-peace-envoy-meets-taleban-and-food-reaches-kabul>; Douglas Bakshian, “The Scene in Kabul,” VOA, October 02, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/scene-kabul>

¹²⁷⁹ Associated Press, “Guerillas Take Afghan Capital as Troops Flee,” *The New York Times*, September 28, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.nytimes.com/1996/09/28/world/gerillas-take-afghan-capital-as-troops-flee.html>

¹²⁸⁰ Lawrence Freedman, “Taliban Offers Capital Glimpse of Stability,” *The Times*, September 30, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/taleban-offers-capital-glimpse-stability>

¹²⁸¹ *Ibid.*

towards the Taliban rule. The UN Security Council's expressing only 'concern' at violation of the UN compound in Kabul and just 'dismay' at the brutal executions of Najibullah and his associates who had taken refuge there¹²⁸² without wording an outright condemnation, the UNESCO Director-General Federico Mayer's call for a spirit of tolerance,¹²⁸³ the UN Secretary General's hasty decision of sending its special peace envoy Norbert Hall to Kabul in the immediate aftermath of these events to broker a peace agreement, despite Hall's objections that the visit might give wrong signals,¹²⁸⁴ and later when asked about the Taliban's treatment of women at a news conference, Hall's reported response of that "Women? Don't talk to me about women. I don't mention women. That is a cultural issue. I am trying to negotiate peace,"¹²⁸⁵ were all the result of this approach. Gannon criticized this approach by stating that, "In a bid to broker a peace agreement, the UN ignored the Taliban's treatment of women and ban on girls' education."¹²⁸⁶ However, this was not a complete ignorance but could be called either 'prioritization of the issues' or 'differentiation of tasks' or 'international misperceptions of the Taliban' because as seen from the following statements of the UN Undersecretary General for Political Affairs Marrach Goulding after his visit to the country in mid-September 1996 namely right before the Taliban capture of Kabul for having talks with the warring parties including the Taliban as part of the UN peace efforts, the UN was well aware of the Taliban's oppressive policies in the areas under their control, especially towards the female population, but the same UN was also believing in the myth in circulation among the international community of that the Taliban policies could be moderated in time:

Although some U.N. agencies, including the U.N. Children's Fund, has deplored Taliban's hard-line interpretation of Muslim law, other officials here have muted their concerns about the prospects that the rebels may seize power.

"There has been progress made, slow progress," in moderating Taliban's views, Goulding said. "It's not hopeless."

Yet the U.N. under-secretary-general added, "Some of their ideas are monstrous."

¹²⁸² United Nations (UN), "Security Council Demands All Parties in Afghanistan Respect Safety of United Nations, International Personnel," Press release SC/6271, September 28, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024. <https://www.un.org/press/en/1996/19960928.sc6271.html>; United Nations Security Council (UNSC), "Statement by the President of the Security Council," S/PRST/1996/40, September 30, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024. <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n96/257/44/pdf/n9625744.pdf>

¹²⁸³ Nancy Hatch Dupree, "Afghan Women Under the Taliban," in *Fundamentalism Reborn?: Afghanistan and the Taliban*, ed. William Maley (London: Hurst & Company, 1998), 148.

¹²⁸⁴ Robert D. Crews, "Moderate Taliban?" in *The Taliban and the Crisis of Afghanistan*, ed. Robert D. Crews and Amin Tarzi (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008), 248-249.

¹²⁸⁵ Kathy Gannon, *I Is for Infidel: From Holy War to Holy Terror: 18 Years Inside Afghanistan* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2005), 48.

¹²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 47.

Taliban, he noted, have banned all access to education for girls and women in areas under their control. Some rebel forces also ban all music, sports, and Western media. But Goulding contended that, when some Taliban leaders were shown Arabic translations of the U.N. Charter, they were willing to agree to its terms — including those which forbid discrimination by race, gender or religion. “They didn’t know about the Charter,” Goulding said, but he claimed they seemed ready to learn.¹²⁸⁷

In a panel organized by USIP on 6 November 1996, Ashraf Ghani, now the current President of Afghanistan but then leading anthropologist at the World Bank, recommended that the Islamic scholars, clerics and leaders in countries like Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Saudi Arabia can develop “a policy of “constructive engagement” with the Taliban regarding its interpretations of Islamic law [to] temper Taliban’s more extreme views and practices, promote respect for human rights, and enhance the overall prospects for a viable state.”¹²⁸⁸ These were interesting developments because before the Taliban’s takeover of Kabul, “there was no international reflection or debate about how to encourage a more moderate Taliban.”¹²⁸⁹ Notwithstanding, the Islamic world, which was addressed by Ghani as an agent of a possible “constructive engagement” with the Taliban, was already far from playing this role. Rashid states that except for Iran, which strongly criticized the Taliban’s restrictions on women and girls as harmful to Islam, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, the Arab Gulf states, and other Asian Muslim countries remained silent.¹²⁹⁰

As stated by Kathy Gannon covering the region since 1988 as the Associated Press (AP) correspondent and bureau chief: “In many distant Western capitals, the Taliban were actually seen as a good thing in that they were expected to put an end to the brutal fighting and lawlessness and bring security to a deeply insecure nation. For the West, the Taliban also represented a single entity, unlike the many factions that were destroying Kabul.”¹²⁹¹ One of those “distant Western capitals” mentioned by Gannon was Washington. Having ignored Afghanistan for many years, except some high level activism shown by Assistant Secretary of State Raphel and Senator Hank Brown for the Unocal pipeline project though with no

¹²⁸⁷ “AFGHANISTAN: Taliban Guerrillas Close to Seizing Kabul, U.N. Says,” Inter Press Service (IPS), September 25, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://www.ipsnews.net/1996/09/afghanistan-taliban-guerrillas-close-to-seizing-kabul-un-says/>

¹²⁸⁸ United States Institute of Peace (USIP), *The Future of Afghanistan: The Taliban, Regional Security and U.S. Foreign Policy*, Special Report (Washington D.C.: USIP, March 1997), 6.

¹²⁸⁹ Kathy Gannon, *I Is for Infidel: From Holy War to Holy Terror: 18 Years Inside Afghanistan* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2005), 47.

¹²⁹⁰ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 116, 257.

¹²⁹¹ Kathy Gannon, *I Is for Infidel: From Holy War to Holy Terror: 18 Years Inside Afghanistan* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2005), 47.

result, the US developed a new interest in the country after the Taliban capture of Kabul. Considering the previous significant roles played by the US as a major donor to the country and a very strong supporter of the Mujahideen, this was a quite important development. The US, which perceived the Taliban as a stabilizing force, hailed the possibility of restoration of stability, security, law and order in the country under the Taliban rule while believing that the Taliban, despite its poor human rights record, could be moderated in time through engagement and dialogue to the extent rendering integration into the international system possible. On the same day of the Taliban's Kabul victory, the US State Department Deputy Spokesperson Glyn Davies in the daily press briefing: 1) called the execution of Najibullah and his associates as "regrettable development" without extending any condemnation, 2) evaluated the Taliban's announcement of that "Afghans can return to Kabul without fear, and that Afghanistan is the common home of all Afghans" as "an indication that the Taliban intends to respect the rights of all Afghans", 3) expressed hope that "the new authorities in Kabul will move quickly to restore order and security and to form a representative interim government that can begin the process of reconciliation nationwide", 4) stated that there were "some of the reports that they've moved to impose Islamic law in the areas that they control, but at this stage we're not reading anything into that. I mean, there's on the face of it nothing objectionable at this stage" and, 5) refrained from answering a question on diplomatic relations by saying that "it's really too early to pronounce ourselves on questions like diplomatic relations."¹²⁹²

The day after, "the Clinton administration launched a diplomatic initiative to demonstrate its willingness to deal with the Taliban as "the new authorities" in Kabul" and "cabled the embassy in Islamabad, authorizing it to send an envoy to Kabul as soon as feasible and safe" with a list of talking points.¹²⁹³ In the talking points of the cable approved by the Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Robin Raphel, the US was expressing its hope that the Taliban would propose soon an envoy to represent their government in Washington by adding that they would not renew visas of the Afghan diplomats previously appointed by Rabbani government and also was stating that it would like to re-open its embassy in Kabul when security permitted but until then would like to stay in contact through frequent trips to Kabul.¹²⁹⁴ Furthermore, although the human rights was mentioned in the beginning of the

¹²⁹² U.S. Department of State, "Daily Press Briefing #156, 96-09-27," September 27, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://www.hri.org/news/usa/std/1996/96-09-27.std.html>

¹²⁹³ Roy Gutman, *How We Missed the Story: Osama Bin Laden, the Taliban, and the Hijacking of Afghanistan* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2008), 77.

¹²⁹⁴ U.S. Department of State, "Dealing with the Taliban in Kabul," Cable, Document No: 1996STATE203322, September 28, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB97/tal17.pdf>

cable together stability, narcotics and terrorism as key concerns to be shared with the Taliban and the latter three issues were covered extensively in the cable, there was nothing about the Taliban's human rights violations, especially towards the female populace of the country, in the other parts of the cable.¹²⁹⁵ With regard to the violation of the UN premises and the execution of Najibullah, the US was just using the expression of 'dismay' in the cable.¹²⁹⁶ The cable in its entirety was a very early *carte blanche* to the Taliban government by the US government. The background of this attitude could be understood well with looking at the US's initial perception of the Taliban since their first appearance in 1994 and its lack of attention to this war-torn country at senior levels after the end of the Cold War, as described by Rashid below:

Between 1994 and 1996 the USA supported the Taliban politically through its allies Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, essentially because Washington viewed the Taliban as anti-Iranian, anti-Shia and pro-Western. The USA conveniently ignored the Taliban's own Islamic fundamentalist agenda, its suppression of women and the consternation they created in Central Asia largely because Washington was not interested in the larger picture. Between 1995 and 1997 US support was even more driven because of its backing for the Unocal project...¹²⁹⁷

Rashid also notes that the US policy was driven by flawed assumptions, which he elaborates on here below:

When I first spoke to diplomats at the US Embassy in Islamabad after the Taliban emerged in 1994, they were enthusiastic. The Taliban had told the stream of US diplomats who visited Kandahar that they disliked Iran, that they would curb poppy cultivation and heroin production, that they were opposed to all outsiders remaining in Afghanistan including the Arab-Afghans and they had no desire to seize power or rule the country... US diplomats believed that the Taliban would meet essential US aims in Afghanistan – 'eliminating drugs and thugs', one diplomat said. It was a patently naive hope given the Taliban's social base and because they themselves did not know what they represented nor whether they wanted state power.

There was not a word of US criticism after the Taliban captured Herat in 1995 and threw out thousands of girls from schools. In fact the USA, along with Pakistan's ISI, considered Herat's fall as a help to Unocal and tightening the noose around Iran...

Some US diplomats, concerned with the lack of direction in Washington on Afghanistan, have admitted that there was no coherent US policy, except to go along with what Pakistan and Saudi Arabia wanted...

¹²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹⁷ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 176

There was another problem. Few in Washington were interested in Afghanistan.¹²⁹⁸

While the US State Department's announcement of the possibility of establishing diplomatic relations with the Taliban Government in the future was shocking everyone and feeding speculation in the region, the statement coming from a very senior executive of the American energy company Unocal, which partnered with the Saudi oil company Delta and together signed an agreement with Turkmenistan in October 1995 for the construction of a gas pipeline through Afghanistan that would bypass both Russia and Iran and then triggered some state level activism in 1996 towards Afghanistan through the Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Raphel's visits targeting to persuade all the Afghan factions in conflict to a negotiated peaceful political settlement by addressing economic benefits with the end of the conflict, came as an absolute bombshell. The company's Vice-President Chris Taggart reportedly called the Taliban capture of Kabul as "very positive" that would make the implementation of the project more likely by adding that "If the Taliban leads to stability and international recognition, then it's positive" but then "company officials said Mr. Taggart was misquoted."¹²⁹⁹ Similar to the statement of Unocal's Taggart, US Senator Hank Brown, a very active supporter of the Unocal pipeline project, welcomed the Taliban's Kabul victory with the following words: "The good part of what has happened is that one of the factions at last seems capable of developing a government in Afghanistan."¹³⁰⁰ These over-hasty statements fueled speculations both in the regional and international contexts. Rashid states, "Unocal's gaffes and the confusion in the State Department only further convinced Iran, Russia, the CARs, the anti-Taliban alliance and most Pakistanis and Afghans that the US-Unocal partnership was backing the Taliban and wanted an all-out Taliban victory – even as the US and Unocal claimed they had no favourites in Afghanistan."¹³⁰¹

However, the diplomatic initiative was short-lived with the intervention of those opposing this friendly welcome to the Taliban both in the State Department and White House, and thus the State Department adopted a new approach with no thought of upgrading diplomatic ties and a new language emphasizing US neutrality towards the parties in conflict and expanding

¹²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 177.

¹²⁹⁹ Elaine Sciolino, "State Dept. Becomes Cooler To the New Rulers of Kabul," *The New York Times*, October 23, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024 <https://www.nytimes.com/1996/10/23/world/state-dept-becomes-cooler-to-the-new-rulers-of-kabul.html>; Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 6, 45-46, 165-166; William Maley, *The Afghanistan Wars* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 244-245.

¹³⁰⁰ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 166.

¹³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 166-167.

areas of interest listed in Raphael's cable to include human rights and the treatment of women.¹³⁰² The Clinton administration's decision of keeping the Taliban at arm's length was not only the result of "the fluid military situation in Afghanistan" but also "the Administration's desire to distance itself -- particularly during the Presidential campaign -- from a movement that has barred women from working and girls from going to school and has control of vast areas where the opium poppy is grown."¹³⁰³ Thereby, on the 30th of September 1996, the State Department Spokesperson Nicholas Burns in the daily press briefing 1) overtly condemned the executions of Najibullah and his companions instead of finding those acts just 'regrettable' as in the previous briefing, 2) defined the situation on the ground as "quite murky" due to the ongoing fighting between the Taliban and the former government forces in the north and the ambiguity over whether the Taliban established a functioning government in the areas under their control or not, and 3) mentioned that despite the absence of an ambassador since 1979 and of the embassy since 1989, the US maintained contact over the past years with "all the major factions" as well as "some of the military faction leaders" in the country including Taliban by referring Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Robin Raphael's meetings with the Taliban representatives both in Afghanistan and Washington during 1996, and underlined that they "consistently raised with all authorities in Afghanistan -- and this includes the Taliban -- issues of great concern to the United States: terrorism, narcotics, human rights including due process, and the treatment of women, which is a major issue for the United States"; but although he stated that the US wait-and-see attitude expressed in the previous briefing did not change, he announced the US interest in sending its diplomats to Kabul to meet with the new rulers by addressing the US interests requiring continuation of the previous contacts both with the Taliban and the others, even said that they would "have to decide at some point in the future when to re-establish an Embassy."¹³⁰⁴ In response to a question on whether the US has a position on the Taliban's treatment of women or not, the spokesperson said the following: "I want to be very careful, when it comes to the Taliban, to say that we've seen some public statements by some people speaking for the Taliban. We will need to assess exactly what happens in Kabul, and that's

¹³⁰² Roy Gutman, *How We Missed the Story: Osama Bin Laden, the Taliban, and the Hijacking of Afghanistan* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2008), 78; Elaine Sciolino, "State Dept. Becomes Cooler To the New Rulers of Kabul," *The New York Times*, October 23, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024 <https://www.nytimes.com/1996/10/23/world/state-dept-becomes-cooler-to-the-new-rulers-of-kabul.html>

¹³⁰³ Elaine Sciolino, "State Dept. Becomes Cooler To the New Rulers of Kabul," *The New York Times*, October 23, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024 <https://www.nytimes.com/1996/10/23/world/state-dept-becomes-cooler-to-the-new-rulers-of-kabul.html>

¹³⁰⁴ U.S. Department of State, "Daily Press Briefing #156, 96-09-30," September 30, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://www.hri.org/news/usa/std/1996/96-09-30.std.html>; Victor Beattie, "Can the Taleban Establish a Working Government?" VOA, September 30, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/can-taleban-establish-working-government>.

one of the reasons why we'd like to send diplomats to Kabul to look at all of these issues and to begin contacts with the Taliban.”¹³⁰⁵

In the latter US State Department briefings held on 01-03-04 October 1996, the State Department kept this position more or less but put some more emphasis on the US neutrality in Afghan conflict as the main reason of maintaining contacts with a variety of Afghan groups including Taliban, urged all external actors but specifically the neighboring states to stop assisting any particular group there that was addressed as the reason of long war in the country, and began to express US concerns about the basic human rights of all Afghans but particularly the status and treatment of women by adding that the concerns were also conveyed to the Taliban and to the other major Afghan groups.¹³⁰⁶ Similarly, Unocal also adopted the neutrality part of this new language. Another Unocal Vice-President Marty Miller began to underline that they were “fanatically neutral” about political issues by adding that they only needed a government having broad support of all the Afghan people and international recognition, both of which would render the pipeline project doable.¹³⁰⁷ Years later in 2003, Miller would clarify the company’s position at that time as that “UNOCAL did not care whether it was the Taliban or some other group that gained control so long as the governing party could restore peace and help people get on with their lives.”¹³⁰⁸

As of 7 October 1996, the State Department Spokesperson Burns also began to become outspoken about the deteriorating human rights situation in Afghanistan, particularly the rights and status of the female populace, with the increasing negative media coverage of these issues as well as mounting reactions from the world, by stating overtly that the US supporting the rights of women and girls had serious concerns about the Taliban’s gender policy, the relevant US authorities made this known/clear to Taliban through various contacts, and the Taliban government had to be concerned with its gender policy that might

¹³⁰⁵ U.S. Department of State, “Daily Press Briefing #156, 96-09-30,” September 30, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://www.hri.org/news/usa/std/1996/96-09-30.std.html>

¹³⁰⁶ U.S. Department of State, “Summary Report on State Dept. Noon Briefing,” October 01, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://www.hri.org/news/usa/std/1996/96-10-01.std.html>; U.S. Department of State, “Daily Press Briefing #158, 96-10-03,” October 03, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://www.hri.org/news/usa/std/1996/96-10-03.std.html>; U.S. Department of State, “Daily Press Briefing #159, 96-10-04,” October 04, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://www.hri.org/news/usa/std/1996/96-10-04.std.html>

¹³⁰⁷ Elaine Sciolino, “State Dept. Becomes Cooler To the New Rulers of Kabul,” *The New York Times*, October 23, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024 <https://www.nytimes.com/1996/10/23/world/state-dept-becomes-cooler-to-the-new-rulers-of-kabul.html>

¹³⁰⁸ U.S. National Archives, “Memorandum for the Record (MFR) of the Interview of Marty Miller of the Union Oil Company of California (UNOCAL) Conducted by Team 5,” 9/11 Commission Records, NAID: 2610323, November 07, 2003, 4, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/2610323>.

result in international isolation and thus lack of international assistance so badly needed by the country; announced that the US not yet made the decision to recognize the Taliban as a sovereign authority and would delay any kind of decision on that due to the ongoing military fighting among different factions on the ground but kept the previously stated US position of continuing talks with all the major factions including the Taliban, despite their treatment of the female populace, by the reason of US national interests; called the narcotics problem as “an important factor whatever relationship [the US] develop with the Taliban”; and expressed concern about Osama bin Laden’s alleged presence in Afghanistan by adding that these concerns were shared with the Taliban and the other major factions in Afghanistan.¹³⁰⁹

In the latter days, the State Department officials continued this approach and the language adopted about the Taliban. A senior Administration official involved in the Afghan policy emphasized, “We’re not going around embracing one group or another willy-nilly,” while a senior State Department official stated, “The last thing we wanted to do was fuel this total misperception that we were recognizing and embracing the Taliban.”¹³¹⁰ Theresa Loar, the State Department's Senior Coordinator for International Women's Issues, noted that the Clinton administration views the worsening conditions for women as “a major concern” holding a very high place in the US agenda, and Madeleine Albright, the US Representative to the UN described the Taliban’s restrictions on women and girls as “medieval,” adding that this approach “cannot be justified or defended.”¹³¹¹ Lee Coldren, the State Department's Director of the Office on Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh underlined the US does not support the Taliban or any other faction, movement or party but only backs the negotiation process among the warring Afghan parties, and also condemned the Taliban’s human rights violations by adding that ““even if the Taliban disappeared tomorrow, you would still have

¹³⁰⁹ U.S. Department of State, “Daily Press Briefing #160, 96-10-07,” October 07, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://www.hri.org/news/usa/std/1996/96-10-07.std.html>; U.S. Department of State, “Daily Press Briefing #161, 96-10-08,” October 08, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://www.hri.org/news/usa/std/1996/96-10-08.std.html>; U.S. Department of State, “Daily Press Briefing #162, 96-10-09,” October 09, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://www.hri.org/news/usa/std/1996/96-10-09.std.html>; U.S. Department of State, “Daily Press Briefing #163, 96-10-10,” October 10, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://www.hri.org/news/usa/std/1996/96-10-10.std.html>; U.S. Department of State, “Daily Press Briefing #167, 96-10-17,” October 17, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://www.hri.org/news/usa/std/1996/96-10-17.std.html>

¹³¹⁰ Elaine Sciolino, “State Dept. Becomes Cooler To the New Rulers of Kabul,” *The New York Times*, October 23, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024 <https://www.nytimes.com/1996/10/23/world/state-dept-becomes-cooler-to-the-new-rulers-of-kabul.html>

¹³¹¹ David Pitts, “U.S. Condemns Human Rights Violations in Afghanistan,” US Information Agency (USIA), October 24, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/us-condems-human-rights-violations-afghanistan>

one of the greatest human rights disasters in the world," in Afghanistan because of the anarchy there and the complete breakdown of law and order."¹³¹²

However, despite the adoption of a new approach refraining from the recognition and the embracement towards the Taliban and a new approach voicing neutrality, human rights and the status and treatment of women, "a good deal of confusion and two competing policies within the State Department and throughout the U.S. government" continued to exist: "One approach favored embracing the Taliban, even it meant overlooking the implications of their domestic system, in hopes of effecting positive changes in behavior" whereas "[t]he other favored public condemnation of their medieval concept of society, even if it stripped Washington of the means to affect their behavior...., both approaches existed in a kind of foreign policy schizophrenia."¹³¹³ Rashid commenting how the US policy makers who favored embracing the Taliban then viewed the new rulers of Kabul stated that: "The most naive US policy-makers hoped that the Taliban would emulate US–Saudi Arabia relations in the 1920s. 'The Taliban will probably develop like the Saudis did. There will be Aramco, pipelines, an emir, no parliament and lots of Sharia law. We can live with that,' said one US diplomat."¹³¹⁴ In his article calling the American reengagement in Afghanistan that was published in the *Washington Post* on 7 October 1996, Afghan-born American Zalmay Khalilzad, then senior strategist at Rand Corporation (1993-2000), who previously served as senior official in the State and Defense departments in both the Reagan and GHW Bush administrations (1985-1992), was defining the Taliban as "traditional orthodox Islamic group" holding "traditional Pashtun values" and its fundamentalism as more like the Saudi style unlike the one in Iran, showing the rumors about Osama bin Laden's departure from Afghanistan as "some common interests between the Unites States and the Taliban," and later lining up the should-be American objectives composed of promoting the establishment of a single authoritative broad-based government especially including Dostum; offering in return the recognition, humanitarian and development aid, and the benefits of the pipeline project; and encouraging other interested states to work for the same objective, as seen here below.¹³¹⁵ Similarly, at the closed door UN meeting on Afghanistan held on 18 November

¹³¹² *Ibid.*

¹³¹³ Roy Gutman, *How We Missed the Story: Osama Bin Laden, the Taliban, and the Hijacking of Afghanistan* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2008), 78.

¹³¹⁴ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 179.

¹³¹⁵ Robert D. Crews and Amin Tarzi, "Introduction," in *The Taliban and the Crisis of Afghanistan*, ed. Robert D. Crews and Amin Tarzi (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008), 51; Zalmay Khalilzad, "Afghanistan: Time to Reengage," *Washington Post*, October 07, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024,

1996, Robin Raphel, the US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs, who had also approved the above-mentioned famous cable on upgrading diplomatic ties with the Taliban in the very early days, kept her previous stance and “urged all states to engage the Taliban and not isolate them.”¹³¹⁶ These two different approaches within the State Department and throughout the US government would compete with each other for a quite while by producing a very good deal of confusion.

While the US government’s uneven reactions to the new situation in Afghanistan was busying the headlines of newspapers and feeding many speculations, two significant developments occurred in early October 1996. First, as the war between Massoud-Dostum led anti-Taliban forces and the Taliban forces drew closer to their borders, the Central Asian states of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Russia held an emergency summit in Almaty, Kazakhstan on 4 October 1996 and issued a joint declaration, in which they first expressed their deep concerns over the newly arisen situation on their southern borders by adding that any action undermining stability on their borders would be responded on the basis of CSTO, secondly they appealed the Afghan parties in conflict but particularly the Taliban to halt the fight and negotiate for peace, thirdly they underlined the non-interference by external actors and importance of the country’s territorial integrity, and as last called for an urgent meeting of the UN Security Council not only to discuss these matters but also the international humanitarian assistance issues, and later on 8 October 1996, they transmit it as a letter addressed to the UN Secretary General.¹³¹⁷ Second, the international community, specifically with those involved in aiding to Afghanistan either as donors or as first-level recipients of direct assistance from donors such as the UN agencies (various actors in the humanitarian system) began to have serious problems with the Taliban in Kabul particularly over the latter’s gender policies. The Taliban’s early image of ‘peace, security and stability provider’ in circulation began to get tarnished when the forceful imposition of their own rigid vision of Islam on the residents of Kabul resulted in a serious deterioration of human rights situation in Kabul, particularly with respect to the female

https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/opinions/1996/10/07/afghanistan-time-to-reengage/300b1725-8d30-4b98-a916-03f7b588bb2c/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.c8849f218f63; “Ex-Ambassador Khalilzad to Become U.S. Adviser on Afghanistan,” Reuters, September 05, 2018, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-afghanistan/former-ambassador-zalmay-khalilzad-to-be-appointed-us-adviser-on-afghanistan-idUSKCN1LK2RC>

¹³¹⁶ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 178, 263.

¹³¹⁷ UNGA and UNSC, “Letter Dated 8 October 1996 from the Representatives of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to the United Nations Addressed to the Secretary-General,” A/51/470, S/1996/838, October 08, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/222184?v=pdf>

populace. The presence of “a large international press and TV corps” reporting extensively for the first time on the Taliban’s restrictions contributed to the deterioration of the Taliban’s image.¹³¹⁸ Furthermore, the Taliban’s stringent gender policies in education and employment had a considerable negative impact on several humanitarian and development programmes because many of the beneficiaries were Afghan women and girls and thus most of the aid workers were Afghan women. The UNHCR had to cease operations after losing its Afghan women employees constituting half of its total staff, Save the Children Alliance had to halt its landmine awareness program for women, Oxfam that had previously shifted its operations from Pashtun areas to Kabul suspended its programme by stating that it could not achieve its aims without female staff, WFP had to shut down its food and rehabilitation projects such as a bakery in Kabul run by war widows that left 15,000 beneficiaries without bread and its vocational programs training women in carpet-weaving and tailoring.¹³¹⁹ Even “Oxfam argued that it would be inconsistent to allow another agency to take over the work...[and] took active steps to persuade the EU, UK government and others to suspend all aid in Taliban areas, in support of Oxfam’s view. The objective... was to stop international aid in order to force the Taliban to change its position on women.”¹³²⁰ These developments prompted strong reaction from the key actors of the international aid community in Afghanistan, composed of the donor governments holding the power of influence in policy making and the UN agencies acting as the coordinator of international assistance measures against the Taliban’s policies, confining the female populace to their homes, and thus forcing either the closure or suspension of many programs targeting Afghan female populace and thus being implemented with the help of Afghan women aid workers by launching a barrage of statements and taking action.

Following the donor meetings held in Islamabad and New York in early October 1996 to urge the UN system to take a firm stance on the Taliban’s restrictive gender policies, the UN responded quickly and decisively: the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Jose Ayala-Lasso appealed directly to the Taliban leader to uphold the fundamental rights of all

¹³¹⁸ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 51

¹³¹⁹ “Afghanistan: Chronology of Events January 1995-February 1997,” Research Directorate of the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Issue Paper, February 1997, 15, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/eoir/legacy/2014/01/16/Af_chronology_1995-.pdf; David Pitts, “U.S. Condemns Human Rights Violations in Afghanistan,” US Information Agency (USIA), October 24, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/us-condems-human-rights-violations-afghanistan>; Tony Vaux, *The Selfish Altruist: Relief Work in Famine and War* (London: Earthscan Publications, 2001), 124; Claude Bruderlein and Adeel Ahmed, *Report of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) Mission to Afghanistan (30 March - 5 May 1997)*, (United Nations, May 1997), Annex 07.

¹³²⁰ Tony Vaux, *The Selfish Altruist: Relief Work in Famine and War* (London: Earthscan Publications, 2001), 125.

Afghans, with a particular emphasis on women,¹³²¹ the Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali expressed his dismay at the Taliban's policies, deeming them contrary to fundamental humanitarian principles,¹³²² warned that these restrictions could severely undermine the UN's ability to deliver its programmes in Afghanistan, and called for a coordinated and appropriate response from UN agencies to address these issues,¹³²³ and WFP Executive Director Catherine Bertini stated that recent events in Afghanistan could jeopardize humanitarian operations and thus require reassessment, adding that the Taliban's restrictions negatively affect WFP's operations in the country, leading up to the rapid inclusion of "the conditionality of assistance that was previously reserved to the NGO approach" within the UN system.¹³²⁴This is followed by the developments outlined below:

In the following weeks, WFP decided to impose a temporary and partial suspension of deliveries of food to the country. This suspension has targeted non-emergency food assistance, in particular food-for-work programmes, and programmes where the equality of access between men and women was not guaranteed. UNICEF followed suit in extending in November its suspension to the rehabilitation of schools considering the inequality of access under the Taliban regime... Other agencies such as the UNHCR reserved their position until further consultations with the field on the implementation of a gender-sensitive approach. WHO, through its office in Islamabad, dissented from this assertive trend by pleading for a more pragmatic approach to the gender issue in Afghanistan. This awakening of the UN system to the policies of the Taliban was abrupt and left the UN staff in Afghanistan confused. It appeared inconsistent with the previous positions. Some of the senior UN staff in the field, in Afghanistan and Islamabad, among WFP, UNICEF, Habitat, FAO and UNOPS, complained that they were not consulted prior to this reversal of policies, and had few hints on how to implement these concerns on Afghan women's education and employment.¹³²⁵

Bruderlain and Ahmed categorized these UN responses to the Taliban regime and its gender policies by putting the WFP and UNICEF under "Principled-Centered Approach" holders, UNHCR and WHO under "Tip-toe approach holders" and UNDP under "Community Empowerment Approach" holders.¹³²⁶

¹³²¹ Claude Bruderlein and Adeel Ahmed, *Report of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) Mission to Afghanistan (30 March - 5 May 1997)*, (United Nations, May 1997), 27.

¹³²² *Ibid.*

¹³²³ Nancy Hatch Dupree, "Afghan Women Under the Taliban," in *Fundamentalism Reborn?: Afghanistan and the Taliban*, ed. William Maley (London: Hurst & Company, 1998), 149; Claude Bruderlein and Adeel Ahmed, *Report of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) Mission to Afghanistan (30 March - 5 May 1997)*, (United Nations, May 1997), 27.

¹³²⁴ Claude Bruderlein and Adeel Ahmed, *Report of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) Mission to Afghanistan (30 March - 5 May 1997)*, (United Nations, May 1997), 27-28. For details, please see Annexes 5-6-7-8 in the same document.

¹³²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³²⁶ *Ibid.*, 29-35.

The UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) mission, who visited the country during the first half of 1997 to examine the constraints faced by the UN agencies while implementing their humanitarian programmes, especially in the Taliban-controlled areas, and evaluate the response of the international aid community notes that many agencies viewed the international aid conditionality, which required policy changes from the Taliban, as “a disproportionate and potentially counterproductive strategy” by adding that the situation of women in non-Taliban areas, where girls and women had access to education and employment, was also far from ideal with rampant criminal activities and human rights abuses posing constant threats to female population, and recommends “to be patient, rather than engage in an ambiguous precedent in conditioning the UN programmes of assistance.”¹³²⁷

With regard to the NGOs working in Afghanistan, as in the case of the UN agencies, “[t]he lack of common operational guidelines and the different strategic approaches among the agencies dealing with gender discrimination prompted the emergence of distinct schools of thought and triggered passionate debates between the agencies in the field.”¹³²⁸ Therefore, “[s]ome NGO workers reported finding cooperative Taliban officials who permitted their work to continue, while others found the administration chaotic and capricious.”¹³²⁹ Maley explains this difference in the perception of the NGOs towards working with the Taliban with the following words:

The Taliban's relations with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) proved equally tense, and the images of the Taliban conveyed to the wider world through NGO channels were on the whole extremely adverse. While some NGOs welcomed the security which the Taliban brought, and found them less corrupt than some other groups with which they had had to deal, for others they were at best meddlesome and obstreperous. The issue of gender again proved extraordinarily sensitive, and those bodies which coped most effectively with the Taliban were those engaged in 'gender-neutral' work such as mine action, or those such as the International Committee of the Red Cross that were not under donor pressure to take a strongly political stand in response to Taliban policy.¹³³⁰

However, among those NGOs engaging in gender-related work in the Taliban-controlled areas, some of them such as SCF-US and OXFAM favoring principled stand with the

¹³²⁷ *Ibid.*, 25-26.

¹³²⁸ *Ibid.*, 28.

¹³²⁹ Robert D. Crews, "Moderate Taliban?" in *The Taliban and the Crisis of Afghanistan*, ed. Robert D. Crews and Amin Tarzi (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008), 248.

¹³³⁰ William Maley, "The Foreign Policy of the Taliban," Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), February 15, 2000, 16, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://cfrrd8-files.cfr.org/sites/default/files/pdf/2005/08/ForeignPolicy_Taliban_Paper.pdf

Taliban authorities chose to suspend or halt their programmes whereas some others such as a Kuwaiti NGO supporting education programmes in Afghanistan made a good reading of the Taliban and continued their work through developing practical proposals instead of insisting on policy-making.¹³³¹ Here below, Bruderlain and Ahmed explains very well the reason behind the Taliban's warm approach towards practical proposals rather than policy-making:

This centralization of the authority hinders the ability and the willingness of the Taliban members to discuss substantive matters. According to the head of one should not insist unnecessarily on policy issues with Taliban representatives since Taliban do not know how to engage in substantive issues. To them at a policy level will only beget a harsh response. Practical proposals can always be discussed and may be agreed upon even if they do not entirely follow the tenets of the movement. Taliban prefer ignoring, or pretending to ignore, necessary arrangements that deviate from their policies, such as community-based schools for girls, rather than engaging in a process that will force the movement to engage in a policy-making process.¹³³²

Furthermore, neither Afghanistan nor the Taliban had a monolithic structure, so depending on the location of the project or the Taliban official in charge of that location, some positive results with varying degree of limitations were achieved, of course if donor did not go for the conditionality.

On 22 October 1996, the UN Security Council adopted the resolution 1076, in which it publicly denounced “the discrimination against girls and women and other violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in Afghanistan, and note[d] with deep concern possible repercussions on international relief and reconstruction programmes in Afghanistan.”¹³³³ In late October 1996, even Norbert Hall, the UN special peace envoy for Afghanistan, who had previously declined to answer questions on Afghan women's situation by stating that the women issue was cultural and he was in charge of only for negotiating peace,¹³³⁴ became outspoken and “warned that it was not up to Taliban leaders to rule on human rights, since ‘Whoever is controlling Afghanistan is bound by the Charter of the UN.’”¹³³⁵

¹³³¹ Claude Bruderlein and Adeel Ahmed, *Report of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) Mission to Afghanistan (30 March - 5 May 1997)*, (United Nations, May 1997), 28; Tony Vaux, *The Selfish Altruist: Relief Work in Famine and War* (London: Earthscan Publications, 2001), 131.

¹³³² Claude Bruderlein and Adeel Ahmed, *Report of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) Mission to Afghanistan (30 March - 5 May 1997)*, (United Nations, May 1997), 13.

¹³³³ United Nations Security Council (UNSC), *Resolution 1076 (1996)*, S/RES/1076 (1996), October 22, 1996, 3, last accessed May 01, 2024. <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1076>

¹³³⁴ Kathy Gannon, *I Is for Infidel: From Holy War to Holy Terror: 18 Years Inside Afghanistan* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2005), 48.

¹³³⁵ Nancy Hatch Dupree, "Afghan Women Under the Taliban," in *Fundamentalism Reborn?: Afghanistan and the Taliban*, ed. William Maley (London: Hurst & Company, 1998), 149.

The Taliban officials facing for the first time with such a reaction from the international community were surprised. Of those officials, some said that these temporary measures were necessary to protect girls and women until a proper civil order and sharia-compliant facilities were established by addressing the security problems during the Mujahideen government period; some stated that the Westerners were not entitled to impose its own rules on Afghans by adding that the Western culture and customs were insulting and dishonoring women; some criticized that they were asked to follow international agreements on human rights but at the same time they were still denied recognition and seat in the UN; some expressed their astonishment for the concern of the international community over ‘such as small percentage of the working population’ by adding that their priority was the establishment of a government; and some blamed the international community of hypocrisy due to its silence during the excessive violations against women by the Mujahideen.¹³³⁶ In the end, as seen from the below quote from the New York Times, the use of aid by the West as a stick against the Taliban did not serve its purpose as the Taliban did not change its attitude by taking all the risks along with, and even did the opposite by raising serious doubts and questions about aid intentions in the minds of the Taliban.

According to Mullah Hassan, the Taliban's supreme council has already agreed to limit any Western reconstruction aid that may be offered, for fear that financial leverage will be used to try and curb the harshness of Taliban rule. “If the West won't help us, it doesn't make any difference,” he said. “We can survive without their help.” Chuckling, he added: “We don't have a friend in the world. We have conquered three-quarters of the country, we have captured the capital, and we haven't received even a single message of congratulation!”¹³³⁷

The Taliban determined to conquer the whole country focused on the conquest of the north. The areas under the control of the Northern Alliance had a vital importance not only because this conquest would bring the long-desired international recognition of the Taliban government but also the north “having 60 per cent of Afghanistan’s agricultural resources and 80 per cent of its former industry, mineral and gas wealth” had key importance in both

¹³³⁶ Nancy Hatch Dupree, "Afghan Women Under the Taliban," in *Fundamentalism Reborn?: Afghanistan and the Taliban*, ed. William Maley (London: Hurst & Company, 1998), 147, 149-150; Tony Vaux, *The Selfish Altruist: Relief Work in Famine and War* (London: Earthscan Publications, 2001), 131-132; Meri Melissi Hartley-Blecic, "The Invisible Women: The Taliban's Oppression of Women in Afghanistan," *ILSA Journal of International & Comparative Law* 7 (2001): 570; David Pitts, "U.S. Condemns Human Rights Violations in Afghanistan," US Information Agency (USIA), October 24, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/us-condemns-human-rights-violations-afghanistan>; Claude Bruderlein and Adeel Ahmed, *Report of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) Mission to Afghanistan (30 March - 5 May 1997)*, (United Nations, May 1997), 23.

¹³³⁷ John F. Burns, "With Sugared Tea and Caustic Rules, An Afghan Leader Explains Himself," *The New York Times*, November 24, 1996, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.nytimes.com/1996/11/24/weekinreview/with-sugared-tea-and-caustic-rules-an-afghan-leader-explains-himself.html>.

state building and economic development.¹³³⁸ So, after the Taliban's northwards offensive on two fronts failed both in the fall of 1996 and in the winter of 1997, and just shifted the front lines back and forth slightly due to the counteroffensive of the Maasoud-Dostum-Khalili led Northern Alliance forces, the Taliban launched a new offensive in the spring of 1997 and achieved to take Mazar-i-Sharif along with some other key northern positions in late May 1997 by defeating Dostum with the support of General Abdul Malik Pahlawan, one of Dostum's high-ranked commanders, who defected to the Taliban for various reasons.¹³³⁹ In the process, Dostum fled the country and Abdul Malik Pahlawan handed Ismail Khan, who had taken refuge in the north, to the Taliban.¹³⁴⁰ With the seizure of Mazar, the principal northern city, the Taliban began controlling five of Afghanistan's major cities.¹³⁴¹ Following the Mazar victory, assuming that the Taliban had taken control of the entire country, a Pakistani delegation led by then-Foreign Minister Gohar Ayub flew to Mazar to announce the end of the war and officially recognize the Islamic Emirate.¹³⁴² After its 'premature' recognition on 25 May 1997, Islamabad urged the rest of the world to do the same, only Riyadh and Abu Dhabi followed suit in the next two days.¹³⁴³

Meanwhile, the region states that felt threatened by the arrival of the Taliban and the bloodshed on their doorstep severely criticized Pakistan and responded to the crisis destabilizing the region in their own way; "Iran said it would continue to support the anti-Taliban alliance and appealed to Russia, India and the Central Asian states to help them also.... [and also] urged the UN to intervene"; Russia voiced taking 'very tough and effective actions' in case the Taliban advanced further in an emergency meeting of the CIS

¹³³⁸ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 55.

¹³³⁹ Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 284; Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 189-190; Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 57-58; Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 78.

¹³⁴⁰ Abdulkader Sinno, "Explaining the Taliban's Ability to Mobilize the Pashtuns," in *The Taliban and the Crisis of Afghanistan*, ed. Robert D. Crews and Amin Tarzi (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008), 67.

¹³⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴² Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 285; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), xix.

¹³⁴³ Abdulkader Sinno, "Explaining the Taliban's Ability to Mobilize the Pashtuns," in *The Taliban and the Crisis of Afghanistan*, ed. Robert D. Crews and Amin Tarzi (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008), 67; Amin Saikal, with assistance from Ravan Farhadi and Kirill Nourzhanov, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London, Great Britain: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 225.

held to discuss the crisis; and Central Asian states, even those having no border with Afghanistan, took several measures in order to increase their border security with the help of Russian troops.¹³⁴⁴

Nevertheless, when the Taliban declined to share power with Malik by appointing him the insignificant post of Deputy Foreign Minister for the Taliban, tried to disarm Malik's troops and Jumbesh's Hazara allies in Hezb-i-Wahdat, and began imposing their strict interpretations of Sharia law on Mazar that was traditionally one of the most liberal cities in the Afghan context hosting a complex mix of religious and ethnic groups; the revolt started by Hazaras refusing to disarm and then joined by Malik switching sides once more as well as by the rest of the population turned into a fierce city combat and the Taliban forces, who were inexperienced in street fighting and unfamiliar to the city terrain, were forced to retreat from Mazar with heavy casualties on 28 May 1997.¹³⁴⁵ Mazar debacle was a significant tragedy for the Taliban in many respects and a major embarrassment for those states, particularly Pakistan, that had granted diplomatic recognition to the Taliban in expectation of their final victory.¹³⁴⁶

The Taliban's tragedy created an invaluable opportunity for the anti-Taliban alliance members who had previously lost to the Taliban. The anti-Taliban alliance, , tried to strengthen its unity by reshaping 'the Supreme Council for the Defense of the Motherland' (Supreme Defense Council) of October 1996 into the 'United Islamic and National Front for the Salvation of Afghanistan' (United Front – UF or Northern Alliance- NA) with Mazar as their temporary capital, and promptly initiated the formation of a new broad-based government under the Islamic State of Afghanistan (ISA) with 'a more national image and a better international presence' by appointing an experienced Afghan diplomat with Mohammadzai Pashtun ethnic background named Abdul Rahim Ghafurzai as prime minister

¹³⁴⁴ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 60-61.

¹³⁴⁵ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 285; Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 58; Abdulkader Sinno, "Explaining the Taliban's Ability to Mobilize the Pashtuns," in *The Taliban and the Crisis of Afghanistan*, ed. Robert D. Crews and Amin Tarzi (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008), 67; Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 189-190; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), xx.

¹³⁴⁶ Neamatollah Nojumi, *The Rise of The Taliban in Afghanistan: Mass Mobilization, Civil War, and The Future of The Region* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 166; Abdulkader Sinno, "Explaining the Taliban's Ability to Mobilize the Pashtuns," in *The Taliban and the Crisis of Afghanistan*, ed. Robert D. Crews and Amin Tarzi (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008), 67-68.

in the summer of 1997.¹³⁴⁷ These attempts of transforming the military victory into a strong and united military and political front against the Taliban raised some hope for the anti-Taliban alliance. In this fragile peace atmosphere, life in Mazar got back to normal, even the UN and some other aid agencies that were forced to abandon the city due to lootings of allegedly Malik's Uzbek forces reopened their offices.¹³⁴⁸

Meanwhile, the Taliban, as confident of that these northern groups had neither the individual capacity to fight the Taliban alone nor capability to achieve necessary unity to attack Kabul through overcoming severe intra-/inter group disunity, declined the invite of this new alliance to join them in their future broad-based government and spent the summer 1997 by dealing with its first-ever manpower shortage and recruitment problem, trying to keep the strategic northern positions in their hands, and playing on Malik who had created a deep split not only among Uzbek forces but also among anti-Taliban alliance.¹³⁴⁹ Furthermore, as of August 1997, the Taliban began imposing blockade on the Hazarajat in Central Afghanistan to force Hazaras to surrender by closing all the roads under its control and even bombing the Bamyan airport to prevent all supplies including food, and continued it despite the UN efforts towards lifting the blockade.¹³⁵⁰ As expected by the Taliban, these northern groups could not record any significant success in turning their military victory into a strong united political and military front against the Taliban. First, the death of Ghafurzai along with several senior members of the alliance in a plane crash in August 1997 and then the internal political and personal differences among the group leaders preventing them from working together undermined the anti-Taliban alliance.¹³⁵¹ The events developed one after another

¹³⁴⁷ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 61-62; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), xix-xx; Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 190; Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 155

¹³⁴⁸ Neamatollah Nojumi, *The Rise of The Taliban in Afghanistan: Mass Mobilization, Civil War, and The Future of The Region* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 163; Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 59

¹³⁴⁹ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 59-60, 62; Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 190; Neamatollah Nojumi, *The Rise of The Taliban in Afghanistan: Mass Mobilization, Civil War, and The Future of The Region* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 162.

¹³⁵⁰ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 67-68; William Maley, "The Foreign Policy of the Taliban," Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), February 15, 2000, 15, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://cfr.org/sites/default/files/pdf/2005/08/ForeignPolicy_Taliban_Paper.pdf.

¹³⁵¹ Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 190; Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B.

and various actors in the alliance groups turned on one another.¹³⁵² Sinno states, “Their wild battles, looting of the offices of charities, and wanton murder of many civilians drove United Nations agencies and NGOs out of the city [once more], depleted it of necessary staples, and made the once-irrelevant trade-off the Taliban offered—security in exchange for the acceptance of a strict social code—particularly appealing for the city’s residents.”¹³⁵³ Iranian and Russian mediation attempts failed because no one agreed to compromise.¹³⁵⁴ However, although the alliance was in shambles, the Taliban’s another attempt of taking Mazar in late 1997 through a push from Kunduz was again driven back.¹³⁵⁵

During this period, the UN’s sporadic attempts to negotiate peace through the "Six Plus Two" framework, which included Afghanistan's six neighboring countries plus the US and Russia, made no progress.¹³⁵⁶ UN special peace envoy for Afghanistan Norbert Holl also resigned in that period due to the deadlock in peace negotiations. His successor Lakhdar Brahimi described the aid context in the country with the following words: “In the north there is complete insecurity for our aid operations and in the south we have a hell of a horrible time working with the Taliban. In the north there is no authority and in the south there is a very difficult authority.”¹³⁵⁷

During the International Forum on Assistance to Afghanistan (IFAA) in January 1997, several consultations were held among UN agencies and NGOs active in Afghanistan.¹³⁵⁸ In

Tauris, 2005), 156; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), xx.

¹³⁵² Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 61, 62, 63, 70; Neamatollah Nojumi, *The Rise of The Taliban in Afghanistan: Mass Mobilization, Civil War, and The Future of The Region* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 162, 167; Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History; Monarchy, Despotism or Democracy? The Problems of Governance in the Muslim Tradition* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 155, 156.

¹³⁵³ Abdulkader Sinno, “Explaining the Taliban’s Ability to Mobilize the Pashtuns,” in *The Taliban and the Crisis of Afghanistan*, ed. Robert D. Crews and Amin Tarzi (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008), 68.

¹³⁵⁴ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 70.

¹³⁵⁵ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 285-286.

¹³⁵⁶ Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 79.

¹³⁵⁷ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 71.

¹³⁵⁸ Claude Bruderlein and Adeel Ahmed, *Report of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) Mission to Afghanistan (30 March - 5 May 1997)*, (United Nations, May 1997), 33.

1997, as holders of the principle-centered approach, first in January the WFP tried to exert pressure on the Taliban but failed due to the increased food assistance of other organizations such as ICRC and later in April the UNICEF reasserted conditionality and also failed to bring policy changes.¹³⁵⁹ Unlike those two, the UNHCR and the WHO holding the tip-toe approach maintained their contacts with the Taliban and achieved to get some concessions with certain limitations by the Taliban such as employing female staff to their employment in accordance with the Taliban sharia system.¹³⁶⁰ After seeing these good results, both UNICEF and WFP began to follow the same strategy of negotiation. The UNDP following the community empowerment approach continued its ongoing PEACE (Poverty Eradication and Community Environment) Initiative programme being conducted at the village level.¹³⁶¹ In April 1997, the Taliban also proposed the UN to establish a joint technical committee on international assistance to Afghanistan, which was well received by the UN system.¹³⁶² In response, the UN created the Strategic Framework for Afghanistan (SFA) in September 1998, “the first conscious attempt to achieve coherence between aid and politics internationally” through harmonizing “the UN’s political attempts to secure a region-wide peace agreement involving the ruling Taliban regime with its development efforts to strengthen communities and foster peace from below.”¹³⁶³ However, the SFA trying to bring together aid, politics and later human rights as a third pillar “in the interests of local peace and international stability” through “bring[ing] the activities of the UN’s ‘political’ wing (reporting to the UN Department of Political Affairs – DPA) into greater coherence with its ‘aid’ wing (UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, etc.)” failed in December 2000 because of “the insurmountable tensions and contradictions it had generated” both within the international community and with the Taliban.¹³⁶⁴

In the winter of 1998, while the anti-Taliban alliance members were still tearing each other apart, the Taliban was preparing for another attack on Mazar.¹³⁶⁵ In the summer of 1998, the Taliban launched major new northwards offensive and this time not only achieved to take

¹³⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 34

¹³⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 35-36.

¹³⁶² *Ibid.*, 38.

¹³⁶³ Mark Duffield, *Development, Security and Unending War: Governing the World of Peoples* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2007), 137

¹³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 137, 138

¹³⁶⁵ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 70.

Mazar in August 1998 but also Bamyān in September 1998.¹³⁶⁶ In response, Masud gathered all the remaining anti-Taliban commanders to the Panjshir valley in December 1998 and established “a new military and political organization called the Islamic United Front for Liberation of Afghanistan (UIFLA).”¹³⁶⁷ Meanwhile, the Taliban’s murder of the Iranian diplomats stationed at the Mazar consulate when they captured the city almost provoked a war with Iran and the Taliban’s successful conquest of the northern regions severely disturbed the region states supporting anti-Taliban alliance due to the threat of religious extremism while further increasing the tension between these states and Pakistan.¹³⁶⁸ The Taliban attributed the deaths of Iranian diplomats to unfortunate mistakes, maintained that they had no stake in internal affairs of Central Asian nations, and denied any intent to harm their neighbors, all of which reduced regional tensions but did not solve the problem.¹³⁶⁹ Larry Goodson states: “With these victories leaving the Taliban in control of 90 percent of the country and Massoud their only major rival still able to field a significant military force by the autumn of 1998, it appeared that the Afghan War might finally be drawing to a close.”¹³⁷⁰

Throughout the year of 1998, the Taliban’s relations with the international community got tensed over attacks on UN personnel. Following a series of serious Taliban provocations, including an assault on a UN staffer by the Taliban’s Kandahar Governor, the UN withdrew its expatriate staff and suspended its humanitarian work in southern Afghanistan in March 1998.¹³⁷¹ Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi, the UN Under Secretary-General for Special Assignments sent a strong message to the Taliban by stating that “if the UN could not operate as it did in all other member states, 'we should pack up and go’” and adding that “international community has a standard and if you want to be a member of the club you have to abide by the rules.” Similarly, the UN Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian

¹³⁶⁶ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 286-287; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 260.

¹³⁶⁷ Neamatollah Nojumi, *The Rise of The Taliban in Afghanistan: Mass Mobilization, Civil War, and The Future of The Region* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 170.

¹³⁶⁸ Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 80; Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 265.

¹³⁶⁹ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 265.

¹³⁷⁰ Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 79.

¹³⁷¹ William Maley, "The Foreign Policy of the Taliban," Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), February 15, 2000, 15, https://cfrd8-files.cfr.org/sites/default/files/pdf/2005/08/ForeignPolicy_Taliban_Paper.pdf.

Affairs, Sergio Vieira de Mello, demanded written assurances of adherence to international humanitarian law.¹³⁷² Upon this, a Memorandum of Understanding providing some written assurances was signed between the Taliban and the UN in May 1998 but its Article 13 stating gradual access for women to health and education led to severe criticism as it implied the UN's approval of the Taliban's restrictions on women's basic rights.¹³⁷³ This issue was overshadowed when the US Tomahawk cruise missile strikes in August 1998 led to UN withdrawal from Afghanistan, during which which a Military Adviser to the UN Special Mission to Afghanistan (UNSMA) was killed in Kabul."¹³⁷⁴ These US-launched 'retaliatory and preemptive' missile attacks were targeting training bases and infrastructure in Afghanistan used by groups linked to Osama bin Laden as after two American embassies were blown up in the capitals of Kenya and Tanzania in August 1998, leading casualties including 12 Americans, the US identified the hand of Al-Qaeda behind these attacks.¹³⁷⁵

These developments rapidly changed aid context in the country. In 1998, while Kabul Shura was seeking to moderate Taliban policies to facilitate the return of UN agencies to the country and boost international aid as "Taliban leaders in the Kabul and Jalalabad Shuras were feeling the growing public discontent at rising prices, lack of food and the cut-back in humanitarian aid," Mullah Omar and the Kandahar leadership refused to expand UN activities and eventually drove the UN out.¹³⁷⁶ Western donors, addressing security concerns, imposed restrictions, suspensions or terminations on aid to Afghanistan. For instance, "UK ruled that any NGO sending any expatriate to Afghanistan would be automatically disqualified for DFID funding," and "ECHO stopped its humanitarian assistance to the country that year."¹³⁷⁷ Many in the aid community believed that these were driven more by "a wider isolationist policy of US and UK rather than genuine concerns over security," noting that such security restrictions were not in place during the pre-Taliban period, despite

¹³⁷² *Ibid.*

¹³⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷⁵ Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 286.

¹³⁷⁶ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 103-104

¹³⁷⁷ Mohammed Haneef Atmar, "Politicisation of Humanitarian Aid and Its Consequences for Afghans" (paper presented at Politics and Humanitarian Aid: Debates, Dilemmas and Dissension Conference, London, February 01, 2001), 4, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/events-documents/3772.pdf>

higher security risks, and such conditionality was not applied in other regions with higher aid worker casualties.¹³⁷⁸

During 1999, while fightings were continuing unabated between the Taliban and the opposition and towns in the north constantly were changing hands,¹³⁷⁹ the US-led international community developed a much stronger anti-Taliban attitude not only because of Taliban's actions worsening the ethnic divisions between themselves and the opposition but also "the reappearance of Osama bin Laden after his long disappearance from sight for most of 1999", "an unprecedented leap in opium production" as proof of the Taliban's reluctance in restraining the narco-trafficking, and "their reported training of Islamist fighters" that produced "renewed fears of "Talibanization" of neighboring countries and territories such as Pakistan, Kashmir, Uzbekistan, and Chechnya."¹³⁸⁰ The UN Security Council announced plans to impose sanctions on the Taliban in October 1999 if they did not hand over Osama bin Laden "for his alleged involvement in terrorist activities" and once Taliban rejected this, sanctions were duly imposed in November 1999.¹³⁸¹ Meanwhile, UN Special Peace Envoy Lakhdar Brahimi, replacing Norbert Hall upon his resignation in late 1997, announced the suspension of his efforts to broker peace in October 1999 by addressing insincerity of the parties in conflict towards finding a peaceful settlement.¹³⁸²

In early 2000, a catastrophic and long-standing drought, the worst since 1971 in the country's recorded history, spread throughout the country and its devastating impacts on agriculture and stockbreeding forced millions of people to move from rural to urban areas in masses, which overstressed the humanitarian response capacity of the aid agencies already suffering from underfunding and the Taliban harassments.¹³⁸³ Taliban government's limited resources were insufficient to address this humanitarian crisis. Taliban government's economic system mainly relied on three source of revenues: the first one, "\$10 million from

¹³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷⁹ Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 285.

¹³⁸⁰ Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 83.

¹³⁸¹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸² Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 287.

¹³⁸³ Ludwig W. Adamec, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, ed. Jon Woronoff, 3rd ed. (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003), 487; Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), xiv.

Pakistan to pay salaries”, the second one “the exploitation of ‘transit trade’ and other smuggling between Afghanistan and Pakistan” with an estimated value of \$2.5 billion, of which the Taliban got \$75 million, and the third one opium as vital source of income, especially considering that around one million Afghan farmers were making over US\$100 million a year just by growing poppies and at least one fifth of this figure namely US\$20 million was going to the Taliban as tax.¹³⁸⁴ In the period 1994-2000, the Taliban’s drug revenue was estimated to be nearly \$150 million.¹³⁸⁵ Therefore, the Taliban called for international humanitarian assistance.¹³⁸⁶ However, donor fatigue of the international community, particularly of the Western donor countries, with whom the Taliban developed problematic relationship due to their gender-apartheid policies, was exacerbated by their mistreatment of aid agencies, resulting in a reluctance to develop a comprehensive humanitarian response.¹³⁸⁷ During the Taliban period, therefore, international community provided only sporadic emergency aid to Afghanistan through NGOs, yet the Taliban even impeded some of these limited aid efforts when they involved activities not fitting within their interpretation of Sharia law.¹³⁸⁸ The aid provided to Afghanistan during the Taliban years is detailed below:

Prior to the Taliban takeover, Afghanistan received relatively small amounts of the billions of dollars dispersed annually in official development assistance. From 1980 to 1986 official development assistance to Afghanistan never exceeded \$20 million a year. Between 1988 and 1998, Official Development Assistance (ODA) averaged a little more than \$200 million a year, and during the years of Taliban rule, external aid fell to a little more than \$130 million a year. From 1992 to 2001, the United Nations provided only a total of about \$160 million in aid.¹³⁸⁹

The Taliban seeking international recognition and foreign aid took several steps to repair their damaged international image in late 2000 such as “announcing a ban on opium poppy

¹³⁸⁴ William Maley, *The Afghanistan Wars* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 235; Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 119

¹³⁸⁵ Kamoludin N. Abdullaev, “Warlordism and Development in Afghanistan,” in *Beyond Reconstruction in Afghanistan: Lessons from Development Experience*, ed. John D. Montgomery and Dennis A. Rondinelli (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 177

¹³⁸⁶ Robert D. Crews and Amin Tarzi, “Introduction,” in *The Taliban and the Crisis of Afghanistan*, ed. Robert D. Crews and Amin Tarzi (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008), 6.

¹³⁸⁷ Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 84; Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), xiv-xv.

¹³⁸⁸ Dennis A. Rondinelli, “International Goals and Strategies for Afghanistan’s Development: Reconstruction and Beyond,” in *Beyond Reconstruction in Afghanistan: Lessons from Development Experience*, ed. John D. Montgomery and Dennis A. Rondinelli (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 15.

¹³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

farming” and “relaxing their ban on girls' schooling” but once the UNSC adopted the US-led new sanctions in December 2000 over the Taliban’s reluctance to hand over Osama bin Laden, “following his suspected complicity in the terror bombing of the USS Cole in Aden, Yemen, in October 2000,” then the Talibs got back to their harsh standing towards the international community.¹³⁹⁰

Meanwhile, UN mediation efforts continued with UN official Francese Vendrell, who was appointed in January 2000, but “no political arrangement could be brokered that would satisfy all the claimants to power.”¹³⁹¹ The Taliban further extended its control over the northern parts of the country in late 2000.¹³⁹² The Taliban, significantly strengthening its position in the north, achieved to establish control over almost the entire country by early 2001, with the exception of a few provinces in the northeastern regions under the control of Massoud-led anti-Taliban alliance, thereby asserting authority over 90 to 97 percent of the country.¹³⁹³

However, following the assassination of Shah Masud by Al-Qaeda on 9 September 2001, Al-Qaeda orchestrated the 9/11 attacks in the US after which Mullah Omar’s refusal to hand over Osama bin Laden to the US led to the US-led international military operation, known as ‘Operation Enduring Freedom’ in Afghanistan in October 2001 and the subsequent rapid decline of the Taliban control in Afghanistan in November 2001.¹³⁹⁴ Thereby, a new chapter opened in the history of Afghanistan.

6.5. Conclusion

Although the war entered into Afghanization process with the Soviet withdrawal, the continuation of funding from both the Americans and the Soviets to their Afghan proxies, albeit to a lesser extent than before, intensified and prolonged the Afghan civil war. The

¹³⁹⁰ Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 84-85

¹³⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 76.

¹³⁹² Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), xx-xxi.

¹³⁹³ Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: the British, Russian, and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 192; Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 85.

¹³⁹⁴ Gilles Dorronsoro, *Revolution Unending: Afghanistan, 1979 to the Present*, trans. John King (London: Hurst & Company, 2005), 4

alignment of some Afghan Mujahideen leaders with Saddam Hussein during the Gulf War prompted the US and its oil-rich Middle Eastern allies to change their aid strategy in Afghanistan, which meant channeling their aid to Mujahideen field commander Massoud instead of those favoring Saddam.

The Soviet collapse that led to eventual downfall of the Soviet-backed Najibullah regime reduced the strategic importance of Afghanistan, resulting in general decline in donor interest and aid levels provided by the US and its oil-rich Middle Eastern allies. The UN, the NGOs, the EU and bilateral European assistance stepped in to fill the aid gap but it was not sufficient for the country to stabilize itself. This indifference and lack of aid from international community gave neighboring countries a free hand to pursue their divergent interests in the country through Mujahideen groups. The Mujahideen infighting over who should rule the country precipitated widespread chaos, societal breakdown, and a humanitarian crisis within Afghanistan.

This convoluted environment in the war-torn country provided fertile ground for the rise of the Taliban, which promised to restore order, security and stability in the country, and their eventual takeover of Afghanistan in mid-to-late 1990s. The international aid community's initial perspective towards the Taliban was positive, despite their emerging policies on gender discrimination, but it gradually changed with the expansion of their rule beyond Pashtun dominated areas where they continued to implement their strict interpretation of Sharia. The calls for aid conditionality divided the international aid community to those highlighting the vital importance of humanitarian response and the others underlining the importance of women and girls' rights. The first group following tip-toe approach preferred to communicate the issue with the Taliban but the response was the Taliban's questioning of the silence of international community against Mujahideen groups' human rights violations of women and girls in the previous years whereas the second group following principled approach went for the suspension of aid programs but it did not work on the Taliban, either. Another point to be underlined that except for three countries (Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates), no country recognized the Taliban as Afghanistan's lawful government after their takeover of Kabul and this created disappointment for the Taliban while stiffening their uncompromising stance towards the international community.

Furthermore, the US, which had lost its interest in Afghanistan following the Soviet demise, continued its minimum engagement policy towards the country through its allies Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. Despite the lack of coherence in the US policy towards Afghanistan, the

overall US approach to the Taliban was initially positive as it was being shaped through its abovementioned allies. In the period 1994-1996, the US viewing the Taliban as provider of order, security and stability with anti-Iranian, anti-drug, anti-foreign fighter, and pro-Western stance preferred to ignore their Islamic fundamentalist agenda, violation of Afghan women and girls' human rights, and the increasing concerns of Central Asian countries. The US developed a renewed interest in Afghanistan, though not as in the Cold War years, after the American oil giant Unocal and its Saudi partner Delta signed an agreement with Turkmenistan in October 1995 for the construction of a gas pipeline from Turkmenistan to Pakistan and beyond through Afghanistan. Shortly thereafter, this interest-based romanticism was replaced by a new approach emphasizing neutrality towards all the warring parties, including the Taliban, and voicing the Taliban's violation of human rights, particularly those of Afghan women and girls due to various reasons such as approaching presidential elections in the US in November 1996, fluid military situation in Afghanistan, and success of the latter in the competition between interest-based pro-Taliban and human rights-centered anti-Taliban approaches at the US government. Starting from late 1990s, the US neutrality policy gradually turned into hostility with the turning of the Taliban's severe human rights violations into a significant domestic policy issue in the US but most importantly the Al-Qaeda terrorist attacks targeting the US Embassies in East Africa in 1998 and the US Warship USS Cole in Aden in 2000 after which the Taliban declined to extradite and expel Osama bin Laden and sanctioned by the UN. The Taliban also alienated their potential allies and/or made new enemies in its immediate and wider neighborhood through welcoming international jihadist groups to the country. All these tensions between the Taliban and international community, combined with the Taliban's uncompromising stance on enforcing Sharia that had restricted aid efforts while knowing that a starving population can overthrow any regime, several attacks on UN personnel, humanitarian imperative, and lack of coordination among international aid actors, even within UN system, resulted in the international aid community with reduced presence and reduced budget in the country provide only humanitarian assistance for Afghan people. The 9/11 Al-Qaeda terrorist attacks in New York and Washington led the US-led international military forces to intervene militarily in Afghanistan to remove Al-Qaeda leaders from the country and the Taliban from power in October 2001.

CHAPTER 7

AID TO AFGHANISTAN IN THE POST-9/11 PERIOD

7.1. Introduction

This chapter aims to elucidate the evolution of aid dynamics in a statehood that experienced both rise and decline during these two decades. The Taliban government's persistent harboring of Al-Qaeda terrorists prompted the US-led invasion of Afghanistan in October 2001, aimed at punishing those responsible for the 9/11 attacks on New York and Washington DC. This invasion led to the dislocation of Al-Qaeda network, including Osama bin Laden, and the defeat of the Taliban in November 2001. Shortly thereafter, the US-led international community spearheaded efforts to create a new Afghan state to restore peace, security, and stability in the country, as there had been no functioning state structure.

However, the Taliban swiftly regained power within few years and consolidated their position in the ensuing years. The international community's costly aid efforts did not yield the anticipated results. Despite spending 20 years in the country and allocated billions of dollars in aid for the country's reconstruction, the US-led international community, to which the Afghan people had entrusted their hopes, closed the Afghan chapter once again, reminiscent of the scenes from the fall of Saigon in 1975.

In mid-August 2021, while the US and its allies were hastily trying to complete the withdrawal of their troops from Afghanistan, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani fled the country without informing anyone from his government. Consequently, the Western-backed Islamic Republic of Afghanistan collapsed, resulting in the Taliban's unopposed takeover of Kabul and their declaration of the country as an 'Islamic Emirate'. With the Western-backed Afghan government consigned to the history at a much faster pace than expected, the American era in Afghanistan ended.

To examine these issues in detail, this chapter is structured as follows: The first part analyzes the US-led international community's aid efforts in rebuilding Afghanistan, covering the

initial short-term reconstruction plan, the Taliban's increasing insurgency driven by public dissatisfaction with international aid, and Obama administration's criticized 18-month surge in aid, which culminated in the creation of an aid-dependent rentier state amidst disorganized state-building efforts. The second part explores the US-led international community's decade-long withdrawal process amidst continued Taliban attacks, decreasing international aid, and the US-Taliban talks over withdrawal timelines under different presidents, while the very government to which responsibilities were being transferred was bypassed, culminating in a delayed yet highly chaotic final withdrawal. The third part investigates the Afghan shadow government, the Taliban's strategy of leveraging service provision to address public dissatisfaction and win support, and the parallel donor state created by international aid practices - where foreigners controlled funding, planning and implementation - undermining the government's monopoly on such sources and its ability to govern effectively.

7.2. Navigating the Crossroads: Rebuilding an Aid-Dependent Rentier State Amidst Confused Statebuilding Efforts

The US, the lead actor in the Afghan theatre in all aspects, which ignored the Afghanistan experience of its Cold War nemesis, the Soviet Union, that had also embarked on its decade-long engagement in the country with an initial two-pronged strategy involving short-term restoration and subsequent departure after its invasion, had planned a limited engagement and a rather short-term reconstruction plan in Afghanistan, assuming that the country was at the post-conflict stage after its military operation in the period 2001-2002 and later prioritizing its Iraqi invasion and reconstruction from 2003 onwards. Following statements of the high level of officials of the Bush administration indicate this prevailing assumption:

Bush had campaigned on a platform against U.S. involvement in nation-building activities...Weeks after 9/11, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz cautioned that in Afghanistan “there is a lot that could be done with just basic food, medicine, and education programs, if we don't set the bar too high.” In policy guidance, Under Secretary of Defense Douglas Feith was more blunt: “The U.S. should not plunge into a nation-building project.”¹³⁹⁵

Former senior State Department official interviewing with SIGAR in 2015 states that the US government adopted “a minimalism approach” towards Afghanistan in the period 2001-2004 by adding that “We will help these guys set up a government and a bit economically and on

¹³⁹⁵ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *What We Need to Learn: Lessons from Twenty Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction*, SIGAR 21-46-LL (Arlington, VA: SIGAR, August 2021), 24, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/SIGAR-21-46-LL.pdf>

the humanitarian side, but we are not going^[1396] to do anything that smacks of nation building. . . . You have to be crazy if you want to get ambitious in Afghanistan.”¹³⁹⁶

Due to its focus on counter-terrorism and the implementation of “light footprint approach” to prevent terrorists from establishing a foothold in Afghanistan, the US did not pursue any objectives or actions beyond these two goals. The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) report states that “the first few years of the U.S. reconstruction effort were significantly underresourced,” noting that “[f]unds were inadequate to address the many challenges presented by a country whose government was unable to defend its borders or protect its citizens, and where schools were shuttered and food scarce.”¹³⁹⁷ Setting aside the reconstruction of Afghan civilian institutions, which were expected to play a secondary role in restoring peace, security and order in post-Taliban Afghanistan, the US allocated very few resources and a short-time period even for reconstructing the country’s national security forces, a priority sector aligned with its counter-terrorism objectives.¹³⁹⁸ For instance, during the period 2002-2003, the US, which had previously committed 54 thousand troops to Bosnia in 1996 - a country “one-twelfth the size and about one-sixth the population of Afghanistan” - and employed 35 thousand civilian police officers only in New York, committed “only seven thousand troops to a country the size of France with a population of thirty million people,” with most tasked with chasing the traces of Al-Qaeda and the Taliban in southern and eastern Afghanistan as part of ‘Operation Enduring Freedom’, while “the UN-mandated International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), initially comprising five thousand troops from forty nations” was designated with the responsibility of securing Kabul.¹³⁹⁹

Furthermore, the US planned to complete the training of a small-sized and Kabul-based Afghan National Army (ANA) and subsequently withdraw its troops from the country in 2004 as it was reluctant to allocate both time and resources to the expansion of the Afghan national security forces beyond Kabul, particularly following its invasion of Iraq in 2003.¹⁴⁰⁰

¹³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 15

¹³⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 24

¹³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹⁹ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 313

¹⁴⁰⁰ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *What We Need to Learn: Lessons from Twenty Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction*, SIGAR 21-46-LL (Arlington, VA: SIGAR, August 2021), 24, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/SIGAR-21-46-LL.pdf>

Similarly, the efforts to build the capacity of Afghan civilian institutions were also inadequately funded. Despite limited funding, driven by the need to show some progress, the National Security Council prioritized infrastructure projects as tangible initiatives with quick success, such as Kabul-to-Kandahar Ring Road in 2002, overriding USAID's objections and requiring it to reallocate funds from other programmes.¹⁴⁰¹

This initial approach based on short-term and limited engagement continued until the reappearance of the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2006. In response to growing Taliban attacks, the international community also increased its civilian and military aid levels. The Taliban making use of the grievances caused by the aid actors within the country began to flourish. With Obama's presidency in 2009, the US government changed its earlier light footprint approach towards Afghanistan. Obama administration put Afghanistan on top of the US foreign policy agenda and developed 18-month way forward policy for the country. Accordingly, the administration massively increased aid levels to help build the Afghan government's civilian and military capacities within 18 months but on the condition that if they could not accomplish the mission, then withdrawal option would be put on the table. This strategy also failed as the amount of aid was way above the country's absorptive capacity and brought about many serious problems, most notably the unprecedented levels of corruption. Upon this, Obama put the withdrawal plan into practice. With some delays, the US and its allies gradually reduced both aid and troop levels. Also, the US started bilateral talks with the Taliban to prepare the country its post-departure. However, as how Bush administration had initiated minimalist namely light foot-print approach in the early 2000s and misused the advantages of these early years, Biden made the worst possible departure from the Afghan theatre. Following parts will examine the issue chronologically to provide a comprehensive picture of aid-giving and aid-receiving in the Afghan context. Before concluding this part, I would like to share Omar Samad's statement that summarizes, which summarizes what really happened in Afghanistan: "the U.S. military intervention went beyond the immediate scope of neutralizing terror outfits or denying them a foothold, and instead, turned into a costly state and nation-building enterprise with inconsistent strategic goals, commitments and timelines."¹⁴⁰²

¹⁴⁰¹ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *What We Need to Learn: Lessons from Twenty Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction*, SIGAR 21-46-LL (Arlington, VA: SIGAR, August 2021), 24-25, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/SIGAR-21-46-LL.pdf>

¹⁴⁰² Omar Samad, "The 2021 Collapse: Lessons Learned from a Century of Upheavals^[1] and Afghanistan's Foreign Policy," in *The Great Power Competition Volume 4: Lessons Learned in Afghanistan: America's Longest War*, ed. Adib Farhadi and Anthony Masys (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2023), 432

7.2.1. Short-term Reconstruction Plan

Following the US-led military intervention in Afghanistan in October 2001, which was the formal commencement of ‘Operation Enduring Freedom’ namely the first phase in the ‘global war on terror’, and the subsequent fall of the Taliban regime in November 2001, the international community, most notably the US and its allies, began preparing for the country’s post-war reconstruction through UN resolution 1378 calling for a framework for reconstruction efforts ahead of a senior officials meeting that was co-chaired by Japan and the US in Washington in November 2001, leading these officials to agree on a coordinated assistance plan among all parties providing financial aid and technical assistance.¹⁴⁰³

Concurrently, all Afghan key players, except Taliban, were invited to the UN-sponsored Bonn Conference to decide “a new political order” that would be shaped by the formation of a central authority “around which a state could be reconstructed with external military and financial assistance” and they signed the “Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Re-establishment of Permanent Government Institutions,” also known as the Bonn Agreement, on 05 December 2001 (ratified by UNSC 1383), which emphasized “the right of people to democratically determine their political future according to the principles of Islam and promoting national reconciliation, stability and respect for human rights,” called upon the wider international aid community to support Afghanistan’s rehabilitation and ensure its national sovereignty, included provisions for “judicial and legal reforms” and the establishment of new Afghan security and armed forces, “independent human rights commission,” “a civil service commission,” “an independent central bank” but without any timelines, and they also agreed on a political system incorporating liberal democracy, market economy, and respect for Islamic and traditional values as some kind of reconciliation between themselves and the international community’s interests.¹⁴⁰⁴ The Bonn Agreement produced the creation of Afghan Interim Administration (AIA) headed by Hamid

¹⁴⁰³ John Alan Hennings, “500 Men: An Alternate Approach to America’s War in Afghanistan,” in *The Great Power Competition Volume 4: Lessons Learned in Afghanistan: America’s Longest War*, ed. Adib Farhadi and Anthony Masys (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2023), 151; Dennis A. Rondinelli, “International Goals and Strategies for Afghanistan’s Development: Reconstruction and Beyond,” in *Beyond Reconstruction in Afghanistan: Lessons from Development Experience*, ed. John D. Montgomery and Dennis A. Rondinelli (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 16.

¹⁴⁰⁴ Nematullah Bizhan, *Aid Paradoxes in Afghanistan: Building and Undermining State* (London: Routledge, 2018), 78-79; Ambassador Hugo Llorens, “Afghanistan: A Case Study in Self-Defeat,” in *The Great Power Competition Volume 4: Lessons Learned in Afghanistan: America’s Longest War*, ed. Adib Farhadi and Anthony Masys (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2023), 274; United Nations Security Council (UNSC), “Letter Dated 5 December 2001 from the Secretary-General Addressed to the President of the Security Council,” S/2001/1154, December 05, 2001, https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/AF_011205_AgreementProvisionalArrangementsinAfghanistan%28en%29.pdf

Karzai in late December 2001 and six month later in mid-2002 the emergency Loya Jirga reaffirmed the Karzai-headed provisional government for two years until a new constitution and elections take place.¹⁴⁰⁵ In accordance with the Bonn Agreement and as authorized by the UNSC 1386 on 20 December 2001, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was created and first deployed to Kabul area in 2001.¹⁴⁰⁶

In January 2002, the International Conference on Reconstruction Assistance of Afghanistan, which was co-sponsored by the EU, the US, Japan and Saudi Arabia, was held in Tokyo with the participation of more than 60 countries, 20 international organizations, and the Head of the AIA Hamid Karzai, and international donors pledged more than US\$1.8 billion for 2002 and US\$4.5 billion over the next five years, which was way below the UN's estimated need of US\$15 billion and the AIA's call for US\$40 billion over the next ten years.¹⁴⁰⁷ UN Assistance Mission for Afghanistan (UNAMA), a political and development mission coordinating the activities of more than 20 UN agencies in Afghanistan and the World-Bank managed, multi-donor Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) providing "a coordinated financing mechanism for the Afghan Government's budget and national programs, delivering support for agriculture, education, governance, health, infrastructure and rural development" were created in 2002¹⁴⁰⁸ This was followed by NATO's taking the lead of ISAF in August 2003, the adoption of the new constitution establishing the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in January 2004 by the constitutional Loya Jirga, the presidential elections in late 2004 resulting in the presidency of the Western-backed Hamid Karzai, the first elected national leader in Afghan history, and the parliamentary elections in late 2005.¹⁴⁰⁹ Barfield explains the declaration of the Islamic government in the 2004 constitution by referring that

¹⁴⁰⁵ Nematullah Bizhan, *Aid Paradoxes in Afghanistan: Building and Undermining State* (London: Routledge, 2018), 79.

¹⁴⁰⁶ Ambassador Hugo Llorens, "Afghanistan: A Case Study in Self-Defeat," in *The Great Power Competition Volume 4: Lessons Learned in Afghanistan: America's Longest War*, ed. Adib Farhadi and Anthony Masys (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2023), 274; NATO, "ISAF's Mission in Afghanistan (2001-2014)," last accessed May 01, 2024, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_69366.htm

¹⁴⁰⁷ UNDP, "Afghanistan: Donors Pledge \$4.5 billion in Tokyo," Reliefweb, January 22, 2002, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/afghanistan-donors-pledge-45-billion-tokyo>; Kate Clark, "Flash From The Past: The 2002 Tokyo Conference – The World's Most Difficult Story," Afghanistan Analyst Network, July 08, 2012, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/en/reports/economy-development-environment/flash-from-the-past-the-2002-tokyo-conference-the-worlds-most-difficult-story/>

¹⁴⁰⁸ Angela Clare, "Aid to Afghanistan since 2001," Australian Parliament, December 23, 2021, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp2_122/AidAfghanistanSince2001

¹⁴⁰⁹ NATO, "ISAF's Mission in Afghanistan (2001-2014)," last accessed May 01, 2024, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_69366.htm; Nematullah Bizhan, *Aid Paradoxes in Afghanistan: Building and Undermining State* (London: Routledge, 2018), 79

Afghans perceive politics and religion as inseparable phenomena and an Islamic government as “descriptive, not prescriptive.”¹⁴¹⁰ As for the 2004 Afghan constitution, Barfield states that the debate between supporters of “a powerful presidential system” with highly centralized structure, which included mainly Pashtuns seeing Karzai’s strong presidency as the means to restore their previous dominance, Afghan modernists viewing strong centralized state as “their tool to bring about change,” the international community wanting to work with “a powerful president and centralized bureaucracy” rather than “a messy legislature or regional power structures” of the 1990s, UNAMA and the US considering the restoration of a highly centralized state structure as a solution to the country’s current problems and a factor preventing the country from falling apart in the future, and the others who favored a federal parliamentary system with a prime minister with reference to the detrimental effects of “a century of highly centralized rule from Kabul” on the regions and the Afghan civil war that had already made the regions autonomous and “less likely to take orders from Kabul that they disagreed with” resulted in the victory of the former group and thereby the revamped version of the country’s 1964 constitution with “a strong monarchal flavor” was created.¹⁴¹¹

While the US and its Western allies were taking consecutive steps in the restoration of the Afghan state through the formation of interim government, creation of new constitution, presidential and parliamentary elections, Loya Jirga approvals to legitimize this new state in both the eyes of the international community and “(it was assumed) the Afghan population,” Afghanistan needed international aid in the following three key sectors that would improve the lives of ordinary Afghan people and thus secure the newly established state’s survival: the provision of security in all regions of the country through the deployment of international troops, the massive investment in agriculture for rural Afghans constituting the great majority of the population, and the rapid rehabilitation and expansion of the existing damaged infrastructure.¹⁴¹²

With regard to security sector, G8 countries adopted a ‘lead nation’ approach to Security Sector Reform (SSR) in 2002, which they divided into five pillars: “Germany would lead on police reform, the US on military reform, Italy on judicial reform, the UK on counter-narcotics, and Japan on the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of former

¹⁴¹⁰ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 41

¹⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*, 7-8, 297-299, 302-303

¹⁴¹² *Ibid.*, 294, 312-313

combatants.”¹⁴¹³ Accordingly, “[t]hat approach marked the beginning of what would become the main plank of the West’s perceived ‘exit strategy’ from Afghanistan, namely by building up Afghan security forces.”¹⁴¹⁴ This ‘lead nation’ approach was created as a burden-sharing arrangement rather than comprehensive framework as “[w]hile all these pillars of reform and development were interconnected, they were pursued by different actors with varying levels of commitment, resources, priorities, and procedures.”¹⁴¹⁵ The ownership of Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) development mission was not under any specific country or agency, instead resided “within a NATO-led coalition and with temporary organizations,” leading to the emergence of a bizarre development process involving “constantly changing staff and rotating military and civilian advisors.”¹⁴¹⁶ In the long run, this lack of ownership in the development of ANDSF, producing “a constant personnel turnover” would hinder “continuity and institutional memory” and thus undermine the entire mission.¹⁴¹⁷

Furthermore, Afghan New Beginning Programme (ANBP) was launched in 2005, with the aim of demobilizing official Afghan army units such as the “militia of Northern Alliance leader Mohammad Fanim... who had taken over the army units left by departing Taliban” not the unofficial militias belonging to the strongmen in the countryside, many of whom became part of the government.¹⁴¹⁸

Similar to the Soviets in the early 1980s, the US was planning to remove its troops from the country in 2004 after completing the preparation of a small-sized and Kabul-based Afghan National Army (ANA) that would ensure the restored order, as dictated by short time prospects, limited resources, the prevailing assumption that the conflict was over, and most importantly the DOD’s warning of ‘stay in basic needs circle and avoid commitment to any nationbuilding project’. The US Green Berets immediately started to train the first group of

¹⁴¹³ Lucy Morgan Edwards, “State-building in Afghanistan: A Case Showing Its Limits?” *International Review of Red Cross* 92, no. 880 (December 2010): 976

¹⁴¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁴¹⁵ Ali A. Jalali, “Reflections on the Fateful Collapse of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces,” in *The Great Power Competition Volume 4: Lessons Learned in Afghanistan: America’s Longest War*, ed. Adib Farhadi and Anthony Masys (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2023), 174

¹⁴¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴¹⁸ Lucy Morgan Edwards, “State-building in Afghanistan: A Case Showing Its Limits?” *International Review of Red Cross* 92, no. 880 (December 2010): 978-979

Afghan soldiers for the ANA around mid-2002.¹⁴¹⁹ However, this time and location pressure put the Afghan security officers out of Kabul under the control of unqualified officers having close connections with militias and strongmen and restrained the US officials' capacity.¹⁴²⁰ A German-led police capacity-building program was not proceeding any different than the American one.¹⁴²¹ However, while the Bush administration was talking about limited engagement in Afghanistan in 2002, on the other hand it was announcing the establishment of "Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) [originally a program called Coalition Humanitarian Liaison Cells], groups of military and civilian officials that sought to facilitate more stability in local communities through strengthening governance and service delivery" in the very same year, referring to "the Bush White House's lack of clarity about Afghanistan policy."¹⁴²²

Furthermore, Washington, which had opposed the expansion of the ISAF's mandate beyond Kabul in 2002 and thereby left most regions outside Kabul without international military presence, began lobbying for its expansion in 2003 but countries that might have been open to making substantial additional commitments in 2002, such as Turkey, France and Germany, declined to do so partly due to the division among NATO allies over the US invasion of Iraq.¹⁴²³ However, the US managed to convince its allies, resulting in the gradual expansion of ISAF from December 2003, when the UN extended its mandate to cover the entire country with UN Security Council Resolution 1510 until October 2006, when ISAF assumed command of the international military forces in eastern Afghanistan from the US-led coalition in the final stage.¹⁴²⁴ Some of the ISAF forces, which had increased to ten thousand, and U.S. forces, which had risen to twenty thousand were allocated to the PRTs as ISAF took over command of several PRTs all over the country.¹⁴²⁵ Better late than never, but

¹⁴¹⁹ Ali A. Jalali, "Reflections on the Fateful Collapse of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces," in *The Great Power Competition Volume 4: Lessons Learned in Afghanistan: America's Longest War*, ed. Adib Farhadi and Anthony Masys (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2023), 172

¹⁴²⁰ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *What We Need to Learn: Lessons from Twenty Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction*, SIGAR 21-46-LL (Arlington, VA: SIGAR, August 2021), 24, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/SIGAR-21-46-LL.pdf>

¹⁴²¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴²² Michael Kugelman, "Mission Creep on Repeat: Deconstructing U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan," in *The Great Power Competition Volume 4: Lessons Learned in Afghanistan: America's Longest War*, ed. Adib Farhadi and Anthony Masys (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2023), 253

¹⁴²³ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 314

¹⁴²⁴ NATO, "ISAF's Mission in Afghanistan (2001-2014)," last accessed May 01, 2024, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_69366.htm

¹⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*

due to the US factor namely its early reluctance in extending the ISAF beyond Kabul in 2002, its focus on Al-Qaeda rather than Afghan reconstruction process, and the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces ANDSF's lack of readiness as they were still undergoing training - such as the Afghan National Army ANA, which could deploy only forty-five hundred out of nine thousand troops - the new Afghan government was unable to extend its authority into the provinces. As a result, "the former regional military leaders of the old United Front retained their political importance in the non-Pashtun regions of the north and west even after their militias were officially demobilized" and the US forces in the Pashtun east employed "local militia allies to assist them" due to their little knowledge and understanding of the Afghan Pashtun context and their limited military capabilities in the region.¹⁴²⁶

The main reasons behind Washington's change of mind regarding ISAF's expansion were its desire to rapidly complete its self-assigned, limited short-term role in the Afghan reconstruction, allowing the UN and the EU to focus on their own priorities, particularly Iraq, and its concerns about the increasing Taliban attacks since early 2003.¹⁴²⁷ Although the Bush administration initially considered Afghanistan a post-conflict country and planned only limited short-term engagement in 2002, these increasing Taliban attacks in early 2003 led it to revise its plans as the administration gradually recognized that Afghanistan was not a post-conflict country and the more commitment was required for the country's reconstruction, leading to US reconstruction spending exceeding "an amount equivalent to 45 percent of Afghan GDP" by 2004, and US reconstruction funding increasing to "more than four times" the previous amount by 2005.¹⁴²⁸

Apart from that, the US Department of Defense (DOD) decided to extend one of its counter-insurgency (COIN) tools from Iraq, the 'Commander's Emergency Response Program' (CERP), to Afghanistan and initiated CERP-Afghanistan in 2004. This flexible program is used by that US commanders to support the US Forces-Afghanistan (USFOR-A) mission

¹⁴²⁶ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 314

¹⁴²⁷ Giovanna Bono, "EU Police Missions," in *The Routledge Handbook of International Statebuilding*, ed. David Chandler and Timothy D. Sisk (London: Routledge, 2013), 358; Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *What We Need to Learn: Lessons from Twenty Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction*, SIGAR 21-46-LL (Arlington, VA: SIGAR, August 2021), 13, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/SIGAR-21-46-LL.pdf>

¹⁴²⁸ Nematullah Bizhan, *Aid Paradoxes in Afghanistan: Building and Undermining State* (London: Routledge, 2018),

and address urgent humanitarian relief and reconstruction need that directly benefit the local population.¹⁴²⁹

About rural development, the National Solidarity Program (NSP), “a flagship development program and darling of Western aid agencies” was initiated in 2003 to support and strengthen “rural Afghanistan’s grassroots through elected Community Development Councils (CDC) that included women, using grants to restore rural infrastructure and create employment,” with funding “a consortium of international donors led by the World Bank.”¹⁴³⁰ NSP, a good example of a community-driven approach, would continue until being replaced by the Citizens’ Charter Afghanistan Project (CCAP) in 2016, during which “more than 14 million villagers in some 20,000 communities benefited from the NSP for a total cost of \$2.3 billion.”¹⁴³¹

Furthermore, in order to lay out its development priorities, the country also created the National Development Framework (NDF) in 2002, which focused on “security and human development”, “rebuilding physical infrastructure,” and “enabling the creation of a viable private sector as the engine for sustainable and inclusive economic growth,” and reaffirmed the NDF in the Securing Afghanistan’s Future (SFA) presented at the Berlin Donors’ Conference in 2004.¹⁴³² During the 2004 Berlin Conference, Karzai administration called donors to consider the aid provided to Afghanistan not as a “charity” but as “an investment in stability, peace-building, and development at local, regional, and global levels” by underlining that this would also “lower the associated defence and security-related costs of many nations.”¹⁴³³ Additionally, the Karzai administration presented an updated needs assessment to the international donors at the Berlin Conference, resulting in pledges totaling

¹⁴²⁹ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *Commander’s Emergency Response Program: DOD Has Not Determined the Full Extent to Which Its Program and Projects, Totaling \$1.5 Billion in Obligations, Achieved Their Objectives and Goals in Afghanistan from Fiscal Years 2009 through 2013*, SIGAR 18-45-AR/Commander’s Emergency Response Program (Arlington, VA: SIGAR, April 2018), 1, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/audits/SIGAR-18-45-AR.pdf>

¹⁴³⁰ Omar Samad, “The 2021 Collapse: Lessons Learned from a Century of Upheavals^[1] and Afghanistan’s Foreign Policy,” in *The Great Power Competition Volume 4: Lessons Learned in Afghanistan: America’s Longest War*, ed. Adib Farhadi and Anthony Masys (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2023), 428

¹⁴³¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴³² Ron van Rooden, “Overview,” in *Reconstructing Afghanistan*, ed. Adam Bennett (Washington DC: IMF, 2005), 2

¹⁴³³ Nematullah Bizhan, *Aid Paradoxes in Afghanistan: Building and Undermining State* (London: Routledge, 2018), 77

\$8.2 billion in support for the period March 2004-March 2007, including pledges of \$4.4 billion for the period March 2004-March 2005.”¹⁴³⁴

As for infrastructural development, in 2002, upon pressure on USAID to show some progress not only to the Congress or the US taxpayers but also Afghan people, the National Security Council (NSC) assigned the agency to build the Kabul-Kandahar Ring Road, and for this extremely costly project, the US had to reallocate money from its other programs such as agriculture and governance. This infrastructure project informed the beginning of “a trend that would last for more than a decade: The United States prioritized tangible projects on which money could be spent and success claimed more quickly, over less tangible types of programming with the potential to be more enduring, such as capacity building.” The Soviets had also been prioritizing this kind of high visibility projects while dealing with Afghanistan such as roads, pavements, mills etc. The problem about this kind of large-scale infrastructure projects is that once funding increased, “they awarded the vast majority of it to contractors to implement programming” by thinking “the Afghan government lacked the capacity to manage the money directly,” resulting in failing to invest in building the Afghan government’s capacity and therefore assuming all these responsibilities for these functions.” This would create lack of ownership problem in the future.

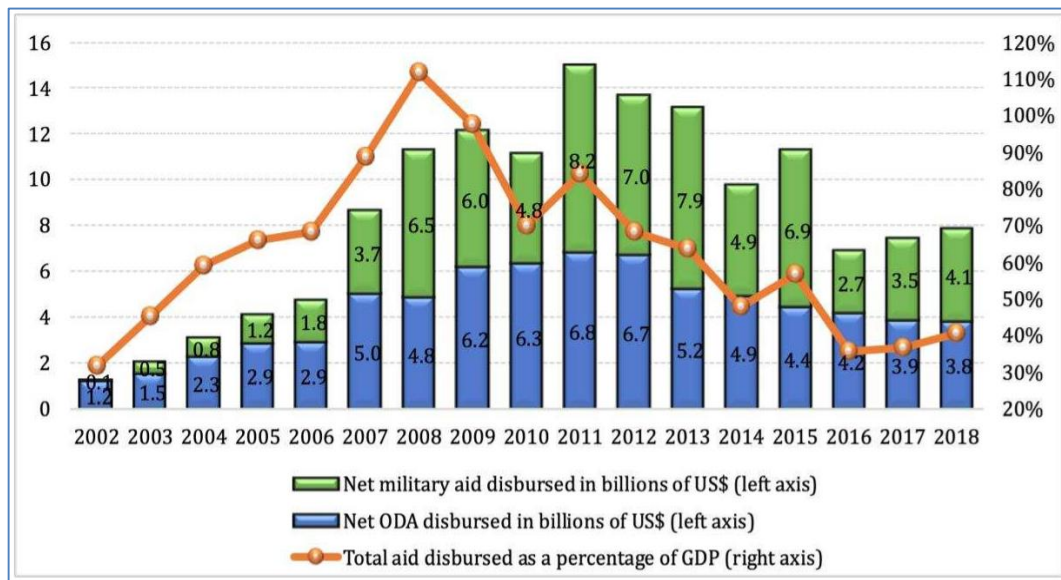


Figure 2. Total Foreign Aid Disbursement to Afghanistan (2002-2018, Current \$)¹⁴³⁵

¹⁴³⁴ Ron van Rooden, “Overview,” in *Reconstructing Afghanistan*, ed. Adam Bennett (Washington DC: IMF, 2005), 2

¹⁴³⁵ Abdul Matin Karimi, “Moving Away from Foreign Aid: A Case Study of Afghanistan,” MRPA Paper No. 105639, December 22, 2020, 14, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://mpr.ub.uni-muenchen.de/105639/12/MPRA_paper_105639.pdf

Thomas Barfield makes the following comment to demonstrate the inadequacy of aid provided to Afghanistan and bad performance of aid actors during the first few years of the country's reconstruction:

What the Afghans needed was construction and capacity building, not reconstruction to pitiful prewar levels. Yet the major projects planned for Afghanistan hardly began to meet the country's needs... While other nations recognized the need for nation building in Afghanistan, the amount of money available, even had it been well spent, was insufficient to do the job. Pledges to Afghanistan amounted to \$10 billion in the first three years after 2001.... While the total figures appeared impressive, many pledges never materialized, and the amounts delivered were low on a per capita basis. In 2003, international aid amounted to only \$50 per person and rose to only \$66 two years later.[“This fell well short of postconflict aid packages elsewhere at the same time, such as Mozambique (\$111 per capita) or Serbia and Montenegro (\$237 per capita)]. Worse, a substantial portion of the aid to Afghanistan was swallowed up by the expenses of providing it.¹⁴³⁶

Apart from the insufficiency of aid amount and bad performance of aid actors, there is also another reason that can explain why the international aid provided by Western donors to Afghan reconstruction process during this period made Afghans disappointed with its initial results and reduce their early days enthusiasm about the post-Taliban era. Douglas Lute the Deputy National Security Advisor for Iraq and Afghanistan under President George W. Bush and Barack Obama, in an interview with SIGAR held in 2015, explains the main reason with the following words:

We were devoid of a fundamental understanding of Afghanistan. We didn't know what we were doing. . . . We're going to do something in Afghanistan with \$10 billion? Haiti is a small country in our own backyard with no extremist insurgency and we can't develop it. And we expect to develop Afghanistan with \$10 billion? . . . What are we trying to do here? We didn't have the foggiest notion of what we were undertaking. . . . It's really much worse than you think. There [was] a fundamental gap of understanding on the front end, overstated objectives, an overreliance on the military, and a lack of understanding of the resources necessary.¹⁴³⁷

Despite increasing frustration and disappointment due to the slow pace of economic development in rural areas where most Afghans lived and government's incapacity of meeting even basic needs in Kabul such as drinking water, electricity and transportation, together with the “governmental malfeasance, corruption, and abuses of power [that] steadily

¹⁴³⁶ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 315-316

¹⁴³⁷ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *What We Need to Learn: Lessons from Twenty Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction*, SIGAR 21-46-LL (Arlington, VA: SIGAR, August 2021), 15, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/SIGAR-21-46-LL.pdf>

reduced domestic confidence in the Karzai administration in the absence of any serious steps to curb them” and deteriorating security situation in the country with the appearance of suicide bombers for the first time, Washington was acting like a “mission accomplished” in Afghanistan as “it reduced its budgeted aid request for Afghanistan by 38 percent (from \$4.3 billion in fiscal 2005 to \$3.1 billion in fiscal 2006)” and the US DOD announced its plans in December 2005 to decrease the number of US troops in Afghanistan “by three thousand” for the year 2006, “although a larger NATO force would replace them” in the country, except eastern Afghanistan under direct US control.¹⁴³⁸ Increasing Taliban insurgency starting from 2006 would serve as a wake-up call for the US and its allies in Afghanistan that would be detailed in the following section.

7.2.2. Increasing Taliban-led insurgency: Mobilization of Discontent

Although Afghanistan and the international community were issuing the Afghanistan Compact, which created a strategy for the building effective and accountable Afghan state and established a framework for making aid more effective in the next five years, during the London Conference on Afghanistan in February 2006 and President Bush was praising Afghan success and President Karzai in his speeches during his visit to the country in March 2006, “the [US] administration’s own intelligence chief reported that the antigovernment insurgency in Afghanistan is growing and presents a greater threat than at any point since late 2001”¹⁴³⁹

After turning of a traffic accident involving US troops and Afghans into an unrest with anti-government character that was also joined by some police officers in mid-2006, which indicated the shrinking popularity of the Western-backed Karzai government; the confrontation of NATO troops in eastern Afghanistan that were deployed not as combat mission but just as a facilitator for new economic development projects with “a well-armed and full-blown insurgency led by a reinvigorated Taliban” in the summer of 2006 that resulted in the retreat of the Taliban back to Pakistan but also showed that “troop levels were too low to expel them permanently from the region,” a steep increase in cross-border attacks of Taliban and Al-Qaeda forces from Pakistan’s tribal territories, and a “new level of violence,” as evidenced by doubling the use of explosive devises, almost tripling armed

¹⁴³⁸ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 318

¹⁴³⁹ Barnett R. Rubin, *Afghanistan’s Uncertain Transition From Turmoil to Normalcy*, Council Special Reports (CRS) No. 12, (New York: Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), March 2006), 1-2, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://cdn.cfr.org/sites/default/files/book_pdf/Afghanistan_CSR.pdf

attacks, and more than quadrupling of suicide bombings between 2005 and 2006 demonstrated that the mission was not accomplished.¹⁴⁴⁰ Having stated that “America’s “good war” was now badly off track, and the seemingly discredited Taliban were back in the south and attempting to spread outward,” Barfield states that the Taliban’s southern offensive in 2006 was based on their two key assumptions of that “NATO troops were simply covering for a U.S. departure from Afghanistan, as indicated by the troop-cut announcement in 2005” and “NATO to be a less-committed foe than the United States.”¹⁴⁴¹

In response to mounting Taliban attacks in 2006, gradual shift from counterterrorism to counterinsurgency-reconstruction occurred. The US developed rapid and condensed training programmes to expand the ANDSF and took over the responsibility of the police capacity-building programme from Germans but this rapid growth of police and army in size did not match with the funding tendencies of donors, leading to several problems, such as shortage of equipment, trainer, advisors, and logistics.¹⁴⁴² Interestingly, the Soviets had also followed the same approach and focused on increasing the size of the military and police rather than their capacity.

Moreover, Washington increased its troop commitment and its allies did not withdraw their troops from Afghanistan.¹⁴⁴³ The number of PRTs also increased to 22 in 2006.¹⁴⁴⁴ In addition to the PRTs, Agri-business Development Teams (ADTs), composed of soldier-experts, were created in 2007 for the purpose of helping Afghan farmers improve agriculture as part of winning hearts and minds campaign.¹⁴⁴⁵ In the period 2008-2012, Afghanistan received “US\$247 million of humanitarian assistance via^[17] military actors, including

¹⁴⁴⁰ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 319

¹⁴⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁴² Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *What We Need to Learn: Lessons from Twenty Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction*, SIGAR 21-46-LL (Arlington, VA: SIGAR, August 2021), 29, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/SIGAR-21-46-LL.pdf>

¹⁴⁴³ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 319

¹⁴⁴⁴ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *What We Need to Learn: Lessons from Twenty Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction*, SIGAR 21-46-LL (Arlington, VA: SIGAR, August 2021), 26, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/SIGAR-21-46-LL.pdf>

¹⁴⁴⁵ Sean Ryan, “Science of Decision-Making Related of Afghanistan and the CASA Region,” in *The Great Power Competition Volume 4: Lessons Learned in Afghanistan: America’s Longest War*, ed. Adib Farhadi and Anthony Masys (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2023), 396; Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL), *Agribusiness Development Teams in Afghanistan: Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures*, Handbook No. 10-10 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, November 2009), 1, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://usacac.army.mil/sites/default/files/publications/10-10.pdf>

provincial reconstruction teams [PRTs],” with annual assistance declining significantly from US\$125 million in 2008 to US\$8 million in 2012.¹⁴⁴⁶

In 2007, the US reconstruction spending surged to nearly three times. With the skyrocketing funds, “the NSC and the military also forced USAID to accept impossible goals, driven by political timelines for how fast it would build things like schools and clinics.”¹⁴⁴⁷ Great majority of the US assistance went to the security and infrastructure sectors.¹⁴⁴⁸ ODA allocated to Afghanistan first jumped from USD 2.9 billion in 2006 to USD 4.54 billion in 2007, and later increased to USD 4.65 billion in 2008 and to USD 5.77 billion in 2009.¹⁴⁴⁹ From 2002 to 2009, foreign aid constituted 70 percent of GDP and financed more than 90 percent of public expenditures, four-fifths of which was covered through off-budget mechanisms.¹⁴⁵⁰

Furthermore, donors financed projects that would serve their interests, such as India chose to fund infrastructure projects in Afghanistan that would reduce its dependency on Pakistan while contributing to the development of Afghan-India relations.¹⁴⁵¹ Another important point to underline is that the numerous coordination/consultative mechanisms were established by the Afghan government and foreign donors but they were mostly perceived as “a process of information sharing than a mechanism for policy adjustment and redirection of resources” as donors channeling majority of their aid to Afghanistan as off-budget namely bypassing the Afghan state (all donors except the World Bank) mostly did not want to share “the details of off-budget expenditures and the concerned challenges.”¹⁴⁵²

Notwithstanding, the security situation continued to deteriorate as the Taliban-led insurgency, making use of “ethnic tensions, the rejection of foreign forces by the Afghan

¹⁴⁴⁶ Global Humanitarian Assistance (GHA), *Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2014*, 67, last accessed May 01, 2024. <http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/GHA-Report-2014-interactive.pdf>

¹⁴⁴⁷ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *What We Need to Learn: Lessons from Twenty Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction*, SIGAR 21-46-LL (Arlington, VA: SIGAR, August 2021), 25, 26, 27, 28, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/SIGAR-21-46-LL.pdf>

¹⁴⁴⁸ Nematullah Bizhan, *Aid Paradoxes in Afghanistan: Building and Undermining State* (London: Routledge, 2018), 86

¹⁴⁴⁹ “Net Official Development Assistance Received (Current US\$)-Afghanistan,” World Bank Open Data, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/DT.ODA.ODAT.CD?locations=AF>

¹⁴⁵⁰ Nematullah Bizhan, *Aid Paradoxes in Afghanistan: Building and Undermining State* (London: Routledge, 2018), 77

¹⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 86

¹⁴⁵² *Ibid.*, 86-87

people, and the lack of local administration to gain support in the population,” achieved to make significant inroads, strengthen its hold in Eastern and Southern Afghanistan, ensure its stronghold in Pakistan and expand its operations into Northern Afghanistan.¹⁴⁵³ Dorronsoro argues that the Taliban’s significant achievement against the International Coalition (IC) forces is partly the IC’s fault as they do not know the Taliban, which he describes as “a resilient adversary, engaged in strategic planning and coordinated action” rather than “an umbrella movement comprising loosely connected groups that are essentially local and unorganized.”¹⁴⁵⁴ Secondly, the situation on the ground helps the Taliban build and make people believe its propaganda, such as “the widely perceived corruption of the Afghan government, the lack of basic services for the people, and the historical narrative of the fight against infidel invaders (British, Soviets, and Americans), and also the Afghan people’s increasing doubts about “the good intentions and effectiveness of the IC.”¹⁴⁵⁵

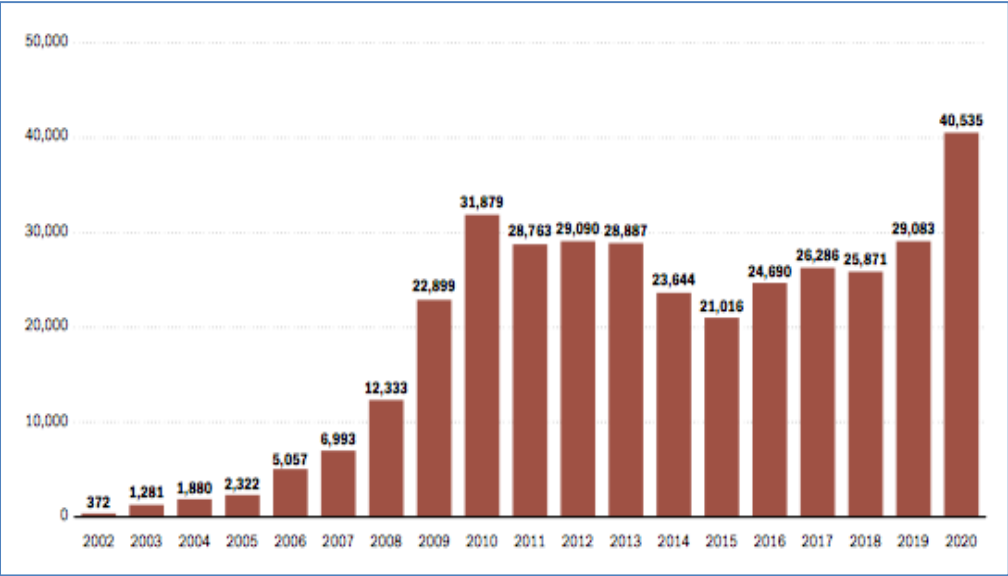


Figure 3. Attacks by Years (2002-2020)¹⁴⁵⁶

Last but not least, the Taliban that had established “governing commissions” (equivalent to ministries) for “military affairs, culture, finance and political matters” in Pakistan in 2003 turned its attention to civilian aspect of insurgency and began to build a shadow government

¹⁴⁵³ Gilles Dorronsoro, *The Taliban’s Winning Strategy in Afghanistan* (Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment, 2009), 7

¹⁴⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 5

¹⁴⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 12

¹⁴⁵⁶ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *What We Need to Learn: Lessons from Twenty Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction*, SIGAR 21-46-LL (Arlington, VA: SIGAR, August 2021), 13, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/SIGAR-21-46-LL.pdf>

in 2006 by establishing “governing commissions” for education, healthcare, justice, taxation and revenues, telecommunications and utilities at both provincial and district levels to provide services to the Afghan people.¹⁴⁵⁷ For instance, judges being appointed in 2006 became “the first functional component of the Taliban’s insurgent service delivery.”¹⁴⁵⁸

7.2.3. Aid in an 18-month Surge

Following President Barack Obama’s inauguration in early 2009, his administration rapidly elevated Afghanistan to a prominent position on the US foreign policy agenda. This shift involved conducting a comprehensive strategic assessment of all American efforts and operations in the country, which led to the formulation and adoption of a new Afghanistan strategy also while criticizing the Afghan government for its weak performance and Pakistan for its dual role as part of the problem and the solution.”¹⁴⁵⁹

Based upon this new strategy, Obama administration decided to follow some kind of bandage strategy in December 2009, akin to Gorbachev’s strategy during his first year of Soviet involvement in Afghanistan, to determine the course of American policy towards Afghanistan. Accordingly, Obama offered to increase funding by more than 50 percent to enhance both military and civilian capacities of the Afghan government within 18 months, but on the condition that failure of this strategy would lead to a reconsideration of withdrawal. SIGAR warned the US government that this strategy was likely doomed to fail as “the compressed timeline” could lead to various problems from initial to the last phase of any programme, and noted the mounting evidence of the US’s ineffective management of previous funds.¹⁴⁶⁰

Obama’s challenge was accepted and the US reconstruction expenditure became “equivalent to more than 100 percent of Afghanistan’s GDP, or more than double the country’s estimated maximum absorptive capacity” in the year 2010.¹⁴⁶¹ ODA allocated to Afghanistan first increased from USD 5.77 billion in 2009 to USD 6.24 billion in 2010 and later to USD 6.75

¹⁴⁵⁷ Ashley Jackson, *Life Under the Taliban Shadow Government* (London: ODI, June 2018), 7, 11, 16, 18, 21, 23, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://odi.org/en/publications/life-under-the-taliban-shadow-government/>

¹⁴⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 7

¹⁴⁵⁹ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 330

¹⁴⁶⁰ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *What We Need to Learn: Lessons from Twenty Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction*, SIGAR 21-46-LL (Arlington, VA: SIGAR, August 2021), 30-31, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/SIGAR-21-46-LL.pdf>

¹⁴⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 31

billion in 2011.¹⁴⁶² “At the peak of aid flows between 2010 and 2012 Afghanistan was the largest recipient of aid in the world.”¹⁴⁶³

This 18-month way forward policy in Afghanistan brought about many accompanying problems. This 18-month period was considered as not only surge of funds but also surge of corruption to unprecedented levels. Even the US aid actors and policy-makers reacted to this situation, as seen here below:

David Marsden, a former USAID official, told SIGAR. “It’s like pouring a lot of water into a funnel; if you pour it too fast, the water overflows that funnel onto the ground. We were flooding the ground.” Corruption, which had been endemic prior to the surge, metastasized and swelled to an unprecedented level. In 2010, a State Department cable from Kabul reported Afghan National Security Advisor Rangin Spanta as saying that “corruption is not just a problem for the system of governance in Afghanistan; it *is* the system of governance.”¹⁴⁶⁴

Injecting huge amounts of money into a country with very limited capacity to digest such as Afghanistan not only worsened corruption but also broke accountability systems in aid sector, leading to “little appetite for honest assessments of what worked and what did not.”¹⁴⁶⁵ This sudden surge of funds also negatively affected the Afghan economy by triggering a series of events causing trade deficit, revenue loss and even increase in poppy production. Interestingly, this 18-month period somehow helped the Afghan National Army fill critical gaps against the Taliban in the short term but increased its dependency on the US enablers in the long run.¹⁴⁶⁶ However, the deployment of more foreign troops to Afghanistan sparked a surge in domestic opposition.¹⁴⁶⁷ Furthermore, the number of PRTs increased from 22 in 2006 to 28 in 2010.¹⁴⁶⁸

¹⁴⁶² “Net Official Development Assistance Received (Current US\$)-Afghanistan,” World Bank Open Data, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/DT.ODA.ODAT.CD?locations=AF>

¹⁴⁶³ Angela Clare, “Aid to Afghanistan since 2001,” Australian Parliament, December 23, 2021, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp2_122/AidAfghanistanSince2001

¹⁴⁶⁴ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *What We Need to Learn: Lessons from Twenty Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction*, SIGAR 21-46-LL (Arlington, VA: SIGAR, August 2021), 31, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/SIGAR-21-46-LL.pdf>

¹⁴⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 32

¹⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶⁷ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 335.

¹⁴⁶⁸ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *What We Need to Learn: Lessons from Twenty Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction*, SIGAR 21-46-LL (Arlington, VA: SIGAR, August 2021), 26, 28, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/SIGAR-21-46-LL.pdf>

Upon poor results of the 18-month period, in June 2011, Obama announced the withdrawal plan of the US troops and the transfer of security to the Afghan forces that would take place between 2011 and 2014.¹⁴⁶⁹ As of 2011, reconstruction funds and troop levels began to fall and the US slowly “reoriented its programs to the reality that the Afghan government and security forces would have to take over the many functions that donors and their contractors had assumed.”¹⁴⁷⁰

Meanwhile, the number of the Taliban attacks was hitting an all-time high in 2010 on the one hand, and on the other hand secret negotiations were for the first time being held in late 2010 between “a Taliban representative and some US officials.”¹⁴⁷¹ Furthermore, the country had provincial council elections and parliamentary elections in 2010. Noah Coburn states that “the rounds of elections since 2004 have created new opportunities for the political elite... to consolidate their power”, “[s]everal key local leaders used...[the elections] to legitimize their importance through legal means and to expand their power”, and “[p]arliamentary positions in particular provided local leaders with access to government resources in Kabul and contacts with international donors” such as “several former commanders...retained their reputations as commanders but also worked to bring international development projects to their areas.”¹⁴⁷² More importantly, the country’s presidential elections held in August 2009 resulted in the reelection of Hamid Karzai but with widespread vote fraud claims raised against him.¹⁴⁷³ Barfield states that “Karzai’s victory came at the cost of alienating his international backers while doing nothing to improve his reputation among Afghans” and thereby Obama administration initiating 18-month way forward policy “inherited

¹⁴⁶⁹ The White House, President Barack Obama, “Remarks by the President on the Way Forward in Afghanistan,” 22 June 2011, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/06/22/remarks-president-way-forward-Afghanistan>

¹⁴⁷⁰ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *What We Need to Learn: Lessons from Twenty Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction*, SIGAR 21-46-LL (Arlington, VA: SIGAR, August 2021), 34, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/SIGAR-21-46-LL.pdf>

¹⁴⁷¹ Clayton Thomas, *U.S. Military Withdrawal and Taliban Takeover in Afghanistan: Frequently Asked Questions*, CRS Report No. R46879 (Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, September 2021), 4, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R46879>

¹⁴⁷² Noah Coburn, *Losing Afghanistan: An Obituary for the Intervention* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2016), 149-150

¹⁴⁷³ Richard A. Oppel Jr. and Sangar Rahimi, “Europe Says a Third of Karzai Votes Are Suspect,” *The New York Times*, September 16, 2009, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/17/world/asia/17afghan.html>; “Karzai Warns West over Afghan Vote Fraud Claims,” CNN, September 17, 2009, last accessed May 01, 2024, <http://edition.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/asiapcf/09/17/afghan.election/index.html>

dysfunctional Karzai” and underlines here below the importance of leadership factor in the Afghan context: ¹⁴⁷⁴

Neither the problems that the Americans confronted nor the policy approaches that they took were new. Both the British and Russians had confronted similar difficulties in Afghanistan, and had designed similar plans, the success of which varied considerably. The lesson that could be learned from their experiences was that all foreigners entered Afghanistan intoxicated by high expectations of easy victories and quick transformations of the country in their own image. All left Afghanistan more sober, far less idealistic, and content to let the Afghans handle their problems in their own way. The one thing they had all needed to ease their way out was the partnership of a strong Afghan leader who could maintain the country’s stability with only “over the horizon” assistance and could ensure that their vital interests would not be threatened from Afghanistan. This Afghan leadership element was notably absent from the Obama strategy. ¹⁴⁷⁵

SIGAR addresses “the chronic misalignment of the ends, ways, and means” as the main reason of failure in Afghanistan and states the following:

For example, improving security required a stable economy to lure fighters away from the battlefield—but rebuilding the Afghan economy depended heavily on revitalizing the agricultural sector. That was only possible through building better roads so farmers could sell their goods; but building better roads required security for the construction workers. If progress could not be made on all fronts simultaneously, it was hard to make progress on any. With an ever-increasing list of enemies and priorities, it was tempting for U.S. officials to believe the solution was more troops and more aid. This assumption proved incorrect. ¹⁴⁷⁶

However, although his evaluation belongs to sometime before Obama’s 18-month challenge, senior US General Stanley McChrystal’s following evaluation of the challenges facing the international community in Afghanistan is the most comprehensive one that maintained its relevancy after the failed 18-month surge and even beyond. General McChrystal, then—Commander of the US Forces in Afghanistan (USFOR-A) and ISAF, criticizes the previous US policy in Afghanistan for being “short-sighted” and makes three important observations in his confidential briefing paper written to President Obama” in August 2009: 1) “The weakness of state institutions, malign actions of power-brokers, widespread corruption and abuse of power by various officials, and Isaf’s own errors, have given Afghans little reason to

¹⁴⁷⁴ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 333

¹⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 335

¹⁴⁷⁶ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *What We Need to Learn: Lessons from Twenty Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction*, SIGAR 21-46-LL (Arlington, VA: SIGAR, August 2021), 14, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/SIGAR-21-46-LL.pdf>

support their government"; 2) "Further, a perception that our resolve is uncertain makes Afghans reluctant to align with us against the insurgents"; and 3) "Afghan social, political, economic, and cultural affairs are complex and poorly understood. [Nato and the US] does not sufficiently appreciate the dynamics in local communities, nor how the insurgency, corruption, incompetent officials, power-brokers, and criminality all combine to affect the Afghan population."¹⁴⁷⁷

7.3. Aid in a Decade of Retrograde

As a result of dwindling reconstruction funds and troop levels since 2011, the US civilian aid decreased by 72 percent and the US military aid decreased by 63 percent during the period spanning from 2012 to 2016, resulting in the Afghan government's losing control of "an additional 16 percent of the country" in the period 2015-2018¹⁴⁷⁸ Total reconstruction expenditure in the year 2014 became "about 40 percent of its peak from just three years before."¹⁴⁷⁹

NATO-led ISAF, which had been gradually transferring responsibility for security to Afghan forces since mid-2011, completed the transition process in late 2014 and officially ended its mission in Afghanistan, leaving the Afghan army and police in charge of security of the country.¹⁴⁸⁰ Following the completion of ISAF, a new smaller NATO-led non-combat mission, Resolute Support, which was developed to deliver "further training, advice and assistance to the Afghan security forces and institutions" was launched in early 2015 and continued until its termination in September 2021.¹⁴⁸¹

¹⁴⁷⁷ K. N. Tennyson, "Afghanistan Imbroglio: Reassessing External Powers' Role in Rebuilding the Country," in *Rebuilding Afghanistan in Times of Crisis: A Global Response*, ed. Adenrele Awotona (London: Routledge, 2019), 194; Peter Beaumont, "Same Old Mistake in New Afghan War," *The Guardian*, October 18, 2009, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/oct/18/afghan-war-soviet-invasion-mistakes>

¹⁴⁷⁸ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *What We Need to Learn: Lessons from Twenty Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction*, SIGAR 21-46-LL (Arlington, VA: SIGAR, August 2021), 19, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/SIGAR-21-46-LL.pdf>

¹⁴⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 34

¹⁴⁸⁰ Erik Brattberg, *Europe, Afghanistan and the Transatlantic Relationship After 2014* (Sweden: SIPRI, 2013), 3-4; Sune Engel Rasmussen, "NATO Ends Combat Operations in Afghanistan," *The Guardian*, December 28, 2014, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/dec/28/nato-ends-afghanistan-combat-operations-after-13-years>

¹⁴⁸¹ NATO, "ISAF's Mission in Afghanistan (2001-2014)," last accessed May 01, 2024, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_69366.htm

Furthermore, when the PRTs, whose number increased from 22 in 2006 to 28 in 2010, ended in 2014, there were 33 PRTs led by 15 different countries.¹⁴⁸² Disbanding the PRTs made the aid actors dependent on the Afghan National Defense Security Forces (ANDSF). With regard to the efficiency of PRTs, the US tried to use the local tribes against the Taliban starting from its first PRT in Gardez, which managed significant programs in various productive sectors such as agriculture, but failed as the Taliban achieved to “build trans-tribal groups of fighters even among tribes that are usually enemies,” violently suppressed its opponents or limited their freedom of movement beyond their territory, and allowed tribes to receive money from the PRT in return of free passage through their territory. PRTs distributing financial subsidies to Afghan people in need did the opposite of what it aimed namely appeasing social tensions, instead, created “high expectations, growing discontent, and a great deal of local jealousy between communities...[and] the insurgency has benefited as much as the population from the influx of money through extortion.”¹⁴⁸³

Unlike PRTs, Commander’s Emergency Response Program (CERP), which was funded by the US Department of Defense and aimed to “meet urgent humanitarian relief and reconstruction requirements and achieve other U.S. objectives,” continued but with a very small budget, especially after 2013.¹⁴⁸⁴

With regard to the Afghan government, the 2014 and the 2019 presidential elections resulted in the victory of Ashraf Ghani but with some kind of power sharing arrangement with his rival Abdullah Abdullah. However, the voter turnout in the 2019 presidential elections, which declined from 84 percent in 2004 to 19 percent in 2019, indicates skyrocketing distrust among Afghans towards their government.¹⁴⁸⁵

¹⁴⁸² Foreign & Commonwealth Office and the Rt Hon William Hague, “Afghanistan: Closure of the Helmand Provincial Reconstruction Team.” GOV.UK. March 20, 2014. Last accessed May 01, 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/afghanistan-closure-of-the-helmand-provincial-reconstruction-team>; Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *What We Need to Learn: Lessons from Twenty Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction*, SIGAR 21-46-LL (Arlington, VA: SIGAR, August 2021), 26, 28, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/SIGAR-21-46-LL.pdf>

¹⁴⁸³ Gilles Dorronsoro, *The Taliban’s Winning Strategy in Afghanistan* (Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment, 2009), 17, 26

¹⁴⁸⁴ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *Commander’s Emergency Response Program: DOD Has Not Determined the Full Extent to Which Its Program and Projects, Totaling \$1.5 Billion in Obligations, Achieved Their Objectives and Goals in Afghanistan from Fiscal Years 2009 through 2013*, SIGAR 18-45-AR/Commander’s Emergency Response Program (Arlington, VA: SIGAR, April 2018), 15, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/audits/SIGAR-18-45-AR.pdf>

¹⁴⁸⁵ Angela Clare, “Aid to Afghanistan since 2001,” Australian Parliament, December 23, 2021, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp2_122/AidAfghanistanSince2001

Following the Tokyo Conference in July 2012, which the international community promised to continue its support for the development of Afghanistan based on Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework under which the Afghan government agreed to implement reforms, the London Conference was held in 2014 as a follow-up activity.¹⁴⁸⁶ Despite these traditional donor conferences, ODA provided to the country in the period 2011-2021 was in near free fall: USD 6.75 billion in 2011, USD 6.67 billion in 2012, USD 5.5 billion in 2013, USD 4.64 billion in 2014, USD 4.27 billion in 2015, USD 4.07 billion in 2016, USD 3.81 billion in 2017, USD 3.79 billion in 2018, USD 4.14 billion in 2019, USD 4.21 billion in 2020, and USD 4.69 billion in 2021.¹⁴⁸⁷

Meanwhile, the Taliban continued their attacks unabated while making use of increasing discontent among the Afghan population. For instance, the Taliban, known as Pashtun-dominated structure, which was trying to mobilize non-Pashtun groups since 2010, managed to create a significant Uzbek base in the north.¹⁴⁸⁸ Another factor that the Taliban benefit greatly in mobilizing the Afghan people is explained here below:

Finally, the absence of integrity in the management of international aid fuels Afghan discontent. There are too many subcontractors dispersing international aid with too little coordination and accountability to Afghans and their interests. The population especially resents the accumulation of wealth by the new Afghan elites. International aid, which is part of a war economy, has created a *rentier* society where foreign money is considered an entitlement. In some places, people rely on foreign subsidies (of which a small part is directed to infrastructural development) distributed by the PRTs or other international bodies. Far from appeasing social tensions, this has created high expectations, growing discontent, and a great deal of local jealousy between communities. In addition, the insurgency has benefited as much as the population from the influx of money through extortion.¹⁴⁸⁹

With regard to the lack of coordination or accountability, the following case speaks for itself: SIGAR auditing a sample of 60 U.S. infrastructure projects in Afghanistan in 2021 identified that “\$723.8 million, or 91 percent, had gone toward assets that were unused or abandoned,

¹⁴⁸⁶ UK Government Website, “About the London Conference on Afghanistan,” <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/london-conference-on-afghanistan-2014/about>

¹⁴⁸⁷ “Net Official Development Assistance Received (Current US\$)-Afghanistan,” World Bank Open Data, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/DT.ODA.ODAT.CD?locations=AF>

¹⁴⁸⁸ Antonio Guistozzi, “The Taliban Beyond the Pashtuns,” Center for International Governance Innovation (CIGI), The Afghanistan Papers No. 5, July 2020, 11,12

¹⁴⁸⁹ Gilles Dorronsoro, *The Taliban’s Winning Strategy in Afghanistan* (Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment, 2009), 17

were not used as intended, had deteriorated, were destroyed, or some combination of the above.”¹⁴⁹⁰ Another one, the US spent \$4.7 billion to “make district-level governments in contested areas seem responsive to their constituents” without knowing that “the districts had no budget to even maintain what had been built, much less continue work.”¹⁴⁹¹

As for the US-Taliban talks, the bilateral negotiations, which had begun in late 2010, continued until early 2012 when President Karzai opposed it.¹⁴⁹² When the Afghan government signed “the Enduring Strategic Partnership Agreement Bilateral in 2012” and “the Bilateral Strategic Agreement (BSA) in 2014” with the US, the Taliban’s strategy shifted from “one of engaging in three-way peace talks to aiming to force an American withdrawal and deal directly with Washington on a timetable”, avoiding any involvement of the Afghan government which they saw as a ‘puppet’.¹⁴⁹³ President Donald Trump authorized Zalmay Khalilzad in September 2018 to initiate negotiations with the Taliban for an agreement that would result in the withdrawal of US forces from Afghanistan and thereby the US-Taliban bilateral talks resumed but without the Afghan government as requested by the Taliban.¹⁴⁹⁴ The Trump administration was demanding three major actions from the Taliban: “(1) a guarantee that Afghanistan would not be used by any terrorist group or individual to attack another country, (2) a promise to reach a political settlement with the existing government in Kabul, and (3) agreement on a general ceasefire and the Taliban, in response, “agreed not to host terrorist groups” but refused “to be pinned down on their relationship to al Qaeda...[and] to consider a ceasefire but were willing to take part in an intra-Afghan dialogue once the United States set a timeline for the withdrawal of its troops.”¹⁴⁹⁵ They reached a preliminary agreement in the summer of 2019 and signed the original agreement in February 2020 in which the “Taliban got their timeline (full withdrawal in fourteen months), [plus the release of five thousand Taliban prisoners] and the

¹⁴⁹⁰ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *What We Need to Learn: Lessons from Twenty Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction*, SIGAR 21-46-LL (Arlington, VA: SIGAR, August 2021), 32, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/SIGAR-21-46-LL.pdf>

¹⁴⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁹² Clayton Thomas, *U.S. Military Withdrawal and Taliban Takeover in Afghanistan: Frequently Asked Questions*, CRS Report No. R46879 (Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, September 2021), 4, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R46879>

¹⁴⁹³ Omar Samad, “The 2021 Collapse: Lessons Learned from a Century of Upheavals^[17] and Afghanistan’s Foreign Policy,” in *The Great Power Competition Volume 4: Lessons Learned in Afghanistan: America’s Longest War*, ed. Adib Farhadi and Anthony Masys (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2023), 425

¹⁴⁹⁴ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, 2nd ed. (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2023), 364

¹⁴⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

Americans got the Taliban to agree not to harbor terrorists and to begin the intra-Afghan talks” but since the Afghan government, as non-party to this agreement, rejected the prisoner clause, the US-Taliban agreement did not yield any result.¹⁴⁹⁶ In April 2021, the Biden administration, which came to power in early 2021, announced the rapid and full US troop withdrawal from Afghanistan until September 2021, and later conducted very chaotic withdrawal in August 2021, resulting in Ghani’s escape from the country, collapse of the Afghan government and the Taliban’s return to power without fight within days.¹⁴⁹⁷

In the end, the US have spent “20 years and \$145 billion [while] trying to rebuild Afghanistan, its security forces, civilian government institutions, economy, and civil society,” apart from the Department of Defense DOD’s “\$837 billion on warfighting, during which 2443 American troops and 1144 allied troops have been killed and US troops injured” aside of that “66,000 Afghan troops have killed, more than 48,000 Afghan civilians have been killed, and at least 75,000 have been injured.”¹⁴⁹⁸ Of the \$145 billion, \$36.23 billion was spent for governance and development and only \$4.43 billion was for humanitarian activities.¹⁴⁹⁹ According to the World Bank, Afghanistan received \$77 billion ODA in the period 2001-2019, of which around 54 percent belongs to the US as the largest donor by a large margin, followed by other major donors such as the EU, Japan, Germany and the UK.¹⁵⁰⁰ However, the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief (ACBAR) estimated that “in 2008, of the \$15 billion in reconstruction assistance given to Afghanistan since 2001, “a staggering 40 percent has returned to donor countries in corporate profits and consultant salaries.”¹⁵⁰¹ This issue points out a systemic flaw in the aid system.

¹⁴⁹⁶ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, 2nd ed. (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2023), 365-366

¹⁴⁹⁷ Kevin Liptak, “Biden Announces Troops Will Leave Afghanistan By September 11: ‘It’s Time to End America’s Longest War’,” CNN, April 14, 2021, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://edition.cnn.com/2021/04/14/politics/joe-biden-afghanistan-announcement/index.html>; Kevin Liptak, “How Four Presidents Created Today’s Afghanistan Mess,” CNN, August 24, 2021, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://edition.cnn.com/2021/08/23/politics/how-four-presidents-created-afghanistan-mess/index.html>

¹⁴⁹⁸ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *What We Need to Learn: Lessons from Twenty Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction*, SIGAR 21-46-LL (Arlington, VA: SIGAR, August 2021), vii, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/SIGAR-21-46-LL.pdf>

¹⁴⁹⁹ Angela Clare, “Aid to Afghanistan since 2001,” Australian Parliament, December 23, 2021, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp2122/AidAfghanistanSince2001

¹⁵⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰¹ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 316.

7.4. Between Afghan Shadow Government and Parallel Donor State

Having established “governing commissions” namely ministries for “military affairs, culture, finance and political matters” in Pakistan in 2003, the Taliban began to focus on civilian aspect of insurgency and took several significant steps to establish a shadow government in 2006 by establishing “governing commissions” for education, healthcare, justice, taxation and revenues, telecommunications and utilities at both provincial and district levels to provide services to the Afghan people.¹⁵⁰² The appointment of judges in 2006 became “the first functional component of the Taliban’s insurgent service delivery” and in 2010, the number of those judges was estimated at five hundred.¹⁵⁰³ Considering the justice related problems of ordinary Afghans due to the mostly dysfunctional or corrupt justice system of the Afghan government, the Taliban’s taking the first step in the justice sector is rational.

The Taliban’s civilian insurgency began to control and touch the lives of the Afghan people in other sectors as well. Ashley Jackson who made an extensive fieldwork on the Taliban’s shadow government states the following:

Where the government and aid agencies provide good and services, the Taliban coopt and control them. Health and education in Taliban areas are a hybrid of NGO- and state-provided services, operating according to Taliban rules. Service delivery ministries have struck deals with local Taliban....Taliban health focal points monitor clinics, checking whether staff shows up for work, docking their pay when they do not and inspecting equipment and medicine stocks. They put also pressure on NGOs to expand healthcare access in rural areas and improve the quality of services. In government schools, they regulate the state curriculum, vet teachers and school staff, monitor teacher attendance and observe class. They regulate utilities and communications ...Justice provision has also become increasingly far-reaching. Taliban taxes either coopt Islamic finance concepts, such as oshr and zakat, or mimic official systems.¹⁵⁰⁴

Beyond doubt, the Taliban developing such as service-focused civilian strategy had a great opportunity to mobilize the Afghan people who had increasing complaints about the Afghan government’s incapacity or corruption, especially in rural areas. However, this service comes with a cost and that’s obeying the strict Islamic rules of the Taliban.

With regard to the concept of parallel donor state, back in 2011, Afghan President Hamid

¹⁵⁰² Ashley Jackson, *Life Under the Taliban Shadow Government* (London: ODI, June 2018), 7, 11, 16, 18, 21, 23, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://odi.org/en/publications/life-under-the-taliban-shadow-government/>

¹⁵⁰³ *Ibid.*, 7

¹⁵⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 5

Karzai raised his voice against foreign reconstruction teams in his country and accused them of working like “a parallel system of government” and blocking the Afghan Government’s development and governance.¹⁵⁰⁵ Karzai was particularly critical about PRTs as these teams were having huge funds and none of those funds were going through the Afghan government. Karzai also communicated with a senior NATO official and complained that “the international community had created parallel government institutions.”¹⁵⁰⁶ However, as seen here below in the figure 3, not only PRTs’ budget but more than four-fifth of all aid provided to Afghanistan was off-budget namely bypassing the Afghan government.

Nematullah Bizhan states that “the US and its allies largely bypassed the Afghan government by establishing parallel institutions both fiscally and politically” in the period 2001-2017, adding that “[o]ver half of the aid bypassed national institutions, largely prioritising donor interests over national priorities,” and later in the period 2018-2021 the same mistakes were repeated.¹⁵⁰⁷ Bizhan addresses the direct negotiations between the US and the Taliban as the most overt expression of bypassing the Afghan government.¹⁵⁰⁸

Thomas Barfield approaches the issue from a different angle and states that these actions of the international community deeply damages the government monopoly as seen here below:

Although more economic aid poured into the country than ever before, the vast majority of it was distributed directly by foreign donors for projects that they planned and implemented. This practice ended the central government’s monopoly over such resources and crippled its ability to rule through patronage. More significantly, the amount of money pledged to Afghanistan, while seemingly large, could not begin to meet either the country’s needs or the population’s expectations.¹⁵⁰⁹

¹⁵⁰⁵ “Hamid Karzai Says Afghanistan Aid Teams Must Go,” BBC News, February 08, 2011, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-south-asia-12400045>

¹⁵⁰⁶ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *What We Need to Learn: Lessons from Twenty Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction*, SIGAR 21-46-LL (Arlington, VA: SIGAR, August 2021), 31-32, 18-19, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/SIGAR-21-46-LL.pdf>

¹⁵⁰⁷ Nematullah Bizhan, “How Foreign Intervention Paradoxes Have Harmed Afghanistan,” Development Policy Center Blog, April 18, 2024, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://devpolicy.org/how-foreign-intervention-paradoxes-have-harmed-afghanistan/>

¹⁵⁰⁸ Nematullah Bizhan, *Aid Paradoxes in Afghanistan: Building and Undermining State* (London: Routledge, 2018), 168

¹⁵⁰⁸ Nematullah Bizhan, “How Foreign Intervention Paradoxes Have Harmed Afghanistan,” Development Policy Center Blog, April 18, 2024, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://devpolicy.org/how-foreign-intervention-paradoxes-have-harmed-afghanistan/>

¹⁵⁰⁹ Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 315.

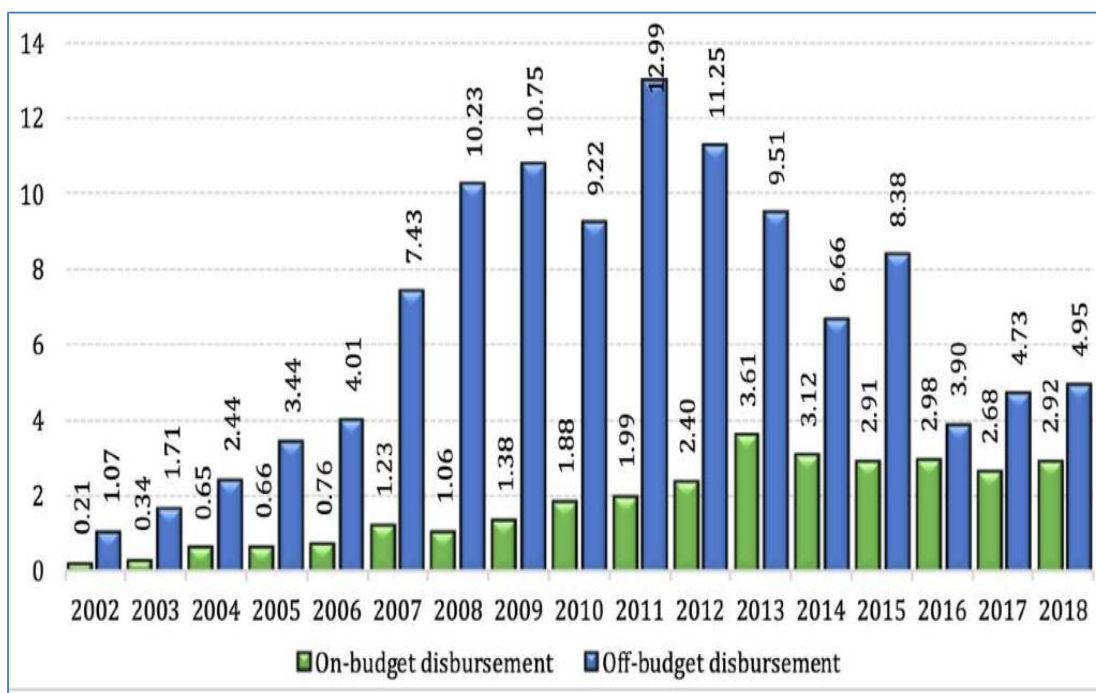


Figure 4. On and off-budget disbursement in billions of US\$ (2002-2018)¹⁵¹⁰

As seen in the figure above, great majority of funds provided to Afghanistan between 2002-2018 was off-budget. Kaimi argues that there are two reasons behind this aid modality. First, Afghanistan had a weak public financial system namely the country was struggling with both structural and capacity related issues such as “inability to execute project budget” and “corruption-related concerns.” Secondly, some donors may have strategic interests separate from the government’s agenda.¹⁵¹¹ However, the Afghan government’s lack of capacity for managing projects with large budgets are also related to the aid agencies since almost all educated multilingual young Afghans are recruited by these local and international NGO or international organizations.

Barfield suggests that this is more related to being treated “less as a partner than as a nuisance,” and explains here below the possible consequences of running a parallel donor state while the other one was in need of support:

Because most projects were handled by foreign contractors or international NGOs,

¹⁵¹⁰ Abdul Matin Karimi, “Moving Away from Foreign Aid: A Case Study of Afghanistan,” MRPA Paper No. 105639, December 22, 2020, 15, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://mprpa.ub.uni-muenchen.de/105639/12/MPRA_paper_105639.pdf

¹⁵¹¹ *Ibid.*

75 percent of aid funds were disbursed and delivered outside official Afghan government channels. This reduced the capacity of Afghans to manage such contracts themselves and increased the costs devoted to security. It also divorced the reconstruction process from the political one, reducing its utility as a source of positive patronage to build support for the new regime, since NGOs plastered their own logos on projects rather than the government's insignia. While the decision to work around the Afghans as opposed to through them allowed some large construction projects to be completed more easily (albeit at a much higher cost), it reduced the projects' economic benefits to local communities because it failed to provide local job opportunities, which were particularly important to support returning refugees. One response to this was the spectacular rise of the opium economy, which soon provided 90 percent of the world's illegal production. By 2007, the export value of the drug trade was estimated at \$4 billion and internally constituted more than 12 percent of Afghanistan's licit gross domestic product.¹⁵¹²

Equally importantly, once large-budgeted aid activities that are funded and implemented by foreign aid actors produce disappointing results in rural areas, this failure incurs a political price. Rural Afghans might believe that their needs were ignored or might be suspicious of the aim of the aid activity. Considering the previous social engineering attempts and their tragic results in the country's history, the principle of 'do no harm' should be strictly followed but not doing harm requires socio-cultural awareness. For instance, "[a]n international NGO that saw itself as doing good by helping women get divorces was seen by Afghans as encouraging home wrecking in a country where divorce (by a man or a woman) was socially unacceptable."¹⁵¹³ Having underlined little familiarity of international decision makers with Afghanistan's culture or history, Barfield states, "This situation was in fact typical of international responses to rebuilding failed states generally, of which Afghanistan was only one of many. Since the inhabitants of failed states had obviously proved their inability to govern themselves, they had little to offer the professional international experts brought in to rehabilitate their governments and societies."¹⁵¹⁴

7.5. Conclusion

This chapter outlines how the US, initially planning a limited engagement and short-term commitment in Afghanistan following its invasion, ended up needing increased engagement and long-term commitment due to unforeseen fragility and misjudgment of the country's context. Struggling with conflicting regional interests, the US failed to develop an effective

¹⁵¹² Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 2010), 316.

¹⁵¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁵¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 317.

aid strategy, leading other international actors to follow its lead and contributing to the project's failure. This chapter also notes that the US and the international community undertook a social engineering project, particularly through their initiatives concerning Afghan women and girls. Due to these characteristics, the US engagement bears many similarities to the Soviet involvement in the country.

With regard to the Afghan state and the Afghan people, having experienced the early reluctance of US and its allies, the failure of international aid with the parallel donor state, the rise of the Taliban insurgency with their shadow government, and the US-Taliban talks over withdrawal timelines under different presidents bypassing Kabul, both the Afghan state and its people anticipated forthcoming challenges and developed their own exit strategies.

CHAPTER 8

AID DURING THE SECOND TALIBAN ERA

8.1. Introduction

This chapter examines the aid-related developments in Afghanistan during the first three years of the Taliban rule. Following the completion of the US withdrawal from Afghanistan in August 2021, the Taliban swiftly took over Kabul and the Western-backed Afghan Islamic Republic collapsed at a much faster pace than anticipated, marking the beginning of the Second Taliban era in Afghanistan. The chapter is structured as follows: The first part begins by exploring the prevailing humanitarian and economic conditions in Afghanistan despite 20 years of international aid efforts. In this regard, it evaluates the consequences of significantly reduced or suspended aid on the Afghan population, highlighting the challenges and repercussions faced by the people. The second part analyzes how the Taliban's return to power altered the country's aid landscape, as their return to power led the international community to either halt or suspend all financial transfers, including aid, to Afghanistan due to various reasons, but most notably security concerns stemming from the Taliban's previous rule, their restrictive gender policies, and widespread skepticism about their governance.

8.2. Humanitarian and Economic Context

When the Taliban returned to power, the country's economic situation was as follows: "The economy was already extremely fragile, heavily dependent on aid. A nation is considered aid-dependent when 10% or more of its gross domestic product (GDP) comes from foreign aid; in Afghanistan's case, about 40% of its GDP was international aid, according to the World Bank."¹⁵¹⁵

Furthermore, the country's international banking system, international transfer companies and all banks ceased operations, putting many families at great risk as "4% of Afghanistan's

¹⁵¹⁵ Ashitha Nagesh, "Afghanistan's Economy in Crisis After Taliban Take-Over", BBC News, August 25, 2021, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-58328246>

GDP was made up of remittances.”¹⁵¹⁶ Additionally, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund stopped payments, the Afghan central bank – Da Afghanistan Bank’s federal reserves (estimated at \$9 billion, most of which is in the US) were frozen, and all western countries suspended foreign aid to Afghanistan.¹⁵¹⁷ According to the 2019 World Bank report, “75 percent of the government’s public expenditures were covered by grants from international partners.”¹⁵¹⁸ All of these had a huge impact on the Afghan people.

Since the Taliban takeover, “the Afghan economy has contracted by 27 percent, leading to economic stagnation,” “[u]nemployment has doubled,” “69 per cent of Afghans are “subsistence insecure”- meaning they do not have enough basic resources”, finance sector has collapsed and “there are no major sources of economic activity such as exports or public expenditure”, only small and medium enterprises and farmers.¹⁵¹⁹

Continuous natural disasters in the country, such as a series of earthquakes in Herat Province in 2023, severe droughts affecting almost three-quarters of rural population in 2023 and relatedly intensification of water scarcity both in rural and urban areas, exacerbated the already dire situation.¹⁵²⁰ SIGAR argues that “the total job loss since the Taliban takeover is projected to reach between 700,000 and 900,000 by mid-2022.”¹⁵²¹

The World Bank states that although “Afghanistan’s agricultural and subsistence economy, including illicit opium production, provided some resilience in rural areas, higher prices, reduced demand, lower employment, and disruptions to services had severe impact across the country”, resulting in that percentage of “households that did not have enough income to meet basic food needs more than doubled from 16 percent to 36 percent in this period.”¹⁵²²

¹⁵¹⁶ Ashitha Nagesh, “Afghanistan’s Economy in Crisis After Taliban Take-Over”, BBC News, August 25, 2021, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-58328246>

¹⁵¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵¹⁸ Lindsay Maizland, “The Taliban in Afghanistan,” Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), January 19, 2023, last modified May 01, 2024, <https://www.cfr.org/background/taliban-afghanistan>

¹⁵¹⁹ “Afghanistan’s Economy has ‘Basically Collapsed’: UNDP,” United Nations (UN) News, March 07, 2024, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/03/1147387>

¹⁵²⁰ International Organization for Migration (IOM), “Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan-Afghanistan,” IOM, December 2023, 13, 14, 64, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://crisisresponse.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd11481/files/appeal/documents/AFG_HNRP_2024.pdf

¹⁵²¹ Bibi Amina Hakimi, “Estimated Afghan Job Loss 700,000 to 900,000: SIGAR,” Tolo News, June 17, 2022, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://tolonews.com/business-178517>

¹⁵²² World Bank, “The World Bank in Afghanistan: Overview,” April 18, 2024, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/afghanistan/overview>

With the deterioration of the humanitarian situation after the Taliban's return to power, as evidenced by the UN estimating that "23 million Afghans now face extreme hunger," the US and the UNSC agreed to grant exemptions for deliveries of food aid and medicine to Afghanistan to alleviate the suffering of the Afghan people.¹⁵²³ Donors provided \$2.6 billion in 2002 and the US provided more than \$1.1 billion in aid since the Taliban takeover.¹⁵²⁴

In January 2022, the Taliban established "food for work" program that required aid recipients to perform "manual labor on public-works projects" in order to receive the humanitarian aid provided by the UN and later expanded this programme by using "foreign wheat aid to pay the salaries of public sector workers."¹⁵²⁵ Taliban's this new program particularly hit poor Afghan widows, whose number is quite high due to decades of conflict in the country, hard as they are not allowed to work under the Taliban rule so they do not qualify for food aid being distributed by the Taliban,¹⁵²⁶.

Furthermore, European Council states, "The Taliban have issued more than 70 edicts with many restrictions or prohibitions concerning: girls' attendance at secondary schools, dress codes, segregation at workplaces, women's freedom of movement without a male guardian (mahram), women's access to public places" adds that the Taliban enforced a ban prohibiting women from attending universities and working for NGOs and the UN in the period 2022-2023.¹⁵²⁷ In response to the Taliban's bans, the UN expressed that it cannot provide humanitarian aid under these circumstances but the Taliban spokesman in his tweet stated that "the UN "should understand the religious demands of our nation and not link humanitarian issues/aid to politics."¹⁵²⁸ Iran and Saudi Arabia also urged the Taliban to alter this policy.¹⁵²⁹

¹⁵²³ "Cash-Strapped Taliban Uses Foreign Aid Intended for Starving Afghans to Pay State Employees," Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), June 25, 2022, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.rferl.org/a/taliban-foreign-aid-starving-afghans/31670691.html>

¹⁵²⁴ Lindsay Maizland, "The Taliban in Afghanistan," Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), January 19, 2023, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.cfr.org/background/taliban-afghanistan>

¹⁵²⁵ "Cash-Strapped Taliban Uses Foreign Aid Intended for Starving Afghans to Pay State Employees," Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), June 25, 2022, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.rferl.org/a/taliban-foreign-aid-starving-afghans/31670691.html>

¹⁵²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁵²⁷ "Afghanistan: The EU's Response to the Crisis," European Council and Council of the EU, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/afghanistan-eu-response/>

¹⁵²⁸ Sophia Ankel, "Taliban Asks to Keep Getting UN Aid Money Despite Ending Education for Women," Business Insider, January 16, 2023, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.businessinsider.com/taliban-asks-keep-receiving-aid-from-un-despite-female-bans-2023-1>

In their seminal study based on a fieldwork in Afghanistan, Sabawoon Samim and Ashley Jackson try to find “the factors driving these restrictions on aid delivery and the dynamics that shape Taleban attitudes toward aid and aid workers” and come to the following conclusion:

The Taleban’s attitude toward aid is complicated. On the one hand, aid operations are vital to delivering certain services such as health and education and they employ many Afghans. Foreign aid has been integral to keeping the economy afloat, with UN shipments of cash supporting the aid effort, injecting liquidity into the economy, stabilising the currency and keeping inflation in check. On the other hand, many government officials are deeply suspicious of aid actors and the motives of most donors, who have so far refused to recognise their government. While the government wants aid, it also wants to influence how it is spent and programmed.¹⁵³⁰

Samim and Jackson note that, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCA), the Taliban government released “173 national and local directives affecting aid delivery between December 2021 and June 2023, averaging just over two per week.”¹⁵³¹ These restrictions included limitations on female involvement in aid work and requirements for detailed information about both aid workers and aid recipients.¹⁵³² The authors attribute the Taliban’s excessive skepticism toward humanitarian aid work to the very fact that “nearly all humanitarian aid is provided by countries that do not recognize the Taleban government (and whose armies fought the Taleban on the battlefield).”¹⁵³³ The following interviews with the Taliban suggest that their skepticism, fear, hatred or distrust toward humanitarian aid and aid workers is largely based on their own experiences with these entities during the insurgency years.

For me, it is actually both laughable and sad. They killed our people for years. They bombarded our people, they unjustly imprisoned innocents, but now they’ve become so wary of us that they don’t want us to die of poverty. They killed us with bombs and bullets when they had power and access, but now when they can’t hit us anymore, they come and want to rescue us from hunger?! You tell me: Is there any logic behind the aid other than another means of killing – or something like that?

¹⁵²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵³⁰ Sabawoon Samim and Ashley Jackson, “Taleban Perception of Aid: Conspiracy, Corruption and Miscommunication,” Afghanistan Analysts Network, July 2023, 4, last accessed May 01, 2024 <https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/en/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/07/Taleban-Perceptions-of-Aid-FINAL.pdf>

¹⁵³¹ *Ibid.*, 3

¹⁵³² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³³ *Ibid.*, 5

– Taleban official in a provincial directorate

During the jihad, when the mashran [Taleban leadership] ordered us to let these people do their activities in our areas [ie under Taleban control], we allowed them. They were coming and working in different fields. In those days when musisato wala [NGO employees] were active, we lost many of our mujahedin in drone strikes. Though we couldn't arrest or didn't find evidence against them as we weren't allowed to investigate, it was very common that most of the time, when they left an area, a few mujahedin were hit by drones. They were sticking small GPS devices on the motorcycles of mujahedin and then the drones would directly target them.

- [Taliban official in Ghazni]

If NGOs really want Afghans to get rid of poverty, then why don't they do infrastructure work? They spend millions of dollars distributing flour and oil and that's barely enough even for a month for a family. Why don't they instead build a road or a hospital? If they really want to help people, they should provide people with long-term working opportunities.

– local official in Ghazni

If the goal of the NGOs is to rid Afghanistan of poverty, why haven't they achieved it yet, despite spending billions of dollars in aid during the last 20 years.... NGOs say this is humanitarian aid and it shouldn't be spent on building infrastructure or other things that provide people with jobs. I don't see any logic to this. When your aim is to provide people with a livelihood, isn't it best to do it by giving people lasting jobs or work that keeps them out of poverty forever? Instead of giving people food packages, it's better they [should] build a factory where thousands of people can find a job.

– local official in Kunduz

The NGOs aren't transparent about their budgets, staff, or activities. NGOs decide what is needed in Kunduz without asking the people or the government. There's a government who should be engaged before requesting a project, but NGOs completely ignore the Taleban and pretend as though we don't exist. We're the government here. And it's not the Republic government where anybody can bring projects to Kunduz. The Taleban must audit all projects before they start.

- [One official in Kunduz] ¹⁵³⁴

The country's free fall since the Taliban takeover, combined with recent natural disasters, made 23.7 million - more than half of the country's population in need of humanitarian assistance, 15.3 million Afghan people (35% of the population) suffer from crisis or levels of food insecurity, and 6.3 million Afghans displace internally in this period.¹⁵³⁵ According to the European Commission's 2024 evaluation, more than 90% of the country's population lives below poverty line, nearly 16 million Afghan are acutely food insecure, 3.5 million face extreme food shortages, acute malnutrition, and excessively high disease levels, and more than 1 million children malnourished. EU humanitarian aid funding by years are as follows:

¹⁵³⁴ *Ibid.*, 6, 7, 15, 24

¹⁵³⁵ International Rescue Committee (IRC), "Crisis in Afghanistan: What you need to know and how to help," IRC, May 17, 2024, last accessed May 20, 2024, <https://www.rescue.org/article/crisis-afghanistan-what-you-need-know-and-how-help>

225 million in 2021, 174 million in 2022, 159 million in 2023, and 125.58 million Euro in 2024.¹⁵³⁶

8.3. Aid Diplomacy: Traditional versus Emerging Donors

Having established full control over the country, the Taliban announced a new interim government of the re-established Islamic Emirate in September 2021. Although several leading Taliban figures stated that the Taliban would “govern in a more moderate and inclusive fashion”, the new interim government consisting of entirely of senior Taliban figures many of whom have been on the international sanctions lists.¹⁵³⁷ Subsequently, they approached the international community for both international recognition and international support that had been withdrawn since their takeover of Kabul in mid-August 2021.¹⁵³⁸ However the international community’s reaction to the Taliban’s return to power was severe. Except a handful of countries, including China and Russia, no country accredited the Taliban’s diplomats, many Western countries closed their embassies after the Taliban takeover and refused to establish diplomatic relations, and the UNGA did not give a seat to the Taliban.¹⁵³⁹

The US administration emphasized leverage, incentive and human rights as reference point in its relations with the Taliban and the EU established five benchmarks as a guide for future engagement, namely conditionality, in September 2021 and also the introduction of the “Taliban Sanctions Act in May 2023 as a new leverage¹⁵⁴⁰ Former U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Ronald Neumann stated overtly that these measures do not work as seen here below:

The current approach of sanctions, demands, and restricted contact with the Taliban is not working. The policy of increased pressure that some have been advocating will

¹⁵³⁶ “Afghanistan,” European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, last accessed May 01, 2024, https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/where/asia-and-pacific/afghanistan_en

¹⁵³⁷ Andrew Watkins, “Five Questions on the Taliban’s Caretaker Government,” United States Institute of Peace (USIP), September 09, 2021, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.usip.org/publications/2021/09/five-questions-talibans-caretaker-government>

¹⁵³⁸ “Hardliners Get Key Posts in New Taliban Government,” BBC News, September 07, 2021, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-58479750>

¹⁵³⁹ Lindsay Maizland, “The Taliban in Afghanistan,” Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), January 19, 2023, last accessed May 01, 2021, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/taliban-afghanistan>

¹⁵⁴⁰ Romain Malejacq and Niels Terpstra, “Why International Leverage Has Failed with the Taliban,” Lawfare, July 30, 2023, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/why-international-leverage-has-failed-with-the-taliban>

not make the Taliban more responsive either and will certainly not help the most vulnerable members of the Afghan population. Worse, it could deepen the diplomatic deadlock and, by playing into the hands of the hardliners, further push the regime toward isolation and radicalization while complicating human rights monitoring.

Kate Bateman from USIP states that on the one hand “the United States has withheld diplomatic recognition and traditional development aid, frozen Afghan Central Bank assets and maintained sanctions on Taliban leaders” but on the other hand “it has been the largest donor of humanitarian assistance, has not supported armed opposition to the Taliban and has effectively loosened sanctions to enable aid delivery and encourage economic activity.”¹⁵⁴¹

In a donor meeting held in Istanbul in April 2004, “Karen Decker, chargé d’affaires of the US mission to Afghanistan, says Washington has “learned the hard way that isolation is ruinous. It’s ruinous for the Afghan people. It’s ruinous for the region” but she also adds that “Washington would continue to engage with the Taliban on “pragmatic issues”, with humanitarian assistance and human rights being her primary areas of concern.”¹⁵⁴² During the same donor meeting, NGO officials state that the Taliban has long been insistent on having long-term development projects such as roads and factories rather than short-term emergency or humanitarian aid but the US officials expresses that “until the Islamic Emirate makes the changes necessary to be considered an official government, the United States simply cannot fund development projects in the country.”¹⁵⁴³ In response to the US officials, a former Afghan diplomat working for an NGO indicates that “the UN, the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, and the governments of the EU, the UK, and Japan, have all started funding development projects.”¹⁵⁴⁴

China, the first country that appointed ambassador to Afghanistan in September 2023, received credentials of the Afghan Taliban diplomat and Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin describing Chinese policy to Afghanistan by stating, “China’s policy on Afghanistan is consistent and clear... As a traditionally friendly neighbor, China

¹⁵⁴¹ Kate Bateman, “A Shift Toward More Engagement with the Taliban?” United States Institute of Peace (USIP), October 25, 2023, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/10/shift-toward-more-engagement-taliban>

¹⁵⁴² Ali M. Latifi, “US Signals Greater Willingness to Engage with the Taliban,” The New Humanitarian, April 29, 2024, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/analysis/2024/04/29/us-signals-willingness-engage-taliban>.

¹⁵⁴³ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

has maintained diplomatic ties, exchanges and cooperation in various areas with Afghanistan” called on the international community to initiate engagement with the Taliban.¹⁵⁴⁵ Chinese interests in Afghanistan include “preventing potential security threats from unstable Afghanistan” and “mining, manufacturing, agricultural, and services sectors, with Afghanistan possessing valuable mineral resources like copper, lithium, and rare earth elements essential for Chinese industries.”¹⁵⁴⁶ Afghanistan’s recent close relations with China have provided the country with opportunities as follows:

- The Taliban tendered and awarded to a Chinese company the major Amu Darya oilfields project, with production reported to have started up. There are also reports that small-scale oil refineries are back in operation, using locally extracted crude oil purchased by the Taliban and then auctioned to refiners.
- The Taliban have contracted three sizable cement projects, two with Afghan companies and one with a Qatari investor, with a reported total investment of \$450 million. This presages significant progress toward self-sufficiency in a sector where it eminently makes sense given Afghanistan’s resource base and the high cost of transporting cement long distances from neighboring countries. The contrast with the previous government, which could not get major cement investments going due to a variety of reasons, one being corruption, is striking.
- Numerous mining contracts have been issued, though many of them may be simply validating and taxing ongoing activities while the prognosis for large new projects is uncertain. There is clearly considerable ongoing activity in smaller-scale extraction of resources such as coal, talc, chromite, dimension stones, gemstones and lithium, the latter including at least for a time involvement of Chinese entrepreneurs.
- On the international side, some larger Chinese companies appear to be expressing interest in the mining sector and infrastructure, and there are even a few U.S. and European businesses operating in Afghanistan. For example, a California-based telecom services company is actively supporting a major Afghan mobile phone company.¹⁵⁴⁷

Upon a senior Indian diplomat’s visit to Kabul to meet with the Taliban officials and discuss both Indian humanitarian aid to Afghanistan and the “use of Chabar port by Afghan traders”, the US special representative for Afghanistan visits India to discuss Afghanistan and urged “Indian Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra to develop “a unified diplomatic approach in

¹⁵⁴⁵ Riyaz ul Khaliq, “China Urges Int’l Community to ‘Step Up Engagement’ with Afghan Taliban,” Anadolu Agency (AA), January 31, 2024, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/china-urges-int-l-community-to-step-up-engagement-with-afghan-taliban/3123969#>

¹⁵⁴⁶ Sabena Siddiqui, “Why China is Edging Closer to Recognising the Taliban,” The New Arab, February 14, 2024, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.newarab.com/analysis/why-china-edging-closer-recognising-taliban>

¹⁵⁴⁷ William Byrd, “Despite Daunting Economic Headwinds, Afghan Private Sector Shows Signs of Life,” United States Institute of Peace (USIP), May 02, 2024, last accessed May 10, 2024. <https://www.usip.org/publications/2024/05/despite-daunting-economic-headwinds-afghan-private-sector-shows-signs-life>

support of collective interests” in Afghanistan” but India takes a different approach as it has various interests in Afghanistan such as counterterrorism, mineral wealth, also “transit access for trade and energy to Central Asia” and also balancing against Pakistan¹⁵⁴⁸ Russia, which has been hosting talks with the region countries such as China, Pakistan, Iran, India and the former Soviet nations in Central Asia but also Afghan factions including the Taliban since 2017, states it will continue its aid to Afghanistan independently and through the UN Food Agency WFP.¹⁵⁴⁹

Apart from these three countries, Turkey, the only NATO member maintaining diplomatic presence in Afghanistan, is another important aid actor in Afghanistan. While most countries cut diplomatic ties with Afghanistan after the Taliban’s return to power, Turkey has remained active with its development and humanitarian aid to this war-torn country. Turkey had provided over \$1.1 billion for Afghanistan’s development, prioritizing infrastructure, health and education sectors, as part of one of the largest foreign aid initiative undertaken by Turkey so far, delivered health services to more than 12 million people in Afghanistan through the healthcare institutions its supports, and also built and renovated more than 100 schools through its development agency TIKA in the period 2005-2021.¹⁵⁵⁰ After the Taliban takeover, Turkey has provided 8,200 tons of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan through charity trains until mid-2024.¹⁵⁵¹ Turkish Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD), Turkish Red Crescent, and Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) have also continued their relief efforts in Afghanistan. In 2022, Turkey has also provided \$8 million in total for the UNDP Special Trust Funds to support health and education sectors in Afghanistan.¹⁵⁵² Furthermore, Turkey completed the second phase of Kajaki hydroelectric dam in Helmand province in July 2022, which cost \$160 million.¹⁵⁵³

¹⁵⁴⁸ “Held Talks on Chabahar Port, Humanitarian Aid to Afghanistan, Says India,” Indian Express, March 09, 2024, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/held-talks-on-chabahar-port-humanitarian-aid-to-afghanistan-says-india-9204015/>; Akmal Dawi, “US Unfazed as India Engages Taliban,” VOA, March 28, 2024, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.voanews.com/a/us-unfazed-as-india-engages-taliban/7547600.html>

¹⁵⁴⁹ “Russia Hosts Taliban for Talks on Regional Threats and Says It Will Keep Funding Afghanistan,” NBC News, September 30, 2023, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/russia-taliban-afghanistan-talks-funding-aid-sharia-law-rcna118195>

¹⁵⁵⁰ “Turkey Supports UN’s Development Aid for Afghanistan,” Daily Sabah, Jul 26, 2022, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/diplomacy/turkey-supports-uns-development-aid-for-afghanistan>

¹⁵⁵¹ Bilal Guler, “Turkiye’s Mission Chief in Kabul Affirms Solidarity with Afghans Amid Multiple Challenges,” Anadolu News Agency, March 12, 2024, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/turkiye/turkiyes-mission-chief-in-kabul-affirms-solidarity-with-afghans-amid-multiple-challenges/3162538>

¹⁵⁵² “Turkey Pledges Additional \$5 Million in Aid to War-torn Afghanistan,” Daily Sabah, April 01, 2022, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/diplomacy/turkey-pledges-additional-5-million-in-aid-to-war-torn-afghanistan>

Several experts attribute Turkey's ongoing involvement in Afghanistan to a historical diplomatic connection established in the 1920s between Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and Amanullah Khan. Alper Coskun from Carnegie Endowment for International Peace notes, "That positive legacy has throughout all these years never interrupted... Turkey took a very deliberate position in ensuring that Turkish forces were not involved in [active warfare or lethal force] against the Afghan population in any way whatsoever."¹⁵⁵⁴ Turkey also pulled its non-combat troops out of Afghanistan ahead of the Taliban's August 2021 deadline for the withdrawal of foreign forces.¹⁵⁵⁵

Furthermore, following the February 2023 earthquakes in Turkey and Syria, which claimed many lives, Afghanistan's Taliban administration announced that the country will provide \$165,000 in aid to Turkey and Syria for earthquake relief with the following words: "The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan ... announces a relief package of 10 million Afghanis (\$111,024) and 5 million Afghanis (\$55,512) to Türkiye and Syria respectively on the basis of shared humanity and Islamic brotherhood."¹⁵⁵⁶

8.4. Conclusion

This chapter detailed the relationship between the international community and the Taliban in search of international recognition and foreign aid. After the Taliban takeover, Western countries applied aid cuts, suspensions and new sanctions, and this put the Afghan people at great risk. The Taliban de facto administration knowing that it cannot control hungry people began to look into the countries outside the Western club and easily found countries like China, Russia and India that would not want to intervene in its internal affairs, and steadily developed effective relationships with these emerging donor countries as both sides have mutual benefits in this relationship from pursuing their national interests, while the Taliban wants the provision of humanitarian and development aid and political support, the others focus on counterterrorism and Afghanistan's mineral wealth. For India, the country's transit

¹⁵⁵³ Ezel Sahinkaya, "Turkey's Engagement with Afghanistan Has Grown Since Taliban Takeover," VOA, August 12, 2022, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.voanews.com/a/turkey-s-engagement-with-afghanistan-has-grown-since-taliban-takeover-/6699437.html>

¹⁵⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵⁶ "Taliban Administration to Send Earthquake Aid to Turkey, Syria," Reuters, February 08, 2023, last accessed May 01, 2024, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/taliban-administration-send-earthquake-aid-turkey-syria-2023-02-08/>

access advantage to Central Asia and the opportunity of balancing against Pakistan in the region also appear as added advantage. Furthermore, Turkey's continued involvement in Afghanistan, which is characterized by its historical ties, a non-combat approach, the withdrawal of troops way before the Taliban's August 21 deadline, and its provision of aid without insisting on conditionality strengthen and define Turkey's relationship with Afghanistan. Both sides have specific interests in maintaining and advancing this relationship.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

This research examines the evolution of humanitarian and development aid to Afghanistan from its earliest days to the present time. Contrary to the donor-centric liberal school of thought perceiving aid as the catalyst for promoting development and international cooperation, this study adopts non-donor-centric realist school of thought seeing aid as a tool in the hands of both aid-receiving and aid-giving countries as international humanitarian and development aid to Afghanistan has always been driven by the interaction of self-interest, power dynamics and strategic calculations of both sides.

When Afghanistan's modernization and development drive coincided with the interests of the main actors of the Second World War due to the country's geographical proximity to the British India, the country witnessed German and Japanese engineers pouring into its lands for the first time to contribute to the country's development effort. After the Second World War, Afghan monarchy had many failed attempts to get the attention of the US, one of the superpowers emerged from the Second World War, and finally got some attention by hiring a giant American engineering company for the Helmand Valley Project. The main reason why Afghans wanted to develop close relations with Americans is not only their superpower status but it's being a distant power as the country's historical encounters with invasions by British India fostered a deep-seated fear among Afghan leaders, prompting them to adopt a cautious policy towards nearby powers to preserve their nation's independence and sovereignty. As for the Helmand Project, which can be considered as the first large-scale infrastructure project in the country, although the only interest of the Americans in the very early stages of the project was profit, Afghans had several significant reasons for engaging in the project, such as developing their relations with the Americans, pashtunization of rural lands through this grandiose project as part of the country's endogenous statebuilding effort, the monarchy's demonstration of its power to its people as they had brought American engineers from other part of the world and these engineers built a an American town in Lashkar Gah, soon after called by Afghans as 'Little America', reclaiming glorious past of the Turkish Ghaznavid Empire by choosing the project location where remnants of the

empire still remain and thus giving the image to its people that Ghaznavids are the ancestors of the monarchy, and as last in the pre-1947 period, the monarchy thought that when the Afghans on the other side of the border saw the project, they became eager to join Afghanistan instead of Pakistan, but in the post-1947 period this would be balancing against Pakistan that was favored by the Americans. As seen here above, the Afghans that had developed aid relationship with the Americans had numerous interests. However, this costly project resulted in big failure to the level that let aside agriculture, nothing could be cultivated from those lands, except opium poppy plants. The interesting thing is that although both sides knew that the project had already failed because of the miscalculations of the American engineers, both sided wanted to continue the project just for the prestige.

Despite the Helmand Valley Project, Afghan leadership could not establish the desired relationship with the Americans. During the period from the 1950s to the late 1970s, Afghan leader Daud dared to break the traditional Afghan policy of following cautious approach towards neighboring powers and welcomed the Soviet aid to the country, after being rejected by the Americans several times. The arrival of the Soviet aid in Afghanistan quickly drew the attention of American and Western powers, initiating a period marked by competitive coexistence. This period was characterized by the simultaneous provision of aid from both sides, as each sought to influence Afghan politics and development. The competition for influence through aid intensified in subsequent years, reflecting broader Cold War dynamics and highlighting the country's strategic significance as a buffer state.

Thereby Daud's modernization drive and Pashtunistan cause made the country the jungle of various aid actors with divergent interests. While attempting to strike a balance between Western and Soviet interests in a manner that would not only safeguard his country from harm but also maximize its benefit from the situation, the country's modernization soon turned into a patchwork. As these various actors injecting massive amounts of development aid, each with divergent interests, had little or no coordination among themselves, even to the level that each faculty of Kabul University was being funded by different donors. For a country largely based on rural economy, the presence of many university graduates without employment opportunities triggered social unrest in the subsequent years. Some of those protestors at those universities appeared as Mujahideen leaders or commanders in the latter years.

Daud's ambitious foreign-funded modernization and development drive got out of control and ended in a bear trap and the country gradually fell under the Soviet orbit until it was

eventually invaded by the Soviets. The Soviets were initially planning short-term and limited engagement but the conditions on the ground compelled them to extend and deepen their involvement. When their engagement became increasingly costly, they eventually withdrew their troops. During the years of the invasion, Soviets continued their development projects as in the old days but they had to locate them to the relatively safer northern areas of the country. There are two interesting aid interventions during these years. First one is the US-funded controversial education project for Afghan children living in refugee camps in Pakistan, explaining math questions with bullets, hand grenades or killing a Soviet soldier. These books were circulated in the Afghan bazaars for a very long time even after the project was finalized, but undoubtedly, these books accelerated the radicalization of Afghan youth. Another interesting case is the UNHCR's violation of its own humanitarian principles by allowing Pakistanis to administer and oversee the entire Afghan refugee registration and aid delivery system in Pakistan. Pakistan enforced all Afghans within its borders to register themselves to the identified Mujahideen parties as a precondition for receiving humanitarian aid. This enforcement made the identified radical Mujahideen parties the face and voice of the Afghan people, despite the Afghan people's initial disapproval of the radical ideologies of these groups when the first emerged in the early 1970s. UNHCR accepted this situation as the US was its largest donor. As observed in this case, all actors in the aid industry, whether minor or major, pursue their own interests even at the cost of violating their own humanitarian principles.

The Soviet collapse dropped Afghanistan off the Western agenda and Afghan Mujahideen groups embroiled in a vicious civil war until the rise of the Taliban. The idea of the country's being ruled by the Taliban was indeed celebrated or tacitly welcomed in the Western capitals, as evidenced in the US State Department briefings, the UN Special Envoy briefings, interviews, speeches delivered in the UN closed door meetings as the US energy company was planning to invest in a pipeline project in Afghanistan and the Taliban was the only actor in the Afghan landscape that could promise security and stability. During this period, Taliban's attitude towards aid actors and their activities changed from province to province, depending on the commander's flexibility. International aid actors are divided into those following principled approach namely enforcing conditionality and the other favoring tip-toe approach namely adapting to the circumstances, and again depending on the province some left the Afghan scene, others stayed and continued to deliver aid to those in need.

Following the 9/11, the American era began in the country. Similar to the Soviets, the Americans were also planning short-term and limited stay in the country, namely light foot-

print approach in military and civilian spheres, let aside the idea of statebuilding. However again the conditions on the ground compelled them to extend and deepen their involvement. For the Americans, priority was the invasion and later the reconstruction of Iraq therefore Afghanistan was not on top of their agenda. Low aid and troop levels in comparison to the need on the ground, coordination problems, off-budget programming, deteriorating security situation with the increasing attacks of the re-grouped Taliban resulted in the failure of aid. The Afghan people, who had happily welcomed foreign troops into their country with the hope that there would be no more civil war and the international community would help them rebuild their country, began to call foreign aid industry in Afghanistan as ‘cow that drink its own milk’. During this period, two interesting structures appeared in the Afghan landscape: Taliban’s shadow government and the international community’s parallel donor state. Taliban’s shadow government constitutes the civilian wing of its insurgency. This shadow government provided several social services to the Afghan people in various fields, such as healthcare, education, and justice. International community’s parallel donor state refers to that aid agencies having very high level of off-budget percentages were bypassing the Afghan government while planning and implementing their projects. Ironically, these aid agencies were there to strengthen the Afghan state but instead they were undermining the Afghan government’s monopoly. Obama’s 18-month surge in aid strategy namely doubling civilian and military aid figures only skyrocketed corruption but could not achieve the intended goals. Subsequently, withdrawal process began, and after several delays the withdrawal process was completed in August 2021.

Taliban takeover of Kabul and the collapse of the ANDSF without even fight against the Taliban underscore the significant failures evident in two decades of aid to Afghanistan. The Second Taliban rule began with promises that they had learned their lessons from the past, and this time they aimed to be much more inclusive and moderate, but they did not act in that way. Western states froze the Afghan central bank assets, cut all aid flowing to the country, except the humanitarian one, cancelled banking and money transfer systems, which is highly concerning, given that migrant remittances are vital for certain segments of the Afghan population, and did not extend international recognition or establish diplomatic relations with the Taliban. Western actors linked the return of aid to the improvements of the Taliban’s human rights record, specifically the human rights of women and girls. In response, the Taliban found new partners that adopt policy of non-interference in internal affairs of other countries, such as China, Russia and India. These countries focus more on economic and strategic interests rather than getting involved in the internal political dynamics or governance of Afghanistan. These emerging donor countries are interested in

the Taliban-ruled Afghanistan because of their own concerns about terrorism, Afghanistan's mineral wealth, and for India, its giving transit access to Central Asia. As seen in the current picture, interest matrix is already established for the new players in the Afghan context.

In conclusion, as demonstrated by the abovementioned historical trajectory of aid to Afghanistan, the Afghan government and the international aid actors have often operated within the framework of realist principles, focusing primarily on advancing their respective interests through aid relationships. Afghan leaders have sought aid not only to address their country's humanitarian and developmental challenges but also to enhance domestic stability within their country and their political leverage in relation to both internal and external rivals. International donors, motivated by geopolitical and security concerns, have long viewed Afghanistan as a strategic battleground in the wider regional context. This perspective has guided their aid strategies, which aim to reinforce their influence in the region while promoting their own economic and security interests. This dynamic has resulted in some kind of permanent condition where both sides prioritize their own strategic goals and interests, mostly leading to complexities in aid delivery. Therefore, the interaction between Afghanistan and international aid actors reflects a realist paradigm marked by self-interested calculations aiming to maximize benefits and minimize risks in a complex and volatile Afghan context.

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APPENDICES

A. CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Güreş, Gülşah

Nationality: Turkish (TC)

Date and Place of Birth: 02.05.1980, İstanbul

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EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
MS	METU Eurasian Studies	2011
BS	METU International Relations	2002
High School	Orhan Cemal Fersoy High School, İstanbul	1997

WORK EXPERIENCE

Year	Place	Enrollment
2022- Present	Various organizations	Independent Consultant
2019-2020	Bali Process RSO, Bangkok	Project Officer (IOM Consultant)
2018	Various organizations	Independent Consultant
2016-2017	ICMPD Ankara	Project Manager
2015	IOM Gaziantep	Reporting&Project Support Officer
2012-2013	ICMPD Ankara	Project&Research Officer
2003-2010	Royal Norwegian Embassy, Ankara	Assistant to the Ambassador

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Advanced English, Basic Russian, French and Spanish

PUBLICATIONS

- “An Evaluation of the International Community’s Aid Response, the Afghan People’s Migration Response as Their Key Survival Strategy, and Linking Development Aid to Humanitarian Purposes,” in *The Second Taliban Era in Afghanistan: Identifying Risks and Opportunities*, ed. Osama Kubbar and Merve Seren (Ankara: Orion Books, 2022), 179-197.
- Co-author, “Afghanistan Migration Country Report,” Vienna: International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), 2013, 1-66.
- Co-author, “Pakistan Migration Country Report,” Vienna: International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), 2013, 1-95.
- “Gender Equality and Women’s Rights in Afghanistan,” *Caucasus International* 3, no. 3 (Autumn 2013): 117-133.
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B. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Bu tez, geçmişten günümüze kadar Afganistan'a yapılan insani ve kalkınma yardımlarının dinamiklerini ve gelişimini, 11 Eylül sonrası döneme özel bir vurgu yaparak, incelemektedir. Afganistan, kendi devlet ve millet inşası süreci ile paralel bir şekilde, 1919 yılında bağımsızlığını kazandığı andan itibaren, iç politikada kendi kalkınma ve modernleşme hedeflerini gerçekleştirme doğrultusunda, dış politikada ise bölgesindeki siyasi gelişmelerle bağlantılı olarak ulusal ve stratejik çıkarlarını koruma amacıyla dış yardım arayışında olan bir ülke olmuştur. Bu çerçevede, geçmişten günümüze Afganistan'a yapılan uluslararası kalkınma yardımların kapsamı ve niteliği, hem Afgan modernleşme ve kalkınma hedeflerine hem de Afgan ulusal çıkarlarının gerektirdiği güvenlik, istikrar ve stratejik işbirliği hedeflerine hizmet eder hale gelmiştir. Ayrıca, Afganistan, gerek coğrafi konumu ve yıllar içinde gerçekleşen çevresel bozulma nedeniyle sel, deprem, kuraklık gibi yoğun ve tekrarlayan doğal afetlere karşı en savunmasız ülkelerden biri olması gerekse de farklı dönemlerde vuku bulan savaşlar ve iç çatışmalar gibi insan kaynaklı afetlerden en çok etkilenen ülkelerden biri olması nedeniyle sürekli insani yardıma ihtiyaç duymuştur.

Bu çalışma, yardım veren ülkelerin, yardım alan ülkelere bu yardımı sağlayarak kalkınmayı ve uluslararası iş birliğini teşvik etmeyi amaçlayan hayırsever aktörler olduğu varsayımıyla dış yardım kavramına donör merkezli bir bakış açısıyla yaklaşan liberal uluslararası ilişkiler kuramının aksine; dış yardımları, hem yardım veren hem de yardım alan aktörler tarafından siyasi ve stratejik bir araç olarak ele alan donör merkezli olmayan realist uluslararası ilişkiler kuramının Afganistan ile uluslararası yardım topluluğu arasındaki süregelen ilişkileri daha doğru bir şekilde açıkladığını ileri sürmektedir. Bu yaklaşım, yardımı veren ve yardımı alan ülkelerin kendi ulusal çıkarlarının hesaplı bir şekilde peşinde koşarak söz konusu yardım ilişkilerine girdiklerini varsaymaktadır. Afganistan'a yapılan yardımların ve ülkenin bu yardımları alma biçiminin tarihçesi, bu yaklaşımın doğruluğunu destekler niteliktedir. Donörler, Afganistan'ın yardım hazmetme kapasitesi, sosyo-kültürel bağlamı, iç siyasi dinamikleri, ülkede bulunan yardım aktörleri arasındaki uluslararası koordinasyon ve yardımların uzun vadeli sürdürülebilirliği gibi konuları yeterince dikkate almadan ve hatta sıklıkla bu konuları ihmal ederek kendi jeopolitik çıkarlarına göre yardım tahsis etmişlerdir. Buna karşılık, Afganistan, bu dış yardımları kendi siyasi ve stratejik çıkarları doğrultusunda kabul etmiştir. Ancak bu kabul, Marcel Mauss'un hediye (bazı kaynaklarda armağan olarak da geçmektedir) olgusunda görülen karşılıklılık ilkesine uygun olarak, bu yardımların sadece hayırseverlikten ibaret olmadığını ve belirli bir karşılıklılık gerektirdiğinin bilincinde olarak

gerçekleştirilmiştir. Afganistan'ın geleneksel dış yardım alma biçimine dair sorun, söz konusu yardımlara ilişkin uzun vadeli riskleri veya potansiyel olumsuz sonuçları göz ardı edip onun yerine kısa vadeli faydalara öncelik vermesi ve siyasi seçkinlerinin ülkenin ve halkının refahını gözetmek yerine kendi kişisel ve siyasi çıkarlarını ön planda tutarak bu yardım ilişkilerini yönlendirmeleridir. Bu durum, Afganistan'ı farklı yerel siyasal güç aktörleri ve süper güçler arasında gidip gelmekte olan kırılgan, yardıma bağımlı rantçı bir devlet haline getirirken halkını da sürekli bir insani, sosyo-ekonomik ve güvenlik krizi döngüsüne hapsedmiştir.

Bu çalışma, birincil ve ikincil kaynakların kapsamlı bir şekilde araştırılması ve değerlendirilmesiyle ortaya çıkmış olup nitel belge analizi ile birleştirilmiş tek bir vaka çalışması yaklaşımını kullanmaktadır. Bu çerçevede, çalışmanın faydalandığı birincil kaynaklar arasında Birleşmiş Milletler-BM belgeleri (BM Güvenlik Konseyi ve Genel Kurul Kararları, BM Brifingleri, BM Tutum Belgeleri ve BM Arka Plan Belgeleri), Amerika Birleşik Devletleri-ABD hükümet belgeleri (Dışişleri Bakanlığı Günlük Basın Brifingleri, Büyükelçilik telgrafları, Bakanlık Bültenleri, Kongre Oturumları, Beyaz Saray Ulusal Güvenlik Karar Direktifleri, ABD Merkezi İstihbarat Teşkilatı CIA raporları, ABD Uluslararası Kalkınma Ajansı USAID raporları, SIGAR olarak bilinen Afganistan'ın Yeniden Yapılandırılması Özel Müfettişliği raporları), Ekonomik İşbirliği ve Kalkınma Örgütü (OECD) raporları ve zamana duyarlı bilgi ve resmi açıklama akışı sağlayan gazete ve haber ajanslarıdır. Afganistan'a yapılan yardım akışlarını gösteren nicel veriler USAID ve Dünya Bankası Veri Bankası'ndan sağlanmıştır. Çalışma, ikincil kaynak olarak ise Afganistan'a yapılan insani ve kalkınma yardımlarının gelişimi ve dinamiklerini anlamaya katkıda bulunan kitap, makale, rapor ve analizlerden faydalanmıştır.

Dokuz bölümden oluşan bu tez, Afganistan'a yönelik uluslararası insani ve kalkınma yardımlarının gelişimini izlemek için kronolojik olarak yapılandırılmıştır. Tezin birinci bölümü olan giriş kısmında bu çalışmanın kapsamı ve amacı, araştırma sorusu, dış yardım kavramına ilişkin literatür taraması, ana argümanı, metodoloji ve teorik çerçevesi sırasıyla sunulmaktadır. İkinci bölümde, ilk olarak Marcel Mauss tarafından geliştirilen hediye (armağan) teoremi üzerinden yardım kavramının sosyoloji, antropoloji, felsefe gibi farklı sosyal bilimler disiplinlerine mensup uzman isimler tarafından nasıl değerlendirildiği analiz edilmektedir. Maussçu hediye kuramının karşılıklılık ilkesine göre, her hediye alışverişi, ne kadar gönüllü görünürsün, prestij ve statü kazandırma veya güç dinamiklerini şekillendirme gibi politik bir işlev taşımaktadır. Bu açıdan, ülkeler arasında yardım verme ve yardım almanın doğasında var olan karmaşık dinamiklerin etkileşimini anlamamıza yardımcı olur.

Daha sonra dış yardım kavramının realizm, liberalizm, konstrüktivizm (inşacılık) ve uluslararası ilişkiler alanında ana akım yaklaşımlara yanıt olarak geliştirilmiş geniş bir teori yelpazesine sahip eleştirel teoriler tarafından nasıl ele alındığı realist ve liberal uluslararası ilişkiler kuramlarına ağırlık verilerek incelenmektedir. Bu bölümün devamında insani yardım ve kalkınma yardımı kavramlarının kökeni ve tarihsel gelişimi detaylı bir şekilde incelenmekte ve bu iki yardım türü arasındaki çok boyutlu ilişkinin, geçmişten günümüze kadar geçirdiği değişimler ve bu süreçte etkili olan faktörler ele alınmaktadır. Bu bağlamda afet bölgelerindeki acil durumlara cevaben temel ihtiyaçları karşılamayı hedefleyerek verilen kısa dönemli insani yardım ile gelişmekte olan ülkelerdeki sistemik sorunlara cevaben toplumların ekonomik, sosyal ve siyasi gelişimini desteklemeyi hedefleyen uzun dönemli kalkınma yardımı arasındaki uçurumun nasıl kapatılacağına veya bu iki yardım türünün birbiriyle nasıl senkronize edileceğine ilişkin yardım literatüründe ‘bağlantı tartışması’ olarak geçen konuya da değinilmektedir. Bu bağlantı tartışmasının çalışmaya dahil edilmesinin üç temel nedeni vardır. Birinci neden, bu kavramlar ve uygulamaları arasında akışkanlığın mevcut olmasıdır. İkinci neden, BM gibi hükümetler arası kuruluşlardan yerel Sivil Toplum Kuruluşları-STK'lara kadar çeşitli düzeylerde faaliyet gösteren yardım kuruluşları, bağlantı tartışmasından ortaya çıkan veya bu tartışmadan etkilenen yardım yaklaşımlarını Afganistan dahil pek çok ülkedeki faaliyetlerine entegre etmiştir. Üçüncü neden ise, bu konu, yardım sektörünün gelecekteki yönüne dair fikir vermektedir. İnsani yardım ve kalkınma yardımları çerçevesinde gelişen bu bağlantı tartışması ilk olarak 1980'lerde Afrika'daki gerçekleşen ve birbirini tekrar eden kıtlıklarla birlikte yardım gündemine girmiş; 1990'larda Sovyet Birliği'nin dağılması sonrasında gerçekleşen çatışmalarla birlikte hızla büyüyen ve artan oranda politikleştirilen ve güvenleştirilen yardım sektöründe önem kazanmış- ki bunun sonucunda kalkınma-güvenlik bağlantısı yaklaşımları ve STK'ların politikleşmesi durumları ortaya çıkmıştır; 11 Eylül sonrası dönemde ise uluslararası yardımların dış politika, güvenlik ve barış inşası gibi konulara nasıl ilişkilendirileceğine dair açık tartışmalar yapılmış ve bu tartışmalar birçok yeni yardım yaklaşımının ortaya çıkmasına neden olmuştur. Buna örnek olarak BM destekli İnsani-Kalkınma-Barış bağlantısı verilebilir. Bu süreçte, donör ülke güvenlik birimlerinin insani ve kalkınma yardımlarına artan oranda ve farklı rollerde dahil olduğu gözlenmiştir. Afganistan'daki İl İmar Ekipleri-PRT'ler veya Komutanın Acil Müdahale Programı-CERP gibi yardım programları buna örnek gösterilebilir. Dış yardımların politik ve güvenlik boyutu aslında yeni bir olgu değildir zira donör ülkelerin devlet adamlarının geçmişte yaptığı açıklamalar bu bağlantıyı birçok defa net bir şekilde ortaya koymuştur ancak bu bağlantının uluslararası düzeyde kurumsallaşması yenidir.

Üçüncü bölüm, ülkenin bugünkü siyasi, sosyal ve ekonomik manzarasının daha kapsamlı bir şekilde anlaşılmasına katkıda bulunmak amacıyla geniş bir tarihsel perspektif benimseyerek Afganistan'ın tarihini en eski zamanlarından Soğuk Savaş dönemine kadar incelemektedir. Bu çerçevede, çalışma, 1880'de modern Afgan devletinin ortaya çıkmasına yol açan erken tarihsel dönem hakkında bilgi vermekte, 1919'da ülkenin bağımsızlığıyla sonuçlanan olayları incelemekte ve Afganistan'ı bağımsızlık sonrası dönemde ilk dış kalkınma yardımının alıcısı olarak konumlandıran bağımsızlık öncesi dönemden miras kalan siyasi ekonomik ve soysal koşulların ayrıntılı bir analizini sunmaktadır. Bu bağlamda, bu bölüm, sonraki bölümlerde sunulacak ilgili gelişmelerin daha iyi anlaşılmasına yardımcı olacak bir temel sağlayacaktır.

Dördüncü bölüm, Soğuk Savaş'ın başlangıcından Sovyet işgaline kadar Afganistan'a yönelik uluslararası insani ve kalkınma yardımlarını incelemektedir. Bu dönemin incelenmesi Afganistan'daki mevcut yardım ortamını ve dinamiklerini anlamak açısından önem arz etmektedir. Bu bölümde, başlangıçta iç politikada kalkınma ve modernleşme çabalarına destek amaçlı, dış politikada ise Peştunistan davası için ABD gibi uzak güçlerden yardım arayan Afganistan'ın ABD'den beklediği desteği bulamaması üzerine ülkenin geleneksel 'komşulardan yardım almama' prensibini çiğneyerek Sovyetler Birliği'ne yakınlaşması ve akabinde de yavaş yavaş Soğuk Savaş rekabetinin odak noktalarından biri haline gelmesi detaylı bir şekilde incelenmektedir. Soğuk Savaş rekabetinin baş aktörlerinden ABD ve Sovyetler Birliği, kendi jeopolitik çıkarları doğrultusunda rakip ekonomik kalkınma modellerine dayalı dış yardım aracını diğer ülkelerde olduğu gibi Afganistan'da da uygulamaya sokmuştur. Dönemin Afganistan Başbakanı Davud Han da bu 'rekabetçi varoluştan' maksimum düzeyde yararlanmaya çalışarak iç politikada ülkesinin kalkınma ve modernleşmesini sağlamaya, dış politikada ise Peştunistan davasında komşusu Pakistan'a karşı elini güçlendirmeye çalışmıştır. Söz konusu dönemde, Sovyetler Birliği, Afgan halkına doğrudan fayda sağlayacak ve görünürlüğü yüksek kalkınma projelerine odaklanırken; ABD, Helmand Vadisi Kalkınma Projesi hariç olmakla üzere –ki o proje de Davud Han döneminden önceki Başbakan Mahmud Şah döneminde Afganistan'ın Amerikan şirketi Morrison-Knudsen ile 17 milyon dolarlık bir kontrat imzalamasıyla başlamıştır- Afgan halkına doğrudan dokunmayan ve görünürlüğü pek olmayan insan sermayesi geliştirme gibi kalkınma projelerine odaklanmıştır. Dönemin en maliyetli projesi olan Helmand Vadisi Kalkınma Projesi, 1940'ların sonlarında Afgan finansmanı ile başlamış daha sonra Davud Han döneminde rekabetçi varoluşun devreye girmesiyle Amerikan kalkınma yardımlarıyla devam etmiştir. Mahmud Şah döneminde Afgan finansmanı ile başlayıp Davud Han döneminde ABD finansmanı ile devam eden Helmand Vadisi Kalkınma Projesinin Afgan

Monarşisi için beş önemli amaca hizmet etmektedir. İlk olarak, söz konusu proje ABD ile ilişkileri geliştirmek amacıyla başlatılmış ve ilerleyen dönemlerde de bu amaca hizmet etmiştir. İkinci olarak, Afgan devlet inşası sürecinin bir parçası olarak kırsal alanların Peştunizasyonu yani Peştun nüfusunun proje bölgesindeki verimli arazilere taşınması amaçlanmıştır. Üçüncü olarak, monarşinin kendi halkına gücünü ispat etmek istemesi olarak ifade edilebilir zira ABD’li mühendisleri dünyanın bir ucundan ülkeye getirip böyle büyük bir kırsal kalkınma projesini başlatıp senelerce devam ettirmek Afgan halkının gözünde önemli olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Ancak, bu sadece Afgan monarşisi için değil ABD için de bir süre sonra prestij projesi olmuştur. Hatta ilerleyen yıllarda her iki taraf da Amerikalı mühendislerin yanlış hesaplamaları nedeniyle projenin başarısız olduğunu bilmesine rağmen projeye devam etme kararı almıştır. Zira projenin başarısız olduğunun kabulü ve sonlandırılması Afgan monarşisi için iç politikada ve ABD için ise uluslararası arenada güç ve prestij kaybı anlamına gelecektir. Dördüncü olarak, Afgan monarşisi proje yeri olarak Afgan topraklarının en görkemli zamanlarını yaşadığı Türk Gazneli İmparatorluğuna ait kalıntılarının bulunduğu yeri seçerek bu imparatorlukla kendisi arasında Afgan halkının zihninde bir bağ kurdukmak istemiştir. Beşinci ve son olarak da 1947 öncesi dönemde yani Pakistan kurulmadan önce Afgan monarşisi bu projenin başarılı olması halinde Peştunistan bölgesinde, Britanya Hindistanı ile yapılan Durand Sınır Anlaşması neticesinde Afganistan’ın elinden çıkmış Afganistan-Pakistan sınır bölgesinde yaşayan Peştunların Britanya’nın bölgeden çekilmesi sonrası dönemde Pakistan yerine Afganistan’a katılmak isteyeceğini düşünmeleridir. 1947 sonrası dönemde bu düşünce yerini ABD’nin bölgede kendisine müttefik olarak seçtiği Pakistan’ı dengeleme hedefine bırakmıştır. Bu dönemde, Sovyetler Birliği de ülkenin yapısını, şartlarını ve kültürünü değerlendirmeden bazen de Amerikalıların Helmand Vadisi Kalkınma Projesinde olduğu gibi mühendislik hataları nedeniyle yaptığı bazı projelerde başarısız sonuçlar elde etmiştir. Bunlardan en bilinenleri Kabil’deki ekmek fırını, Celalabad’daki sulama sistemi ve Cangalak’taki otomobil parçası fabrikası projeleridir. Ayrıca ABD ve Sovyetler Birliği’nin müttefik ülkeleri de eş zamanlı olarak bu iki rakip süper gücün Afganistan’daki siyasi saikli yardım çalışmalarına kendi ölçeklerinde katkıda bulunmuşlardır. Son olarak, bu dönemde Afganistan’ın dış yardım destekli kalkınma deneyimi, ülkenin kalkınma faaliyetleri için gerekli yurt içi geliri üretememesi nedeniyle “bağımlı kalkınma” olarak tanımlanmış, bunun sonucunda da kalkınma maliyetlerinin finansmanı için dış yardıma olan yoğun bağımlılık devam etmiştir.

Başbakan Davud Han’ın istifasından sonraki Kral Zahir Şah’ın tam iktidarı üstlendiği dönemden Davud Han’ın Sovyet yanlısı askerler tarafından desteklenen kansız darbesine kadar olan dönemde, eski başbakan Davud Han tarafından başlatılan bu bağımlı kalkınma

modelinin etkileri, azalmaya başlayan dış yardım akışı ile birlikte, yavaştan ortaya çıkmaya başlamıştır. Bunlardan en bilineni, her bir fakültesi başka ülkelere fonlanan Kabil Üniversitesi'ndeki öğrenci hareketliliğidir. Ağırlıklı olarak kırsal bir nüfusa ve dolayısıyla da tarım ekonomisine sahip olan ülkenin iş olanağı sunamayacak olmasına rağmen ihtiyacından fazla üniversite öğrencisine ve mezununa sahip olması neticesinde artan umutsuzluk ve işsizlik toplumsal huzursuzluğa yol açmıştır. Bu dönemde üniversitedeki protestocuların bazıları daha sonra Mücahidlerin bilinen simaları olarak Afgan siyaset sahnesine çıkacaktır.

Davud Han, Sovyet yanlısı Afgan askerler tarafından desteklenen kansız darbesiyle başlayan dönemde ülkesindeki yoğun Sovyet nüfuzunu azaltmaya yönelik çabalara girişmiştir. Bu amaçla farklı ülkelere kalkınma yardımı alabilmek amacıyla yoğun bir diplomasi başlatmıştır. Ancak Davud Han'ın Afgan ordusu üzerinde yoğun etkisi olan Sovyetlere karşı rekabetçi varoluştan tekrar faydalanmak amacıyla attığı bu adımlar kendisinin Sovyet yanlısı Afgan askerler tarafından devrilmesine neden olan 1979 Saur Devrimi ile neticelenmiş ve ülkenin bir Sovyet uydu devletine dönüşmesi tamamlanmıştır.

Sovyet destekli Afganistan Demokratik Cumhuriyeti döneminde ülkede Sovyetler ve müttefiklerinden gelen yardımlar haricinde dış yardımlar gittikçe azalmış, Afgan komünist klikleri (Halkçılar ve Bayrakçılar) arasındaki ölümcül mücadele komünist hareketin radikal kanadı olan Stalinist Halkçıların zaferiyle sonuçlanmış ve ülkenin yapısına uymayan modernleşme ve reform hareketleri toplumda artan oranda tepki oluşturmaya başlamıştır. Sovyetler yönetimi bile bu aşırı reform hareketlerinden rahatsız olmuştur. Zira artan toplumsal tepki radikal İslamcı muhalefet hareketlerini güçlendirmeye başlamıştır. Afgan toplumu oldukça muhafazakar olmasına rağmen bu radikal İslamcı hareketlere destek vermese de Sovyetler bu durumun ilerde değişebileceğinden endişe etmiştir. Yönetimdeki radikal komünist Halkçı Taraki ve Sovyet yönetimi arasındaki anlaşmazlıklar neticesinde Taraki ABD'ye yakınlaşmaya çalışmıştır. Bunun üzerine Afganistan'ın kısa sürede ya radikal İslamcılarının eline düşeceğine ya da ABD etki alanına gireceğini düşünen Sovyetler Birliği 1979 yılında Afganistan'ı işgal etmiştir.

Beşinci bölüm, insani yardım ve kalkınma yardımlarının, 1979 Sovyet işgalinden sonra başlayan dönemde Sovyetlerin kurduğu Afgan hükümeti ile Mücahidler olarak bilinen Afgan gruplarından oluşan bir koalisyon arasında gerçekleşen Afgan Savaşı'nın uzaması, gelişimi ve sonucu üzerindeki etkisini analiz etmektedir. Bu bağlamda ilgili ulusal, bölgesel ve uluslararası gelişmeler ve bunun sonucunda ülkenin siyasi, ekonomik ve sosyal alanlarında ortaya çıkan dramatik değişiklikleri de ele alınmıştır. Sovyetler Birliği'nin 1979'da

Afganistan'ı işgal etmesi, ülkenin kaderini derinden etkilemiş ve ülke üzerinde önemli ama olumsuz bir etki yaratmıştır; sonuçları bugün hâlâ hissedilmektedir. Afgan savaşı boyunca Kabil rejimine ve Mücahidlere sağlanan insani yardım ve kalkınma yardımını da içeren Sovyet ve ABD öncülüğündeki dış yardımlar, savaşın uzamasında çok önemli bir rol oynamış ve sonucu üzerinde belirleyici olmuştur. Bu amaçla, bu bölüm ilk olarak Sovyetlerin kısa vadeli bir restorasyon yaklaşımından, işgale karşı artan isyanın etkisiyle uzun vadeli bir devlet inşa etme stratejisine geçmek zorunda kalmasıyla değişen yardım dinamiklerini incelemektedir. İkinci olarak, bölüm, Gorbaçov'un Afganistan'dan çekilme stratejisinin bu değişen yardım dinamikleri üzerindeki etkisini araştırmaktadır. Üçüncü ve son olarak da Pakistan'daki Afgan mültecilere (Pakistan Mülteci Programı) ve Afganistan'ın Mücahidlerin kontrolündeki bölgelerindeki Afganlara (Afganistan Sınır Ötesi İnsani Yardım Programı) yönelik yardımlara odaklanarak Sovyet işgalini takip eden dönem boyunca ABD önderliğindeki yardım çabalarını analiz etmektedir. Bu dönemde Sovyetler Birliği ve ABD'nin ülkenin yardım mimarisinin şekillendirilmesi de dahil olmak üzere ülkede oynadığı kilit rol göz önüne alındığında, bu iki ülke merkeze alınarak konu çalışılmıştır. Ancak her ne kadar bu iki aktör bu bölümün öncelikli odak noktası olsa da diğer ilgili aktörlerin yardımlarına dair bilgi de verilmiştir.

Bu dönemde Afganistan'a yapılan insani yardım ve kalkınma yardımlarının genel olarak değerlendirmesinde iki önemli noktanın altının çizilmesi gerekmektedir. Birincisi, 1980'lerden 1990'ların başlarına kadar sağlanan uluslararası insani ve kalkınma yardımı politik olarak oldukça taraflıdır. ABD'nin Volag projesinde yer alanlar da dahil olmak üzere pek çok STK, Mücahid gruplarıyla doğrudan iş birliği yapmış, Birleşmiş Milletler Mülteciler Yüksek Komiserliği (BMMYK) ise Pakistan'ın mülteci kayıt uygulaması BMMYK'nin insani ilkelerini açıkça ihlal etmesine rağmen Pakistan'daki Afgan mültecilere yönelik acil insani yardım programını sürdürmüştür. Pakistan'ın mülteci kayıt uygulaması, ülkesinde bulunan Afganlara mülteci statüsü alıp yardımlardan faydalanmak için belirlediği yedi Mücahid partisinden birine üyeliği bir ön koşul haline getirmiştir. BMMYK, o dönemin en önemli ve programın en büyük bağışçısı olan ABD'nin baskısı nedeniyle, Pakistan'ın mülteci politikasına müdahale etmeyerek söz konusu programın sürdürülmesine katkıda bulunmuştur. Bu durum 1970'lerde Afgan halkı ve uluslararası kamuoyu nezdinde herhangi bir öneme haiz olmayan 1980'lerde partileşen Mücahid gruplarının bir anda Afgan mültecilerinin meşru temsilcisi olarak tanınmasına sebep olmuştur. Daha da önemlisi, bu durum Afgan toplumunun mülteci kamplarında hızla siyasallaşmasına ve radikalleşmesine katkıda bulunmuştur. Geleneksel olarak muhafazakar olup 1980'lerde partileşen bu radikal İslamcı grupların 1970'li yıllarda yaptıkları çağrı ve eylemlerle ilgilenmemiş olan Afgan

halkının bugün geldiği nokta düşünüldüğünde bu yardımların nasıl bir toplum mühendisliği etkisine sahip olduğu daha net bir şekilde anlaşılmaktadır. İlaveten bu yardımlar sadece mülteci kamplarında kalan Afgan mültecileri radikalleştirmemiş, eş zamanlı olarak Pakistan toplumunda da radikalleşmeyi tetiklemiştir.

İkinci olarak, Sovyetler Birliği, Babrak Karmal yönetiminde Sovyet yanlısı bir hükümet kurup, Afganistan'da düzeni yeniden inşa edip kısa süre içerisinde askeri birliklerini çekmeyi planlıyordu ancak işler planlandığı gibi gitmedi ve Sovyetler Birliği'nin Afganistan işgali uzun vadeli bir Sovyet angajmanına dönüştü. Bunun temel nedenleri şöyle sıralanabilir: 1980'lerin ortalarına kadar Afgan devlet mekanizmasının önceki radikal Halkçı hükümeti tarafından neredeyse tamamen çökertilmesi, büyük şehirlerde Afgan halkının Sovyetlerin kurduğu Karmal rejimine karşı yaygın şekilde düşmanlığını sergilemesi ve Afgan komünist partisindeki Halkçılar ve Bayrakçılar arasında devam eden hizip kavgası nedeniyle zaten oldukça zayıflamış olan devlet mekanizmasının tamamen paralize olması. Ancak bu angajman Sovyetler Birliği için her bakımdan çok maliyetli hale gelince, askeri birliklerini Afganistan'dan çekmeye karar vermiştir. Böylece, Afganistan'da derin siyasi, ekonomik, sosyal ve insani sonuçları olan on yıllık çatışma sürecinin sonuna gelinmiştir. Yeniden yapılanma veya devlet inşa sürecinin bir parçası olarak Afganistan'daki uzun vadeli angajmanı sırasında Sovyetler, işgal öncesi kalkınma önceliklerine odaklanmaya devam etmiş, ancak yardım stratejilerini tüm ülkede, özellikle de kırsal kesimde, hızla kötüleşen çatışma durumuna göre yeniden düzenlemiştir. Bu çerçevede, Sovyetler Birliği kalkınma projelerinin coğrafi kapsamını Kabil ile kuzeyde Afgan-Sovyet sınırı arasındaki nispeten güvenli hükümet kontrolündeki alanlarla sınırlamış ve Kabil rejiminin hayatta kalmasını ve istikrarını sağlamaya yardımcı olmak amacıyla daha hedefe yönelik ulaşım, iletişim ve enerji altyapısı projeleri geliştirmiştir. Sovyetler Birliği, Kabil rejimi kontrolündeki bölgelerde yaşayan Afganlara büyük ölçekli insani yardım çalışmaları yapmak zorunda kalmıştır zira Afgan savaşı, kırsal alandaki tarım ve hayvancılığı neredeyse bitme noktasına getirmiş ve kırsal nüfusun yardım almak amacıyla şehirlere yığılmasına neden olmuştur. Bunun dışında, Sovyetler Birliği, Afgan doğal gazı üzerinden yapılan Sovyet-Afgan (takas) ticaretini Afganistan'a uzun dönem angajmanının getirdiği ağır ekonomik maliyeti bir nebze de olsa azaltmak amacıyla kullanmıştır.

Altıncı bölüm, 1989-2001 yılları arasında Afganistan'a yapılan uluslararası insani ve kalkınma yardımlarında gözlemlenen değişiklikleri sunmaktadır. Bu amaçla bölümün ilk kısmı, 1989 yılında Sovyetler Birliğinin askeri birliklerini Afganistan'dan geri çekmesini takip eden ilk üç yıl içinde Afganistan Devlet Başkanı olarak konumunu korumayı başaran

Necibullah'ın dönemindeki yardımlarla ilgili gelişmeleri incelemektedir. Afgan savaşı, Sovyetler Birliğinin 1989 yılında çekilme kararı almasıyla birlikte Afganlaşma sürecine girmiş olsa da, hem Amerikalıların hem de Sovyetlerin Afgan vekillerine eskisine göre daha az da olsa yardım sağlamaya devam etmesiyle Afgan iç savaşı şiddetlenmiş ve uzamıştır. Afganistan Devlet Başkanı Necibullah'ın azalsa da devam eden Sovyet yardımlarını Makyavelist taktiklerle ustaca harmanlamak suretiyle iktidarını nasıl devam ettirdiği detaylı bir şekilde incelenmektedir. ABD öncülüğündeki dış yardımlar da Afgan Mücahid gruplarına akmaya devam etmiştir. Hatta Necibullah rejimine son darbeyi indirmesi için ilk zamanlar sağlanan yardım oranı artırılmıştır. Ancak bu artan yardımlar daha sonra kademeli olarak Mücahid grupları arasındaki çatışmalar, farklı jeopolitik öncelikler ve Mücahidlerin Necibullah rejimini devirmede başarısız olması gibi farklı nedenlerle azalmıştır. Ayrıca Körfez Savaşı sırasında bazı Afgan Mücahid liderlerinin Saddam Hüseyin'i destekleyen açıklamaları, ABD'yi ve onun petrol zengini Orta Doğulu müttefiklerini Afganistan'daki yardım stratejilerini değiştirmeye sevk etmiş; bu ülkeler yardımlarını Saddam'ı destekleyenler yerine Mücahid saha komutanı Şah Mesud'a yönlendirmişlerdir.

Bölümün ilerleyen kısmı Sovyetler Birliğinin 1991 yılında tarih sahnesinden tamamen silinmesinin ve Necibullah rejiminin Mücahid grupları tarafından devrilmesinden sonraki Mücahid iç çatışma yıllarına odaklanmaktadır. Sovyetlerin çöküşü sonrası Kabil'i ele geçirip Necibullah rejimini deviren Mücahid güçleri iki sorunla yüzleşmek zorunda kalmıştır. İlk sorun, Sovyetlerin çöküşü sonrası Amerikalıların Afganistan'a olan stratejik ilgisi tamamen yok olmuştur, ki bu da eskiden sağlanan büyük ölçekli yardımların bitişi anlamına gelmektedir, zira ABD'nin yardımları azaltma kararını onun petrol zengini Orta Doğulu müttefikleri de takip etmiştir. Bu durum eskiden maddi kaynak sıkıntısı olmayıp bir anda böyle bir problemle karşılaşan Mücahid grupları arasındaki paylaşım savaşını arttırmıştır. İkinci sorun ise Mücahid grupları, ülkeyi kimin nasıl yöneteceği konusunda şiddetli bir anlaşmazlığa düşmüştür. Bu iç savaş, Amerikalıların Afganistan dosyasını tamamen kapatmasıyla birlikte oluşan boşluğu dolduran bölge ülkelerinin Afganistan'daki farklı Mücahid grupları üzerinden vekalet savaşı yürütmesiyle birlikte uzamış ve şiddetlenmiştir. Bunun neticesinde 10 yıllık Afgan Savaşı sırasında bile görülmemiş oranda yıkıcı bir iç savaş başlamıştır. Bu durum, Afganistan'da kaosu, toplumsal çöküşü ve insani krizi hızlandırmıştır. Bu dönemde BM, AB ve Avrupa ülkelerinin ikili yardımları devreye girse de ülkenin istikrara kavuşması için yeterli olmamıştır.

Bölüm son olarak Sovyetlerin çöküşü, Amerikalıların Afganistan dosyasını kapatması ve bölge ülkelerinin oluşan bu boşluğu farklı Mücahid gruplarına yardım sağlayarak doldurup

Afgan iç savaşını daha da içinden çıkılmaz bir hale getirmesiyle oluşan kaos ortamında Taliban hareketinin ortaya çıkışı ve akabinde meydana gelen olayları Taliban ve uluslararası yardım topluluğu arasındaki ilişkilerin dinamiği üzerinden incelemektedir. Taliban Afganistan'da katı bir şariat düzeni kurmayı amaçlayan büyük ölçüde Peştun kökenli bir harekettir. Savaşın harap ettiği ülkedeki kaotik ortam, ülkede düzeni, güvenliği ve istikrarı yeniden sağlama sözü veren Taliban'ın 1990'ların ortalarında yükselişine, 1990'ların sonlarında ise Afganistan'ın büyük bir bölümünü ele geçirmesine verimli bir zemin sağlamıştır. Taliban, Kabil'i ele geçirdikten sonra Pakistan, Suudi Arabistan ve Birleşik Arap Emirlikleri dışında hiçbir ülke Taliban'ı Afganistan'ın meşru hükümeti olarak tanımamıştır. Bu durum, Taliban için ciddi bir hayal kırıklığı yaratmıştır. Uluslararası toplumun Taliban'ı Afganistan'ın meşru hükümeti olarak tanımamasının nedenleri dönemlere göre çeşitlilik göstermiştir. Uluslararası toplum, Taliban'ın ilk zamanları olan Peştun bölgelerini kontrol etmeye başladığı zamanlarda, Taliban'ı düzen, istikrar ve güvenlik sağlayıcı yerel bir güç olarak algılamıştır. Uluslararası yardım topluluğunun Taliban'a yönelik başlangıçtaki bakış açısı uyguladıkları cinsiyet ayrımcı politikalara rağmen olumsuz olmamıştır ve Peştun bölgelerindeki yardım aktörleri Taliban yöneticileriyle görüşerek yardım programlarını devam ettirmişlerdir. Bunda Mücahid gruplarından kopmuş savaş ağalarının kaosundan ve çatışmalarından bıkmış olan Peştun yoğunluklu bölge halkının Peştun kökenli bir hareket olan Taliban'a karşı olumlu tavrı da etkili olmuştur. Ancak bu durum, Taliban kontrolünü Peştun nüfusun yoğun olarak yaşadığı bölgelerden etnik grupların yoğun olarak yaşadığı bölgelere doğru genişlettikçe yavaş yavaş değişmiştir. Özellikle Taliban kontrolüne giren Herat ve Kabil şehirlerinde, hem yabancı basın mensuplarının olması hem de buralarda Taliban'ın özellikle kadın ve kız çocuklarının en temel insan haklarını ihlal edecek düzeyde olan katı uygulamalarına karşı gösterilen yerel tepkiler bu bakış açısının değişmesinde etkili olmuştur. Taliban'ın bu katı uygulamalarına karşı uluslararası yardım toplumu yekvücut bir tepki geliştirememiştir. Yardımın koşullu olması yönündeki çağrılar, uluslararası yardım topluluğunu, insani yardımın hayati önemini vurgulayanlar ve kadın ve kız çocuklarının insan haklarının önemini vurgulayanlar arasında bölmüştür. Bazı yardım organizasyonları konuyu Taliban ile müzakere etmeye çalışmış ancak Taliban bu katı tavrını değiştirmeyi reddetmiş ve kendisine yöneltilen eleştirilere yanıt olarak da uluslararası toplumun önceki yıllarda Mücahid gruplar kadınlara ve kız çocuklarına yönelik çok sayıda insan hakları ihlalinde bulunurken neden sessiz kaldıklarını sorgulamıştır. Bunun üzerine bazı yardım organizasyonları yardım programlarını askıya almış ancak bu durum Taliban üzerinde etkili olmamıştır zira diğer yardım organizasyonları Taliban'ın direktiflerine uyararak veya bazı bölgelerde de şartları müzakere ederek yardım çalışmalarına devam etmiştir. Uluslararası yardım çalışmalarını da ciddi bir şekilde etkileyecek olan Taliban ile uluslararası toplum

arasındaki asıl kırılma noktası Taliban'ın uluslararası terörist gruplarla olan ilişkisi nedeniyle gerçekleşmiştir. Böylece Taliban hem ilk zamanlarında yaptığı insan hakları ihlalleri hem de sonraki döneminde uluslararası terör gruplarıyla kurduğu ilişkiler nedeniyle uluslararası toplum için tartışmalı bir varlığa dönüşmüştür. Taliban ile uluslararası toplum arasında kötüleşen ilişkiler, Afganistan'daki uluslararası yardım çabaları üzerinde derin bir etki yaratmıştır.

Bu dönemde ayrıca ele alınması gereken konu ABD'nin Afganistan politikasıdır zira Taliban'ın terör örgütleriyle ilişkisi ve bu terör örgütlerinin Afganistan'ı üs olarak kullanması neticesinde gerçekleşen 11 Eylül 2001 terör saldırıları sonucunda ABD öncülüğündeki uluslararası koalisyon güçleri Taliban'ı devirmek için Afganistan'ı işgal edecektir. Sovyetlerin dağılmasının ardından Afganistan'a olan ilgisini kaybeden ABD, bölgedeki müttefikleri Pakistan ve Suudi Arabistan aracılığıyla ülkeye yönelik asgari angajman politikasını sürdürmüştür. ABD'nin Taliban'a yönelik genel yaklaşımı, bölgedeki müttefikleri Pakistan ve Suudi Arabistan üzerinden şekillendiği ve bu iki ülkenin de Taliban ile ilişkileri Taliban'ın Kabil ele geçirmesi sonrası hemen tanıyacak kadar yakın olduğu için başlangıçta olumlu olmuştur. ABD, 1994-1996 yılları arasında Taliban'ın İran karşıtı, uyuşturucu karşıtı, yabancı savaşçı karşıtı ve Batı yanlısı duruşa sahip olduğunu düşündüğü ve bu hareketi Afganistan'da düzen, güvenlik ve istikrar sağlayıcısı olarak gördüğü için hareketin İslami kökten dinci gündemini, başta kadın ve kız çocuklarının olmak üzere insan hakları ihlallerini ve Orta Asya ülkelerinin artan kaygılarını görmezden gelmeyi tercih etmiştir. Bir diğer neden de Amerikan petrol devi Unocal ve Suudi ortağı Delta'nın Ekim 1995'te Türkmenistan'dan Pakistan'a ve ötesine uzanan bir gaz boru hattının inşası için Türkmenistan'la bir anlaşma imzalaması ve bunun için de istikrarlı ve güvenli bir Afganistan'ın varlığının gerekliliğidir. Böylece ABD, Soğuk Savaş yıllarındaki kadar olmasa da Afganistan'a yeniden ilgi göstermeye başlamıştır. Ancak kısa bir süre sonra bu yaklaşım yerini Taliban dahil tüm savaşan taraflara karşı tarafsızlığı vurgulayan ve Taliban'ı başta Afgan kadınları ve kız çocukları olmak üzere insan haklarını ihlal ettiğini dile getiren yeni bir yaklaşıma bırakmıştır. Bu değişimi nedenleri şöyle sıralanabilir: 1996'da ABD'de yapılacak seçimler, Afganistan'daki değişken askeri durum ve ABD hükümeti içerisinde çıkar odaklı hareket edilmesi gerektiğini düşünen Taliban'a olumlu bakan grup ile insan hakları merkezli hareket edilmesi gerektiğini düşünen Taliban'a olumsuz bakan grup arasındaki rekabette ikinci grubun başarısı. 1990'lı yılların sonlarından itibaren Taliban'ın ağır insan hakları ihlalleri ABD'de önemli bir iç meselesi haline gelmiştir. 1998 yılında Doğu Afrika'daki ABD Büyükelçiliklerini hedef alan El Kaide terör saldırıları ve 2000 yılında Aden'de ABD Savaş Gemisi USS Cole El Kaide terör saldırısı neticesinde ABD'nin

Taliban'a karşı tarafsızlık politikası giderek düşmanlığa dönüşmüştür. Taliban'ın Usame bin Ladin'i iade etmeyi veya sınır dışı etmeyi reddetmesi ve ardından gelen BM yaptırımları ilişkileri daha da gerginleştirmiştir. Taliban'ın terörist gruplarla ilişkisi ve onları ülkede barındırması bölgedeki potansiyel müttefiklerini yabancılaştırırken yeni düşmanlar edinmesine de neden olmuştur.

Taliban ile uluslararası toplum arasındaki kötüleşen ilişkiler Afganistan'a yardımları oldukça olumsuz etkilemiştir. Hem ülkedeki yardım aktörlerinin sayısı hem de ülke için ayrılan yardım bütçeleri ciddi oranda azalmıştır. Bu dönemde ülkeye sadece minimum düzeyde insani yardım sağlanmıştır. Taliban'ın, açıklıktan ölmek üzere olan bir nüfusun herhangi bir rejimi devirebileceğini bilmesine rağmen ülkedeki uluslararası yardım aktörlerinin çabalarını kısıtlayan katı uygulamaları konusundaki tavizsiz duruşu, BM personeline yönelik çok sayıda saldırının olması ve uluslararası yardım aktörleri arasındaki koordinasyon eksikliği bu durumu daha da zora sokmuştur. 11 Eylül 2001 tarihinde New York ve Washington'daki El Kaide terörist saldırıları sonrasında ABD öncülüğündeki uluslararası koalisyon güçleri Taliban'ı devirmek için Afganistan'a askeri müdahale başlatmış ve başarılı olmuştur. Böylece Afgan tarihindeki birinci Taliban dönemi sona ermiştir.

Yedinci bölüm, ABD'nin 11 Eylül saldırılarından sorumlu El Kaide terör örgütüyle ilgili yaptığı tüm uyarı ve yaptırımlara rağmen ısrarlı bir şekilde ilişkilerini sürdüren ve bu örgüte ev sahipliği yapan Taliban'ı devirmek amacıyla 2001 yılında yaptığı askeri müdahale ile başlayıp 2021 yılında ABD ve beraberindeki uluslararası koalisyon güçlerinin Afganistan'dan temelli olarak ayrılmasıyla sona eren 20 yıllık dönemdeki yardım dinamiklerini incelemektedir. Taliban hükümetinin El Kaide teröristlerini ısrarla barındırması, 11 Eylül 2001 tarihinde New York ve Washington DC'ye yapılan saldırılara yanıt olarak her ikisini de cezalandırmayı amaçlamıştır. ABD'nin Ekim 2001'de Afganistan'ı işgal etmesi Afganistan'daki terörist El Kaide ağının önemli ölçüde zayıflatılmasını, Usame bin Ladin'in Afganistan'ı terk etmesini ve Taliban hükümetinin Kasım 2001 tarihinde devrilmesini sağlamıştır.

Bu bölüm ilk olarak, Afganistan'da en başından beri sınırlı ve kısa vadeli bir angajman amaçlayan ABD'nin bir süre sonra kendisini kapsamlı ve uzun vadeli bir angajman gerektiren bir durum içerisinde bulmasına neden olan dinamikleri incelemektedir. Afgan halkının büyük çoğunluğu farklı nedenlerle ABD öncülüğündeki işgale karşı çıkmamış hatta farklı nedenlerle desteklemiştir. Sıradan halk tekrar bir sivil savaşın başlayıp önceki dönemlerdeki gibi zalim savaş ağalarının eline düşmekten korktuğu ve ülkelerinin yeniden

inşasını sağlayacağını düşünerek desteklerken, küçük ve büyük güç erkleri herhangi bir savaşa dahil olmadan kazanan tarafa geçip yeni dönemden kendileri için fayda sağlamayı düşünerek desteklemişlerdir. ABD öncülüğündeki uluslararası toplum, ülkede hiçbir devlet yapısı ve işleyişinin kalmaması nedeniyle ülkede barışı, güvenliği ve istikrarı yeniden tesis etmek için yeni bir Afgan devleti kurma çabalarına girmek zorunda kalmıştır. 2001 Bonn Konferansıyla birlikte Afganistan'da yeni bir hükümetin kurulması ve uluslararası yardımların koordine edilmesiyle ilgili önemli adımlar atılmıştır. Ancak bu çabalar alandaki realiteyle örtüşmemiştir. İlk yıl yapılan yardımlar ülkenin ihtiyacı düşünüldüğünde oldukça yetersiz kalmıştır. ABD'nin önceliğinin işgal ettiği Irak olması, Afganistan'da kendine edindiği misyonu El Kaide'yi yok etmek olarak belirlemesi nedeniyle Afganistan'da oldukça sınırlı ve kısa vadeli bir angajman planlaması ve Afgan ülke bağlamını doğru okuyamaması gibi nedenlerden ötürü ABD Afganistan'da etkin bir yardım stratejisi geliştirememiştir. ABD lider ülke konumunda olup diğer ülkeler onun adımlarını izlediği için de ülke için en değerli yıllar kaybedilmiştir. Zaten Taliban birkaç yıl içinde eski gücünü toparlamış ve saldırılarına başlamıştır. Taliban'ın bu kadar hızlı bir şekilde eski gücünü toplamasının en önemli nedeni bu birkaç yıllık dönemde uluslararası yardımların Afgan halkını hayal kırıklığına uğratması ve Taliban'ın da bu memnuniyetsizliği kullanarak kendisine güç devşirmesidir.

Bölüm daha sonra Afganistan'daki 10 yıllık yardım çabalarının başarısız olmasının kabul edilmesi sonrasında Obama yönetiminin Afganistan'daki yardım aktörlerine işleri düzeltmesi için 18 aylık bir süre vermesi ve başarısızlık durumunda da Afganistan'dan çekilme seçeneğinin değerlendirileceğini belirttiği 18 aylık dönemi analiz etmektedir. ABD Başkanı Obama'nın 18 ay planına SIGAR gibi alanında uzman ve Afganistan'daki dinamikleri iyi bilen kurumlar böyle bir planın gerçekçi olmayacağı ve bu planın başarısız olacağını belirterek en başından karşı çıkmıştır. Bu 18 aylık dönemde yardımlar çok ciddi oranda artmış ama SIGAR'ın da en başında belirttiği gibi plan başarısız olmuştur. Bu 18 aylık dönemde Afganistan'da bulunan yardım aktörleri yardımlardaki ani ve büyük artışla birlikte yolsuzluk oranlarının da ciddi boyutlara ulaştığına dair beyanatta bulunmuşlardır. Bu başarısızlık üzerine ABD, Afganistan'dan çekilme planlaması yapmaya başlamış, ancak çeşitli nedenlerle bu planı sürekli ertelemek durumunda kalmış, nihayetinde Ağustos 2021 tarihinde ABD ve beraberindeki uluslararası koalisyon güçleri Afganistan'dan çekilmiştir.

Bu 20 yıllık süreç değerlendirildiğine, ABD öncülüğündeki uluslararası yardım toplumunun oldukça maliyetli yardım çabaları beklenen sonuçları vermemiştir. Ülkenin yeniden inşası için trilyonlarca dolar yardım sağlayan, Afgan halkının güvendiği ABD ve beraberindeki koalisyon güçleri, bu sefer Saygon'un düşüşüne benzer sahneleri hatırlatan bir görüntüyle

Afganistan'dan temelli olarak ayrılmıştır. ABD ve koalisyon güçleri aceleyle askerlerinin Afganistan'dan çekilmesini tamamlamaya çalışırken, Batı tarafından kurdurulan ve 20 yıllık süreçte desteklenen Afganistan İslam Cumhuriyetinin Devlet Başkanı Eşref Gani, kimseye haber vermeden ülkeden kaçmış ve Afgan devleti beklenenden de hızlı bir şekilde çökmüştür. Bunun sonucunda Taliban Kabil'i rahatlıkla ele geçirmiş ve kendi 'İslam Emirliğini' ilan etmiştir. Batı destekli Afgan devletinin tarihe gömülmesiyle birlikte Afganistan'da Amerikan dönemi sona ermiştir. Son olarak ABD'nin Afganistan müdahalesinin, Sovyetlerin Afganistan müdahalesiyle giriş, gelişme ve sonuç açısından birçok benzerlik taşıdığını belirtmek isterim.

Bölüm son olarak Taliban hareketinin halkın desteğini kazanmak amacıyla geliştirdiği isyan stratejisinin sivil ayağı olan 'Afgan Gölge Devletini' ve uluslararası yardım toplumunun Afganistan'da yaptığı yardım faaliyetlerinin her aşamasında Afgan devlet kurum ve kuruluşlarını bypass ederek oluşturdukları 'Paralel Donör Devletini' tartışmaktadır. Taliban'ın kurmuş olduğu bu gölge devlet adalet, eğitim, sağlık gibi halka doğrudan dokunan alanlarda faaliyet göstermiş ve halk arasında kendisine ciddi bir sempati kazandırmıştır, özellikle de merkezi hükümetin pek görünür olmadığı kırsal alanlarda. Paralel donör devleti uygulamaları ise uluslararası toplumun Afgan halkı nezdindeki prestijini ciddi şekilde zedelemiştir. Uluslararası yardım toplumunun Afganistan'daki varlık nedeni Afgan devletinin inşası ve güçlendirilmesiyken yapılan yardımların büyük bir kısmının hangi nedenle olursa Afgan devletini bypass etmesi ciddi bir sorun olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Afgan halkı ülkede bulunan yardım organizasyonlarının Afganlara yardım etmekten ziyade kendilerine yardım ettiğini belirtmek için bu organizasyonları kendi sütünü içen bir inek olarak tanımlamıştır.

Sekizinci bölüm, Afganistan'daki üç yıllık ikinci Taliban döneminin yardım dinamiklerini incelemektedir. Bu bölüm son gelişmeler ışığında ülkedeki insani ve ekonomik durumu ve uluslararası tanınma ve dış yardım arayışındaki Taliban ile uluslararası toplum arasındaki ilişkileri değerlendirmek amaçındadır. 20 yıllık uluslararası yardım dönemi Afganistan'daki yardıma bağlılık dinamiklerini daha da güçlendirmiştir. Uluslararası toplumun insani yardımlar da dahil olmak üzere tüm yardımları kesmeleri ve yeni yaptırımlar uygulamaları zaten oldukça kırılğan olan Afgan halkını büyük risk altına sokmuştur. Bunun üzerine uluslararası toplum Afganistan'a insani yardım sağlamaya başlamış ancak Taliban'ın gelen insanı yardımları kendi çıkarı için kullanmaya başlaması (devlet görevlilerinin maaşını yardımlarla ödemek veya yardımları belli işlerde gönüllü çalışan insanlara vermek gibi) uluslararası toplumundan tepki çekmiştir. Daha önceki döneminde uyguladığı kadın ve kız

çocuklarının en temel haklarını ihlal eden katı şeriat uygulamalarını tekrar devreye sokması hem bu nüfus grubunun hayatını oldukça zorlaştırmış hem de ilk iktidara geldiğinde önceki döneminden daha farklı davranacağı vaadinde bulunmasına rağmen kendisine güvenmeyen uluslararası toplumla ilişkilerini daha da kötüleştirmiştir. Batılı yardım aktörleri kalkınma yardımı gibi daha büyük ölçekli yardımların geri dönüşünü Taliban'ın insan hakları sicilindeki iyileşmelere ve terör konusundaki tutumuna bağlamış bulunmaktadır. Taliban ise uluslararası toplumun tüm baskılarına rağmen geri adım atmamaktadır.

Bunun üzerine, Taliban, hem kendisini ilerde Afganistan'ın meşru hükümeti olarak tanıyabilecek hem de ihtiyacı olan yardımları sağlayabilecek yeni ortaklar bulmak amacıyla yardım diplomasisine başlamıştır. Taliban Batı kulübü dışında yer alan Çin, Rusya, Hindistan gibi iç işlerine karışmama politikası olan ülkelerle ilişkilerini geliştirmiştir. Taliban, bu ülkelerden insani yardım, kalkınma yardımı ve siyasi destek sağlamalarını isterken, bu ülkeler terörle mücadeleye ve Afganistan'ın maden zenginliğine odaklanmaktadır. Hindistan, Afganistan'ın Orta Asya'ya transit erişim avantajı ve bölgede kendisine Pakistan'ı dengeleme fırsatı sağlamasını da ek bir avantaj olarak değerlendirmektedir.

Sonuç olarak, Afganistan'a yapılan yardımların geçmişten günümüze incelenmesi neticesinde Afgan hükümetleri ve uluslararası yardım topluluğunu oluşturan aktörlerin çoğunlukla realist ilkeler çerçevesinde birbirleriyle yardım ilişkisine girdikleri değerlendirilmektedir. Afgan liderler sadece ülkelerinin ilgili ihtiyaçlarını karşılamak amacıyla değil aynı zamanda ülkelerindeki iç istikrarı sağlamak, ülkelerinin ulusal çıkarlarını korumak veya hem ülkedeki hem de ülke dışındaki rakiplerine karşı siyasi nüfuzlarını artırmak amacıyla dış yardım arayışında olmuşlardır. Buna karşılık, uluslararası yardım aktörleri kendi jeopolitik ve güvenlik çıkarları doğrultusunda Afganistan ile yardım ilişkilerini şekillendirmişlerdir. Bu yardım ilişkisindeki her iki taraf da Marcel Mauss'un hediye teoreminde görülen karşılıklılık ilkesine uygun olarak, bu yardımların sadece hayırseverlikten ibaret olmadığını ve belirli bir karşılıklılık gerektirdiğinin bilincindedir. Bu duruma belki de en iyi örnek, Afganistan Devlet Başkanı Hamid Karzai'nin 2004 yılındaki Berlin Konferansı'nda donör ülkeleri Afganistan'a yapılan yardımları bir hayırseverlik faaliyeti olarak değil, istikrara, barış inşasına ve çeşitli düzeylerde kalkınmaya yapılan bir yatırım olarak değerlendirmeye çağırması, hemen ardından da bu yardımların donör ülkelerin savunma ve güvenlik giderlerini azaltacağını belirtmiş olmasıdır.

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