ARTICULATION OF TRIBALISM INTO MODERNITY: THE CASE OF
PASHTUNS IN AFGHANISTAN

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ABSTRACT

ARTICULATION OF TRIBALISM INTO MODERNITY: THE CASE OF PASHTUNS IN AFGHANISTAN

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The main objective of this thesis is to analyse the relationship between tribalism and modernity in Afghanistan. Focusing on Pashtuns, who constitute the largest ethnic group in Afghanistan, the thesis traces their transformation from a tribal confederacy into a central state that introduced modernity to Afghanistan. In this regard, the thesis is, basically, a discussion of the struggle for power between two institutions in Afghanistan: the tribe and the state. In an effort to reveal the relationship between the two, the thesis looks at the modern strategies and ideologies used by the Afghan state to beat the power of tribalism. Nationalism and Socialism, in this regard, come up as two modern ideologies that are discussed in relation to Pashtun Tribalism. Questioning the concepts of Afghan Nationalism and Pashtun Nationalism as well as their relation to Pashtun Tribalism, the thesis discusses the concept of a tribe within the frame of modern border demarcation, nation-building efforts and modernist reform programmes. Passing on to the discussion on Socialism, the thesis then addresses the question of tribe in relation to the idea of class struggle, a communist party, a modern coup d'état and a communist revolution. Contrasting the concept of tribe with such modern notions, the thesis finally reveals how tribalism managed to survive within these modern ideologies by articulating into them in various ways.

Keywords: Afghanistan, Pashtuns, Pashtun tribalism, nationalism, socialism

ÖZ

AŞİRETÇİLİĞİN MODERNİTEYE EKLEMLENMESİ: AFGANİSTAN'DA PEŞTUNLARIN DURUMU

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Bu çalışmanın başlıca amacı, Afganistan'da aşiretçilik ve modernite arasındaki ilişkinin incelenmesidir. Afganistan'daki en büyük etnik grubu oluşturan Peştunları konu alan bu çalışma, Peştunların aşiret konfederasyonundan merkezi devlete dönüşme sürecini anlatmaktadır. Bu bağlamda düşünüldüğünde, bu tezin konusu, temelde, Afganistan'ın iki önemli kurumunu temsil eden aşiret ve devlet arasındaki güç savaşıdır. Bu iki kurum arasındaki ilişkinin ana hatlarını ortaya çıkarma amacı güden çalışma, Afgan devletinin, aşiretçiliğin etkisini kırmak amacıyla kullandığı modern strateji ve ideolojileri ele almaktadır. Bu çerçevede öne çıkan Milliyetçilik ve Sosyalizm ideolojileri, Peştun Aşiretçiliği bağlamında incelenmektedir. Afgan Milliyetçiliği ve Peştun Milliyetçiliği ile bunlarla Peştun Aşiretçiliği arasındaki ilişkiyi sorgulayan çalışma; modern devlet sınırlarının belirlenmesi, ulus-devlet inşa süreci ve modernist reform programları çerçevesinde aşiret kavramını tartışmaktadır. Müteakiben Sosyalizm tartışmasına geçen çalışma; sınıf çatışması kavramı, komünist bir parti, modern bir askeri darbe ile komünist bir devrim bağlamında aşiret kavramını incelemeye devam etmektedir. Aşiret kavramını modernitenin getirdiği yeni kavramlarla kıyaslayan çalışma, sonuç olarak, aşiretçiliğin modern ideolojilere eklemlenerek nasıl ayakta kaldığını gözler önüne sermeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Afganistan, Peştunlar, Peştun aşiretleri, milliyetçilik, sosyalizm

To my father who gave his life for Afghanistan

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

More skilled in the swords are the Pashtuns than the Moghuls,
Would only more intelligence was theirs.
Were the tribes but of agreement amongst themselves,
Emperors would prefer to bow before them.
Every deed of the Pashtun is better than that of the Moghul,
Concord is what they lack, how pitiful that is.
...
Oh God! Grant them but concord, sweet refrain,
And old Khushal will rise a youth again.

Khushal Khan Khattak

Afghanistan shelters many ethnic groups such as Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, Turkmen, Baluch, etc., among which Pashtuns have always represented the majority (circa 40%). Some of these groups still live as tribes while some others have been detribalised long ago. Whatever the degree of detribalisation on the whole, tribe sustains its valuable position in the Afghan society as well as the Afghan state. It is so deeply rooted into the minds of Afghan people that it has been very difficult for Afghans to think of themselves within the frame of the modern concepts of ethnicity, nation or citizens which have been introduced by the modernising Afghan state through the direct or indirect influence of foreign powers. In this regard, the position of the state in relation to tribes has also been problematic in Afghanistan where the state has been in a constant struggle for establishing itself as an institution in the face of tribal power. To this end, it has employed various modern ideologies in order to replace the mode of tribal thinking. These efforts, although seemingly succeeding in the surface, proved to be failures in the end because the state could never totally destroy the power of tribe neither in the society nor in minds. How tribalism managed to survive was that it always found new ways to articulate into whatever new system the state introduced. Basically, in the Afghan case, the main struggle has been between the tribe and the state, which will be the departing point of this thesis.

Before introducing the details of this struggle, however, a clarification is needed for understanding this complicated concept of 'tribe.'

1.1. Clarification of Concepts and Categories

1.1.1. What is *not* a tribe?

The concept of 'tribe' by itself is a vague term surrounded by other concepts such as nomad, pastoral, peasant, kinship, ethnicity, community, etc. All these other terms are, in certain ways, related to the concept of tribe, as it will be revealed. For now, though, a more specific distinction is required for the use of; nomadism, pastoralism and tribalism. The misleading equation 'nomad=pastoralist=tribal' actually confuses "the three factors of movement, economic pursuit and socio-political system" (Khazanov, 1994: 24). Nomads are people who are not settled down, moving from place to place depending on the conditions. Pastoralists, on the other hand, are people who earn their living by animal breeding. As animal breeding also requires movement, pastoralists may naturally be nomads. However, settled societies may deal with animal breeding, as well. Tribalism, on the other hand, is something related to how the society is organised socially and politically. Nomads, pastoralists and settled societies can all be tribal.

Another major distinction, which will be more clarified in later chapters, should be made between the concepts of tribe and ethnic group. Although these two terms may sound similar at a first glance, it is apt to say that the latter was introduced, at a later date, by modernity through foreign powers, especially the Soviet Union which increased ethnic awareness during its invasion of Afghanistan. Although R. Tapper (1983: 10) is careful to note that the subdivisions of ethnic groups "may also fulfil the criteria of 'tribes,'" he is inclined to call them confederacies, not tribes, which are "groups of tribes united primarily in relation to the state or extra-local forces" (R. Tapper, 1983: 9). What counts here is that terms like 'ethnicity' or 'ethnic group' were not on the foreground until they were imposed by modernity. Although we define the different communities living in Afghanistan as 'ethnic groups' today, they have long since been defined as *qawm*, or tribes in the Afghan society.

A final clarification will be needed for what is exactly meant by tribe. In popular usage, the concepts 'tribe' and 'tribal' may evoke the image of the first humans on earth who lived as hunters and gatherers in the Hobbsian 'state of nature.' This meaning of tribe gives us an image of the savage man living without any government or law. On the contrary, however, tribe is a social and political formation; it has a lot to do with rules. Tribalism, in this sense, is considered to have emerged with the Neolithic Revolution when the transition from hunting to agriculture and settlement occurred. One step further, Sahlins (1968: 4) sees tribes as part of the social evolution, arguing that "tribes occupy a position in cultural evolution. They took over from simpler hunters; they gave way to the more advanced cultures we call civilizations." It is not necessary, however, to see tribes as a link in a linear chain of progress. In certain regions, tribes have evolved into complex societies; in other regions like Africa they are less touched by modernity; and further in other regions like Afghanistan, tribalism still exists within those evolving modern societies, which is something that represents the point of departure for this thesis.

1.1.2. What *is* a tribe?

If the issue in question is tribe, it is impossible to come up with definite formulas. One could only reach some generalisations to which there will be many exceptions. Just as "jellyfish tribes," a word coined by Yapp (1983: 186), scatter around to avoid control, the concepts related to tribe refuse to come under control so that one can give it a meaning. This part will be an attempt to do it within a certain framework.

The need to define tribes in sociological terms goes as far back as Ibn Khaldun (1989), the Arabian scholar, who attempted to write a universal history through the microcosm of North Africa in the 14th century. In his opinion, two civilisations existed in the world which replaced each other in a cyclical manner: desert and sedentary civilisations. What Khaldun means by 'desert civilisation' is a nomadic tribe living in the desert, which, thanks to its military strength, courage and solidarity (*asabiyya*), succeed in taking over the 'sedentary civilisation,' an urban population living in the city in a luxurious and relaxed manner. As the desert tribe becomes urbanised, however, it detribalises and goes into decline, causing another tribe from

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the desert to come and take over. The main idea behind this approach is that tribes and settled urban societies are positioned against each other.

To pass on to a more specific definition by R. Tapper (1983: 9), the tribe is "a localised group in which kinship is the dominant idiom of organisation, and whose members consider themselves culturally distinct (in terms of customs, dialect or language, and origins)... [and] usually politically unified." What catches the attention first in this definition is the word 'kinship,' which is the main link among the members of a tribe. Family is the basic unit of a tribe followed by extended family, clan, tribe and the tribal confederacy/confederation. Starting from the family, blood relations are of utmost importance in this version of the 'Great Chain of Beings.' If you are a member of a tribe, what matters is whose son you are. But this is more complex than a simple form of belonging, for it is situational; i.e. it may change according to circumstances. A tribe may choose to include newcomers for political considerations through gifts, exchanges and, most importantly, marriages which may even become peace treaties, as well as the generation of peace treaties. As Sahlins (1968: 12) puts it, "kinsmen are made as well as born." Kinship is something constructed whereby ties of descent are created; not given.

The second feature is that tribes are culturally distinct groups, developing a common culture in time and speaking in the same language. Sahlins (1968: 23) says that cultural similarity is the only thing that gives tribal people a measure of coherence and identity. They are alike in custom and speech. "Cut from the same cloth, they have a common destiny…They respond the same way to the world and thus develop an historic identity" (Sahlins, 1968: 23). The issue of 'common destiny' is worth underlining here, as it will be encountered many times throughout the thesis.

The third and most important feature is that a tribe is a politically unified group. Living together for years and having a common destiny, members of a tribe come to acquire a common history, common causes, common allies and common enemies. Still, the level of political unification should not be taken as something fixed, as it depends on the political organisation of a tribe, which may be either 'hierarchical' or 'egalitarian.'

To start with the hierarchical type, these tribes are also called chiefdoms as they are usually united under a chief. The most basic feature of this kind is that there is a hierarchy between the members of this tribe. Some members are superior in

descent and other members have to accept it. Considered closer to the modern stratified societies, this structure is believed to be more suited to ruling large states and empires for longer periods of time. The chieftain at the top faces no problem of legitimacy, possesses the authority to command and, thus, achieves unification more easily and for longer periods of time. Seen more commonly in the steppes of Central Asia, Anatolia and Iran, this type is also called the Turko-Mongolian model which succeeded in creating big and *longue durée* empires like the Ottoman and the Safavid (Rubin, 2002: 11). Having the resources of the plateaus of Anatolia at hand, controlling trade routes and being in proximity to rich neighbours to plunder, these tribal systems were able to sustain bigger populations.

Egalitarian or segmentary tribes, on the other hand, accept equality among members as their basic ideology. These tribes are "sharply divided into independent local communities, structurally equivalent, functionally (economically) equivalent, politically equivalent" (Sahlins, 1968: 21). It is very difficult to achieve a form of consensus or unity among these tribes except against external forces, like the authoritarian state or enemies. Still, "collective spirit is episodic. When the objective for which it was called into being is accomplished, the alliance lapses and the tribe returns to its normal state of disunity" (Sahlins, 1968: 21). It is not very difficult to understand why segmentary dynasties usually do not last as long as hierarchical ones. The lack of unification results from the problem of leadership. Although leadership is usually confined to the primary community, a leader is seen only as the 'first among the equals' or *primus inter pares*. As Poullada (1973: 29) claims, "the stress is on the *pares* rather than on the *primus*." Not having the power to command, a leader can be replaced more easily by an outsider in egalitarian tribes compared to hierarchical ones where the prestige of the ruling dynasty is very important. More common in the Middle Eastern region ranging from Morocco to Afghanistan and constituting the type of tribes studied by Ibn Khaldun (Rubin, 2002: 10), the egalitarian type is also called the Arabian model, which included sedentary as well as nomadic populations. Living in deserts or mountainous areas which offered not many resources, these tribal systems were able to sustain smaller populations compared to hierarchical tribes. Pashtun tribes also belong to the egalitarian category although the ruling tribe (the Durrani) is said to have acquired some hierarchical features thanks to its experience within the Safavid Empire.

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1.2. Argument of the Thesis

Following this brief introduction to the concept of tribe, it is now time to reveal the argument of the thesis. As the dominant tribal group living in Afghanistan; as the founders of modern Afghanistan; and, most importantly, as the group which best represents the features of tribalism, Pashtuns will be taken as the focal point of this thesis. Although some other communities living in Afghanistan, such as the Turkmen, also live as tribes, this thesis will take Pashtun tribalism as tribalism *per se* in Afghanistan, since "to be a Pashtun is to be integrated into a tribal structure" (Roy, 1990: 35). Furthermore, the major cleavage in Afghan society has been "not between tribe and non-tribe, nor between nomad and settled, but between Pathans (Afghans) and the rest, whether urban, peasant or tribal" (R. Tapper, 1983: 12). 'The rest' is referred to by Pashtuns either as 'Tajik' or *Farsiwan*, meaning Persian-speakers. This 'residual' category of the *Farsiwan* means all what is non-Pashtun: basically, non-tribal and Persianophone people. In other words, Pashtuns take pride in their tribes, looking down on those populations whose social organisation is not tribal. Even when they *are* tribal, just as in the case of the Hazara and the Turkmen, Pashtuns underrate them, as well, because of the fact that their ancestors are different. This is how the tribal system distinguishes between Pashtuns and non-Pashtuns such as Hazaras for instance, who are taken as two different tribal confederacies of two different lineages, while modernity treats them as two different ethnic groups today.

The deeply-rooted tribal traditions of Pashtuns, however, were to pose a big problem as they attempted to form a state of their own. In this regard, the case of Pashtuns is quite interesting as they originally constitute a tribal confederation that, thanks to its experience within an empire, the Safavid, attempted to establish its own empire, the Durrani, which gradually evolved into a central state as opposed to diffuse tribes. In other words, the Durrani Empire, which originally had the form of a tribal confederacy, attempted to establish itself as the sole power-holder, taking the form of a central state in an effort to overcome tribal power. That is to say, the state needed to rise above the tribe which represented its own roots in order to institutionalise its authority. But it could do it only by introducing a new basis of legitimacy other than the tribe. To this end, the Afghan state endeavoured to find new bases of legitimacy ranging from pre-modern to modern ideologies.

In this process, the Afghan state utilised Persian Royalism when it had the form of an Empire (1747-1823); then it benefited from Islam when it turned into an Emirate (1823-1926); then it went on to utilise the modern ideology of Nationalism when it turned into a Kingdom (1926-1973); and then it passed on to the modern ideology of Socialism as it became a Republic (1973-1992)[1]. Two clarifications need to be made at this point: (1) that the new ideologies, as they were introduced, existed together with the older ones; that is to say, a newcomer did not totally wipe out an older one, and (2) that this process did not end here but continued in later periods as new ideologies such as Islamism and Fundamentalism were introduced; but they remain out of the scope of this thesis. On the side of the state, these ideologies turned out to be mere tools for reform, serving the state's centralisation efforts against tribal authority. On the side of the tribes, they helped define the diffuse tribes better, in line with Gellner's (1983b: 436) contention that the tribe "defines itself in terms borrowed from a wider civilisation." The crucial point is that Pashtun tribalism never lost its strength in the face of these ideologies because it continued to articulate into them in numerous ways; that was how it survived in the face of modernity. This survival will be the *problematique* of this thesis which will largely be an attempt to discover the Pashtun tribal articulation into modernity, specifically into Nationalism and Socialism. Observing the tribal Pashtuns *vis-a-vis* modernity, the thesis will, essentially, attempt to trace the continuous oscillation between the tribe and the state.

1.3. Structure of the Thesis

Covering predominantly the time span that starts with the end of the First Anglo-Afghan War in 1842 and goes until the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, the thesis will not go into the aftermath of the Soviet invasion where Afghanistan became the theatre of the Cold War fought between the US and the USSR. In other words, the thesis will be analysing Pashtun tribalism and the Afghan state before it was fragmented by foreign powers.

Structurally, the thesis will be composed of three main chapters. The Introduction is to be followed by Chapter 2 which will be on 'Pashtun Tribalism' where the main features of the Pashtun tribal confederation including genealogy,

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[1] See Appendix A for the full list of titles that the Afghan state used.

rivalry among tribes, tribal government, tribal code, tribal economy, religion as well as the relationship between Pashtun tribes and the Durrani Empire will be given.

Chapter 3 will be on the 'Encounter of Pashtun Tribalism with Nationalism' which is to cover the Anglo-Afghan Wars, modern demarcation of borders, Pashtunisation of Afghanistan, introduction of the ideology of Nationalism into Afghanistan, the significant role of Mahmud Tarzi and Young Afghans, the speedy reformist King Amanullah Khan, the clash between Nationalist reform and Pashtun tribalism, the consequent tribal interruption to reforms and finally the slowed-down reform programme initiated under the Musahiban dynasty.

Chapter 4 will be on the 'Encounter of Pashtun Tribalism with Socialism' which will cover the impact of modernisation efforts on Kabul as well as on Pashtun tribes, the rise of German influences in Afghanistan, the ideology of National Socialism, the Pashtunistan Issue as the an official ideology, Soviet penetration into Afghanistan, Daoud Khan's coup d'état of 1973 as a prelude to Socialism, the Afghan communist party PDPA and the Saur Revolution as well as the attitude of Pashtun tribalism in the face of Socialism including the tribal schism within the PDPA and the clash between Socialist reform and Pashtun tribalism.

Finally, the thesis will end with a Conclusion where the general inferences that have been made concerning tribe-state relations will be given.

CHAPTER 2

TRIBALISM IN AFGHANISTAN: PASHTUN TRIBALISM

Pashtuns or, as they are also called, Pakhtuns, Pukhtuns, Pathans, have always been the major tribal group (42% according to *The World Factbook 2011*) living in Afghanistan. In the past, the name 'Pashtun' was used synonymously with the name 'Afghan' which came through the medium of Persian language according to Mountstuart Elphinstone (1815), the early British envoy to Afghanistan who wrote massively on the country and the people. Today, though, 'Afghan' will be the correct name especially for outsiders, as the name 'Pashtun' is not well-known beyond the region. There is also a political reason for it, as non-Pashtuns in Afghanistan prefer to be called Afghani or Afghanistani, showing an inclination to form an umbrella nationality.

Talking about Pashtuns, one should not forget to include those living in the other side of the border in today's Pakistan[2]; previously in British India. These Pashtun groups were called 'Pathans' by the British, although the name today may also refer to the wider Pashto-speaking peoples of both Afghanistan and Pakistan. According to *The World Factbook 2011*, Pashtuns form 15% of the population in Pakistan, which makes almost 29 million. Along with the 12.5 million living in Afghanistan, Pashtuns are described as "the largest tribal society on earth" (Noelle, 1997: 135). Some Pashtun groups live wholly in Afghanistan; some live wholly in Pakistan; some have members in both countries while some summer in Afghanistan and winter in Pakistan.

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[2] See Appendix B for the maps of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

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2.1. Pashtun Genealogy

As seen in the Introduction, ancestors are vital to a tribal system. What makes a lineage or a tribe is the common ancestor who has a legendary personality and charisma that survives in the collective conscious of the tribe. The common ancestor of all the Pashtun groups is Qays bin Rashid or Qays Abdul Rashid who is believed to have gone from Ghore to Arabia and adopted Islam in the lifetime of the Prophet, marrying the famous Muslim warrior Khalid bin Walid's daughter. He had four sons who are, today, accepted as the founders of the four major tribes under Pashtun lineage.

In this genealogy, the first son of Qays produced the tribe called the Abdali, later on to be called the Durrani, who were the most important tribal group among Pashtuns, producing the rulers of the country since 1747. Mostly living in the southwest around Kandahar, Farah and Herat, they were known as the southern or western Pashtuns. Components of the Durrani were: Barakzai, Popalzai, Achakzai, Alikozai, Nurzai, Ishaqzai and Alizai. Barakzai was the most powerful and crowded clan while the Popalzai (especially its Sadozai family) was the aristocratic one. Pashtun tribes living in Pakistan, such as the Yusufzai, Shinwari and Mohmand, also claim Durrani descent.

The second son of Qays produced the Ghilzai tribe, rival of the Durrani, which founded the Hotaki Empire before the Durrani Empire, with its Hotaki clan as the strongest one. The Ghilzai formed the largest Pashtun group with the largest number of nomads. Living in the east around Ghazni and Kabul, they were known as the eastern Pashtuns. Components of the Ghilzai were: Hotaki, Suleyman Khel, Kharoti, Andar, Tokhi, Taraki, Nasiri and Ahmadzai.

The third son of Qays produced the Gurghusht tribe including Kakar, Musa Khel and Safi while the fourth son, who was a foundling, produced the Karlanri tribe including Wardak, Orakzai, Afridi, Wazir, Jaji, Tani, Khattak, Zadran, Mangal, Mahsud and Khugiani. Hart (2011:152) argues that it is the sons of the Karlanri, the foundling, which were to become the prototypical Pashtun tribes, or the 'free frontier tribes' called Pathans by the British.

Having a deeper look at Pashtun genealogy, it should be noted that Pashtuns pinpoint the start of their lineage with their encounter with Islam, rejecting a non-

Islamic past. This provides a useful tool in tribal differentiation as Pashtuns distinguish themselves from other tribal confederacies (today called 'ethnic groups') such as the Tajik, Hazara, etc. by their 'original Muslimness.' Thus, it was through the Pashto language (in contrast to Persian) and an 'original Muslimhood' that the fictive genealogy of Pashtuns was established. In this genealogy, there is even an argument among Pashtuns about who the 'real' Pashtuns are (Barfield, 2010: 22). This might be because of large Pashtun groups getting away, or rather forced to get away, from each other both geographically (including Pakistan) and politically so that they begin to lose the sense of sharing a common destiny. Yet, even if they are supposed to have no more common goals after this separation, there have been points in history, which will be given throughout the thesis, when Pashtuns of Afghanistan and those of Pakistan still acted as one single tribal confederacy, although the rulers at the top tried to break this solidarity under forced circumstances. A second point is that the Pashtun tribal elite separated from common Pashtun tribes as it was exposed to the Persianising effects of the modern state. That is why the ruling Pashtuns, mainly the Durrani, are seen as corrupt by the frontier tribes which consider themselves as purer tribes, and thus, 'the real Pashtuns.' Though contradictory at first sight, most of these 'real Pashtuns' were actually the sons of the adopted son Karlanri, as mentioned above. In other words, the genuine sons of Qays alienated from the Pashtun tribal system while those of the adopted son came to define themselves as real. Then, it is necessary to add that the so-called authenticity of the Pashtun lineage should be considered within the extent of genealogy construction.

2.2. Pashtun Tribal Confederacy

The four tribes under the common ancestor Qays make up the Pashtun tribal confederation/confederacy. The chain goes as follows: Pashtuns make up a tribal confederation; the Durrani under Pashtuns make up a tribe; the Barakzai under the Durrani make up a clan; and the Muhammadzai under the Barakzai make up a tribal family. All the groups in this chain are forms of forced alliance. They are all extended versions of one another. However, in Pashtun social structure, what matters is the smaller unit; not the larger one. As the category expands, it becomes more difficult to define blood relations, kinship and descent while the members of this

category have difficulty in tracing back to a common ancestor. Therefore, the sense of unity, or *asabiyya*, if there is any, gets more complicated as the category expands. If we imagine lots of Pashtun tribal groups defining themselves through their ancestors and segmentary oppositions like 'us vs. them', it becomes evident that a stable form unification was something almost impossible and, at the same time, *unwanted*. That is why a tribal confederation represents tribes that come together for a specific purpose against a common enemy. In other words, a confederation is not a fixed unit like a state but a dynamic, loose and situational formation. Membership in a confederation is also situational, as it is the case for tribes. A tribe may join a certain confederacy under given conditions, moving in and out of this confederacy according to circumstances. Modernity was to be an attempt to replace these loose formations and memberships with fixed formations like the state and fixed memberships like citizenship.

2.3. Tribal Rivalries among Pashtuns: the Durrani vs. the Ghilzai

In tribal societies, the main question is: 'Who is the rival?' This question is to count always more than the question: 'Who is the foreign outsider?' to be asked in later periods. In other words, internal strife among tribes or clans is always the main issue, for it has a direct impact upon the lives of the tribesmen. Especially in a segmentary model like that of the Pashtuns, rivalry was part of the tribal system.

Among the four Pashtun tribes, the main struggle for power was between the Abdali or the Durrani and the Ghilzai while the other two groups were only minor players within this rivalry, taking the side of either one or the other. It might be due to the fact that the Durrani and, to a limited extent, the Ghilzai were more on the foreground as they were the ruler-breeding tribes. On the other hand, frontier tribes with 'purer' egalitarian features failed to form a unified power to stand up as a rival of the Durrani or the Ghilzai.

Both the Durrani and the Ghilzai were Sunni Afghan tribes living in the border areas of the Shiite Safavid Empire. As they had this link to the Safavids, the leaders of the "Abdali and Ghilzai clans had an advantage over other Pashtuns: an access to sources of revenue, and the political backing needed to rise above the petty disputes

among rival tribes" (Barfield, 2010: 94). In time, they became the governors of major cities like Kandahar and Herat, set to gain experience in administration.

It was first the Ghilzai to rise into power as the Safavid and Mughal Empires went into decline in the 1700s. The Ghilzai were militarily dominant in the Safavid Empire while retaining strong economic ties with the Mughal Empire. It was in 1709 when Mirwais Hotaki, the chief of the Ghilzai, mobilised his men to end the domination of Afghanistan by the Shiite Safavids, taking Kandahar under his control and forming the Hotaki dynasty which lasted until 1738. The Ghilzai even captured the Safavid capital Isfahan in 1722 and killed the ruling family; yet they were unable to consolidate their rule and remain in power for long. The several reasons given for it are; (1) that they were still inexperienced to govern such a complex state like that of the Safavids (Barfield, 2010: 96); (2) that they were the Sunni rulers of a Shiite country; (3) that they were already divided among themselves by rivalries due to their egalitarian structure; and, most importantly, (4) that they didn't have a goal of uniting all Pashtuns as the modern concept of 'nation' had not yet arrived in the Hotaki Empire. The Ghilzai were to have the encounter with modernity later in the Socialist era of the 1970s. Things would be different for the Durrani, though, as they would encounter modernity through British meddling in Afghan affairs.

Having removed the Ghilzai dynasty, Nadir Shah of the Afsharid dynasty in Persia turned to the Abdali (Durrani) Pashtuns and established good relations with them, treating Ahmad Khan Abdali as his most trusted general and his personal bodyguard. Furthermore, the historical conjuncture was more convenient for the Durrani to rise into power. Both Persia and India were in turmoil when Nadir Shah was assassinated in 1747. This power vacuum was soon to be filled by Ahmad Khan who also had the financial resources to establish his own reign. Upon Nadir Shah's assassination, he retreated to Kandahar, carrying with him a large part of the imperial treasury. Last but not the least; he was supported by the Qizilbash, Shiite Turkmen group left in Kabul by Nadir Shah. As a result of all these, Ahmad Khan of the Sadozai family within the Popalzai clan of the Abdali tribe, united Pashtun tribes in Kandahar in 1747. Referring to his title 'Durr-i Durran,' the pearl of pearls, he changed the name of his tribe from Abdali to Durrani. Having founded the Durrani Empire in most of what is today Afghanistan, Pakistan, Kashmir, Indian Punjab, and

Khorasan province of Iran, Ahmad Shah Baba, as he is also called, is known as the father of modern Afghanistan.

All in all, the Durrani Empire was established with the help of financial resources, governmental experience, support from non-Pashtun groups and the eventual submission of non-Durrani groups. In contrast to the Khaldunian model, it was built by an urban military tribal elite and not by the frontier tribes which stood against the authority of any power and which, anyway, failed to unite for long periods. In Barfield's (2010: 97) words, "it was no accident that [the Durrani], and not the unruly Pashtuns in the tribal hinterlands of the Mughal frontier, created the first Pashtun-ruled empire."

Under the Durrani dynasty, the Ghilzai were gradually disempowered. Now seen as 'the royal tribe' under Persian influences, the Durrani reduced the Ghilzai to a subordinate status by excluding them from elite politics and expelling them from Kandahar, their urban base. On the other hand, the Ghilzai never accepted that the Durrani were superior to them, as an Afghan saying shows: "He who would rule at Kabul must make peace with the Ghilzai and make it to a great extent on their terms" (Poullada, 1973: 197). Apart from the fact that they were to achieve power finally in the Socialist era with the ideology of populism in contrast to Durrani elitism, what occurred between the Durrani and the Ghilzai was a perfect example of tribal fragmentation (the Durrani and the non-Durrani) which may go on and on in egalitarian tribes.

2.4. Pashtun Tribal Government

2.4.1. Khans and *Dastakhans*

The Pashto word for 'tribe' is *qawm*, originally an Arabic word, while that of 'tribal confederation' is *ulus*, or *oolooss* as cited by Elphinstone (1815), which originally comes from Mongolian, equally meaning 'confederation of tribes.' Leader of the tribe is called *khan* while that of the confederation is called either 'Shah' with Persian influences (especially under the Sadozai dynasty in 1747-1826) or 'Amir' with Islamic influences (especially under the Muhammadzai dynasty in 1826-1919).

Tribal system depends on constantly plundering neighbours and sharing the booty. The khan or the Shah/Amir first needs to gather followers for plunder and then has to distribute what is gained, for the tribal system is originally a system of *distribution*; not a system of *production*. Therefore, tribal leadership emerges at the point of attacking for plunder and then distributing the booty. Thus, it is something pragmatic and not ideological. That is why it is difficult to maintain a leadership position especially in egalitarian tribes where 'the leader of the plunder' or 'the owner of the booty' might easily change according to circumstances. The khan does not have the ability to command, but the ability to persuade. In persuading his potential followers to join him, he should have charismatic power as well as wealth. As R. Tapper (1983: 56) says, "khans are self-made men who achieve their position through personality, not age or genealogical position, though these may help." Generosity and hospitality are the fundamental elements of this personality. A khan builds political power through these elements, investing in his relationship with his fellow tribesmen through gift-giving and feasts, so that his fame rises. A Pashtun saying goes: "There is no khan without *dastakhan*" (Roy, 1990: 23), meaning there is no khan without a tablecloth, which refers to keeping an open table. This saying provides a perfect analogy to King Arthur's Round Table where 1.600 knights could sit at the same time and feast so that jealousy was eliminated and Arthur remained invincible (Mauss, 1967: 64). Such shows of generosity, however, are not unrewarded, for a 'gift' actually represents an obligation to repay, almost like a credit and "the gift not repaid debases the man who accepted it" (Mauss, 1967: 63). The return of the gift-taker is military support to the khan or to the Shah/Amir. This continuous flow of give-and-take also contributes to the tribal *asabiyya*:

> The importance of these gifts arises from the extraordinary competition which exists among members of an expedition. They seek out the best possible partner in the other tribe. For the cause is a great one; the association made establishes a kind of clan link between partners. To get your man you have to seduce him and dazzle him. While paying proper regard to rank, you must get in before the others and make exchanges of the most valuable things – naturally the property of the richest man. The underlying motives are competition, rivalry, show and a desire for greatness and wealth. (Mauss, 1967: 26)

Among Afghan rulers, Ahmad Shah was known for his generosity towards his troops. This, however, doesn't necessarily have to be something related to his personality, but to the fact that he frequently went to expeditions in Mughal lands so

that he could provide his tribesmen with continuous booty. And in return, he accumulated military strength. Ahmad Shah's reign was the peak of this plundering model as the Mughal Empire was soon to be taken over by the British which made plundering impossible. Thus, the source of tribal revenue slowly soured, paralysing the tribal system and requiring the institutionalisation of state power. It was at this point that Ahmad Shah's son Timur Shah moved the capital from Kandahar to Kabul to keep the state away from the influence of tribes. He utilised Qizilbash troops, an outside element, as his guards in contrast to Pashtuns, not trusting his own tribesmen who, deprived of any shows of generosity, now became a threat. This is perfectly in line with the Khaldunian idea that the 2nd generation ruler, Timur Shah in this case, makes new friends with outsiders while his own people, Pashtuns in this case, become his enemies. In order to "prevent them from seizing power, and in order to keep them away from participation in it, the ruler needs other friends, not of his own skin, whom he can use against (them) and who will be his friends in their place" (Ibn Khaldun, 1989: 146-147).

2.4.2. Pashtun Tribal Assembly: the *Jirga*

Pashtun khans are assisted in government by a tribal council called *jirga*, literally meaning 'circle,' which can be convened at any level of tribal organization to reach a consensus on matters of common concern. The principal assembly is called the *Loya Jirga* which is to be used as a legitimising body by the Afghan ruler in later years. A *jirga* is comprised of all the adult male members of a tribe or the heads of the tribes' subdivisions, depending on the situation. Every subdivision acts among itself, as claimed by Elphinstone as far back as 1815 (162):

> In cases of little consequence, or on emergency, the Khaun acts without consulting the Jeerga, who on similar occasions give their opinion without consulting the Jeergas below them; but in matters of importance, when circumstances will admit, the sentiments of the whole tribe are ascertained before any thing is decided.

The *jirga* also acts as a court whose decisions are based on a combination of the Islamic *sharia* and the *Pashtunwali*, the Pashtun code of honour. Civil disputes are usually settled by elders or *mullahs*, not necessitating the assembly of a *jirga*,

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while more serious ones are tried before the khan. All criminal trials, for instance, are "conducted before the Jeerga which is composed of Khauns, Mulliks, or elders, assisted by Moollahs, and even by grave and experienced persons of inferior rank to those" (Elphinstone, 1815: 167). We can see how experience and age is respected no matter what the social status is. The elders actually form another category of leadership. 'The old man' and 'the grey-beard' are the names of respected spokesmen for small groups who "do not bring unity to a group, [but] emerge from unity" (R. Tapper, 1983: 57).

The military institution of the *jirga* is the tribal *lashkar*, literally meaning the armed tribe, whereby tribesmen are called to fight and each family contributes manpower and weapons. "As Gellner says of tribal peoples generally, a tribal army is not a differentiated body but simply the society in arms" (Rubin, 2002: 42).

The *jirga* also operates as a platform for performing the tribal code *Pashtunwali*. It is "a forum where important Pathan virtues, such as courage, judgement, dependability, and morality can be acted out" (Barth, 1981: 108) and one's Pashtunness can be tested. Pashtun respect for equality is visible even in the physical organisation of a *jirga* where "men sat in a circle to avoid even symbolic hierarchy" (Barfield, 2010: 79) just like King Arthur's *Round* Table where everyone feasted. In such a climate, it was difficult for a khan to take decisions on his own or carry out separate negotiations. Rather, decisions were taken together and the khan acted as a consensus-builder, using his ability of persuasion.

2.5. Pashtun Tribal Code: the *Pashtunwali*

Pashtuns define themselves by an ideal code of conduct called the *Pashtunwali*, which literally means 'doing Pashtun.' The assertion of Pashtun identity through the Pashto language and Pashtun genealogy is a fundamental part of the *Pashtunwali*. Elphinstone (1815: 251) claims that Pashtun tribes "...all take a lively interest in the Nung du Pooshtauneh, or honour of the Afghaun name; and they are extremely attached to the country that gave them birth." The Durrani, for instance, "have a sort of reverence for Candahar, which they say contains the tombs of their ancestors" (Elphinstone, 1815: 420). The issue of ancestors is an important one for Pashtuns who "will hardly acknowledge a man for an Afghaun, who cannot make his proofs

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by going back six or seven generations" (Elphinstone, 1815: 251), as it determines the relation of responsibility in cases of conflict. This is an indicator that one's knowledge of his ancestors is part of his Pashtunness. Similarly, speaking in Pashto is a significant indicator of Pashtunnes; yet, it does not suffice, as goes the Pashtun saying: "He is Pathan who does Pashto, not (merely) who speaks Pashto" (Barth, 1981: 105).

Embedded in Pashtun custom and law, the *Pashtunwali* is basically a code of honour and shame. A man's honour, *izzat* or *nang*, and reputation lie at the centre of the *Pashtunwali*. Honour can be achieved, in the first place, through military prestige, fighting ability, courage and attendance to war. This is actually an advantage in military terms which obliges Pashtun tribesmen to obey the khan's call to fighting, as they "would rather die than shame themselves in front of their kin by running away. Life would not be worth living afterward if they did" (Barfield, 2010: 59). Participation in warfare is also a compensation for the khan's generosity and hospitality, or *melmastia*, which forms another principle of the *Pashtunwali*. "To refuse to give, or to fail to invite, is – like refusing to accept – the equivalent of a declaration of war; it is a refusal of friendship and intercourse" (Mauss, 1967: 11). It can be seen how close concepts festival and warfare are.

A man's honour is also equated with the chastity of women that are under his roof. The concept of the *purdah*, meaning the privacy of domestic life, is another important institution in Pashtun daily life. The realisation of honour involves the maintenance of "the autonomy and integrity of the household (*korunei*) through the ability to protect (and control) the women, the house and the land belonging to it, three categories that are united in the same concept of honour – *namus*" (Christensen, 1988: 8). If a man believes that his honour is wronged, he resorts to the institution of *badal*, meaning retribution, which is another principle related to honour. The *Pashtunwali* accepts that it is every man's right and duty to do himself justice. It is not very prevalent among the Durrani or in the cities, as the *Pashtunwali* is believed to exist in its purer form in frontier areas where 'real Pashtun tribes' live. Still, as Elphinstone says back in 1815 (166), "it has taken root in the habits of the Afghaun nation" no matter how the *mullahs* preach against it and the state bans it. A Pashto saying denotes that "all conflicts revolve around *zar*, *zan*, and *zamin*, i.e., loot, love,

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and land" (Poullada, 1973: 23). Put another way, Pashtun men fight over booty, women and land, seeing them as valuable property.

The notion of honour and equality are very close in the *Pashtunwali* which accepts that all Pashtuns are honoured and equal because they are of common descent. Thus, equality is another dominant feature within the *Pashtunwali*. In egalitarian tribes, there is a possibility for every man and every group to become a leader. It should still be noted that within the Pashtun tribal confederation, the Durrani, borrowing from the hierarchical features of the Turko-Mongolian tribal model, acted like a primary community with a few Ghilzai takeovers. Yet, within the Durrani tribe, different dynasties were established by different clans, as will be seen. Both ways, it was difficult for a khan to consolidate his power. Even if he did, it would be difficult to maintain it further in the presence of jealous rivals who may probably be cousins, as the Pashto word for cousin rivalry, the *tarburwali*, indicates. What is meant by cousin here, however, need not denote blood relations as kinship bonds may be constructed. The *tarburwali* in general denotes the usual tribal situation of 'structural opposition' whereby first cousins fight each other, then they join in fighting the distant relatives of the other family and then they join to fight that of the other clan and so on. Such rivalries have been a factor not only causing internal division but also inviting external manipulation. The first external intrusion into Afghan affairs, to be discussed below, was due to the rivalry between two Durrani families for the Afghan throne: the Sadozai and the Muhammadzai, which not only weakened the Empire but also contributed to the consolidation of the British in the region.

2.6. Religion among Pashtuns

According to Pashtun belief, Qays, the common ancestor, converted to Islam in Arabia in the lifetime of the Prophet. As seen above, Pashtun genealogy takes the conversion to Islam as its starting point, ignoring the period before that, just like a 'selective amnesia'. Actually, many resources including Gregorian (1969: 27), claim that Pashtuns were originally of Jewish origins; that they were one of the lost tribes of the *Ben-i Israel*. Yet, Pashtuns themselves ignore their whole history before Qays, believing in the purity of the descent of their religion, thinking that they "have no

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infidel past, nor do they carry in their history the blemish of defeat and forcible conversion" (Barth, 1981: 105), almost like a 'chosen people.' As they were not colonised like their southern neighbours in India or northern neighbours in Central Asia, they did not have to go through conversion. They lived under the Shiite Safavid rule for a while, but finally they, as Sunni Muslims, formed their own Sunni empire.

Even if Pashtuns believe themselves to be Muslims starting from their ancestor, they never forfeited their tribal code. Islam and the *Pashtunwali* existed side by side from the very beginning of Pashtun genealogy. Christensen (1988: 5) refers to a Pashtun saying that goes: "Pashtun half use the Koran, half *pakhtunwali*." The *Pashtunwali* was such a strong institution that it was never totally subdued by Islam. Instead, Islam became a fundamental part of the tribal identity of Pashtuns. "Pashtun society was thus fundamentally Muslim, although not necessarily Islamic" (Hopkins, 2008: 99).

The *sharia* has, at times, been in conflict with the *Pashtunwali*, especially in matters of honour, *izzat*, and retribution, *badal*. Especially among the tribal Pashtuns,

> in order not to give the impression of being weak, redress is preferable when it is in accordance with *Pashtunwali* rather than Islam. Asking for justice under Islamic injunctions would indicate a man's weakness and thus leave him wide-open to further encroachments by his rivals. (Misdaq, 2006: 276)

Thus, the continuity of feuds in Afghanistan is not due to Islam, as it is usually assumed, but to tribal traditions. Another issue where Islam and the *Pashtunwali* are in conflict is related to women. The usual points of conflict are as follows: absence of inheritance rights for women, expenditure in marriages and dowry (which was seen by fathers as a compensation for the loss of labour in household and not as a social insurance in the event of divorce or widowhood), widows marrying the husband's next of kin, child marriage and no right of divorce to women. These are some of the areas where following the *sharia* would be a more reasonable choice than the *Pashtunwali* as the first offers a more universal approach while the latter remains more restrictive. As Roy (1990: 36) expresses, a Pashtun "defines himself in opposition to everything which is not Pashtun. The *shari'at*, on the other hand, attempts to transcend specific groups such as tribes, *qawm* and other *asabiyya* in the universality of the *umma*." Such universality, however, is in total conflict with parochial tribalism and a threat to the tribal identity.

Another point is that the *Pashtunwali* is a positive and secular system in structure, keeping priests "outside the tribal system, either below it, or above it" (Roy, 1990: 35). Holy personalities such as *sayyeds* and *pirs* are above the system while the village *mullah* is below it, as he has not much learning. These positions pass down to next generations and this is how they stay within the same group, outside the *Pashtunwali*. In some cases, the *mullahs* attend the *jirga* but only as counsellors who are not allowed to intervene too much into the affairs of the *jirga*. The *pir*, on the other hand, is a spiritual master usually in a Sufi order, whose tomb becomes a place of pilgrimage or *ziyarat*. *Pirs* are believed to have *barakat* or a form of holy blessing, along with *sayyeds* who are believed to be the descendants of the Prophet. *Sayyeds* are also kept outside the tribal system even when they are of Pashtun origins. "Even if his mother-tongue is Pashtu, he will not be thought of as a Pashtun: his *qawm* is *sayyad*, that is to say 'Arab'" (Roy, 1990: 38). A final point to be made about these men of religion is that Pashtuns are suspicious of formalised priesthood. Hart (2011: 177-78) refers to a Pashtun joke about a *pir* who complained of not having a shrine and who was killed on the spot by the tribesmen to build up a shrine over his remains. Such an external position allotted to the men of religion makes them natural mediators in factional rivalries among tribal groups. This is also in line with the Khaldunian model which assumes that only those outside the tribal system can take mediation or leadership into their hands (Rubin, 2002: 11). As the concept of leadership is absent among egalitarian tribes, a call made by a religious leader can be considered more valuable in gathering people around a purpose, even though for a limited period. The fact that the majority of Pashtuns were illiterate also played its part. Despite living in between Islamic centres, such as Bukhara and India, Pashtuns remained secluded from the world. Due to their illiteracy and ignorance, their perception of Islam was in the hands of others:

> The main reason for the influence of the mullas in Afghanistan was that the common Muslims were ignorant of the religion they professed, and because of this influence Afghan rulers made full use of the mullas when Afghanistan was threatened by a danger. In such times the mullas felt it to be their duty to raise the cry that Islam was in danger. (K. Kakar, 1979: 153)

On the whole, it can be said that Pashtuns made light of formalised religion while they had a deep faith that existed beside their tribal code. It was only in times

of crisis that religion played its part in giving a common cause to the dispersed Pashtun tribes.

2.7. Pashtun Tribal Economy

Afghanistan has a different geography compared to many other countries where mountains usually play a role in forming the borders. In Afghanistan, mountains are located just in the middle of the country while the surrounding areas are mostly plateaus, which greatly results from the imposition of the Durand Line in 1893. Consequently, those living in the mountainous centre, mainly Pashtuns, were basically highlanders while those living in the periphery, such as the Tajik, were urbanised populations. Among Pashtuns, the majority was settled, either in cities or in the mountains, doing unirrigated subsistence farming due to poor land conditions. Nomads, on the other hand, constituted a majority especially within the Ghilzai, who were called either *kuchi* or *powinda*. As "[the] genealogical clan system [was] a pattern of settled people and was developed among peasants, not nomads" (Glatzer, 1983: 220), this thesis will be focusing on the settled Pashtun tribes whose perpetual tribalism is rooted in Afghanistan's agrarian economy:

> Each Afghan tribe is trapped in a valley with geographical walls and is the natural prisoner of a culture stemming from a mountainous environment and farming economy. Cultural tribalism is the product of farming conditions rooted in the deep valleys of Afghanistan. Belief in tribalism is as deep as those valleys. (Makhmalbaf, 2001: 35-36)

Land was the most important asset in Pashtun tribal world, "the *sine qua non* of Pakhtuns" (Barth, 1981: 64). Owning a piece of land was a way of settling down, having a circle of acquaintances and eventually acquiring power. "Within the tribal ethos of Pashtun society, land ownership has traditionally been the precondition enabling a man to act in the local political arena" (Olesen, 1994: 47) and have a voice in the *jirgas*. That was why "except for questions concerning the honour of women, and revenge, all conflicts among Pathans boil down to conflicts over land" (Barth, 1981: 64).

Other than land ownership, traditional occupations of Pashtuns were "the imposition of tolls on travellers, cattle raiding, the capture of merchants for ransom

and other activities of a predatory nature" (Ewans, 2002: 76) as the British entered their region in the 1830s. These activities could all be considered as an extension of the plundering model. Tribes close to the Khyber Pass made money out of passage tolls while others raided cattle or trade caravans, offering not much security in the region. Trade, as an economic activity, was continually inhibited both by the tribes and by the state which taxed the merchants who were supposed to be the saviours of the economy. As Hopkins (2008: 120) claims, "Afghan rulers resorted to the self-defeating practice of seizing merchants and extorting money, as well as plundering caravans when under financial pressure," thereby continuing with the tribal practices.

2.8. Empire and Tribe

2.8.1. Persian Influences

The Durrani Empire was established by a Pashtun general, Ahmad Khan, of the Safavid army who, seeing a vacuum of power, broke away to form his own confederacy by uniting Pashtun tribes under his authority. In other words, Ahmad Shah, although a Pashtun, was sort of an outsider to the tribal system; a Persianised general. He brought with him the treasury of the Safavid Empire as well as Persian customs, language and bureaucracy. Considering the Durrani experience within both the military and administration of the Safavid Empire, it is argued that the Durrani owe to the Turko-Mongolian heritage as much as they owe to their own tribal legacy. Ahmad Shah *Baba* is like the common ancestor of this 'royal' or 'Persianised Pashtun tribe,' even lending his name, Durrani, to it. Barth (1981: 115) defines this situation as a loss of tribal identity for the Durrani Pashtuns as

> the elite and urban middle class in this purely Afghan kingdom have shown a strong tendency to Persianization in speech and culture, representing – I would argue – a sophisticate's escape from the impossibility of successfully consummating a Pathan identity under these circumstances.

The Durrani had no choice but be Persianised, as their originally egalitarian tribal system was not in line with the logic of a central authority. "Because of the tribesmen's antipathy towards central state control, Afghan monarchs were forced to look to other communities to provide the personnel for a nascent state bureaucracy"

(Hopkins, 2008: 89) such as the Qizilbash. To create an empire out of an egalitarian tribe, one needs to depend on foreign forces above the tribal system. No matter how these Persianophone officials were disliked by Pashtun tribesmen as Persian-speaking Shiites, Persian influences were deeply built into the roots of the Durrani Empire. The Afghan ruler himself assumed the title Shah while Persian was regarded as a royal language and Pashto was rejected as a symbol of rural tribal traditions. All in all, Persianisation was something disliked by Pashtun tribes both at the top and among common people, just as it was the case with the *Farsiwan* people.

2.8.2. The *Qalang* and the *Nang* Tribes

Under the Sadozai dynasty which ruled between 1747 and 1826, the relationship between the empire and Pashtun tribes was, especially at the beginning, complementary. The Shah depended on his tribesmen for military support, and, in return, tribes attended to his calls to war as long as he left them alone in their internal affairs. But this system could survive as long as the plundering model existed; i.e. until the fall of the Mughal Empire and the consolidation of British power in India following the defeat of the Sikh Empire in 1849. After that, the system of *revenue distribution* turned upside down as a system of *revenue collection*, i.e. taxation, which could only operate under a strong state. That is how the Durrani Empire evolved from a tribal confederacy into a state tending towards centralisation and institutionalisation. Moving away from the system of tribal alliances and trying to institute itself as the only power-holder through taxation, the Empire attempted to define, fixate and control those over which it was supposed to reign, i.e. diffuse tribes. Yet, especially in the case of Pashtuns, there have been tribes that allowed such state controlling as well as tribes that never allowed it. Consequently, the structure of the Durrani Empire resembled to a triangle where the Shah/Amir and the Durrani tribal elite acted as the power-holder at the top with two different types of tribes at the other two ends of the triangle defined respectively as the *qalang*, taxation, and the *nang*, honour, by Ahmed (1980: 154).

To start with the first group, the imperial need to first define and then control worked better on the Durrani and the Ghilzai tribes living closer to imperial centres. In time, these tribes, coming under the influence of the centralist state, underwent a

structural transformation and tended towards detribalisation. Most importantly, they were taxed by the state; that is why Ahmed (1980) calls them the *qalang* tribes. Here, "the proximity to the centralized authority [was] so great that it [became] very difficult for people of any importance to assert and exhibit the autonomy and independence that their identity and position [demanded]" (Barth, 1981: 115). Although internal affairs of the tribe were still conducted by the khan, the khan himself was usually selected by the Shah/Amir who could appoint one of his relations, as well. To the cities in these areas were appointed military governors called *sardars*, an adoption from the Safavid Empire, who collected taxes from the city in the name of the state. In this way, a duplicity in government came up under the Sadozai dynasty (1747-1826): khans of tribes and *sardars* of cities. Khan represented the tribe while *sardar* represented the state. *Sardar* was an outsider, so was the state. *Sardar* was someone appointed by the state; that is why, differing from the khan, he had the ability to command. Especially the *sardar* of Kandahar was in a critical position as he was the representative of the Shah/Amir when he was absent, acting like a vizier. *Sardar* was originally a military title bestowed on individuals who distinguished themselves in wars (K. Kakar, 1979: 23); yet, under the Sadozai dynasty, even heads of the Durrani clans came to be called *sardars*. This shows that an external military hierarchy was introduced to the egalitarian tribal structure. This transformation was to continue more under the Muhammadzai dynasty which was to reign between 1826 and 1929, where Dost Muhammad Khan would strengthen the position of *sardars*, appointing them from among his sons and grandsons. This would, in return, strengthen provincial governments being administered according to the wishes of *sardars* who "considered the provinces their own possessions and acted as 'lesser kings'" (K. Kakar, 1979: 48), even causing civil wars. Rather than playing their traditional role of "leading the Afghans against the invading foes, these sardars actually looked to the British for allowances and official posts. Some even acted in collusion with the British in the hope of becoming amirs" (K. Kakar, 1979: 24). Some *sardars* were so close to the British that during the Second Anglo-Afghan War, they were called the "Cavagnarizai" (notice the Pashto suffix *-zai*) after Louis Cavagnari, the British resident in Kabul (K. Kakar, 1979: 24).

The main difference between the *qalang* and the *nang* rests in whether the tribe was taxed by the state or not. The ruler being Pashtun, the basic burden of taxation

was actually laid on non-Pashtun populations. "The majority of Afghan tribes did not have to pay taxes, or if they did have to pay them the taxes were low, sometimes they were only purely symbolic" (Khazanov, 1994: 273). Yet, for Pashtuns, even a symbolic amount of taxation was a sign of submission to another authority and inability to rule. They felt humiliated by taxation, as they saw themselves fit to govern their internal affairs. For them, "those tribes who submit to authority and taxation thereby join the townsmen and belong to the number of those unfit to rule. Only those who refuse to be governed are themselves fit to rule" (Gellner, 1994: 28). Behind this tribal rejection to be ruled is the following logic: "He who allows order to be maintained for him by a ruler may not truly claim to be part of a 'house'. A real house looks after its own defence" (Gellner, 1984: 27). A real house or a real tribe is one that looks after itself, not needing an 'outsider' state to control it. It is important to note here that the tribe sees the centralist state not as a part of itself but as an outsider. And taxation is the major issue the tribes have with this outsider state. Tribes that submit to the state's authority and pay taxes are called the *qalang*, meaning taxation in Pashto, while those that refuse to be controlled or taxed by the state in defiance of their honour are called the *nang*, meaning honour in Pashto.

Most of the *nang* tribes were those located in the frontier zones of Afghanistan near today's Pakistan, or earlier, the British India. These frontier tribes have always been resistant to outside control whether coming from the Mughals, the British or the Durrani. Prior to the Durrani Empire, Pashtun tribes on the borders with the Mughal and Safavid Empires continuously rejected all attempts at control from both sides. They could flee from one side to the other according to circumstances, playing off the two sides against each other. This situation continued in the same way throughout the Durrani era although the power-exerting forces had become the Durrani and the British. As said above, Durrani rulers most of the time recognised the frontier tribes' autonomy. "As they controlled the trade routes linking Kabul with Qandahar and Peshawar, their goodwill was an essential ingredient for the ability of the Durrani kings" (Noelle, 1997: 123). The most important point on this trade route was, certainly, the Khyber Pass which was controlled by the Afridi and Shinwari Pashtuns who demanded subsidies for passage through the Pass. There are even legends about Alexander the Great refusing to pay the passage toll to the Afridi and Mahmoud Ghazni accepting to pay it (Hart, 2011: 152). In other words, passage tolls provided

an important source of income for frontier Pashtuns living in the rugged mountains, who had found a way of making money out of their position there.

The main reason behind the British interest in the frontier tribes was to create a buffer zone before their colony in India and to keep the trade routes open between India and the North. Yet, these tribes "who had not accepted even fellow-Pashtuns as rulers, had no intention of recognising the hegemony of outsiders" (R. Tapper, 1983: 60). Thus, the relationship between them and the British was a harsh one starting from the 1830s, whereby the British took hostages among them, imposed taxes and gave punishments. This only served to "sharpen tribal resentment of them and their representatives, so that any Afghan ruler who openly had British support forfeited that of the tribes" (R. Tapper, 1983: 33). In later years, the British, obsessed with strengthening their power in India, refused to recognise the authority of the Afghan Shah on frontier tribes. They bribed the frontier tribes and used them as a buffer during the Indian Mutiny of 1857. Dealing with the Durrani Empire and frontier tribes separately, the British actually undermined the consolidation of the Afghan state in its early formation. This attitude was to be sharpened more as they fixed the borders of Afghanistan together with the Russians. The frontier called the Durand Line, to be discussed in the following chapter, divided the Pashtun population in half between Afghan and Indian, present-day Pakistan, territories. Yet, even this forced division did not mean that the Pashtun tribes were finally subdued, as they still continue to "cross the frontier between Afghanistan and Pakistan without papers, openly carry guns, and refuse to recognize the Durand Line as a border" (Barfield, 2010: 54).

Yapp (1983: 54) calls such tribes the 'jellyfish tribes' which avoid engagement "by refusing to recognise any leader, indigenous or imposed, and by maintaining a diffused form of organisation...[which is] Gellner's 'divide that ye be not ruled.'" They have different strategies other than their military ability in fighting. They either diffuse their tribal formation and scatter around or flee. For these tribes, mobility is the major form of defence, providing both revenue and protection. "They would move themselves, their tents, and their livestock away from any invading army, retreating endlessly until their pursuers exhausted themselves and had to return home" (Barfield, 2010: 68).

The British were constantly after trying to find a way to control these tribes. As "to destroy a tribe a state must first create it...[or] to destroy a segmentary lineage system a state must first convert it into a chiefly polity" (Yapp, 1983: 186), the British attempted to make these diffuse formations into tribes. They transformed the fluid leadership status of *maliks* (khans of frontier tribes) into fixed ones as Marten (2009: 166) points out:

> The British made this *malik* status official and hereditary, based on primogeniture – something which undercut the tribal norm of equality of all honorable Pashtun men ... The British effectively undercut a centuries-old cultural norm by creating new warlords, individuals who could use patronage from outside sources to maintain and control militias.

Thus, the people between the state and the *nang* tribe were not khans but *maliks*, just like *sardars* in the *qalang* tribes. "They represented the state to the community and the community to the state" (Roy, 1990: 19), in the meanwhile strengthening their own personal position. In this way, jellyfish tribes were also transformed structurally, like the urban Durrani tribes that lived close to the central state. Yet, the *nang* tribes, standing in contrast to the overwhelming state, were still diffuse, rejecting any kind of imposition on their tribal system. That is why they are believed to be purer tribes compared to the *qalang*, and anthropologists today mostly prefer working on them, rather than the legacy of tribalism within the modern state.

As a final point, it can be said that the Pashtun confederation, even the Durrani tribe under it, offers a perfect combination of both the *qalang* and the *nang* whereby the Sadozai and the Muhammadzai families provided the rulers while the Yusufzai (also under the Durrani) and other Pathan tribes continuously rejected those rulers.

2.9. Conclusion

This chapter has shown the outlines of Pashtun tribalism in terms of genealogy, rivalries, government, code of conduct, religion as well as the tribes' relationship with the empire and external forces. It has been argued that the Durrani Empire under the Sadozai dynasty, especially the early reign of Ahmad Shah, represented the perfect form of a tribal confederation whereby the relationship between the tribes and the state was complementary. Yet, this system started to dissolve with the gradual

removal of the plundering model as the Mughal Empire in India collapsed and the British took the reins of power in the region. What the Sadozai dynasty basically did in this period was to differentiate themselves from the rest of the Pashtun tribes as an imperial state that was to operate on a new basis of legitimacy other than tribal power, which was Persian Royalism. It was also in this process that the state, starting from the final years of the Sadozai dynasty, tended more and more towards centralisation and institutionalisation so that it could tax the tribes. As unification, let alone a central state, was contrary to the logic of a tribe, any kind of state formation in Afghanistan would face tribalism as a bar before it. In this regard, this chapter has shown the beginning of the binary opposition between the tribe and the state, in which the tribe maintained its power by articulating into Royalism in several ways as to be shown in the following points.

Although rulership in the Durrani Empire was hereditary, Afghan rulers did not merely assume the throne as a matter of right. Just like in tribal systems, upon gaining power, they worked to win the consent of tribes through their power of persuasion in order to legitimise their rule. It was a consequence of the egalitarian tribalism where Pashtun tribes did not readily accept rulers even though their power was hereditary.

Under the Sadozai dynasty (1747-1826), the Shah was still a member of the *jirga* and he was advised by a *majlis* made up of elders. Furthermore, he was "confirmed in [his] possession of lands and the main offices of state were distributed among the different tribes" (R. Tapper, 1983: 13) just like booty was distributed among tribes. In other words, kinship and tribal links were still accepted as bases for being appointed to state offices, which can be taken as a kind of early nepotism.

Typical of egalitarian societies, Afghan dynastic disputes particularly under the Sadozai dynasty occurred where the death of a ruler was almost always accompanied by civil war which "ended only when a challenger proved himself supreme by blinding, jailing, exiling, or killing his rivals" (Barfield, 2010: 180). This was due to the absence of a stable system of succession. Although it was a hereditary system within a ruling family, the Sadozai in this case, it was not based on primogeniture. It was only "customary for younger sons to defer to older ones or to the oldest living brother of the dead chief" (Poullada, 1973: 11). As an extension of the *tarburwali* in

Pashtun tribal system, there was something called the *padshahgardi*, meaning political fights at the top.

Another point to be made is about the Pashtun tribal elite which gradually evolved into a ruling elite based in the city of Kabul as the modern state came into being. This has not been a sharp break in the society, though, as Pashtuns still continue to

> predominate at both the bottom and the top of the social hierarchy ... because the tribal Pushtun considers himself the inferior of no one and speaks to members of the elite on quite equal terms. It is more nearly correct, then, to view Afghan social stratification as a full cycle rather than as a pyramid. (Poullada, 1973: 19)

In other words, Afghan social stratification was derived from the egalitarian tribal structure of Pashtuns that survived even under hierarchical influences.

A final point is related to the efforts of the tribe for inserting itself into state institutions, as Roy (1990: 24) argues:

> This operation [was] intended not only to produce material benefits (posts for the young, sinecures, exemption from the payment of taxes and from conscription), but especially to ensure that the local power game [carried] on as it [had] always done, and that the traditional rules of the game of politics [would] determine the way in which the state [functioned].

That is to say, the tribe, although rejecting state authority, deliberately sneaked into the state in order to stay in the game. This was the tribe's way of controlling the state, which was to reach new extents in the following periods.

CHAPTER 3

THE ENCOUNTER OF PASHTUN TRIBALISM WITH NATIONALISM

This chapter will be an attempt to understand the first encounter of Pashtun tribalism with modernity as the Afghan state evolved into a modern nation-state with its 'nation' designated as the Pashtun tribal confederation, under what was first the Emirate of Afghanistan (1823-1926) and then the Kingdom of Afghanistan (1926-1973). Tracing the journey of Afghan Nationalism, or rather Pashtun Nationalism, in this regard, this chapter will try to reveal whether it could overcome tribalism in Afghanistan and whether it had the power of an ideology or was just a tool. On the whole, the main goal will be to view the articulation of Pashtun tribalism into the Afghan reformist state that made use of the ideology of Nationalism in this period.

3.1. First Muhammadzai Encounters with Modernity (1826-1880)

As seen in the Introduction, the Sadozai dynasty (1747-1826) represented the perfect form of a tribal confederacy that survived on plunder. Ahmad Shah's reign (1747-1772) was the peak of this dynasty, followed by Timur, Zaman, Mahmud and Shuja Shahs under whom the Empire gradually shrank with the decline of plunder. This weakness reached its climax when Peshawar, the Pashtun core-land, was captured by the Sikh Empire in 1818, causing a struggle between two Durrani families for power: the Sadozai/Popalzai and the Muhammadzai/Barakzai. Until then, the Sadozai rulers had all depended on Sadozai Royalism and exclusivity to the Afghan throne. The Muhammadzai, on the other hand, had served in the Sadozai court, especially as *sardars*, and gained experience in administration. As they emerged victorious, "for a period of eight years after 1818, the Sadozai were put on the throne but in name alone. All decisions concerning the running of the state were

in the hands of the Muhammadzai" (Misdaq, 2006: 54). In other words, the Muhammadzai could not openly take over the throne due to Sadozai exclusivity.

In need of another base of legitimacy, Dost Muhammad Khan of the Muhammadzai adopted the title '*Amir al-Muminin*' (Commander of the Faithful) in the war to recover Peshawar in 1836. "His adoption of the Arabic title *amir*, in lieu of the more traditional Persian title *shah*, marked a definitive rejection of the Persianized, or more specifically, Safavid, norms of kingship employed by his predecessors" (Hopkins, 2008: 106). In this regard, Islam represented a base of equality in the Durrani court which stood in contrast to Persian Royalism. "The war against the Sikhs over Peshawar was thus transformed from a dynastic struggle to *jihad* against the infidels" (Hopkins, 2008: 105). Dost Muhammad even appealed to the British, another 'infidel,' to help him recover Peshawar. Yet, the British, who had their own intentions on the Pashtun city of Peshawar, failed his calls and, instead, chose to support Shah Shuja of the Sadozai. Dost Muhammad's eventual appeal to Russians provoked the British who invaded Afghanistan in 1839, restoring Shah Shuja, their puppet ruler on the Afghan throne. In other words, the tribal rivalry between the Sadozai and the Muhammadzai eventually gained a global dimension as rivals chose to ally with non-Pashtun and non-Muslim forces. This is an indicator of the survival of tribalism where situational alliances could be made with outsiders whether they were foreign or not. Nevertheless, the British occupation of Afghanistan between 1839 and 1842 was a "foreign challenge [which] provided a focus for the Afghans to unite" (Saikal, 2004: 32) under Dost Muhammad and to win over the British in the First Anglo-Afghan War.

Following the war, Dost Mohammad was restored on the throne in 1842 and the Muhammadzai dynasty, also called the Barakzai dynasty referring to the clan, was properly established. This dynasty, however, was to reign in a different conjuncture than the Sadozai, representing the first Afghan encounter with a modern Western power whereby the very first reform movements in the military started. The plundering model was over now, which made the relations of dependency between the ruler and the tribesmen problematic. Dost Muhammad's relationship with Pashtun tribes was more difficult than that experienced by his Sadozai predecessors, "partly because he did not possess the legitimacy derived from descent from Ahmad Shah, and partly because of the pressures on him to collect revenues" (Ewans, 2002:

78). He faced insistent tribal resistance, and "fought the Ghilzai no fewer than six times before they were finally subdued" (Ewans, 2002: 78). He saw the solution in a central state established on the basis of Islam and sustained by a regular army which was formed with British subsidies taken in return for Afghan silence during Indian Mutiny of 1857. At this point, it can be said that Islam functioned as the ideology of the early modern centralising state, which was to be taken further under Abdurrahman Khan.

Dost Muhammad was followed by his son Amir Sher Ali Khan who played with the British and Russians to gain subsidies and support from both, which is an indication of tribal policies. The British pressed Sher Ali for allowing a resident British agent in Kabul; yet, he rejected such wishes coming either from the British or Russians. Pressure from both sides eventually led to the Second Anglo-Afghan War in 1878 lasting until 1880 when Afghans were, once again, able to win over the British militarily but not politically. The War ended with the Treaty of Gandamak signed in 1879, which gave the British the right to control the foreign affairs of Afghanistan by appointing a British resident to Kabul.

3.2. Iron Amir's Centralisation Programme (1880-1901)

End of the Second Anglo-Afghan War brought a new ruler to the Afghan throne, Amir Abdurrahman who recognised the Treaty of Gandamak in return for British withdrawal and financial subsidies with which he set out on his project of centralising and strengthening the Afghan state located between two 'infidel' powers.

3.2.1. Borders Demarcated

Determined and internationally recognised for the first time under Abdurrahman, borders of Afghanistan represented a modern imposition on the Afghan state, being a product of the Great Game played between Britain and Russia. Both the Durand Line[3] and the Wakhan Corridor, a strip designed to divide Russia and Britain geographically, were determined by agreements between the British and Russians. British interest in the Hindu Kush resulted from the Khyber Pass, which

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[3] See Appendix B for the map showing the Durand Line between Afghanistan and today's Pakistan.

was an essential trade route bridging Central and South Asia. Yet, this region was inhabited by Pashtuns, seen by the British as a warrior people who had to be taken under control to consolidate power in the region. Their relationship with Pashtun tribes is summarised by Ewans (2002: 76) as follows:

> A pattern of warfare now developed, characterized by raids, looting and kidnapping on the part of the Pashtoon tribes, and punitive expeditions and retaliatory exactions on the part of the British. The latter also took hostages against good behaviour on the part of the tribes and tried to play off one tribe against another. At the same time, efforts were made to prevent, so far as possible, the regime in Kabul from exercising its influence in the tribal areas.

Having defeated the Sikhs in Peshawar in 1849, the British already held the control of this city, which facilitated their divide-and-rule policies on Pashtuns. In the meanwhile, Amir Abdurrahman was trying to prevent further divisions, as it can be understood from a letter he sent to the British before the Durand Line Agreement:

> 'As to these frontier tribes known by the name of Yaghistan, if they were included in my dominion I should be able to make them fight against any enemy of England and myself, by the name of a religious war, under the flag of their co-religious Muslim ruler (myself). And these people being brave warriors and staunch Mahomedans, would make a very strong force to fight against any power which might invade India or Afghanistan. I will gradually make them peaceful subjects and good friends of Great Britain. But if you should cut them out of my dominions, they will neither be of any use to you nor to me: you will always be engaged in fighting and troubles with them, and they will always go on plundering. As long as your Government is strong and in peace, you will be able to keep them quiet by a strong hand, but at any time a foreign enemy appears on the borders of India, these frontier tribes will be your worst enemies ... In your cutting away from me these frontier tribes who are people of my nationality and my religion, you will injure my prestige in the eyes of my subjects, and make me weak, and my weakness is injurious for your Government.' (Arghandawi, 1989: 72-73)

Abdurrahman carefully warned the British about the consequences of their policies while showing his own concern for legitimacy in the eyes of his people. Yet, the British already rejected a strong Afghan Amir popularly supported by his people, believing that a weak one would facilitate fragmentation. Thus, they ignored Abdurrahman's call and imposed the Durand Line in 1893. Although Abdurrahman saw in it an opportunity to stop the continuous British penetration into Pashtun land, Afghanistan lost vast territory with this agreement as "the core of the original Afghanistan came to be regarded as within the British sphere of influence" (K. Kakar, 1979: xx). With the imposition of the Line, the British severed communication

between Pashtuns, or Pathans as they were called, in British India and those in Afghanistan. What is more, the British divided the Pathans left in India by creating the NWFP (North Western Frontier Province) in 1901 with Peshawar as its capital. The NWFP was further divided into two as Settled Districts (closer to India) and Tribal Areas (closer to Afghanistan). Settled Districts were administered by the British while the five Tribal Agencies, like Swat, were autonomous like the Indian Princely States. As the latter represented the front line of the British Raj, the British did everything to prevent any kind of nationalist fervour that might emerge out of Pashtun solidarity there. That is why they were to brutally suppress the Pathan nationalist movement of the 1930s called the *Khudai Khidmatgaran* (Servants of God). They kept giving subsidies to Afghan rulers as well as to frontier tribes in order to deter any support to such solidarity movements. In other words, British subsidies given to Afghanistan represented a means of control. As foreseen by Abdurrahman, they were unable to control Pashtun tribes, so they bribed Afghan rulers to pacify them. In a way, the Afghan ruler became someone who contributed to the disunity of his own people.

Differing from usual border zones with low population density, the Durand Line cut through a densely populated Pashtun land whereby the British attempted to "transform an open frontier into a closed border" (Banerjee, 2000: 45) and even to create a buffer zone out of it. Contrary to the logic of a buffer zone, which is considered as a no man's land with a small or no population, this one was to prove very problematic, having a great potential to become a conflict zone. For the British, it was a buffer zone within the larger buffer zone of Afghanistan against Russians in the north. Therefore, they did not (or could not) intervene to control the tribes there, which was perfectly in tune with Pashtun tribes who were left free of the colonial authority of Britain as well as the central authority of the Afghan state. In time, this zone became a heaven for tribal leaders who retained their autonomy and kept intact their tribal codes. They ignored the Durand Line and crossed the borders easily. "This ease of crossing and the fact that there were no agreements for extradition between Afghanistan and her neighbours made the frontier areas havens for all kinds of offenders" (K. Kakar, 1979: 66). In other words, this zone became a threat to the Afghan state, where no state power or law, let alone any modernist reform, could penetrate. The autonomy and power of these frontier tribes meant that "they could

strike at the government whenever it was weak or it infringed upon their well-established positions" (K. Kakar, 1979: 65). Due to the strength of tribal ties in Afghanistan, the power of frontier tribes meant that the tribes within Afghanistan also became more influential as borderline politics escalated. All in all, the frontier buffer zone created by the British accomplished its mission in dividing Pashtuns and creating a Pashtun threat against the government of Afghanistan. The existence of such a frontier zone itself represents a tribal articulation within the modern concept of border demarcation, as Pashtun tribes living there were given an exceptional status.

Last but not the least, the Durand Line not only physically divided Pashtuns but also attempted to destroy the tribal concept of a Pashtun common destiny between Pathans in India Pashtuns in Afghanistan. The British goal was to separate the destinies of the two and to prevent them from supporting each other. Although this policy forcibly worked on the rulers, it failed on the people. As it will be revealed, Pashtuns and Pathans continued to support each other and whenever an Afghan ruler abstained from support to Pathans, he was punished for it. Pashtun tribalism never forgot to take revenge.

3.2.2. Tribalism Subdued

Upon gaining the Afghan throne, Abdurrahman knew how big a task was awaiting him in unifying a fragmented country. He himself described the situation as follows:

> 'Every priest, mullah and chief of every tribe and village considered himself an independent King, and for about 200 years past, the freedom and independence of many of these priests were never broken by their sovereigns. The Mirs of Turkestan, the Mirs of Hazara, the chiefs of Ghilzai were all stronger than their Amirs.' (Gregorian, 1969: 129)

The title 'Mir,' derived from the Arabic title 'Amir,' denoted a hereditary ruler, Uzbek in the case of Badakshan for instance, and Hazara in the case of Hazaras, who was politically autonomous but subservient to the Afghan Amir. In this speech, Abdurrahman actually gives a glimpse of the fragmentation in Afghanistan, saying that the leaders of various groups were stronger than the Afghan Amir at the top. Believing that indirect rule was the reason behind the strength of tribal authorities,

Abdurrahman set out to establish a centralised authority throughout the country by taking all the Mirs and chiefs under his control through strong centralisation.

In order to achieve centralisation, Abdurrahman departed from the notion of an Amir as the head of a tribal confederacy and based his authority, instead, on Islam

> to consolidate his rule, centralise power and create national unity…[declaring] himself the Muslim ruler of all Afghan people and [claiming] divine sanction for his rule, thus becoming the first Afghan ruler strongly to invoke something akin to the divine right of kings. (Saikal, 2004: 35)

Following from Dost Muhammad's enlarging the power base through Islam, Abdurrahman used it as a source of legitimacy. On the whole, it could be argued that Islam in Afghanistan was utilised as a tool to pass from divisive tribal politics to centralist state politics. In this regard, Islam functioned as an early tool for modernisation in the face of tribal power. Indeed, Abdurrahman's sole purpose for "claiming an Islamic basis for the monarchy was to establish the fact that those who opposed the King's authority in the efforts to build a strong, Muslim nation were committing anti-Islamic acts" (Shahrani, 1988: 37). That is to say, he used the Islamic identity for pragmatic reasons; to establish a unified nation which was stuck between two 'infidel' powers. He always tried to explain the need for Afghan unity to the public, publishing pamphlets and acting like a 'teacher of the nation.' In a sense, the Afghan ruler's urge for a unified nation was born as a reaction to 'infidel' imperialism. The Safavid and Mughal Empires also had imperialist intentions; yet they were Muslim, i.e. co-religionists with Afghans, and they represented pre-modernity.

Abdurrahman attempted to erase all forms of dispersed tribal authority so that a single authority would emerge: the state in Kabul. To do this, he first had to break away from his dependency on tribes for military manpower. With the subsidies he took from the British, he built up a regular army which was "more professional and centralized than ever before, yet the amir never allowed a class of military leaders to develop that might challenge his power or influence his policies" (Barfield, 2010: 166). He introduced a compulsory conscription system which put an end to the need for troops provided by tribes in return for tax exemption, thereby offering a way to tax the tribes. By giving state taxation a religious basis, Abdurrahman "declared that God commands people to pay the revenues in accordance with the prescriptions of

the Quran" (K. Kakar, 1979: 75). In a way, he tried to beat tribal resistance against taxation through Islamic injunctions as well as the force of his standing army. It should be underlined, however, that taxes were still collected in kind; not in cash.

An effort to change the ruler's relationship with the tribes could not be limited to the army and taxation; but had to include the representative institution of the tribes: the *jirga*. In order to break his dependency on the tribal *jirga*, Abdurrahman reinstituted the *Loya Jirga* as a National Council whose members he himself appointed from among three estates: "Muhammadzai sardars (tribal commanders), important khans from different parts of the country, and religious leaders" (Rubin, 2002: 51) whose presence at court kept them isolated from their power base. "The Loya Jirga thus co-opted a tribal tradition into a state institution" (Rubin, 2002: 51) whose role was limited to approving and legitimising the ruler's policies. In other words, its original function of reaching a common consensus within the tribe was transformed, as it now functioned "not as a decision-making but as a legitimising body" (Saikal, 2004: 144) convened at the ruler's request in cases of national emergency such as the British invasions, successions to the throne or reform initiatives.

On the whole, this was an attempt to reverse the picture of dependencies by making tribes dependent on the state, "whereby the ruling groups (tribal leaders, royal family and clergy) no longer depended for their position on their following, but on the state (and the Amir)" (Vogelsang, 2002: 265). Abdurrahman's elite was created only to serve him and the state from which it derived its power. Administration of the country was no more a family business, whereby provincial governors, or *sardars*, were appointed from among unambitious soldiers who had no tribal backing. These were the "tame Muhammadzai sardars…[who were made] 'partners of the state' (*sharik-i-dawlat*), which entitled them to receive regular government stipends and land on easy terms [after which] they became the dominant class" (Barfield, 2010: 166). Notice that it was the *tame* Muhammadzai who were made partners; those who were not tame and seen as a threat were exiled abroad either to India or the Ottoman Empire. These exiles were later to be summoned by the following ruler and have a deep impact on the course of events.

As for local religious authorities, Abdurrahman also tried to bring them under state control by making the appointment of judges a state business. What he tried to

do was to bring an order to the chaotic form of Islam in Afghanistan. K. Kakar (1979: 154) claims that Abdurrahman "never sought to weaken Islam but rather to strengthen it and fully integrate it into the state."

All these huge changes made many tribes rebel. Iron Amir was harsh on them, applying force in various ways ranging from religious injunctions, marriage alliances, bribes and intrigues to bloody punishments and divide-and-rule policies. He had spies everywhere who infiltrated into every segment of the society. Eventually, not only Pashtun tribes but also Hazaras, Kafiristan and Afghan Turkistan were brought under control by brutal force through the 'Covenants of Unity' which represented "a written contract between himself and the Afghan people that would bind his subjects to his wills in perpetuity" (Barfield, 2010: 174). Abdurrahman

> centralized power so thoroughly that no city or region outside of Kabul had any significant influence on national policy. He destroyed or subordinated the regional elite in the north, west, and south who had previously challenged the national government's privacy in the nineteenth century. (Barfield, 2010: 165-6)

It should be underlined that the success of the Iron Amir's harsh policies especially in the north was greatly due to the ongoing Great Game. "While the British were annexing traditional Pashtun territories in the south, they were pushing the Amirs to pursue an expansionist policy in the north to deter the Russians" (Saikal, 2004: 39).

3.2.3. Nation Homogenised: Pashtunisation Policy

The Iron Amir's state-building process was accompanied by a nation-building process, as well. The Afghan nation was to be built out of the Pashtun tribal confederation, or ethnicity in the modern sense, which was the numerically dominant population in most parts of Afghanistan including the south, the east and the west; but not the north. Afghan Turkistan was considered almost as a continuation of the larger Turkistan in Central Asia. This region was inhabited mainly by Uzbeks, Turkmens and Tajiks who were "uncommitted to Afghan hegemony" (N. Tapper, 1983: 256), with their consanguine living in the other side of the border. This situation clashed with the requirement of nationalism that "political boundaries must be congruent with ethnic ones" (Gellner, 1994: 38). The fact that there were no ethnic differences between the populations living in northern Afghanistan and

Central Asia made this region another frontier zone and prevented the formation of a border line. Besides, the Russian threat approaching through Central Asia required the settlement of a warrior population in this region. To overcome this situation, Abdurrahman initiated the process of Pashtunising northern Afghanistan. His project of Pashtun colonisation included voluntary or forceful Pashtun, especially Ghilzai, migrations to the north, which yielded the result that Pashtuns now inhabited all the border areas: the Durrani already inhabited the southern and western area from Herat to Kandahar; the Ghilzai inhabited the eastern area from Kandahar to Kabul; and now the north was also inhabited by Pashtuns.

Abdurrahman's Pashtunisation policy was more of a border issue at the beginning; but then it assumed a nationalist characteristic with Pashtunism rising as an official ideology. In 1896, Abdurrahman was quoted saying "It is proper that as the king is an Afghan, his tribesmen, the Afghans should guard the frontiers" (K. Kakar, 1979: 132). Notice that Abdurrahman still refers to the King and his 'tribesmen,' showing the legacy of tribalism no matter how he tried to subdue it. Still, it was a signal that the Afghan nation-building went parallel to the nationalist requirement that "rulers must not be ethnically distinguishable from the ruled" (Gellner, 1994: 38). Preference for Pashtuns over non-Pashtuns had always been something practised by Afghan rulers; but it was, for the first time, openly exalted through Abdurrahman's Pashtunisation policy. Abdurrahman's Pashtunism was born out of protecting the frontiers of the 'patria' although Afghan Turkestan was not a 'patria' for Pashtuns. Abdurrahman overcame this problem through classical tribal policies; i.e. by showing his good intentions of improving the conditions of his tribesmen. He offered Pashtuns the vacant but fertile lands of the north, while at the same time realising the economic potential of this region. The over-populated Pashtun homeland was a facilitating factor in encouraging the migrations with the promise of new lands. It was also a way of sedentrianising the landless nomads, who constituted a majority within the Ghilzai, taking them under state authority. In other words, the Pashtunisation project was a many-faceted one, accomplishing more than one goal at the same time. Pashtun 'patria' was now the whole of Afghanistan including Turkestan.

The Pashtunisation project stimulated the rise of Pashtuns as a dominant group over non-Pashtuns, for they "brought with them ideas of their ethnic superiority

which were reinforced by Government support and by the grant of both formal and informal privileges over the other ethnic groups" (N. Tapper, 1983: 257). Pashtun settlement areas received better service while positions in government offices and the army were also reserved for them. Dominating the local populations due to their links with the rulers, Pashtuns "acted as representatives of the central state," (Rasuly-Paleczek, 2001: 153), which is actually an irony as Pashtun tribes were known for their continuous clashes with the state. In a way, they were co-opted; given a share and a responsibility within the state, which started with protecting the borders. In a way, Pashtunisation was Abdurrahman's strategy of subduing tribalism; yet, it was still afflicted with tribalism, for Abdurrahman preferred the Durrani, his own tribesmen, over the Ghilzai. The ones that he forced to migrate were mainly the Ghilzai (Vogelsang, 2002: 268) whom he tried to keep away from the centre of power. This was the point where tribalism continued to articulate within the Pashtunist ideology. In other words, Abdurrahman's Pashtunism was still not a form of modern Pashtun nationalism. It was something imposed by the ruler; it was not a product of the Pashtun elitist efforts. That kind of Pashtun nationalism was on the way, though.

3.3. Habibullah at the Crossroads of Modernisation and Nationalism (1901-1919)

Amir Abdurrahman's death was, almost uniquely, not followed by internal turmoil whereby he was followed by his son Habibullah in 1901. Habibullah was "fortunate that, largely as a result of his father's repressive policies, there was little or no internal unrest during his reign" (Ewans, 2002: 111). Thus, he was to be the start point of all the later reform movements in Afghanistan. "His rule was distinguished not so much for what it achieved but for what it unleashed" (Saikal, 2004: 40). Three factors played a role in this.

The first factor was that Habibullah was the first Afghan ruler to extend modern reforms beyond the military into education. He was the founder of the *Maktab-e Harbiyya*, the Royal Military College (1906), and the *Habibiyya* College (1904), the first modern secondary school modelled on a French lycée, as well as a teacher-training school called the *Dar al-Moalimin* (1912). These institutions were

opened at a crucial time when so many changes were taking place in the world. "They also marked the beginning of Afghanistan's critical social divide, between the traditional Afghan society of the tribe and the countryside and that of an increasingly westernized, urban elite" (Ewans, 2002: 117).

It should be noted at this point that Habibullah's reforms went parallel to his cooperation with Pashtun tribes. Facing no rivals, "lacking his father's harsh authoritarian instincts and inheriting a state already harshly pacified," (Wahab and Youngerman, 2007: 98) Habibullah relaxed the strict policies of his father, giving back some of the privileges of tribal chiefs and *mullahs*. He placated the tribes by "setting up a State Council for tribal affairs, easing the system of compulsory conscription and giving the *khans* more freedom to conduct their own affairs" (Ewans, 2002: 111) while continuing to build upon the early nation-state. The picture of modernity was, thus, a little complicated, showing us the articulation of tribalism into the state structure:

> The incipient national bureaucracy established by his centralizing father thus became open to infiltration by traditional, localized power bases. When local *maliks*…were coopted into government roles, they were often able to stonewall unpopular decrees, whether out of loyalty to community values or in return for bribes…Such officials often used state funds and patronage to reinforce traditional power structures. (Wahab and Youngerman, 2007: 98)

The second factor was the importation of modernity through Pashtun tribal families previously sent on exile by Abdurrahman and called back by Habibullah who decreed a general amnesty. These were basically strong tribal families two of whom were especially important with regards to modernity: the Tarzi, also called the Kandahar *Sardars*, and the Musahiban, also called the Peshawar *Sardars*. These two families had different experiences with modernity in the countries that they were exiled to. The Tarzi family, exiled to Damascus and Istanbul in the Ottoman Empire, saw the revolutionary movements in the Ottoman Empire while the Musahiban family witnessed a gradual modernisation programme in British India. Having returned to Afghanistan upon Habibullah's permission, both families entered into his administration (1901-1919) and gained influence. Consequently, two different informal modernist ideologies appeared under Habibullah's reign: the revolutionary modernist one centred around Mahmud Tarzi of the Tarzi family and the gradual

modernist one centred around Nadir Khan of the Musahibans. In other words, these were the two basic approaches to modernisation in Afghanistan of the time.

Before passing on to the third factor, this process of exile and homecoming should be more elaborated upon. It was Abdurrahman (1880-1901) who had sent away alternative centres of power, establishing an almost dictatorship. Having been isolated from the world until that point, strong tribal families, when sent on exile, contacted the outside world for the first time, being exposed to new ideas and ideologies. When called back by Habibullah (1901-1919), they brought their cultural baggage with them, which would form the basis of all political divisions in later periods. The Charki family, the Mujaddidi family (Sufi), the Gailani family (related to the Qaderiyya Sufi order in Iraq) and the Naqshbandi Hazrats of the Shor Bazaar in Kabul represented other such families besides the Tarzi and the Musahiban. Although they had incompatible ideas, the one common point they had at the time was that they were anti-British, which would prove influential in the Third Anglo-Afghan War.

Finally, the third factor was related to what was happening in the world at that time, ranging from the World War I to reforms in Turkey and Iran. As Saikal (2004: 40) argues, Habibullah "assumed power at a time when Afghanistan could no longer remain aloof from certain reformist and nationalist waves that were deeply affecting a number of regional Muslim states." ***Pan-Asianism*** was one of these waves formed in the wake of the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905 where Japan defeated Russia and became the symbol of an awakening East. As it was the victory of a modernised Japan, this country immediately became an example for all Eastern countries endeavouring to make modern reforms. The other wave was ***Pan-Islamism*** through which the fragmenting Ottoman Empire made a call to all Muslims to join World War I on their side. Indian Muslims were particularly influenced by this ideology in their struggle against the British, considered a common enemy. Afghanistan, at this point, offered a *dar-ul Islam*, land of Islam, for all those living in the *dar-ul harb*, land of war. Its curious position as a *dar-ul Islam* between two *dar-ul harb*s in British India and Russian Central Asia was consistent with its position as a buffer state, continually receiving devout Muslims escaping from both. Eager to join the Ottomans in the war and looking for a potential leader, Indian Muslims (including Pathans) even declared that "if Afghanistan joined the war, they were prepared to

acknowledge the Amir as the permanent King of India" (Arghandawi, 1989: 123). Ottomans also expected Afghanistan to enter the war with the declaration of *jihad* by the Ottoman Caliph and the Turko-German mission sent to Kabul. Yet, Habibullah, despite popular Afghan support for the Ottomans, considered the possibility of being stuck between two Allies and chose to remain neutral in the war, keeping his balance with the British who still held the country's foreign affairs. In return for his neutrality, he was promised the frontier territories in British India (Saikal, 2004: 63), which would not be fulfilled at the end. With the defeat of the Ottomans, all the groups in the country felt that "Afghanistan had failed Islam in the hour of need" (Gregorian, 1969: 226) and Habibullah, called a *kafir*, an infidel, by now, was assassinated in 1919.

3.4. Nationalism in Afghanistan: Mahmud Tarzi and the Young Afghans

Following the decline of Pan-Asianism and Pan-Islamism, another movement came up in this period: Nationalism. Nationalist currents were already storming big empires in the world fragmenting them into smaller nation-states, as "the principle of self-determination was part of the contemporary *zeitgeist*" (Ewans, 2002: 121). Although Nationalism was to influence Afghanistan too, it was not wholly in the form of an ideology but a mask of modern reforms. In other words, the reformist movement in Afghanistan achieved a nationalist dimension in this period, as to be shown below.

Basically, Afghan Nationalism was born out of the modern *Habibiyya* College founded by Habibullah. Influenced by the global currents of the time, the very early graduates of this school formed the National Secret Party (*Jam'iyyat-i Sirri-i Milli*) and initiated a Constitutional Movement as early as 1907-1909. The Party, although not a 'party' in the political sense but rather a diffuse organisation, was preoccupied with restricting the power of the Afghan Amir with a constitution, also urging for a constitutional assembly based on a national rather than tribal level. In other words, the early reformists wished to shift from a tribal to a national level; it was why nationalist ideologies accorded with them. Yet, as an indication of the persistence of tribalism, Habibullah already considered tribal chiefs as representatives of people. Having no intention of sharing his power, he quickly suppressed this movement.

After the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, a similar group appeared, this time called the 'War Party' as its members urged for an Afghan entry into the war with the Ottomans. In time, this group came to be known as the 'Young Afghans' (*Jawanon-e Afghan*) modelled after the Young Turk movement in the Ottoman Empire. The group was "by no means homogeneous, but rather a collection of individuals from different social backgrounds. It neither had an identifiable organisation, nor did it operate as a political party in the modern sense of the term" (Saikal, 2004: 41). Saikal (2004: 42) further resembles it to a club of *Habibiyya* graduates brought together by "their common position as faithful Muslims and Afghans, [and] a shared yearning for national cohesion, stability, progress and independence." The leader of this group was Mahmud Tarzi, the most influential figure in Afghan modernism. Having served in the Ottoman administration, Tarzi was influenced by the European waves of nationalism, the Young Turk movement and the pan-Islamist ideas of al-Afghani. Called back by Habibullah, Tarzi influenced the Amir with all his knowledge as well as his skill in languages. Therefore, he was appointed as the Chief of the Royal Translation Bureau so that he could inform the Amir about the contemporary events in the world. From then on, Tarzi started to disseminate his ideas of independence and reform.

What made the dissemination of the Young Afghan ideology possible was the bi-weekly journal called *Siraj al-Akhbar Afghaniyyah* ('The Lamp of the News of Afghanistan') edited by Mahmud Tarzi and published between 1911 and 1919 during the war years. In this regard, this journal provided a forum for the Young Afghans in spreading their nationalist and modernist ideology. Tarzi believed that the major bar before modernisation in Afghanistan was the disunity which "had calamitously set city against city, village against village, street against street, tribe against tribe, brother against brother" (Gregorian, 1969: 166). This view was exactly how tribalism appeared from a modern perspective. Due to tribal traditions that were constantly in clash with the central state, the Afghan perception of freedom had become equated with the absence of government authority. Tarzi asserted that this was not in line with Islam even, which glorified the order established by the state. Due to its position between two colonial powers, Afghanistan had deliberately chosen to remain closed to any foreign influence or borrowing for fears of colonisation. Yet, Tarzi argued, knowledge was universal, whether coming from the West or the East. He not only

referred to Western achievements but also pointed to the past achievements of Muslim societies, by referring to al-Afghani. As we can see, Tarzi's nationalism was highly equipped with what can be called Islamic modernism. In Tarzi's belief "there was no incompatibility between Islam and either nationalism or modernism. On the contrary these were necessary to fulfil Islam. It was thus a religious duty to serve the homeland, the government, and the king" (Magnus&Naby, 1998: 100). In other words, he made a call to the traditionalist groups to participate in developing the country. As his ideas turned out to be openly clashing with the Amir, however, the *Siraj* was inevitably banned. Nevertheless, his ideas were to achieve greater influence under the next ruler King Amanullah.

3.5. Amanullah's Wide Modernisation Programme (1919-1929)

Also a member of the Young Afghans, Amanullah Khan became the next ruler upon his father Amir Habibullah's assassination in 1919. He is cited as a revolutionary leader who attempted to modernise Afghanistan in a very short period, introducing a wide-ranging reform programme in the fields of administration, education, justice, health, communications, rights of women, etc. Achieving full independence of Afghanistan in 1919 and free to conduct Afghan foreign relations, Amanullah opened up Afghanistan to the world, establishing diplomatic relations with many countries including Turkey as well as European countries. Also enacting the first Constitution of Afghanistan, the *Nizamnama* in 1923, Amanullah made Afghanistan into a constitutional monarchy and changed the state's name from Emirate of Afghanistan to the Kingdom of Afghanistan, assuming himself the title King (*Padshah*) in 1923.

3.5.1. Anglo-Afghan Wars & Independence

Amanullah, especially at the beginning, was well aware of the power of the tribes in Afghanistan. His mother, Ulya Hazrat, was an influential tribal leader's daughter, which was a factor that facilitated his relations with the tribes. As soon as he came to power, he benefited from this close relationship in rallying the frontier tribes, including those in the Indian side, against the British. At first, he was so

ambitious that his goal was not only full independence but also the recovery of Pashtun territories within India. Declaring his independence from the British in 1919, Amanullah initiated the Third Anglo-Afghan War with the declaration of a *jihad*, at the end of which he proved winner. This war is usually considered as the Afghan War of Independence in many resources, but it is actually more complex than that. Amanullah, on the one hand, initiated the war with the declaration of a *jihad*, a tool used in uniting the tribes; and on the other, he declared that he derived his authority from the Afghan nation, not from Islam or tribes, which sounded like a properly modern ideology. "This was the first time ever that an Afghan ruler claimed to seek legitimacy not so much in tribal politics or Islam, but in broad public acceptance" (Saikal, 2004: 61). The concept of an Afghan nation was something totally new. However, at the end of the day, it was not 'the nation' but the tribes that fought for the full independence of the Afghan state, which was a force that they actually disliked. Eventually, the Treaty of Rawalpindi signed in 1919 brought back to Afghans the control of their foreign affairs.

The three Anglo-Afghan wars provided a military platform to propound Afghan independence and nationalism, although still within the limits of tribalism. The first war fought in 1839-1842 brought forth a change of dynasty from the Sadozai to the Muhammadzai; the second one fought in 1878-1880 caused the loss of the control of foreign affairs to the British and the third one fought in 1919 recovered that loss. It was through these military encounters that heroic Afghan warriors rose in the Afghan social consciousness. As Hyman (2002: 303) argues, "Afghan wars entered into the national psychology, occupying a key place in oral history as well as the later state-conceived version of national history." Oral history recounted the story of heroic tribal warriors as part of a tribal world while the state showed the warriors as nationalist fighters. If there was something akin to an 'Afghan national feeling,' it was born out of the anti-British sentiments that emerged as a result of these wars as well as the British mistreatment of frontier tribes. Later British dealings with the frontier tribes kept the memories of war and Afghan nationalism alive. "The struggle of the independent frontier tribes with the British in India thus indirectly gave sustenance to Afghan nationalism" (Gregorian, 1969: 124), but, in return, strengthened the position of tribes within Afghanistan. That is why Afghan nationalism operated within the limits of Pashtun tribalism.

3.5.2. Nation-Building

As modern nation-building typically started with the construction of a common past, Amanullah attempted to shape the early Afghan historiography by inviting French archaeologists and founding the first museum of Afghanistan in 1919. It was through the works of these archaeologists that a common Aryan origin was attributed to all the inhabitants of Afghanistan, Pashtun and non-Pashtun. Yet, Pashtunism still continued to operate within the nation-building efforts, as it was the Pashtuns who made up 'the nation' in this nation-building programme. It was asserted that the ancient Aryan kingdom of Bactria was the earliest Afghan kingdom, as the word Pashtun or Pakhtun was derived from the word Bactria or Pactria itself. Yet, the acceptance of such a pre-Islamic Bactrian past actually conflicted with the tribal code *Pashtunwali* which ignored the pre-Islamic Pashtun history before Qays. Furthermore, the Pashtunist ideology worked to strengthen the Pashto language and literature as opposed to Persian influences. Poetry of the Pashtun poet Kushal Khal Khattak who lived in the 18th century, for instance, was evoked as part of these efforts. Exemplifying the perfect figure of a warrior-poet who was a fierce fighter *and* a man of letters, Kushal Khan Khattak of the Khattak clan under the Karlanri tribe, is accepted as the very early Pashtun leader calling for Pashtun unity against the Mughal Empire. Accepted as a national hero, Khattak's poems, an example of which has made the prologue to this thesis in the Introduction, were influential in stimulating the Pashtun nationalist movement.

3.5.3. Nationalist Reform vs. Pashtun Tribalism

One thing that never changed in Amanullah's attitude was that he always remained an eager reformist. Mahmud Tarzi, as his minister of foreign affairs, was his right-hand man who established family connections to the ruling dynasty. Tarzi's daughter Surayya was married to Amanullah while his other daughter was married to Inayatullah, Amanullah's brother. It is ironic that the two most modernist figures of Afghanistan still depended on kinship ties, a legacy of tribalism, even at the highest levels of the state. Just another similar point to note is that Amanullah married his two sisters to the Musahiban brothers who were influential in his government thanks

to the "border-tribal loyalty that they had acquired over the years" (Saikal, 2004: 59). Having good relations with the frontier tribes, Nadir Khan was appointed as the Minister of War. Such legacies of tribalism continued to clash with Amanullah's (1919-1929) modern reforms which cover a wide range. Here, though, we will be limited to the areas where they clashed with tribalism in order to better understand the consequent tribal rebellion.

The military was where the earliest reforms were initiated starting with Dost Muhammad. Later, it was Abdurrahman who first attempted to alter the military system by introducing a compulsory but indirect conscription system called the *hasht nafari* (eight persons). In this system, tribal leaders chose one of each group of eight men to serve in the army while the other seven were taxed to support his household (Rubin, 2002: 49). In other words, there still was a selection process where "tribal leaders [had] the power to choose conscripts and negotiate with the state on behalf of their communities" (Barfield, 2010: 184). Later on, Amanullah, introducing the Conscription and Identity Card Act of 1923, changed the conscription system "from one of local selection to one of lottery" (Ewans, 2002: 129), completely removing tribal interference into the military. He also remodelled the army along Turkish and German lines; yet, the army lost its strength at the point where Amanullah made a fatal mistake by decreasing military spending when he was unable to collect enough revenue for his reforms.

The second reform area was the legal and administrative system which was also attempted to be centralised, starting with Abdurrahman, in the face of tribal government and justice systems as well as the Islamic *sharia*. It was under Amanullah that a National Council (*Shura-e Melli*) as well as a Council of Ministers was established. Amanullah took all the previous efforts one step further and enacted the first Constitution of Afghanistan, the *Nizamnama*, which was based on the Turkish example, in 1923 through a *Loya Jirga*, the legitimising body. Although the Constitution recognised the *Loya Jirga* which was frequently used by Amanullah to ratify his reforms and policies (Barfield, 2010: 196), his last reform programme was to urge for its complete dissolution. As for the reforms in the legal system, Amanullah attempted to create "an independent judiciary, a system of courts and a secular penalty code" (Ewans, 2002: 128) in 1924, trying to take the *Pashtunwali* and the Islamic justice system *sharia* under state control.

The third reform area was finance where Amanullah was obliged to do some vital reforms due to the withdrawal of British subsidies with the Treaty of Rawalpindi (1919). Thus, he "instituted a government budget, reorganized the tax system and established a customs tariff" (Ewans, 2002: 128) which brought him into conflict with border tribes. The biggest change was in the taxation system where taxes were required to be paid in cash, which gave rise to corrupt tax collectors who worsened the already bad image of the state in the eyes of the tribal people. Amanullah, furthermore, "cut the stipends previously paid to the Muhammadzai elite and religious leaders" (Barfield, 2010: 184), thus undermining their position in the society.

The fourth reform area was the education system where reform had been initiated by Habibullah and extended by Amanullah. Following the *Habibiyya* College, which proved to be a great stimulant of nationalist modernism, Amanullah had more deliberate goals about education, seeing it as a tool in creating an enlightened generation to reform and administer the state. His first task was ending the public apathy towards education, especially a non-religious one, which was seen as Western phenomena. He opened more secondary schools; allowed the French and Germans (preferably not Britain or Russia) to open schools; introduced secular subjects into the curricula; sent the first group of Afghan students, including females, to abroad and opened girls' schools. All these efforts clashed with the local authorities in education, who were basically *mullahs* concerned about their own authority in the society. It was due to their misleading the public that education was something feared among Pashtuns. That is why Amanullah obliged all *mullahs* to obtain teaching certificates, restricting their role as local educators.

The fifth reform area was to do with the issue of women, which represented the biggest point of clash with tribal authorities. Starting with the Family Code of 1921 that regulated marriages, Amanullah banned child marriage and interkin marriage as contrary to Islam; banned the practice of widows marrying the husband's next of kin; made the registration of marriages compulsory; reduced the amount of dowry and gave women the right of divorce as well as the right to choose their husbands. In the meanwhile, unveiling and Western dress became popular among Kabuli high-class women led by Queen Surayya. The Queen and Mrs. Tarzi became the vanguards of feminism, administrating the *Malalai* College (girls' school) and editing the first

women's magazine *Ershad-e Niswan* as of 1921. All these developments meant that family problems formerly dealt with by local *mullahs* were now under the responsibility of the state, depriving men of their authority over women. Such state interference in Pashtun private life angered Pashtuns who urged for the reestablishment of the *Pashtunwali* even if it was in clash with Islam.

Finally, it is necessary to note that not all of these reforms were prevalent all throughout Afghanistan. Military and legal reforms bounded the tribes more while social reforms were applied only in Kabul. Still, the rumours about these reforms were travelling throughout the country in distorted images.

3.5.4. Tribal Interruption to Reforms

3.5.4.1. Khost Rebellion of 1924

Amanullah's attempt to extend his power into provincial areas through reforms eventually started to be seen as a direct threat upon people's lives, coming from "three directions: taxation, conscription, and perceived interference in family life" (Barfield, 2010: 183). In 1924, eastern Pashtun tribes including the Mangal and the Jaji living in the Khost region of Paktia united under local *mullahs* and rebelled against Amanullah. The *mullahs'* concerns about the social reforms especially relating to women were combined with the protests of tribal leaders against the new conscription system, as "it was the tribes that had most resented conscription that formed the base of the rebellion" (Barfield, 2010: 186). The irony was that Amanullah's army was unable to quell this tribal rebellion, which obliged him to ask for help from the Mangal's rivalling tribes. "The necessity of calling on the tribes for military assistance only heightened the perception that his government was weak" (Barfield, 2010: 187). This weakness was further revealed when Amanullah convened a *Loya Jirga* only to see that he had little support. Making some moves backward, he was finally able to appease the tribes; however, this rebellion "smeared Amanullah's reforms as anti-Islamic, a characterisation upon which [his] opponents in the wider political arena could rely to generate more uprisings" (Saikal, 2004: 81).

3.5.4.2. Bacha-i Saqao Revolt of 1929

Thinking that the tribal threat was fully over, Amanullah went on a 'grand tour' abroad with Queen Surayya for over six months. As Afghanistan had long been an isolated country, it was a first in Afghan history that a ruler went abroad somewhere except India. Upon returning with fully refreshed ideas about modernisation, Amanullah convened another *Loya Jirga* in 1928, imposing further reforms with little consent. Both Mahmud Tarzi and Nadir Khan warned him not to be too hasty, but he did not listen to them. He cut all the ties with the religious establishment "ending their stipends, and forbidding membership in Sufi orders by government officials" (Barfield, 2010: 189).

Soon, another tribal rebellion broke out first among the frontier Pashtuns including the Shinwari and the Mohmand as well as the Ghilzai. The starting point of the rebellion was where the Shinwari protested the attempts at government control of the collection of border tolls at the Khyber Pass. When Amanullah sent his troops to them, "some defected joining the tribal *lashkar* against him" (Misdaq, 2006: 64). In other words, the soldiers in the state army defected to the tribal *lashkar* against the state, once again proving the tribal victory over modernity. What is more, "discontented clerics soon gave this tribal rebellion a religious turn by declaring the amir an infidel" (Barfield, 2010: 190). And then it was joined by Kohistanis under a Tajik bandit named Habibullah Kalakani, popularly known as Bacha-i Saqao, who had been involved in the anti-Soviet Basmachi movement in Central Asia and who "had acquired something of a reputation as 'Robin Hood' through his harassment of oppressive government officials and support of the poor" (Ewans, 2002: 132). An opportunist, Kalakani eventually seized the control of Kabul driving Amanullah out of the city to Kandahar. Although rebellions were separate; causes for rebelling were various in each group; and each city was under someone else's control, Kalakani acted like a leader as he had the reins of Kabul for eight months. Rubin (2002: 57) argues that "he was not a traditional tribal or religious leader but a disaffected former state recruit involved in national and even international politics. Bacha-yi Saqao thus foreshadowed the modern Afghan resistance."

The analysis of the failure of Amanullah's reform programme remains a much-debated issue. The four most typical arguments are; (1) that the British were involved

in the overthrow of Amanullah "to keep the Afghan leadership weak and incapable of having any regional impact" (Saikal, 2004: 63) especially in India; (2) that Amanullah lacked the necessary financial resources and trained manpower to carry out his wide programme; (3) that the movement "started from the palace, with little grass-roots involvement in the formulation of its goals" (Saikal, 2004: 60); and (4) that Afghan society was not ready for modernisation. If we, like Poullada, regard the issue as the usual clash between centralisation efforts and tribalism, we will see that it was due to Amanullah's failure to curb the power of tribalism and the tribal understanding of Islam in Afghan society. Yet, in a paradoxical way,

> to retain the Afghan character of his kingdom and to secure the hereditary rule of his dynasty, he needed the support of the Afghan tribes, particularly the Durranis; and to give homogeneity and cohesion to the peoples of Afghanistan, he needed Islam as a religious and cultural bond ... He opposed feudalism as a political force, but he had nothing to substitute for it ... In the face of a tribal-feudal-religious-traditionalist coalition in opposition, he was unable to find the necessary support in a strong urban middle class or in an economically healthy peasant class ... Perhaps one of his greatest failings was that instead of concentrating on the economic development of the country, he dissipated his efforts and resources by introducing mere symbols of progress. (Gregorian, 1969: 269, 274)

Aimed at the small urban population of Kabul, Amanullah's reforms were far from improving the conditions of tribal Pashtuns who formed the majority of the population. Rural people were taxed for urban reforms whose primary impact was on upper-class urban dwellers. No real economic reforms were made in rural areas due to the fact that land was a tribal issue. Social reforms, on the other hand, "reached the rural and tribal areas more via the route of rumor and gossip than through any meaningful application or demand for compliance" (Poullada, 1973: 145). The British, for their part, who disliked Amanullah for his anti-British speeches, "spread photographs of Amanullah's queen amongst the tribes, showing her without a veil amongst the *farangis* (foreigners)" (Misdaq, 2006: 64). Added to this was "Amanullah's discontinuance of tribal allowances, his abolition of the role of tribal khans in administration, and his abuse of the Loya Jirga" (Rubin, 2002: 58) which had alienated the tribal leadership. It was this perception of threat that rallied the tribes preoccupied with 'protecting' the tribal society from the state. In sum, this rebellion was one of the usual tribal uprisings against central authority; not one particularly aimed at modernisation, as it started in regions least affected by reforms,

i.e. the tribal frontier. Thus, what destroyed Amanullah was usual tribal separatism; not social change or religious liberalism.

3.6. Kalakani: A Tajik at the Core of Pashtun Tribalism

Keeping the reins of power as well as the royal treasury in Kabul, Kalakani represented the Afghan throne for a brief period of eight months during which Kabul was plundered. There was no order left neither in the capital nor in the tribal belt where Kalakani "skilfully divided the Pashtun tribes for a surprisingly long time, keeping them at odds with one another by appealing to their local mullahs…as well as playing on traditional animosities between the Ghilzais and the Durranis" (Barfield, 2010: 192). The reason behind this division was that the rebelling frontier Pashtuns could never agree on who should be the successor of Amanullah, which kept Kalakani on the throne. Although instrumental in the overthrow of the ex-ruler, Kalakani was not popular among Pashtun tribes, as could be expected, representing a brief Tajik interruption to Pashtun supremacy in Afghanistan. As Poullada (1973: 196) claims, "the only 'ideology' of the tribes was that of Pushtun supremacy. Aside from the prospect for loot the one thing that moved them deeply was the sight of a Tajik on the Kabul throne." This feeling was so strong that the frontier tribes soon joined the Durrani in Kandahar rallying for Amanullah, the very man whom they had dethroned, showing a typically tribal situation. "Since Afghan politics [or rather, tribal politics,] has always been renowned for its side switching, both parties overlooked the recent unpleasantness so that they could deal with an enemy they now feared more" (Barfield, 2010: 194), i.e. Kalakani. The support for Amanullah would have increased further had it not been for the Ghilzai who withheld their support and defeated the Durrani, due to Nadir Khan's influence on them (Barfield, 2010: 194). Nadir Khan's mission as War Minister in Amanullah's government as someone "responsible for all dealings with the frontier tribes, where he and his brothers had already built a substantial following, enabled him…to strengthen his tribal base further" (Saikal, 2004: 84). Rallying the tribes against Kalakani, Nadir Khan carefully prevented this opposition to open the way for Amanullah, preserving his own interests. Thus, Amanullah was defeated and left for exile in Europe while Pashtun tribes were further fragmented. Although attacking Kabul four times, Nadir

and his brothers, who lacked financial resources, were repulsed each time. Then, most interestingly, they asked for help from across the border, calling the Wazir tribe in the Indian side, which sent a big tribal *lashkar* and finally took Kabul (Barfield, 2010: 195). Unable to show any generosity to the Wazirs, Nadir Khan allowed them to loot Kabul before leaving. One point to be noted here is that despite the internationally recognised Durand Line and the differentiation of destiny between the Pashtuns in Afghanistan and Pathans in British India, it was Pashtun tribalism again that drove Pathans (the Wazirs) to help Pashtuns in return for looting. Their influence was to continue in later periods, too, as Nadir called Pathan tribes once again in 1930 to repress the revolts by the Shinwari and the Ghilzai, the very tribes who had supported Nadir Khan as opposed to Amanullah, but who now saw him as a usurper (Barfield, 2010: 197). These revolts took place because of the fact that the tribes typically rejected to come under state authority. "This succession contest ended when the British formally recognized Nadir's regime…and began providing him with money and arms to stabilize his government" (Barfield, 2010: 197). In other words, it was the usual British support and subsidies that finally ended Pashtun tribal fighting.

3.7. Musahiban Brothers: From Revolutionary to Gradual Modernisation (1929-1973)

With the recognition of Nadir Khan as the new ruler in 1929, the Musahiban dynasty was established under the five Musahiban brothers: Muhammad Aziz, Muhammad Hashim, Muhammad Nadir, Shah Wali and Shah Mahmud. "They, however, belonged to two different and potentially competing branches of the same family" (Saikal, 2004: 104). The first two brothers were born of a Muhammadzai mother while the last three were of a Sadozai mother. With Nadir Khan, it could be said that power had returned to the Sadozai although under a new dynasty. It was also the reason why he adopted the title Shah once again to show that the Muhammadzai dynasty was over. In the next fifty years following Nadir Shah's brief rule of 4 years, "power remained highly concentrated within Nadir's extended family" (Barfield, 2010: 198), as will be seen. Under Zahir Shah, who became the successor to his father when he was only 19, the state was administered by his Musahiban uncles in the first 30 years and by his Prime Ministers, whom he

appointed from among family members, in the last 10 years. This is a sign that the 'gradually modernising' state under the Musahiban brothers was governed as a family business where tribalism and modernisation went hand in hand, to such an extent that the post of PM and other ministers were filled through successions.

Considering the Musahiban rule, the very first thing to be said is that they, departing from Amanullah's revolutionary modernisation, initiated a gradual modernisation programme accompanied by economic development. What the Musahibans prioritised was stability in the country and they did whatever was necessary to achieve it, including cooperation with tribes. Upon taking control, Nadir Shah confirmed his determination by saying: "I will not be king but the servant of the tribes and the country" (Barfield, 2010: 195), thus differentiating himself from Amanullah. He chose to co-opt those forces that had dethroned Amanullah, allocating "governmental positions…to buy the support of the religious establishment and the tribes" (Saikal, 2004: 100). He realised that all the "rebellions that were later justified in Islamic terms had initially been provoked by the state's economic demands for money and conscript troops" (Barfield, 2010: 198). Thus, he tried to reduce this economic pressure on tribes, appeasing the tension between Kabul and the tribes. Nevertheless, this was not a total retreat; but a type of modernisation in which tribalism was *allowed* to articulate; whereby it would be encapsulated within the modern state. The Constitution of 1931 provides a perfect example, including a "provision for consultation with the tribal leaders by means of a bi-cameral parliament, 105 of whose members were selected as a consultative National Council" (Ewans, 2002: 140). Although Nadir's Constitution erased almost all the previous reforms, it was a strategic move to legitimise his rule so that he could launch his cautious reform programme. The Musahibans' gradual reform programme was to be realised through educating the people. They integrated Pashtun tribesmen into the administrative system "by assigning them the role of middlemen between the local society and the central state, without, however, allowing them any direct influence on state policies" (Rasuly-Paleczek, 2001: 155). To give the impression of power sharing, sons of tribal chiefs were taken into the army, but only after they were educated in military schools. Similarly, as a counterforce to the strength of land ownership by tribes, industrialisation was initiated as something out of the control of tribes. The introduction of industrialisation into a tribal society "[necessitated]

changes in the economic infrastructure and the replacement of a tribal identity with a national one" (Makhmalbaf, 2001: 36). Consequently, cotton, sugar, textile and cement factories were opened in the 40s, through which economic self-sufficiency was sought. The *Bank-i Milli* (Afghan National Bank) was opened in 1930 and the first private companies were formed. Much of these economic innovations were masterminded by the much-noted businessman Abdul Majid Zabuli who *modernised* the economy with a *pre-modern* method by "making members of the dynasty, in particular the prime minister, partners in business" (M. Kakar, 1995: 5).

In prioritising stability in Afghanistan, Nadir Shah pursued a policy of non-involvement in all the movements abroad. Especially the tribal belt was very active in the 1930s with the Pathan nationalist-reformist movement, the *Khudai Khidmatgaran*, urging for a reformed Pathan society through secular education. The leader of this movement was Abdul Ghaffar Khan, popularly known as Badshah Khan, who belonged to the Muhammadzai family, the previous ruling dynasty in Afghanistan. Ghaffar Khan was also an admirer of Amanullah Khan, maintaining close ties with the overthrown ruler. Yet, it was because of these factors that Ghaffar was unable to receive any help and support from Kabul under Nadir Shah. Apart from the fact that Nadir Shah was a Musahiban who had overthrown Amanullah, any official support to this reformist movement based on secular education would alienate Pashtun tribes who were already fed up with Amanullah's speedy reforms. Let alone supporting, Nadir's government went as far as discouraging the activities of the *Khudai* and disassociating itself from them. "Thus, the same man who had mobilized the frontier Pathan tribes for the cause of Afghan independence in 1919" (Gregorian, 1969: 328) and who had taken Kabul with their help in 1930 now failed to support them. Left without Afghan support, Ghaffar Khan had to remain within the larger Indian nationalist movement against the British, thus seeking "to unite the Pashtuns in opposition, at first to the British rule of India, and then to the transfer of India's Pashtun areas to the projected Pakistan" (Saikal, 2010: 8) and not to Afghanistan, which would lead to many other problems in the coming years. In the meanwhile, the perception of Nadir Shah among some tribes as usurper and as someone who failed to support his fellow tribesmen against the British soon culminated in his assassination in 1933. This typical Afghan case is another indicator that Pashtun tribalism still counted as a force among the people no matter how it was

divided into two modern forms of Pashtun nationalism in Afghanistan and Pathan nationalism in India.

Nadir Shah was followed by his son Zahir Shah who was only 19 when he assumed power. Zahir's rule can be divided into three periods as: (1) 1933-1953, (2) 1953-1963, and (3) 1963-1973. In the first 20-year period, which was a relatively stable one, Zahir was the monarch only in name as real power rested in his uncles Muhammad Hashim (1933-1946) and Shah Mahmud (1946-1953) as prime ministers. The second part of this period is also known as the 'Liberal Parliament' period when "the government refrained almost completely from interfering in parliamentary elections" (M. Kakar, 1995: 6). Although political parties were not legalised yet, there were several party-like formations such as the *Wish Zalmayan* (the Awakened Youth), the Fatherland and the National Club. Following the enactment of a Free Press Law, several papers appeared in the national scene, such as *Watan*, *Niday-e Khalq*, *Ulus*, etc., which acted more as the mouthpiece of the above-mentioned formations than as "a vehicle of propaganda among a largely illiterate people" (M. Kakar, 1995: 6). The second 10-year period, which represents an authoritative break in the relatively liberal environment offered under the Musahiban dynasty, was marked by PM Daoud Khan, the son of Muhammad Aziz, which will be discussed in the next chapter within the frame of Socialism in Afghanistan. And in the very last 10-year period, Zahir finally took the reins of power whereby he made some significant reforms. Denoting an experimentation with democracy, this period was also called 'New Democracy' (*Democracy-e Nau*) which was "based on retention of the monarchy, incorporation of traditional tribal institutions, strong parliamentarism, and 'cooperation of all classes of the nation, especially the educated people and the youth'" (Saikal, 2004: 142) provided by Kabul University which was founded in 1946.

First and foremost of Zahir's reforms was the promulgation of the Constitution of 1964 which brought forth a bi-cameral parliament, free elections and civil rights. Giving supremacy to secular over religious law, the Constitution was legitimised through a *Loya Jirga*, as usual. In the new parliamentary system, the *Loya Jirga* and the *Shura* (Parliament) existed side by side. The *Shura* consisted of the *Wolesi Jirga* (House of the People) elected by secret ballot and the *Meshrano Jirga* (House of the Elders) partly-elected and partly-appointed by the King while the *Loya Jirga*

comprised all the members of the Parliament and leaders of the provincial *jirgas* (Ewans, 2002: 166). To be assembled on the King's request, the *Loya Jirga* "was to serve as an instrument for testing popular attitudes and also as an additional means for the King to secure wider political support for his initiatives" (Saikal, 2004: 148). That is to say, the *Loya Jirga* was still at the service of the King who was also allowed by the Constitution to appoint family members to his government. These exclusive rights "helped the King to seek modern legitimacy for his traditional leadership" (Saikal, 2004: 152). The situation was similar on the part of the public, as well. Although the election system was a modern one, the base for electing was not so. During the elections of 1965, people still voted according to tribal ties, sending khans and local power elite to the Parliament, who were

> mainly interested in pressuring the executive to further their own interests and those of their own constituencies…Thus, contrary to the spirit of a liberal constitution, the assembly was dominated by nonliberals and nondemocrats who did not know the workings of the constitution" (M. Kakar, 1995: 10).

Chances for the educated middle class to enter the Parliament was very low as it constituted only a minority. This means that the tribal system was still functioning; the only difference was that it was now in a 'modern' Parliament, not in the *Loya Jirga*. Consequently, the five governments formed in this period were short-lived, lasting approximately two years.

Ewans argues that Zahir's failure lied in "his refusal to pass into law the political parties, provincial councils and municipalities legislation which would have given his governments…the political support they required in order to function effectively" (Ewans, 2002: 177). His concern was about the possible factionalism and extremism these actions might have bred. And he was to prove right, as extremist groups were to find political voice as political parties were to be legalised after Daoud's coup.

3.8. Conclusion

This chapter has shown us a number of important points with regards to Pashtun tribalism and Afghan nationalism. First of all, we have seen an attempt to build up a modern Afghan nation-state through the official ideology of 'Afghan

Nationalism' which was actually Pashtun Nationalism. This was part of an effort to make the Pashtun tribe the basis of an Afghan nation, which was an ill-devised formula from the start. The reason is that a nation and a tribe are categorically different systems of representation. A tribe has to cease to be what it is; or to detribalise in order to be made into a nation. As we have seen in this chapter, being a Pashtun meant belonging to a tribe. Pashtuns' first and foremost belonging was to the tribe and there was almost no secondary belonging, for the state was seen as something external. Consequently, the concept of citizenship failed to be established in Afghanistan where blood relations retained their significance. Thus, the notion of a *constant* 'national unity' was weak, as unity was understood in tribal terms where *situational* alliances were made. This is also in line with Gellner's (1983a: 138) contention that "a tribal nation may for a time be tribal internally and national externally," to keep peace internally and defend it externally. Similarly, while trying to draw a national Afghan picture in the eyes of the outside world, Afghanistan retained a tribal society within. Therefore, the very basic conclusion to be made from this chapter is, thus, the difficulty of building a nation-state out of a tribal society and the invalidity of the argument that tribalism eventually gives way to nationalism.

Secondly, the fact that Pashtuns constituted a divided population between Afghanistan and Pakistan made the picture more complicated. The creation of two distinct nationalisms, that of the Afghan and the Pathan, out of one single Pashtun tribalism seemed to be operating on the surface; but actually failed within. No matter how the destinies of the two were officially separated, tribes in both sides continued to support each other and, what is more, punished those rulers who didn't. The solidarity between Pashtuns and Pathans was, thus, a proof of the survival of Pashtun tribalism.

What was the meaning of the ideology Nationalism in Afghanistan then? As Rubin (2002: 84) argues, the Afghan state "never developed a coherent ideology. Like other authoritarian regimes, it relied on unelaborated 'mentalities,' or general political orientations." The main emphasis of the state was on the modernisation of the country through Western imports *and* the maintenance of Afghan independence by balancing the two superpowers, the British and Russians. In this regard, Nationalism did not have the effective power of an ideology in Afghanistan as it remained limited to a small elite based in Kabul. It was not a grassroots movement

prevailing throughout the country. It was only a cosmetic ideology failing to achieve a linguistic, economic and cultural unity in the country. The concrete examples were that Pashto was still not as commonly-used as Persian in state levels. Most of the articles published in the *Siraj* were still written in Persian even by Tarzi himself. Besides, the level of literacy was very low, which was a bar before spreading the ideas of nationalism. The third conclusion, then, is that the ideology of Nationalism became a tool in the hands of the Afghan state which utilised it to achieve more central state power as opposed to tribal power.

And finally, this chapter has revealed a differentiation between two forms of tribalism that went parallel, as the Afghan tribal confederacy evolved into a centralist state: the 'pure' tribalism on the frontier, which was out in the open, and the latent tribalism within the state. What we have basically seen in this chapter is how the latter articulated within modern forms in various ways and, thus, survived within the state.

CHAPTER 4

ENCOUNTER OF PASHTUN TRIBALISM WITH SOCIALISM

4.1. From Nationalism to National Socialism: PM Daoud Khan (1953-1963)

The previous chapter showed that Zahir, the son of Nadir Shah, assumed power at the age of 19 following the assassination of his father in 1933. Although this accession took place without much ado, Zahir's uncle Muhammad Hashim, born of a Sadozai mother along with his brother Muhammad Aziz, actually intended "to strengthen the position of his own branch in the royal power hierarchy" (Saikal, 2004: 110). That was why he, upon the assassination of his brother Aziz who was the Afghan Ambassador to Germany in the early 1930s, treated Daoud and Naim, his two nephews, as sons. With Zahir assuming power as the King in 1933, Muhammad Hashim strengthened Daoud's position more by marrying him to Zahir's sister, "which made Daoud *Agha-Lala* (Senior Brother-in-law) to the King – a term of kinship carrying substantial weight in the Pashtun code of consanguinal relations" (Saikal, 2004: 110). It can be seen how blood relations still maintained their significance at the top.

Daoud had gone to the *Amaniyya* College in Afghanistan founded by Amanullah, where he received education in line with German curriculum. The significance of Germany needs attention at this point, as pro-German ideas had been spreading in Afghanistan since World War I. Germany offered the 'German way of modernisation' to Muslim countries like Iran and the Arab world as well as Afghanistan, "as a model for modernization independent of the old imperial powers, [which was] a path that also avoided the atheistic and antitraditional elements of communism" (Wahab and Youngerman, 2007: 115). This idea started to find more audience especially after the withdrawal of the British from the region in 1947 and Germany gradually assumed the role of the new foreign assistant in industrialising

Afghanistan. German experts, technicians and businessmen slowly diffused into the country, bringing with them the ideology of National Socialism that was prevalent in the Nazi Germany in the inter-war years. The Nazi propaganda also "convinced some educated Afghans that they were the 'original Aryans' and discouraged the previously widespread belief that the Pashtun were one of the biblical Lost Tribes of Israel" (Wahab and Youngerman, 2007: 114). Had the Second World War not erupted, this process might have continued with more impact. However, as Afghanistan, stuck between two Allied Powers once again, chose to remain neutral in the war, German presence in the country became problematic and German advisors were gradually expelled from the country.

Although German influence in Afghanistan could not fully realise its potential, it still penetrated into some minds in certain Afghan educative institutions such as the *Amaniyya*. Daoud was one such student who, even when he was sent to France for higher education along with his cousin Zahir, continued to follow the events in the Nazi Germany until he came back to Afghanistan in 1930. Being a fierce Pashtun nationalist, Daoud was especially influenced by Hitler's principle of 'One People, One Nation, One Leader.' Not unlike Hitler, he saw "national progress as inseparably intertwined with a type of chauvinist nationalism under a centralised, determined, charismatic leadership" (Saikal, 2004: 112). In this regard, he believed that Afghanistan could only be developed and modernised under the supremacy and unity of Pashtuns, thereby calling for the ideology of Pashtunism, Pashtunification of Afghanistan and the idea of a 'Greater Afghanistan' through the reunification of Pashtuns in both sides of the Durand Line. Upon returning to Afghanistan, Daoud studied in the Military Academy and then he was given the governorship of Kandahar in 1935, which was a perfect place to promote his Pashtun nationalist ideology. There, Daoud formed his power basis by cultivating a number of Durrani and Ghilzai tribal chieftains who were dedicated Pashtunists. When he was finally summoned to Kabul in 1939 for the position of Commander of the Central Forces, Daoud brought this circle of Pashtunist tribal leaders with him to Kabul. During his years as Commander, he cultivated a strong Pashtunist base in the army.

As Daoud was busy promoting Pashtunism, significant Pashtunist reforms were made by the government in the meanwhile. Pashto was accepted as the national language in 1937 and it was set to replace Persian in schools as well as in

government levels as the main medium of communication. Government officials, who were mostly Pashtun and Tajik, were forced to conduct their work in Pashto, and no more in Persian which had been the lingua franca of Afghan bureaucracy. The state even initiated Pashto courses for those civil servants who did not speak Pashto and finally founded the *Pashto Tulana* (Pashto Academy) in 1937 as the centre for instructing and institutionalising Pashto. "Feverish attempts were made to hammer out a literary Pashtu based on its southern (Paktiya) dialect" (Saikal, 2004: 145) with publications multiplying in *Kabul*, the journal of the Academy.

Following the Premiership of Muhammad Hashim and Shah Mahmud, Daoud was finally appointed as Zahir Shah's PM in 1953 whereupon he initiated his Pashtunist programme. Following the footsteps of Abdurrahman, he started with attempting to further Pashtunise northern Afghanistan through forced migrations. Added to his efforts of Pashtunification was his inclusive perception of Pashtuns living in Pakistan, which was a result of the feeling of shame that he had for his ancestors, especially for Sultan Muhammad (the ancestor of the Musahiban family also called the 'Peshawar *Sardars*') who had surrendered Peshawar to the Sikhs in 1818. For this purpose, he had even pushed for entering the World War II on the side of Germany in return for the restoration of the tribal belt in British possession and the designation of the Indus River as the border. Yet, he had a limited effect on King Zahir at that time who chose neutrality. Still, after the war, he was to urge further for the 'Pashtunistan Issue' which was to be his obsession, to be discussed below.

During Daoud's Premiership, Afghanistan, thanks to the Cold War atmosphere, received foreign aid from many countries such as the USSR, Germany, France, Italy, the US, etc. Daoud concentrated the first and greater part of this aid on the army which he gradually strengthened. In time, he achieved such a strong army that he was no longer obliged to ask for tribal support to suppress even a major rebellion. Saikal (2004: 126) gives an example where "in 1959, the fierce and belligerent Mangals preferred to flee across the border to Pakistan rather than to confront regular government units – an unprecedented occurrence in Afghanistan's modern history theretofore." As Daoud's army was successful in placating the frontier tribes, he was also "encouraged to take a strong line with tribal leaders in Kandahar" (Ewans, 2002: 158) and establish his authority over them. As for the second part of the foreign aid, Daoud concentrated it on industrial development. Having already hit tribal power

through his strong army, Daoud further weakened it thanks to economic power, gradually imposing taxation on tribes and co-opting tribal authorities. He was also successful in social reforms whereby women were *allowed* to, but not *forced* to, unveil in 1959. It was a smooth change, as Daoud's government "did not make a provocative fanfare on the occasion as did Amanullah in the 1920s" (M. Kakar, 1995: 8). The increase in the rate of female education as well as the number of working women were also contributing factors in this.

All in all, Daoud succeeded where his predecessors failed, in institutionalising the state with the help of a strong army and a relatively better economy. Still, Saikal (2004: 130) warns us that "the summit of power continued to be dominated by an exclusionist circle of people who operated according to the principles of group solidarity." That is to say, no matter how the state's relations with tribes were in favour of the state, those who held state power continued to sustain tribalism at the top.

4.1.1. A New Nationalist Ideology: Pashtunistan Issue

The independence and consequent partition of India into two as the sovereign states of India and Pakistan in 1947 as well as the British withdrawal from the region had important consequences for Afghanistan. Upon partition, the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) was given the option of joining either India or Pakistan. Although only 55% of the population participated in the plebiscite held in 1947, a great majority voted for Pakistan which was designed to be an Islamic state as opposed to majority-Hindu India. The Afghan state, on the other hand, protested that the NWFP was not given the option of acceding to Afghanistan or forming an independent state called 'Pashtunistan.' This claim was built on the ground that the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) in the NWFP, such as Waziristan, had always been autonomous just like the princely states of India which were given independence. According to the Anglo-Afghan Treaty of 1921, the British had accepted that "the conditions of the frontier tribes of the two governments [were] of interest to the Government of Afghanistan" (Ewans, 2002: 146). These arguments, defended vehemently by Daoud, were further strengthened with the assembly of a *Loya Jirga* in 1949 which declared its support for Pashtunistan. Still, Pakistan was

unwilling to consider this protest, "despite the fact that it demanded itself the application of the same principle with regard to Kashmir, a territory disputed between Pakistan and India" (M. Kakar, 1995: 7).

Afghanistan's efforts were fruitless due to a number of reasons. First of all, the NWFP had been under British rule for 50 years and particularly the Pashtun elite living there had been exposed to the effects of British colonisation, such as receiving education in British-model colleges. "The British had also favoured the recruitment of Pashtuns into the armed forces because of their proven fighting qualities, and they were thus well represented in the Pakistani officer corps" (Rasanayagam, 2005: 33). It was one of these Pashtun generals, Ayub Khan, who even became the President of Pakistan in 1958 and proved an enemy of PM Daoud Khan, fiercely opposing the idea of an independent Pashtunistan as it gave sustenance to further separationist movements such as that of Baluchistan. PM Daoud Khan had intense interpersonal problems with President Ayub Khan (Saikal, 2004: 131), just like the extended version of a *tarburwali*; that is why the problem eventually came into a deadlock. As it can be seen, the leaders of both sides were Pashtun; but their 'official destinies' were separated for good. Yet, we still cannot say that Pashtun tribes on either side recognised such a separation.

Secondly, there was a big paradox in the Afghan claim: An independent Pashtunistan would mean an obligation on the side of Afghanistan to abandon its own Pashtun population which was the very basis of the Afghan state. Although the Afghan strategy might be first establishing an independent Pashtunistan and then annexing it to the mainland Afghanistan, Pakistan regarded it as a baseless claim.

The Pashtunistan issue was ignited even more as Daoud Khan became the PM in 1953. He was to use it frequently as a pretext to legitimise his actions, as will be shown below. His obsession with Pashtunistan was so persistent that it eventually became the state's official national ideology, taking the form of "annual days, officially organized demonstrations, symbolic postage stamps, and many tracts and other publications intended to further the cause" (Hyman, 2002: 308). This ideology, however, was a hostile one for the newly-founded Pakistani state which, under Pashtun President Ayub Khan, eventually broke all diplomatic ties with Afghanistan and closed the border in 1961. The impact of this closure was felt most in Afghan trade which was still fragile as a source of revenue. Closure of the border also

"stopped the annual migration of the nomad *kuchis* to and from Pakistan" (Ewans, 2002: 160), further hitting local trade. Consequently, Afghanistan plunged into an economic crisis, looking for a saviour who was not very far.

It was only after the resignation of PM Daoud Khan, the leader of the Pashunistan cause, in 1963 that the relations between the two countries started to normalise and the border was fully reopened in 1965. Zahir Shah named Muhammad Yousuf, a non-Pashtun, as the new PM, in order to cool down the Pashtunistan issue. He reinstituted the relations with Pakistan whereupon the tribal belt continued to receive special treatment as before. For instance, in the Indo-Pakistani War of 1965, Afghanistan "did nothing to discourage the frontier tribes who 'tried to join the Pakistan armed forces to fight the infidel Hindu enemy'" (Saikal, 2004: 137). In other words, following all the bloody opposition between Daoud Khan in Afghanistan and Ayub Khan in Pakistan, Pashtun tribes still helped their fellow tribesmen in Pakistan to fight their enemy, India. If we are talking about 'common enemies,' it means that we are still talking about tribalism. With the removal of the colonial power and the establishment of Pakistan, there were now two sovereign states at issue; but it seems that the population divided between them, almost like an intersection set, acted as a 'bipartisan' that had a foot in both camps, giving support to who was in need. In other words, Pashtun tribalism still did not recognise the Durand Line, or any other line that would attempt to separate Pashtun tribes.

4.2. Impact of Durrani Modernisation

4.2.1. Impact of Modernisation on the Centre: Birth of New 'Ideologies'

The Musahiban dynasty coincided with the start of the Cold War which gave Afghanistan an opportunity to receive foreign aid from many countries including Germany, France, Italy, the USSR, the US, etc. The main consequence was that Afghanistan gradually turned into a rentier state. Other consequences such as foreign education, foreign tourists, foreign advisors, foreign publications and foreign radio broadcasts, on the other hand, were to be influential in the spread of new ideas in Afghanistan. The impact of education needs particular emphasis at this point.

Under the Musahiban dynasty, especially under PM Daoud Khan (1953-1963), foreign schools proliferated in Afghanistan, creating an incoherent education system in the country which fed from multiple resources. In this period, the USSR run the Polytechnic School; Kabul University had a strong affiliation with the US; the Police Academy was under Germans; and the French trained lawyers and medical practitioners (Saikal, 2004: 124). It was inevitable that such diversity led to a proliferation of new ideas and ideologies, culminating in an enlarging group of educated youth and discontented intellectuals in urban centres, particularly in Kabul, who formed a 'primitive civil society.' Kabul University, in this regard, was *the* centre of politicisation and polarisation where students grouped under student unions among which was the Left-oriented reformist group called the *Wish Zalmayan* (Awakened Youth) founded during the Liberal Parliament period in 1947. The unions allied with the intelligentsia and organised clubs, discussion groups, newspapers, etc. but not political parties yet. Preoccupied with recruitment at the beginning, they only published newspapers and organised public demonstrations. Born out of foreign schools, the unions had links with the international system, as the Afghan state was in the position of an aid-receiver from multiple sources. Thus, as Rubin (2002: 81) says, "a rentier state produced rentier revolutionaries." In other words, the generation educated in the New Democracy era was to breed the revolutionary figures of later years. Although the Awakened Youth was dissolved in 1952, the movement did not just evaporate. It was to be the foundation stone of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) to be established in 1965, which would find better opportunities to organise with Soviet aid that was on the way.

Being the products of modern education in state schools, these students, as well as the intelligentsia allied to them, represented modernity as opposed to the 'old regime' represented by the monarchy. They were critical of "the corruption and stagnation of the old regime and [had] a belief in…the myth of revolution" (Rubin, 2002: 84). They sought to form a new order where they questioned the legitimacy of the king, seeing "the monarchy as an obstacle to the country's progress (and their own)" (Barfield, 2010: 212). In other words, it was no more the ruler at the top who was preoccupied with progress and modernisation, such as Amanullah or Zahir Shah, but a civil society questioning it.

Consequently the nature of political conflicts in the period from 1960 to 1970 was no longer based on the old tradition, that of periphery versus centre or tribe versus state. The new bases adopted for political conflict were mainly concerned with the question of legitimacy of the government, articulated by foreign trained youths in Afghanistan. (Siddiqi, 1989: 126)

Although this argument may seem sound at first sight, it still needs some further explanation. First of all, *modern* political questioning, in this period, was still something peculiar to Kabul while the tribal society was still strong in other major cities like Kandahar. The reason was that education remained largely limited to Kabul city which, as late as 1959, contained circa 75% of the secondary school students in Afghanistan (Rubin, 2002: 70). All the *modern* ideological movements were born at the campus of Kabul University, which took *modern* bases for political thinking: old regime vs. new regime. On the other hand, political conflicts that went on in the countryside as usual still compounded the opposition of the tribe vs. the state. True that modernisation had started to yield its fruits in Kabul where it had been implemented. However, the tribal society, for the most part, remained untouched as the Musahibans preferred to ignore it rather than confronting it (Barfield, 2010: 232). In other words, modernisation had not penetrated into the entire tribal society; but had a certain impact upon those tribes which had been exposed to it, including the Ghilzai.

4.2.2. Impact of Modernisation on Tribalism: Detribalisation of the Ghilzai

Modern reforms realised by the Durrani state had an interesting consequence in terms of Pashtun tribalism. The ideology of Pashtun Nationalism, which was imposed by the reformist state, was something meant for Pashtuns; it did not have much significance for non-Pashtuns. Among Pashtuns, it naturally benefited the Durrani, the ruling tribe, who had been most exposed to detribalising effects of modern reforms since the Safavid Empire. The real impact of reforms, however, was on the non-Durrani Pashtuns who consisted of the frontier tribes and the Ghilzai, the ancient rival of the Durrani. Given the fact that the frontier tribes had always rejected state authority in every form, the Ghilzai were the most likely to benefit from Pashtun Nationalism, who

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now found in Pashtun nationalism an ideology which gave them an opportunity to improve their social lot and the means of wresting the monopoly of power from the establishment. This group gained recruits especially amongst the young educated elite (particularly those who came from the Ghilzay) who had recently moved to the towns and were rapidly losing their tribal customs. (Roy, 1990: 18)

Reforms of the Durrani state represented a contributing factor in the detribalisation process of the Ghilzai in terms of the opportunities they provided such as modern education, job opportunities, urbanisation, etc. PM Daoud Khan, a Pashtun Nationalist, had "established a military boarding school that trained mainly eastern and Ghilzai Pashtuns for careers in the officer corps" (Rubin, 2002: 69) as well as tribal boarding schools which were to play a significant role in preparing the tribal youth for a modern state system. Typically, tribal Pashtuns at first saw such schools as a challenge to their authority. Thus, they "treated modern education like conscription, paying poor families to replace their sons in the schools" (Rubin, 2002: 76). Yet, as they gradually realised the power and influence of an educated kinsman placed in state bureaucracy, they "attempted to co-opt modern education and make the influence derived from it part of the package of benefits they could offer their constituents" (Rubin, 2002: 76). In other words, tribal Pashtun leaders now offered their tribesmen an opportunity to be educated in state schools. Interestingly, modern education, which had been vehemently rejected by tribes, now turned into something offered by tribal leaders as if it was a kind of booty; because it offered a way to power. Considering that the tribal system was a system of distribution, it was normal that anything which had value could turn into booty to be distributed among tribesmen. With modernity, the substance of booty had changed; yet, the concept of booty was still there for the tribal system was intact. Foreign aid had also articulated into the tribal system as booty. As Rubin (2002: 66) claims, the domestic consequence of becoming an aid-dependent rentier state was "the distribution of foreign aid as patronage to favoured groups." In this regard, tribal Pashtuns including the Ghilzai were the beneficiaries of irrigation projects; dominated the trucking industry thanks to their location close to the border; and entered, as the new middle class, into civil service (Rubin, 2002: 66). In the meanwhile, the tribal youth sent to tribal boarding schools were exposed to a new way of life away from their tribe and kin. This was just the beginning of a detribalisation process.

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It has been said that both the Durrani and the Ghilzai were detribalised in the modernisation process in different ways. Although known as the cradle of Pashtun tribal world, the Durrani were not as strong a tribe as the Ghilzai, being "more skilled in the arts of peace than they were in those of war" (Barfield, 2010: 284). The reason was that they had long been detribalised due to their position as the royal lineage since Ahmad Shah Baba. Their detribalisation had been in the form of Royalisation and Persianisation, both belonging to pre-modernity. As the ruling elite detribalised, so did the Durrani tribes who were also accepted as of the same cloth due to their kinship bonds to the ruling family as well as the preferential treatment they received, ranging from "eighteenth-century land grants to twentieth-century irrigation projects" (Barfield, 2010: 287). Non-royal Ghilzai, on the other hand, had preserved their egalitarian structure and "had long proved themselves superior to the Durranis in times of war and disorder, because their social and political structure was better adapted to cope with it" (Barfield, 2010: 285). There were also economic factors because the Ghilzai, also called the Eastern Pashtuns, lived on a subsistence economy in a scarcely arable land while the Durrani, also called the Southern Pashtuns, lived on irrigated agriculture in relatively prosperous lands within the zone of state control. They had a position in between the state-controlled tribes of the Durrani close to cities and the uncontrolled hinterlands of frontier tribes. Among the Ghilzai, it was difficult to accumulate wealth which was "rarely enough to sustain a family's superior position across many generations" (Barfield, 2010: 286). Therefore, their detribalisation was a recent phenomenon which started with the impact of a top-down modernisation. While the bureaucratic elite represented by the Durrani had served the monarchy for years, the Ghilzai "emerged through party affiliation [with the communist PDPA] and had no previous experience of bureaucracy" (Misdaq, 2006: 101). Furthermore, the fact that they had no royalist tradition like the Durrani made them more open to the modern ideologies of Socialism and Communism as they detribalised. It might be argued that the Royalist Durrani were more fit for Nationalism, an elitist movement. Even when they became Socialists, they were unconvincing due to their Royalism and were labelled as 'Royal Communists,' which is an oxymoron in itself. On the other hand, the Ghilzai gradually formed the backbone of the PDPA as well as the Afghan army which became the most modern sector of Afghan society with Soviet aid. As Brigot and Roy (1988: 23) claim, "many

young officers, of Pushtun origin but not belonging to the aristocracy, turned towards Marxism." Who is meant by these non-aristocratic Pashtuns was basically the Ghilzai.

The only Pashtun groups that remained thoroughly tribal were the frontier tribes which "developed a minority attitude and [became] radicalized, taking every possible means to combat their rivals, who [were] their tribal antagonists, not the Soviet forces" (Brigot and Roy, 1988: 104). That is to say, many frontier tribes rallied against the Durrani due to their resentment at such *long-durée* Durrani power and allied with the Ghilzai. This was not an ideological alliance since the majority of both the Durrani and the Ghilzai intelligentsia claimed to be socialist at that time; but it was a tribal alliance due to the legacy of tribal rivalry. In sum, "the behaviour of the people [was still] determined essentially by the local rather than the national situation" (Brigot and Roy, 1988: 104). Therefore, this period might be read as the continuation of the usual tribal conflict between the Durrani and the non-Durrani Pashtuns, now set in a modern context, especially as the Ghilzai rose into power as opposed to their rival, the Durrani.

4.3. Towards Socialism in Afghanistan

4.3.1. Soviet Penetration into Afghanistan

The power vacuum left by the British in the region was quickly filled by the US as opposed to the USSR. Seeing this, the Afghan state under PM Daoud Khan asked for aid and support from the US only to be rejected on grounds that the US was disinterested in Afghanistan. The actual reason was that the US was cultivating her new partner, Pakistan, in the face of India, which was under Soviet influence. Any US support to Daoud at that time might have bolstered the Pashtunistan campaign, which would be a hit to Pakistan. These developments show us how the tension between Afghanistan and Pakistan was entangled with the start of a new 'Great Game' in the region, this time called the 'Cold War' between the USSR and the US.

Humiliated at the US refusal, Daoud, already obsessed with the Pashtunistan issue and exposed to an economic crisis because of it, broke the so-called traditional, and at least official, Afghan neutrality and finally accepted the long-standing Soviet

hand. This was not an ideological alliance, though, for Daoud was not a Marxist, but a modernist (Magnus and Naby, 1998: 98). Soviet hand was only a last resort for Daoud who accepted it while "recognizing that it was a gamble" (Magnus and Naby, 1998: 104). Besides, the fact that the Pashtunistan issue, as well as Pashtun Nationalism, was something already supported by the USSR had been inducing factors for Daoud. Based on this ground, he "managed to persuade a *loya jirga* to approve the concept of a thoroughgoing military relationship with the Soviets" (Ewans, 2002: 154-55) no matter how tribal leaders rejected to see 'infidel' powers strengthening the central state. This is an interesting case indeed, because the Pashtunistan issue was actually the official ideology of the state; but it worked on tribes as it was also a tribal issue. As usual, Pashtun Nationalism, as an ideology, was entangled with Pashtun tribalism; or, put another way, Pashtun tribalism was made to serve the purpose of Pashtun Nationalism.

The USSR not only provided a perfect alternative to Pakistan as a trade route but also became Afghanistan's new assistant in industrialisation, undertaking big construction projects and introducing the 5-year economic plans into this country. However, as usual, hard power was accompanied by soft power. Along with the concrete aid programs, Soviet ideology, to be referred to as Socialism, Communism or Marxism, gradually diffused into the country through; Soviet personnel pouring into all levels of the government and industry, Afghan engineers trained in the USSR, Afghan students sent to the USSR for education, and most importantly, Afghan army trained and supplied by Soviet army. That is to say, Socialism entered into Afghanistan through gradual Soviet penetration into the country. Afghan tendency for this ideology was motivated not "by ideological sympathy, but sprang from a recognition of the inevitable predominance of a powerful neighbour, which offered, moreover, the most important resources and the most favourable terms for the planned development of Afghanistan" (Brigot and Roy, 1988: 29). As agreements between the USSR and Afghanistan multiplied, most Afghan institutions were modelled on Soviet institutions while pro-Soviet agents were placed in the highest levels of the government and Afghan students sent to the USSR were recruited by the Russian KGB (Committee for State Security).

More specifically, Afghan army was *the* sphere where Socialism took root. Russians successfully organised their own ideological cadres through the military

and secured a base in Afghan army. "Soviet infiltration on the Afghan army…reached such a degree of perfection that the Soviet advisers, present in every regiment and battalion, knew in detail and from day to day the slightest movement of the Afghan army" (Brigot and Roy, 1988: 42). How Pashtuns allowed such penetration into the military was implicit in Daoud's usual pretext: "To justify the military changes to a suspicious population, in particular the Pashtuns, on whom the officer ranks relied, the demands for Pashtunistan were raised as a rallying point" (Magnus and Naby, 1998: 103). After all, the high-rank officers in the army were Pashtuns and most had been Soviet-educated. Daoud, having already cultivated a power base in the army since when he was the Commander of the Central Army, exploited the feelings of nationalism among Pashtuns while, ironically, allowing foreign penetration into the Afghan army which represented the peak point of nationalism. Meaning, he sacrificed domestic integrity for his expansive nationalism.

A final point to be made is the need to consider these events within the Cold War frame. Saikal (2004: 127) argues that the real purpose of Daoud's proximity to the USSR was "to induce a reluctant Washington to attach greater importance to Afghanistan," just like in the tribal playing with the British and the Russians by his predecessors. And he was actually successful as the US also started to make some moves later on, such as building an international airport in Kabul, which the Soviets saw as a base to launch a nuclear strike on them (Ewans, 2002: 158), and irrigation projects as well as their influence on Kabul University. Actually the two superpowers existed side by side within Afghanistan as aid-givers, recognising the sovereignty of this state and restricting themselves to economic aid.

4.3.2. Daoud's Coup of 1973: Prelude to Socialism

In the years between 1963 and 1973, the resigned PM Daoud Khan waited for an opportunity to come to power again. Just before his resignation, he had given a set of reformist proposals to King Zahir, hoping to come back though the parliamentary system. It was true that Zahir initiated reform under the New Democracy movement. Yet, his Constitution of 1964 included a key article prohibiting the royal family members to stand for elections or serve as ministers. This prohibition, especially strengthened by the approving *Loya Jirga*, was aimed particularly at Daoud, as well

as his brother Naim, in order to prevent him from coming to power once again (Ewans, 2002: 166). In other words, the seemingly democratic move of removing the royal family from politics was actually the result of a *tarburwali* as it was intended for specific people. Even though it actually signified progress in terms of democratisation, this article was the reason why Daoud and his brother Naim "turned against the new arrangement because it excluded them from politics" (M. Kakar, 1995: 11).

It was not only Daoud who was unable to take a political role but also those who had failed in the 1965 elections to enter the Parliament. This group was mostly made up of leftists who were a legacy of the *Wish Zalmayan* movement formed at Kabul University in the 1940s. Just around the time of the elections, they came together under Nur Muhammad Taraki who founded the *Hezb-e Dimukratik-e Khalq-e Afghanistan* or the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) in 1965. In other words, the PDPA was originally a coming together of diverse leftist groups which formed the Party with a view to win parliamentary seats. Although it split into two in 1967 as *Khalq* (Masses) led by Nur Muhammad Taraki and Hafizullah Amin; and *Parcham* (Banner) led by Babrak Karmal, it gradually enlarged its power base. Despite attracting only a minority in the beginning, the PDPA started to draw more and more army officers who were already under the influence of Soviet ideology. Eventually, the army and the Party became almost one and the same thing.

It was at this point that Daoud's path crossed with that of the PDPA. Given that "from the age of eighteen Daoud held more military positions than civilian" (M. Kakar, 1995: 7), he saw the only way to regain power in mobilising his power base in the military which had an organic link with the PDPA. Consequently, in 1973, 10 years after his resignation, he realised a bloodless *coup d'etat* with the support of the army as well as the PDPA, especially its *Parcham* faction, dethroning Zahir Shah who had been the monarch for the last 40 years. With this coup, Daoud abolished the ages-old Afghan monarchy as well as the Kingdom of Afghanistan, becoming himself the first President of the Republic of Afghanistan.

Daoud's coup needs more analysis in order to understand its dimensions of modernity. First of all, the reason behind this seizure of power was, typically, the *tarburwali* at the top whereby Daoud was prevented to regain power by other family members (Zahir Shah and other Musahibans) who held power. This argument might

further be strengthened considering that there was a familial division among the Musahiban brothers. (Daoud, Naim and their uncle Muhammad Hashim were born of a Sadozai mother while Zahir Shah and his other two uncles were born of a Muhammadzai mother.) Left without the chances of acquiring power through politics, Daoud resorted to regain it through force; another typical tribal situation. Yet, his method can be considered modern, as this seizure of power was not realised with the support of a tribal *lashkar*, but with that of a modern army. Daoud "seized power not as his uncle [Nadir Shah] had, at the head of a tribal army, but as the leader of a group of Soviet-trained military officers" (Rubin, 2002: 74). It was for the first time that an Afghan aspirant to power looked not to the tribes or the clergy, which represented traditions, but to a political party and the state army, which represented modernity. Daoud's coup, being a first in Afghan history, changed the understanding of acquiring power and quickly became a lesson for other aspirants to power such as the communists.

Daoud's reign was important not for what it achieved, but for what it unleashed, just like Habibullah's. His rule was like a prelude to the Socialist era on its way just like that of Habibullah which had been a prelude to the Nationalist era exploding with Amanullah. Although it was his coup that finally brought communists, the PDPA, to power for the first time in Afghanistan, Daoud's alliance with the communists in the coup was one made rather for practical reasons in order to snatch power, as the PDPA was the only way to do that due to its links with the army. That was why he, as early as 1974, began to distance himself from Soviet dependency for the sake of Afghan independence. Isolating himself from the entire communist faction, Daoud started persecuting the Soviet-supported PDPA, especially the *Parcham* faction which had brought him to power, whereby "the Revolution [devoured] its children," as predicted by Jacques Mallet du Pan. The *Parchamis* were posted either abroad as ambassadors or to the countryside as provincial administrators, in order to keep them out of Kabul. This attitude was also reflected in Daoud's foreign relations whereby he turned to India, Egypt, Iran as well as Pakistan with whom he improved relations under President Bhutto. His invitation to UN and NATO experts was the final straw that provoked the USSR under Brezhnev who requested Daoud to get rid of those experts immediately. Daoud's famous answer showed his firm intention to break away from the Soviets:

'We will never allow you to dictate to us how to run our country and whom to employ in Afghanistan. How and where we employ foreign experts will remain the exclusive prerogative of the Afghan state. Afghanistan shall remain poor, if necessary, but free in its acts and decisions.' (M. Kakar, 1995: 14)

Persecuting the communists and left without the support of the members of the old regime after the coup, Daoud was now practically a 'One Man for All,' assuming "the offices of president, prime minister, foreign minister and minister of defense" (Ewans, 2002: 179). Also considering his Pashtun nationalism, he might be resembled to an incarnation of the Nazi ideology of 'One Land, One Man and One Nation.' Included in this ideology was also the 'One Party' whereby he founded the *Hezb-e Inqilab-e Milli* (National Revolutionary Party) in 1975 to act as the single political party which would function as a tool of national integration. Daoud also promulgated the Constitution of 1977, through a *Loya Jirga*, which "provided for a unicameral parliament and a one-party state, with the *loya jirga* as the 'supreme manifestation of the power and will of the people'" (Ewans, 2002: 181). It should be underlined that as late as 1977, just one year before the Saur Revolution, Daoud still saw the *Loya Jirga* as representative of the people. That is to say, he was intent to go on modernising Afghanistan in an Afghan way, in stark contrast to the Communist *Khalq* rule to come.

In the aftermath of the coup, although making some significant reforms, Daoud "did little to transform the mode of governing to match the means by which he had taken power" (Rubin, 2002: 75). He went on with nepotism at the top, as before, relying on his family. His brother Naim, for instance, was very influential in the government even if he had no formal office. Soon, it was revealed that Daoud's coup had ended the monarchy but not the Musahiban dynasty which still retained its power as the royal family.

Nothing much changed in terms of tribalism, either, as Daoud's government continued with the Musahiban's encapsulation strategy towards tribes, and not confrontation. "Its command over foreign aid, state enterprises, education, and state employment enabled it to compete with the khans for the allegiance of their tribes and even sons" (Rubin, 2002: 72). Daoud established a Ministry of Tribal Affairs which recognised *qawm* as an institution and appointed *maliks* to *qawms*, who did not have any organic connection to the tribal populations and who were "more

concerned with keeping on the good side of their superiors in Kabul than in forging good relations with the local population" (Barfield, 2010: 223). The Ministry continued to pay subsidies to some tribes while making them dependent allies, whereby particularly "Pashtuns along the Durand Line [still] received special treatment and benefits" (Barfield, 2010: 221). It seems as if the Ministry, as a state institution, functioned to offer privileges to Pashtun tribes. Other tribes, on the other hand, cooperated with other ministries which maintained their own chains of command, such as the Nuristanis who had links to the Interior Ministry (Barfield, 2010: 221). "Such parallel lines of administrations tended to make each part of government a separate fiefdom, making cooperation at the local level difficult" (Barfield, 2010: 223). Such was the extension of tribalism into government levels and Daoud was actually supporting this model, as he "sought support not in the tribes themselves but in individuals of tribal origin whom his government had recruited into the expanded state apparatus" (Rubin, 2002: 102). That is to say, he made use of the co-opted tribal manpower within his administration. Notice that Daoud still heeded the 'tribal origin' in his government no matter how these individuals had grown up in allegedly 'modern' and 'detribalised' environments. This is a perfect example showing the latent tribalism operating within the state.

Daoud's first reign in power as PM in 1953-63 and his second reign as President in 1973-78 may seem to represent two different approaches to the USSR; but we are actually talking about the same man who had, in the first place, accepted Soviet aid for a purpose: Pashtunistan. His real intent became visible in his second reign when he, upon accumulating power, endeavoured to get away from the Socialist ideology as well as the Soviets. In principle, Daoud remained an eager modernist and a Pashtun Nationalist. He followed the footsteps of the previous Durrani rulers who received foreign aid without wholly adopting foreign ideas but merely utilising them as tools for centralist reform.

4.3.3. The PDPA: A New Socialist Party or an Old Reformist Party?

The side effect of Soviet penetration that started as of the 1950s was that the USSR gradually came to be accepted as the new model of modernity in Afghanistan. The USSR claimed that the Soviet way of non-capitalist development, as opposed to

Western capitalist development, was to be a model for Islamic countries, showing Central Asia as an example. This model of modernisation was to be achieved through the Soviet ideologies of Socialism, Communism and Marxism which came to be regarded as the ideologies of modernity and reform in Afghanistan at that time, just like Nationalism had been before. Yet, this shift was not a total break, as there was obviously a continuity between the former nationalist reformist movement and the current communist reformist movement. Afghan communists under the PDPA linked to the former reformers such as the Young Afghans (*Jawanon-e Afghan*) of the 1920s; the Awakened Youth (*Wish Zalmayan*) of the 1940s and partisans of the New Democracy movement of the 1960s, while seeing the modernist King Amanullah as a hero (Magnus and Naby, 1998: 101). The three communist leaders, Taraki, Amin and Karmal, who were to be Presidents of Afghanistan, were members of the *Wish Zalmayan* movement in their youth. In the same line, Misdaq (2006: 99) argues that both *Khalq* and *Parcham* were built on the radical reformist programme of the *Wish Zalmayan* movement with pro-Soviet overtures. Departing from these points, it is argued that the Afghan Communists were merely reformists, following the footsteps of the Nationalist reformists and seeing Socialism only as the trend of the day and a tool to gain power. This argument might be further strengthened considering that the PDPA members did not have much knowledge of Marxism, whereby they benefited from some basic Persian translations published by the Iranian leftist Tudeh Party. Furthermore, they did not openly advocate Socialism or Communism, at least originally. Rubin (2002: 86) argues that the PDPA was "a movement developed by members of state bureaucracy who desired faster, state-directed Western-style modernization." In other words, they were not after a particularly Soviet-style modernisation. As the USSR was the aid-giver at that time, its ideology was in fashion. "Marxism as a vehicle of social change was only a theory; more important from a practical standpoint was the role played by the neighboring USSR, which supported the Afghan state and offered to export the Soviet version of modernization" (Rubin, 2002: 85). Whether Western-style or Soviet-style, both modernisations might have been regarded as similar, both coming from the *farangi*, or foreign sources. This was the Afghan way of experimenting with modernisation.

Although the PDPA did not openly advocate Socialism or Communism, it was written in its secret constitution that it was the vanguard of the working class in

Afghanistan. Yet, their deeds did not fit with their words. Ewans (2002: 173) talks about the violent disturbances at Kabul University occurring in support of the strikes by industrial workers which had become a feature of the national scene. He continues to say, however, that there was "nowhere any suggestion that either *Khalq* or *Parcham* took the slightest interest in them or in the working class more generally" (Ewans, 2002: 173). This approach did not change much even after the split in the PDPA that took place due to ideological as well as tribal differences, to be discussed further on. The main ideological difference between the two factions was that *Parcham* under Karmal followed a more inclusive 'National Front' strategy trying to include the former Nationalist movement, while *Khalq* under Taraki and Amin urged for an immediate socialist revolution based on the working class. Even though blaming *Parcham* as the 'Royal Communist Party' due to its proximity to the ruling elite, *Khalq* was also unsuccessful in its stance despite seeing itself closer to communism. Because, there was a fundamental paradox: The concept of a class struggle was alien to the Afghan society which was largely tribal. Rubin (2002: 86) claims that the weakness of class formation in Afghanistan can be understood from the lack of class-based mass organisations such as peasant associations or trade unions. A second paradox lied in the fact that the working class of Kabul was mainly Tajik and Hazara (Rubin, 2002: 101) who were mostly pro-Chinese Maoists united under other political parties, *Setam-e Milli* (National Oppression) and *Shula-e Jawed* (Eternal Flame) respectively, both against Pashtun domination. On the other hand, *Khalq* was made up of Ghilzai Pashtuns who were Pashtun nationalists and their political support to the Tajik and Hazara working class was something unthinkable. Thus, "despite their class rhetoric, the *Khalqis* concentrated recruiting efforts among schoolteachers, writers, and others likely to have long-term effects on the ideology of educated Afghans" (Rubin, 2002: 101); in other words, mainly the new middle class. What was ironic was that the *Khalq*, which criticised *Parcham* for being Royalist, was not aware that it was actually supporting the early Afghan bourgeoisie. The reason was that there was not even a proper working class to be mobilised at that time and what little working class they had was not Pashtun whom they would not prefer to mobilise. Such was the entanglement of tribalism with Socialism.

As for the PDPA's attitude towards tribalism, it did not have a program for overcoming tribalism in Afghanistan, as shown by Rubin (2002: 85-6) below:

> The Constitution…[of the PDPA failed] to mention the particularly acute
> Afghan problem of *qawm* loyalties…The sole mention of tribalism was a
> promise to remove it by settling nomads and by 'bring[ing] advantages to the
> oppressed factions' as part of the 'fight of all sections of the population against
> national oppression.' The platform…never mentioned tribal autonomy.

Several points in this passage need more elaboration. First of all, as the vehicle for
implanting an imported version of Soviet socialism in Afghanistan, the PDPA treated
Afghanistan like a completely different country than it really was. Afghanistan was
regarded as a 'feudal' country where farmers were oppressed by feudal lords, just
like in Russia before the Revolution or in Western Europe in the Middle Ages. This
was the product of an effort to see Afghanistan in Western or Soviet terms, which
was to be a failure. In Afghanistan, tribes, especially the *nang* tribes, did not
represent an 'oppressed faction;' but, on the contrary, almost a *privileged* faction,
having preserved their autonomy from the state for ages. We cannot say that there
was something like a wide 'national oppression' in Afghanistan as the state
constantly failed to be centralised in the face of local tribal power. The only state
oppression was seen as taxation among tribal populations, which was already
escaped by the *nang* tribes. As for the *qalang* tribes, their taxation meant that they
accepted state authority as well as the modernising reforms, taking education in state
schools and eventually sneaking into state institutions to continue to represent
tribalism there. As seen above, tribalism continued to operate at the state level in
Afghanistan. Therefore, the PDPA's program had inadequately considered only
nomads as tribal populations, for nomads constituted not a majority among tribes.

4.4. Pashtun Tribalism in the Face of Socialism

4.4.1. Pashtun Tribal Schism within the PDPA

"In a society where the state and national sentiment are weak, the *qawm*
provides a network of solidarity and clientism which forms the basis of all Afghan
politics (including that of the Communist Party)" (Brigot and Roy, 1988: 71). For
this reason, Pashtun tribal structure as well as the tribal rivalry between the Durrani
and the Ghilzai continued to operate within the PDPA, as well. In 1967, only two

years after its formation, the PDPA split into two as *Khalq* and *Parcham*, named after the two newspapers published by these groups, due to socio-cultural, economic and, above all, tribal differences. *Khalq* was made up of the newly-detribalised, newly-urban and non-royal Ghilzai Pashtuns who came to Kabul via tribal boarding schools or the *Harbiyya* while *Parcham* included Persian-speaking upper class Pashtuns, i.e. the Durrani, as well as non-Pashtuns who had been long-term residents of Kabul. Thereby, Rubin (2002: 93) gives us the following picture:

> *Parcham*, like the royal court, included individuals of different ethnic and tribal origins who generated a network of clientelism through marriage…*Khalq*, on the other hand, was more traditionally tribal: there were networks of tribes and clans within the party, and *Khalqis* (who were all male) married women from their own villages in accord with traditional tribal principles.

In tribal terms, *Parcham* represented the royal court or the state (*hukumat*) and *Khalq* represented the tribe (*yaghistan*). This is an interesting case indeed, because it can be seen that the Durrani tribe had been detribalised to such an extent that the political party in which it constituted the majority was now seen as the representative of the state. As an extension of the Durrani's label as the 'royal tribe,' *Parcham* was called the 'Royal Communist Party' by the *Khalqis* who were tired of the *Parchamis*' paternalistic approach due to "their high family positions and city sophistication" (Misdaq, 2006: 103) as well as their view of themselves as better qualified to deal with the Soviets. *Parcham* constituted mainly the Durrani and the Tajik who were at key state positions which gave them access to Soviet aid. Thus, *Parcham* had its power base in the state bureaucracy while *Khalq* had it in the Soviet-trained military. The *Khalqis* "felt both envy and contempt for the 'Persianized' Kabuli elite who monopolized good governmental positions and had betrayed the Pushtun linguistic and cultural heritage" (Magnus and Naby, 1998: 112). The *Khalqis* were, at the same time, Pashtun Nationalists, who preferred to use Pashto language among themselves while the *Parchamis* preferred Persian. The Durrani's ruling experience was also influential in the more inclusive ideology of *Parcham* which had a National Front strategy inclusive of Pashtuns and non-Pashtuns as opposed to the more restricted Pashtun Nationalism and Working-Class Communism of *Khalq*.

It is possible to see a similar opposition among the three PDPA leaders: Karmal, Taraki and Amin. Ewans (2002: 172) says that especially the personal rivalry

between Karmal of *Parcham* and Taraki of *Khalq* was a factor in the split of the Party into two.

Babrak Karmal's tribal background is disputed whereby his family is alleged to have come from India. Being "the son of a respected major-general who had been governor of Paktya Province" (Ewans, 2002: 169-70), Karmal lived in the Pashtun core-land and this might be the reason why he always claimed to be a Pashtun with Durrani connections. (This might be the result of a tribal kinship construction process.) Having links to Daoud Khan in the army through his father, Karmal received elite education at the *Nejat* High School, a German-curriculum school, and then studied Law and Politics at Kabul University. While studying, he was involved in the student union activities, and even imprisoned for it for a while, and then he was recruited as a KGB agent (Ewans, 2002: 170). Being one of the founders of the PDPA, Karmal is cited as an "orthodox internationalist Marxist" (M. Kakar, 1995: 34). Among the three leaders of the PDPA, it was only Karmal who was first elected to the *Wolesi Jirga* in the elections of 1965.

Nur Muhammad Taraki, on the other hand, came from a semi-nomadic *kuchi* family (Ewans, 2002: 169) within the Taraki clan of the Ghilzai tribe. Although he was the son of a shepherd, he was able to receive education. He went to India to work where he encountered the Communist Party of India. Then he returned to Kabul and made himself known as a writer and a journalist, working in various governmental positions. He joined the *Wish Zalmayan* in 1948 and was recruited as a KGB agent in 1951 (Ewans, 2002: 169). For a while, he stayed in the US as the Press Attaché of Afghanistan, where he became critical of PM Daoud's actions. Upon returning, he took part in the elections of 1965; but he failed to enter the Parliament. In the same year, he founded the PDPA "at a meeting in his house attended by just thirty 'comrades' drawn from a number of pre-existing 'study groups'" (Ewans, 2002: 169).

Hafizullah Amin, the other leader of *Khalq*, was also a Ghilzai Pashtun, belonging to the Kharuti clan. Having studied maths and physics at the university, he was appointed as a teacher and then as the head of the Avicenna High School and then that of the Teacher Training College. Afterwards, he went to the US for his PhD where he started to criticise PM Daoud's government and, thus, was summoned to Afghanistan before completing his studies. Upon returning, he also took part in the

1965 elections, but failed just like Taraki. He then joined the PDPA, bringing with him all his energy and influence over teachers, and was elected to the *Wolesi Jirga* in 1969.

Misdaq (2006: 111) cites an anecdote where he asked Amin why he was interested in communism and received the answer of a typical modernist: "America and the West is rich and much advanced, we can never become like them and it takes a long time. So communism is the only way for our development and advancement as a country." Misdaq (2006: 111) claims that Amin was not a committed communist like Taraki or Karmal; but rather a Third World Nationalist like Gandhi or Nehru. He "wanted to use communism as a way of obtaining power quickly and after getting the initial funding for a socialist infrastructure from the Russians, he wanted to take Afghanistan on its separate road to development and democracy" (Misdaq, 2006: 111). This is totally in line with the argument of this thesis that Socialism, or any other modern and thus foreign ideology, was utilised only as a tool by those in power.

4.4.2. The Saur Revolution amidst Tribal Rivalry (1978)

Parcham and *Khalq* acted differently in different occasions, just like in tribal situations. The royalist *Parcham* first assisted Daoud in his coup of 1973 and then it chose to unite with *Khalq* again in 1977 to overthrow him. There are basically two reasons behind this reunification, one internal and the other external. The internal reason was that, *Parcham*, very soon after achieving power with Daoud's coup, was exposed to a purge by Daoud. As this coup had not removed the old regime represented in the royal court, there was no way for *Parcham* to institutionalise. As the purge continued, the *Parchamis* gradually came to believe that the old elite should be totally destroyed for a real change to take place. The external reason behind the reunification was the role played by the USSR which, upon seeing that President Daoud was trying to get away from Soviet dependency, increased its interest in the PDPA, cultivating it as the leader of the Third World Communist Parties among its satellite states and, at the same time, encouraging the reunification of the Party. The USSR wished to cultivate a reunified PDPA as an alternative power centre to Daoud which would *gradually* replace him. Put another way, the USSR by no means urged for an immediate Communist revolution in Afghanistan, reckoning

that "it would be many years before the overwhelmingly tribal and feudal Afghanistan would be ready for a Communist revolution" (Ewans, 2002: 185). Yet, the PDPA, now seeing itself as a leader of the Communist Third World, was not of the same opinion, aiming to "achieve a direct transition from a feudal to a communist society" (Ewans, 2002: 186). For them, a Communist Revolution would short-cut the long way to development, bypassing certain steps of modernisation in a tribal society. However, there was a big mistake: the PDPA was using Soviet terminology to understand Afghan society which was *tribal*, and not *feudal*. Gellner (1983b: 440) briefly gives us the basic difference between a tribal society and a feudal one as follows: The tribal society is one in which

> the large majority of adult males are formally equal, and qualified to participate in politics and violence, entitled and obliged to share the risks of feuds and the benefits of blood money. This is quite unlike feudalism, in which a fairly small warrior stratum monopolises politics and violence.

Having several political strata such as the nobles, knights, merchants, farmers, etc., the feudal society can be defined as the primitive version of a class-based society. As for the Afghan society, we have seen above that the concept of class was something introduced by power-holders, and thus, class-formation in Afghanistan was weak. Classes were almost understood in terms of tribalism where the Hazara represented the working class; the newly-urban Ghilzai represented the middle class while the Durrani, labelled as the royal tribe, represented the upper class. All in all, there was not even a proper working class to be mobilised for a Communist Revolution. Not seeing this clear difference and treating the two types of societies as one, the PDPA "relied on Soviet, not Afghan, experience, and thus, too, they broke with the Afghan past" (M. Kakar, 1995: 15).

The consequence was that the PDPA undertook a bloody coup in 1978, only one year after its reunification, known as the Saur (April) Revolution. As the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA) was established, Taraki of *Khalq* became the President of the Revolutionary Council and Prime Minister while Karmal of *Parcham* and Amin of *Khalq*, who hated each other, became the Deputy Prime Ministers.

Although the Revolution brought a unified PDPA to power, it was not to last long, as "the decade-long split [had] hardened the attitude of their members toward

each other" (M. Kakar, 1995: 59). There was still a latent rivalry between *Khalq* and *Parcham* at the end of which *Khalq*, seeing itself as the real representative of a communist revolution, prevailed over *Parcham* which still represented a royalist tradition or a legacy of it. In other words, the Revolution could not escape the Durrani-Ghilzai conflict, either. Its aftermath was to be almost a 'coalition' rule by the Durrani and the Ghilzai; yet, the ancient tribal rivalry between the two did not allow for a coalition. Having the upper hand during and in the aftermath of the Saur Revolution, the Ghilzai, represented in *Khalq*, finally outrivaled the Durrani, represented in *Parcham*. Thereby, they did not wait for long to avenge upon the Durrani by eliminating *Parcham* totally. Thus started, once again, the massive purge of the *Parcham* faction this time by the *Khalq* regime which first sent them, including Karmal, abroad as ambassadors and then dismissed, arrested or killed them. The consequence was an explosion of Pashtun Nationalism at the top, since "after the purge of the *Parchamis*, the government became more Pashtun than any in a century, which alienated the Shi'a and the Persian-speakers" (Rubin, 2002: 185-86), or the *Farsiwan*, who had been relatively better included under the previous Durrani regimes. Although the Durrani regimes had also embraced Pashtun Nationalism, they knew that they needed to be more inclusive, since they had acquired an administrative experience under an Empire. The *Farsiwan*, including the Tajik and the Qizilbash as a legacy of the Safavid Empire, had traditionally been employed in Afghan bureaucracy by the Durrani state. Yet, the Ghilzai state achieved power in the modern 20th century. That is why they completely ignored whatever the old royal regime represented, breaking with the Afghan past totally, as seen above.

In achieving this break off, the *Khalq* repressed all the other potential powers that could pose a threat to its authority. It started with the royal family whereby President Daoud Khan and all the royal family members were killed in the coup. The rest of the Musahibans were arrested, deprived of citizenship and then allowed to emigrate. The army was also interfered into where the Durrani generals were removed in order to prevent any further plans for another coup. The other political factions who had found voice under the Musahibans' democratisation efforts, such as the Islamists under the *Jamiat-e Islami*, the traditionalists/Nationalists under the *Afghan Millat* and even the leftist Maoists under the *Setam-e Milli* were suppressed and eventually drawn out of the country. In other words, the *Khalq* rule meant the

toppling down of all the progress that had been made under the Musahibans in giving voice to different factions in the Afghan society through political means. What had been produced under a modern education and a democratisation movement was now destroyed under *Khalq*. Rooted deeply in a tribal tradition, and embracing the communist ideologies of the Soviet Union, *Khalq* tried to achieve an autonomous state just like a tribe which was always after autonomous power. The *Khalq* autonomy at the top reached such an extent that there was almost no non-*Khalqi* in any of the governmental positions.

All this repression, however, culminated in popular uprisings among the Afghan public which was later on to evolve into a Resistance movement. It was due to this rising popular discontent that the PDPA signed a Treaty of Friendship with the USSR in 1978, asking for its military assistance in times of need, which did not wait for long to come. Only one and a half year after the Saur Revolution, Soviet troops entered Afghanistan at the end of 1979. The exiled *Parchamis* were only happy to see Soviets who installed the *Parcham* faction to power under Karmal, just like Shah Shuja had been restored into power by the British. (Notice that in both cases, it was the disempowered party who chose to cooperate with foreign forces, even while endangering independence. This might also be seen as a legacy of tribalism.) With Karmal installed in power, the PDPA, now openly a puppet regime, remained in power until the collapse of the USSR, first under Karmal (1979-86) and then under Najibullah (1986-92).

4.4.3. *Khalqi* Reform vs. Pashtun Tribalism

It was concluded in the previous chapter that the 'old regime' did not have a coherent ideology. The situation was similar for the 'new regime' under *Khalq* which also failed to form a proper ideology. The *Khalqis* believed in the 'myth of revolution' but they had no clear program for constructing the state in the aftermath of a revolution. The first thing they did upon achieving power was to build their legitimacy in the public by forming a link with the previous reformists, whereby "Marxism was soft-pedalled and catchwords such as 'nationalist,' 'democratic' and 'reformist' were employed, while lipservice was paid to Islam" (Ewans, 2002: 189). Then, just like the previous reformers, they set out to break tribal power through a

fast-paced reform programme with Soviet overtones. They tried to eliminate tribalism overnight by getting rid of khans, seen as the exploiting class since they were landowners, *maliks* and other intermediaries between the state and tribes, arresting or killing many of them. They attempted to break the old tribal system by imposing reforms in; (1) land reform, (2) abolition of usury, (3) regulation of marriages and (4) universal literacy campaigns. Concerning the first two reforms, the *Khalqis* attempted to bring land under state authority in order to distribute it among peasants and register their deeds on the land. Yet, this system soon turned out to be a failure, because;

> it was not just a question of land: tenants often relied on landowners for seed, fertiliser, credit and draft animals, while water rights were also crucial. Many rural inputs and services were provided communally rather than bought and sold…so there was very little reliable knowledge about who owned what. Often land had been registered in the name of a tribal or clan chief, while in practice its ownership was communally shared. (Ewans, 2002: 192)

The *Khalqi* goal was to reduce exploitation by transferring land from landowners to the poor who were deprived of land. However, "most rural Afghans believed that it was unjust and un-Islamic to accept property that had been expropriated from another" (Ewans, 2002: 193). What the *Khalqis* saw as inequality and exploitation was actually a part of the tribal system which naturally required patronage and dependency in order to conduct the work communally. The state failed to do all the communal work that was carried out within the tribal system, such as irrigation. As Rubin (2002: 119) argues, "water, not land, was the major constraint on Afghan agriculture, but the reforms distributed land without providing for adequate irrigation." Land reform also interfered with the structure of rivalries among tribal groups. It attempted to give certain tribes the upper hand, which was unacceptable for certain other tribes. That was why land reform was seen by tribal Pashtuns as usual state meddling into their tribal affairs. That is to say, the seemingly 'modern' land reform reinforced tribal rivalry even more and, thus sustained the tribal system rather than breaking it which was the main *Khalqi* goal.

As for the reforms regulating marriages, the *Khalqis* introduced to the tribal areas the concept of a nuclear family made up of a husband, a wife and unmarried children under 18. The main goal here was to break the tribal web of extended

families which were established through planned marriages and to divide the property that was accumulating in big tribal families.

As for educative reforms, the *Khalqis* introduced co-education for boys and girls "based on a Marxist curriculum and with Russian as the medium of instruction at the secondary level" (Ewans, 2002: 191), which was unacceptable to tribal Pashtuns for whom speaking in Pashto was a part of the *Pashtunwali*. Besides, the content of primary and secondary education was made to reflect the Party ideology.

Apart from the content of reforms, the method of implementing them was also a failure whereby "groups of armed *Khalqi* activists were dispatched to the villages, most of them schoolteachers and army officers with no connection to the community" (Rubin, 2002: 118). *Khalq* tried to impose the reforms by force "to the extent of beatings, arrests and even assassinations" (Ewans, 2002: 193). In carrying out such an extent of repression, *Khalq* was assisted by the army, the police and a new intelligence organisation called the AGSA. Therefore,

> the choice the peasants were given was not between domination and exploitation on the one hand and freedom and equality on the other. Their choice was between leaders whom they knew, with whom they shared much, and leaders whom they did not know, who believed in an alien ideology and who showed by their actions that they could not be trusted. (Rubin, 2002: 119)

It was to these state commissions for land reform, literacy campaign, education of women and conscription that the public revolted. Not interestingly, "villages that did cooperate tended to have kinship links with PDPA officials" (Barfield, 2010: 232). But those that did not cooperate initiated local revolts that soon culminated into a national Resistance whereby "rural communities were united in resistance to the reforms, rather than split by their acceptance" (Ewans, 2002: 193). Main reason behind the revolts was not that the tribal society simply rejected reforms but that the tribal system had always been more influential in defining the property relations than the state. As property relations formed the basis of the tribal system, or any other social system, it was hard to completely alter it overnight. Plus, "the reforms were presented in an ideological framework (class struggle) which was alien to [the tribal peasants'] everyday experience" (Roy, 1990: 87). The situation in the countryside was not thoroughly analysed and was treated as a class struggle to make it fit with the communist party dogma. Yet, "when the peasants acted it was virtually never as

members of an economic group, but as members of a *qawm*" (Roy, 1990: 92). This was not a Socialist struggle against Capitalism, for Capitalism was still something new and external in Afghanistan. This was the usual fight between the (*Khalqi*) state and tribalism, as *Khalq* introduced *Socialist* reforms in order to break the *tribal* structure. Their reforms, if implemented,

> would have destroyed the economic and social bases of exchanges – marriage prestations, loans, mortgages, tenancy, hospitality – that [enabled] khans to 'tie the knot of the tribe.' The network of clientism that held extended families together and knitted them into a qawm would have been replaced by direct dependence of nuclear families on the party and government bureaucracy. (Rubin, 2002: 116)

Besides these reforms, *Khalq* also attempted to change the Afghan flag by removing the green strip on it which represented Islam and making its background totally in red, like the flags of Socialist states. The invocation to Allah written before official statements was also removed. The governmental positions which were emptied through purges were filled more and more with Soviet advisors. And the *Khalqis* were still, naively, after transforming Afghanistan with Soviet aid while Afghanistan was slowly turning into a Soviet republic. Finally, the Treaty of Friendship signed in 1978 with the USSR made it obvious that Afghanistan had turned into a satellite state which was not to wait long to be invaded.

4.5. Conclusion

This chapter has shown us the continuation of the articulation of tribalism into the Afghan state which went on applying centralist reforms under its practical ideology of Socialism. First of all, we have seen that the Musahiban era was a culmination of all the modernist reforms undertaken in Afghanistan. It was in this period that an educated youth and a rising intelligentsia started to question the actions of the monarchy which came to be labelled as the 'old regime.' Due to the historical context where Afghanistan was forced to draw closer to the USSR, the aspirants for a 'new regime' who gathered under the PDPA gradually came to accept the Soviet modernisation as the right path to development. Yet, the PDPA adopted not only the Soviet way of non-capitalist development but also equated the 'Soviet past' with the Afghan past. It was at this point that the PDPA, especially during the

Khalq rule, failed as it treated Afghanistan like a completely different country, ignoring the very obvious facts of its *tribal* and not *feudal* society. The consequence was that the PDPA, alienated from its own country and people and left with a small membership base which was small; 3.000-5.000 according to Western observers and 15.000 according to Soviet sources (Rubin, 2002: 119), eventually fell into the clutches of Soviet aid upon which it became totally dependent.

This chapter has also shown us the entanglement of tribalism with Socialism whereby the rise of Socialism in Afghanistan coincided with the rise of the Ghilzai into power as opposed to the long Durrani hegemony. Interestingly, the ideology of Socialism provided a perfect ground to the newly-urban Ghilzai to oppose their Royalist rival Durrani. It was as if the Ghilzai adopted Socialism because they saw themselves as the oppressed *tribe*, not *class*, and the Saur Revolution was the Revolution of the Ghilzai against the Durrani, or the old regime. It was true that the Durrani had also taken part in the Revolution; but, as it turned out, that cooperation was just like a tribal alliance made for a specific purpose: to topple President Daoud Khan. As soon as the Revolution was accomplished, *Khalq* started to purge *Parcham*, at the end of which it remained as the sole power-holder.

The old regime targeted by *Khalq* also included autonomous tribal power which was attempted to be broken with all the reforms imposed and repressions made. As Rubin (2002: 115) argues, the main goal of *Khalq* was to "use the state apparatus to destroy all competition for social control in all sectors of Afghan society." What is to be concluded at the end is that the Socialist era also became a theatre of the usual fight between the tribe and the state, which were both trying to preserve their autonomy from each other. At the end, the *Khalqi* state became so autonomous that it had almost no base in the Afghan society and its survival wholly depended on the USSR. The state repressed the tribal society so much that the tribes resorted to two solutions: they either revolted or finally left Afghanistan in later years.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This thesis has largely been an attempt to show the articulation of Pashtun Tribalism into two modernist ideologies, Nationalism and Socialism, utilised by the Afghan state. While discussing this articulation, the most common point encountered throughout the thesis has been the oscillation between the tribe and the state, which was the departing point for this thesis and will be the concluding point, as well.

Departing from R. Tapper's definition of a tribe given in the Introduction, let us now look at Gellner's (1983b: 438) definition:

> A tribe is a local mutual-aid association, whose members jointly help maintain order internally and defend the unit externally. This assumption of peace-keeping and collective defence responsibility, which thus defines the tribe, is contrasted with a situation in which the maintenance of order, and defence, is assured by the central state and its specialised agencies (courts, nominated officials, police forces, army).

In short, it is the "peace-keeping and collective defence responsibility" that defines the tribe. Gellner (1983b: 438) further says that if all of this responsibility is taken by the state, the tribe no longer exists. However, "there often is a sharing of these responsibilities" (1983b: 438). It is this process of sharing which creates conflict between the tribe and the state. The tribe represents an alternative to the state; therefore, it is a polity of a tribe-size and it often "aspires to capturing the state and becoming its centre" (Gellner, 1983b: 443), just like the Durrani did in their break-off from the Safavid Empire and like the Ghilzai did in the *Khalqi* state. In other words, the conflict between the state and the tribe is largely a struggle for autonomy. The tribe tries to have a larger share of responsibility in order to maintain its autonomy from the state. In return, the state does the same and tries to steal a role from the tribe in order to be an autonomous power from the tribe. It is from this point where all the problems arise. In trying to separate itself from the tribe, the state

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breaks its ties with the tribe, endeavours to centralise its power and tries to institutionalise itself as a separate power. Yet, it fails introduce, by making use of the modernising strategies, a new model of relationships other than blood relations, whereby it would be tied to its citizens. As long as the state sees itself as autonomous from the society in its modernising role, it always goes on fighting with the society which remains tribal. Consequently, a picture as follows appears: "When people [refer] to the *hukomet* (government), they often quite literally [mean] the local government compound – place rather than a concept. On passing out of its front gate, and particularly after leaving the road that [leads] to it, 'government' [ceases]" (Barfield, 2010: 221). That is to say, the state remains only a building in the eyes of tribal people.

In trying to establish its autonomy, the state persistently tries to centralise its power; but it also has to make its claim legitimate in the eyes of the public. That is why the state continually presents its tribal society with new bases for legitimacy under the guise of ideas or ideologies. That is what we have seen throughout this thesis where the Afghan state, from the establishment of the Durrani Empire until the Soviet invasion, introduced various bases of legitimacy: Royalism, Persianism, Islam, Nationalism and Socialism. However, these ideas, some pre-modern some modern, remained as tools in the hands of the state which was basically after centralisation. As the state continued its fight with the tribe, it remained in the pre-modern tribal realm. Even the seemingly modern ideology of Pashtun Nationalism worked for the good of Pashtun *tribes*; not for that of a Pashtun *nation*. It might even be argued that the state equated modernisation with centralisation of its power. After all, almost all of the reforms of the Afghan state were directed towards centralisation. Because, this was the reform of a *tribal* state; not a *modern* one, into which tribalism constantly articulated in new forms. That is why:

> The failure of reformists [or Nationalists] and Marxists in Afghanistan lay in the fact that they both attempted to create a national-democratic revolution in a country that was not yet a nation. Marxists went further by attempting a revolution in a countryside where reform had barely penetrated. (Magnus and Naby, 1998: 99)

Remembering that in the tribal system, it was never an ideology that brought together different tribes, but; a common enemy, the possibility of plunder or the generosity of a tribal leader, it would be easier to understand the failure of modern

ideologies in the Afghan state. Modern ideologies were seen only as temporary causes that brought together an elite faction at the top, like a ruling dynasty in the case of the Durrani or a ruling party in the case of the Ghilzai, for a specific time period against a common enemy. In the Nationalist period, the enemy was the infidel British while in the Socialist period, it was the newly-founded state of Pakistan and its stance against the Pashtunistan issue, which actually represented a continuation with the British meddling into Afghan affairs. The fact that there was continuity between Nationalism and Socialism is an indicator that they were seen not as distinct ideologies but largely as foreign modernising ideologies.

Turning to Gellner (1983b: 445), he concludes his argument for the tribe vs. the state as follows:

> The tribe is the anti-state, politically unspecialised or very mildly specialised, and state-resistant; it may also be the fruit of state pressure; it may be the seed of future states; and it may crystallise mini-states internally. It can be both agent and enemy and victim of the state.

In other words, the opposition between the tribe and the state may take various forms, as we have seen in the case of Afghanistan. Similarly, Gellner (1983b: 447) claims that these relationships are complex and volatile but not without a pattern. Further studies on tribe and tribalism will help reveal this pattern, of which this thesis humbly takes a part.

5.1. Scope for Further Research

The two most powerful institutions in Afghanistan that always existed side by side with the state were; Pashtun tribes and what is called 'the Islamic community' which represented holy lineages such as *Sayyed* and *Pir*, Sufi orders and traditional *ulama*. Afghan rulers have always had to cooperate with or co-opt these two factions in order to consolidate their power. This thesis has focused on the first, the tribe, while the latter, the Islamic community, may present another field of research. Despite remaining outside the scope of this thesis, there are some points that are worth mentioning for giving an idea of further research on the Islamic community in Afghanistan.

The Islamic community had a system of its own, just like the Pashtun tribal system. Just as there were powerful tribal families, there were also powerful Islamic or holy families such as the Sufi Mujaddidi family, the Gailani family related to the Qaderiyya Sufi order in Iraq and the Naqshbandi Hazrats of the Shor Bazaar in Kabul. These families were outsiders to the Pashtun tribal system who were regarded by the *Pashtunwali* as either below or above the tribal system, belonging to different tribes such as *Sayyed*, *Pir*, Sufi or simply Arab. Still, they were important political players in the Afghan state. And it was in the Resistance movement during the Soviet invasion in 1979-89 that this community came to the foreground, articulating into the modernist *Islamist*, not *Islamic*, movement under the *Jamiat-e Islami* which was originally born at Kabul University as opposed to the Communists under the *Wish Zalmayan*. From this cooperation between the traditionally Islamic community and the modern Islamist movement as well as the Pakistani and American military and financial aid was born the Mujahedeen movement.

The Soviet invasion and the Resistance movement completely altered the social structure in Afghanistan, weakening the Pashtun tribal structure. Until this point, it had been the tribal community that stole a role from the state under what was called the 'old regime.' Starting with the Soviet invasion and the Resistance movement, it was the turn of the Islamic community to articulate into the modernist system of Islamists and share power with them.

What happened in the Taliban era offers an even more complicated picture as it covers a Fundamentalist movement. Thus, the Taliban era also invites more research to look for the legacy of Pashtun tribalism in Taliban Fundamentalism.

Finally, departing from the points made in this thesis, the situation in present-day Afghanistan might be studied in order to discover the survival of Pashtun tribalism today. It may also offer an interesting case indeed, considering that the ancient rivalry between the Durrani and the Ghilzai continued in later years, as well. Following the ousting of Daoud Khan, the last Durrani ruler, from power, it was time for the Ghilzai to rise into power in each of the following power blocs, as they constituted the Pashtun power elite in the PDPA, in the Mujahedeen parties as well as the Taliban (Barfield, 2010: 284). Following the US intervention and the fall of the Taliban, however, power has returned to the royal Durrani as Hamid Karzai, the

President of Afghanistan since 2004, belongs to the Popalzai clan that descended from Ahmad Shah Baba.

Last but not the least, this thesis has particularly focused on *Pashtun* tribalism in Afghanistan. However, as stated in the Introduction, there are other communities in Afghanistan, as well, who live as tribes all or in part, such as the Turkmen and the Hazara. The relationship between Pashtuns and these other tribal communities as well as their relationship to the Afghan state remain subjects for further study.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

THE STATE OF AFGHANISTAN THROUGHOUT HISTORY

1747-1823 Durrani Empire

1823-1926 Emirate of Afghanistan (Monarchy) (1919 – Independence)

1926-1973 Kingdom of Afghanistan (Constitutional Monarchy)

1973-1978 Republic of Afghanistan (Single-Party Republic)

1978-1992 Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (1979-1989 – Soviet Invasion)

1992-1996 Islamic State of Afghanistan (Civil War among the Mujahedeen)

1996-2001 Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (Taliban Era)

2001-   Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

APPENDIX B

THE DURAND LINE

Map showing Afghanistan and Pakistan with the Durand Line, Pashtun population, Taliban rear bases, and territories administered by Pakistan but claimed by India.

CÉCILE MARIN

Source: Afghanistan_Lefeuvre_map.gif
http://www.khyber.org/
[retrieved on January 28, 2013]

APPENDIX C

TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü ☐

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü ☒

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü ☐

Enformatik Enstitüsü ☐

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü ☐

YAZARIN

Soyadı : SUNGUR
Adı   : ZEYNEP TUBA
Bölümü : ORTA DOĞU ARAŞTIRMALARI

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : ARTICULATION OF TRIBALISM INTO MODERNITY: THE CASE OF PASHTUNS IN AFGHANISTAN

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans ☒   Doktora ☐

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐

2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☒

3. Tezimden bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz. ☐

Yazarın İmzası: ……………………… Tarih: ………………………

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