

PAK-AFGHAN RELATIONS (1973-1979)



Thesis submitted in the partial fulfillment for the award of the degree of

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by

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CANDIDATE’S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis presently submitted bearing the title “**Pak-Afghan Relations (1973-1979)**” is the result of my own research and has not been submitted to any other institution for any other degree.

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DEDICATED TO
My Parents
To whom I owe every achievement of my life

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FAWAD AHMAD

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--------------|--|
| FCR | Frontier Crimes Regulation |
| KPK | Khyber Pakhtunkhwa |
| SEATO | South Asian Treaty Organization |
| CENTO | Central Treaty Organization |
| NAP | National Awami Party |
| USSR | Union of Soviet Socialist Republic |
| USA | United States of America |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| NAM | Non- Aligned Movement |
| OIC | Organization of Islamic Conference |
| UNO | United Nations Organization |
| ISI | Inter- Services Intelligence |
| CIA | Central Intelligence Agency |
| PDPA | People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan |

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INTRODUCTION

Pakistan and Afghanistan are two neighboring South Asian countries. Both the countries are Muslim majority states and are also Islamic Republics. Both countries have shared historic, cultural, ethnic, geographic, economic and linguistic linkages. This very fact was mentioned by the former Prime Minister of Pakistan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in the words that no other two countries have so much in common as Pakistan and Afghanistan.¹ For this reason, the former president of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai called the two states “inseparable brothers”. This is the reason that both the countries are referred to as “brotherly” countries. But it is an irony of the fact that since the inception of Pakistan in 1947, the relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan have generally followed a turbulent path. Their relationship has normally been characterized by mutual distrust, animosity and blame game. There has hardly been a phase of history in which both countries have enjoyed mutual cordiality and goodwill. Such phases of relations have only existed for a very brief period. The Afghan irredentist claims over Pakistan’s territory, the issue of Pashtunistan and the dispute over the legality of the Durand Line were the initial elements that spoiled the ties between the two states. The relationship experienced further bitterness when the Pak-Afghan region became the epicenter of the Cold War between the Capitalist bloc and the Communist bloc with Pakistan and Afghanistan taking sides opposite to each other. The mutual animosity was further fueled by the allegations of cross border terrorism. Both countries blame each other for harboring terrorist

¹ Hanif ur Rehman, “Pak-Afghan Relations during Z. A. Bhutto Era: The Dynamics of Cold War”, *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture*, Vol. XXXIII, No. 2 (2012), 31.

elements on their soil while Pakistan also blames Afghanistan for fostering secessionist elements in Baloch and Pashtun belts of Pakistan.

The relations between both the states have deep historical roots. Afghanistan has historically remained a gateway for invaders into the former Sub-continent and the present-day Pakistan. The history of the ties between Pak-Afghan region can be traced back to the ancient days of Achaemenid empire of Persia which included the present Afghanistan and the areas of North-West Frontier, Indus and Punjab. Historically, this region remained under the influence of the Aryans, the Persians, the Huns, the Macedonians, the Scythians, the Parthians, the Central Asians, the Turks, the Arabs and the Mughals. Islam made inroads into this region with the Arab penetration in the 7th And 8th century. But the first direct contact between the Afghans and the Indo- Pak region took place as a result of Mahmud Ghaznavi's attacks. After that, the linkages between the two regions enhanced as new dynasties came from the Afghan side and ruled India. In the 18th century, under Ahmad Shah Abdali, the foundation of modern Afghanistan was laid which included the area of Afghanistan and some parts of Central Asia, Persia and North-West India. The British ascendancy began to expand in this region in the 18th century. In the 19th century, the British took direct control of India from the Mughals and also gained influence in Afghanistan. The British were concerned about the Russian expansionism towards Central Asia and beyond Afghanistan into India which was a part of the "The Great Game" strategy. To keep the Russians away from the Indian borders, the British required a buffer zone. For this, the British concluded an agreement with the then Amir of Afghanistan, Amir Abdur Rehman. The agreement was named as the "Durand Line" agreement. According to this agreement, a line was demarcated between Afghanistan and the British India by which the North-Western border areas came under the control of British Empire. This agreement might have solved the problems for the British but laid the basis

for bone of contention between the future states of Pakistan and Afghanistan. This treaty was later reaffirmed by Afghan governments several times. However, the problem re-emerged in the years of partition of Sub- continent when the Afghan authorities claimed back these areas. The issue of Pashtunistan also emerged in those years when the Khudai Khidmatgars or the Red Shirts demanded an independent state of Pashtunistan, the claim which was supported by Afghanistan as well. In the words of Martin Ewan, “Afghanistan’s stance was that the people of NWFP and Tribal Areas should have the right of self-determination. They must be allowed to form an independent state of Pashtunistan”.² But this demand remained unfulfilled and Pakistan as a successor of the British government took control of these areas. Pakistan achieved its independence in August 1947 but the problem of Pashtunistan remained unsettled as the Afghan authorities carried on raising voice against the inclusion of Pashtun territory, south of the Durand Line in Pakistan. Pakistan kept refuting the Afghan claims on its territory. To them, the Durand Line was a settled issue and the declared western border of Pakistan. Due to this issue, Afghanistan was the only country that opposed Pakistan’s membership in the United Nations. Pakistan had serious problems with India on the eastern border due to the Kashmir dispute, soon after independence. Soon both countries were at war with each other in 1948. Therefore, tension on the western border and any mischief from the Afghan side to foment disturbance in the Pashtun areas was an additional factor for Pakistan to worry about. The government of Pakistan under Governor General, Quaid-i-Azam was doubtful about the loyalty of the then Dr. Khan Sahib’s Pashtun nationalist government in the NWFP. They were also worried about the Afghan influence in the Pashtun belt. The Muslim League was of the view that after overwhelming vote of the people of the then NWFP in referendum in favor of Pakistan has delegitimized the right of representation of the Khudai

² Martin Ewans *Afghanistan: A New History* (Richmond: Curzon Press, 2001), 68-69.

Khidmatgars' government in the NWFP. The reason presented in favor of this stance was that the Red Shirts had opposed the merger of Pashtun belt with Pakistan and the people voted against their program. The reality was that the Red Shirts boycotted the referendum when their option of "Independent Pashtunistan" was not provided as a third choice in the referendum besides accession with Pakistan and India to the people of NWFP. Therefore, soon after independence, Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah dismissed Dr. Khan Sahib's ministry in the NWFP despite the fact that he along with his elder brother Bacha Khan, the head of the Khudai Khitmatgars' movement had pledged his oath of allegiance to Pakistan. After some time, they were banned, jailed and persecuted. Being a Pashtun nationalist group, the Khudai Khidmatgars had immense support in Afghanistan. Pak-Afghan relations, therefore, began on a very sour note. After opposing Pakistan's membership into the UN in September 1947, Pashtunistan flag was raised in Kabul, and it was decided to arm and financially assist the tribal lashkars for the movement of liberation of Pashtunistan. Several border skirmishes took place between forces of the two countries. In July 1947, the Afghan Loya Jirga openly declared its support for Pashtunistan movement and rejected the Durand Line in the wake of an incident in which Pakistani airplanes had bombarded an Afghan village named Moghulgai while chasing the miscreants³. Pashtunistan Day began to be celebrated each year on 31st August. In short, mutual relations between the two states remained strained as the Pashtunistan struggle went on. In 1961, diplomatic relations between the two countries were cut off and the Afghan transit trade was restricted by Pakistan when the then President of Pakistan Ayub Khan accused the Afghan authorities of fomenting unrest in the Pakistani tribal areas.

³ Robert Nichols, "The Pashtun Borderlands: Development, Nation, and Agency 1947-55", *Afghanistan*, Vol. 4, 2(2021), 114-141.

However, relations between the two states returned to normalcy during the period of 1963-1972. It was because of the fact that the restrictions on Afghan transit trade were hurting Afghanistan for which Pakistan was the major trade route. Moreover, the then King Zahir Shah had removed his cousin and prime minister Sardar Daud in 1963 who was the most key proponent of the cause of Pashtunistan. During this phase of the rule of King Zahir Shah, the Pashtunistan issue largely went into the backburner and the relations between the two countries further improved when the Afghan government decided to maintain its neutrality during the two Indo-Pak wars of 1965 and 1971. However, the relations again became hostile when the pro-Soviet Sardar Daud dethroned King Zahir Shah and became the Prime Minister of Afghanistan in 1973. From 1973 to 1979, the Pak Afghan region remained an epicenter of Cold War between USA and the USSR. This period largely witnessed hostile ties along with very brief phases of mutual thaw between both the neighbors. The reasons were the political developments on both sides of the border as well as the interference of global powers in the region.

Research Questions:

1. What was the policy of Sardar Daud's Afghan government towards Pakistan especially regarding the Durand Line and Pashtunistan Issue?
2. How did Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's government responded to Sardar Daud's foreign policy towards Pakistan?
3. How did the government of Zia-ul- Haq manage relations with Afghanistan from 1977 to 1979?
4. What was the effect on Pak-Afghan relations due to the change of political governments in Afghanistan in 1978 and 1979?

5. What was the role of Cold War between America and the USSR in determining the nature of Pak-Afghan ties during the period of 1973 to 1979?

Statement of the problem:

The relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan generally remained strained in the early decades after the inception of Pakistan. But the ties experienced a phase of normalcy during the era of King Zahir Shah from 1963 to 1973. However, with the return of Sardar Daud's government in 1973, the era of hostility started again. The issue was the same that of Pashtunistan and the Durand Line behind which Sardar Daud was the main proponent and supporter. This was also the phase of Cold war between America and the USSR and the USSR was the key supporter of Daud's regime while Pakistan had a general tilt towards America. The government of the Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto began to counter Daud's policy vigorously. Bhutto dismissed the National Awami Party's government in Baluchistan and its coalition government in the then NWFP accusing them of conspiring against the integrity of Pakistan in collusion with Afghanistan. The NAP's leadership was jailed and some of them fled to Afghanistan. The Afghan government sheltered and assisted the Pashtun and Baloch nationalist elements against the Bhutto regime while NAP was banned in Pakistan. The Bhutto government established an Afghan Cell in Pakistan to support the anti- Daud Islamist groups in Afghanistan. However, after few years, Daud's government mended its relations with Pakistan and General Zia-ul- Haq's government released all the political prisoners of Bhutto's regime. But after the assassination of Sardar Daud in 1978 began the era of Noor Muhammad Tarakai and Hafiz Ullah Amin's governments in Afghanistan, the Pak-Afghan relations could not remain cordial. This research basically studies the stance of Afghan governments on the issue of Pashtunistan and Durand line and the response of Bhutto and Zia governments in this era of 1973-1979. The role of governments on both sides, the role of Islamist proxies and nationalist

elements and the contribution of major powers, US and the USSR in Pak-Afghan relations during this era are key factors of the study.

Scope and Significance:

A lot of work has been done on the issue of Pak-Afghan relations in general as well as about relations in specific regimes. Mainly focus has been given to the eras of Afghan Jihad and the War against terror. But the period of 1973 to 1979 has been less researched in Pakistan. This study discusses the Pak-Afghan relations from 1973, the year in which Zulfikar Ali Bhutto became prime minister of Pakistan and Sardar Daud gained power in Afghanistan who rejuvenated the issue of Pashtunistan. The research discusses the issues in relations of the two countries after the fall of Bhutto regime till the invasion of Afghanistan by the USSR. This research is significant in the sense that it considers the period of history which consists of facts and events that proved turning point in determining the future course of history of not only the region but also the world as well. The politics of this region in this era was the main element that laid the foundation of the entry of USSR in Afghanistan and the subsequent Afghan Jihad and the dismemberment of the USSR. Therefore, this study provides a different dimension from the present common view point that traces the history of Pak-Afghan relations and the issue of Taliban to the arrival of USSR in Afghanistan and the beginning of Afghan Jihad.

Methodology:

This research is basically descriptive and analytical in nature. It is descriptive in the sense that facts and events have been described in detail after consulting the sources. It is analytical in the sense that facts of the history have been analyzed and interpreted by the researcher. The qualitative approach has been followed by consulting secondary sources.

Literature Review:

A plethora of literature is available in Pakistan on the issue of Pak-Afghan relations in the shape of articles and books. In many works, the relations of both countries have been studied in general manner starting from 1947 while some have looked at specific periods. But very few of them have taken into account the period from 1973-1979 which was the foundation period for what was going to happen in the region in the years to come.

Abdul Ghaffar Khan's *My Life and Struggle*, translated by Helen H. Bouman is a primary source material which helped in discussing the issue of Pashtunistan in the pre-partition period. It provided a first-hand account of the stance of Pashtun nationalists on the issue of Pashtunistan. This book also tells about the role of British, Congress, and the Muslim League regarding the issue of Pashtunistan in the years of partition. It is a good source which provides valuable knowledge to the researchers about the Pashtunistan issue.

M. Hassan Kakar's *A Political and Diplomatic History of Afghanistan 1863-1901* is a detailed study about the history of Afghanistan comprising the latter half of the 19th century. This book gives a valuable account of the genesis of the issue of Durand Line. This research talks about the factor of "The Great Game" between the British and the USSR which influenced the Anglo-Afghan relations in that era. Moreover, this book covers the developments that occurred in the Indo-Afghan which led to the agreement of Durand Line in 1893.

Abubakar Siddique's work, *The Pashtun Question: The Unresolved Key to the Future of Pakistan and Afghanistan* is also a valuable study on the relations of Afghanistan and Pakistan. This work mentions about the problems of Durand Line, Pashtunistan, and the Pashtun identity in the historical context. It also discusses the nature of Pak-Afghan relations in various phases. However,

Abubakar Siddique has mentioned more about the factor of extremism and Talibanization in the Pak-Afghan region. The phase of Pak-Afghan relations from 1947 to the invasion of USSR in 1979 has not been discussed in detail.

Moreover, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's book, *If I am Assassinated* is another important contribution and primary source on Afghan-Pakistan relations during Bhutto's era. Bhutto has explained the ups and downs with the Afghan regime during his tenure. The reasons behind the animosity between the two states and later an agreement to end the rivalry are explained in the book. It serves as a primary source for the topic under research but it largely gives the stance and narrative of Pakistan's government.

Anees Jillani's "*Pak Afghan Relations: 1958 to 1988*" is also a worthy work to consult for research on Pak-Afghan relations. Anees Jillani has written about the nature of ties between Afghanistan and Pakistan during different regimes from 1958 to 1988. It tells about developments which influenced the relations between both states in the post-partition period. However, Anees Jillani has focused less on elaborating the history of Durand Line and the subsequent events in the pre partition period which led to the demand of Pashtunistan.

Hanif -ur-Rehman's PhD Thesis, *Pak-Afghan Relations During 1996-2006* helped a lot in the research. Although it focuses the era of relations during Taliban's rule and the Karzai's government in Afghanistan, yet it gives a valuable background knowledge about the issue of Durand Line and Pashtunistan. It also sheds light on the Pak-Afghan relations during different phases in the post-partition period.

Abdul Sattar's book titled *Pakistan's Foreign Policy: 1947-2016: A Concise History* considers the issue of Pak-Afghan relations overall in detail. The said era is also mentioned and discussed in the

book. Although, it is a good effort to study Pakistan's foreign policy but its main aim is to look at Pakistan's relations with many countries. Therefore, the era under study has been discussed but not specifically in detail.

Similar is the case of Shahid Amin's work. Shahid Amin's book *Pakistan's Foreign Policy: A Reappraisal* is a very quality work which tells about Pakistan's relations with the other countries in a very balanced and unbiased manner. It has also very beautifully analyzed Pak-Afghan relations but there is the same issue that the specific period of 1973-1979 has been discussed but less comprehensively.

Adeel Khan's book *The Politics of Identity: Ethnic nationalism and the State in Pakistan* is indeed a very good work which discusses Pak-Afghan relations with a comprehensive detail about the issue of Durand Line and the Pashtunistan issue and also briefly mentions about the Bhutto's foreign policy towards Afghanistan and the relations between the two countries in the early two years of Zia before the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Furthermore, another significant work is that of Muhammad Yousaf, a Brigadier of Pakistan army during the Soviet Afghan war. He himself played an important role in the management, training and equipping of Mujahedeen. The work is an account of firsthand experiences in the battlefield of Afghanistan. The name of the book is *The Bear Trap: Afghanistan's Untold Story*. The book has exposed the nexus between Inter-Services Intelligence agency of Pakistan, CIA of America and Mujahedeen. It tells stories and share memories of the Soviet-Afghan War. The book covers the era of General Zia-ul-Haq.

Organization of the Study:

The work is basically divided into four chapters.

The first chapter of the study considers the genesis of the issue of Durand Line and the Pashtunistan issue in detail. It is because of the fact that during the period under study, this issue basically determined the mode of relationship between both the states.

In the second chapter, Pak-Afghan relations from 1947-1973 have been considered. This chapter briefly looks at the policies of King Zahir Shah's government towards Pakistan in the view of Pakhtunistan and Durand Line's issue and the response of different Pakistani governments to Afghanistan that came during this era.

The third chapter deals with the period of relations between the two countries from 1973 to 1977 when Bhutto was the Prime Minister of Pakistan and Sardar Daud headed the Afghan government. This chapter considers Sardar Daud's stance on the issue of Pashtunistan and Durand Line and Bhutto's policy of patronizing anti-Daud elements in Afghanistan. This chapter also discusses the issue of the problem of the nationalist National Awami Party in Pakistan in connection with Afghanistan. The chapter also looks into the role of the US and the USSR in the Pak-Afghan region.

The fourth chapter deals with the relations between the two countries in the post-Bhutto period of General Zia-ul-Haq from 1977-1979. This is the study of the period of the Afghan policy towards Pakistan under the three governments of Sardar Daud, Noor Muhammed Tarakai and Hafiz Ullah Amin and Zia's foreign policy towards Afghanistan in these two years. This chapter also discusses the role of global powers in this relationship of both countries.

CHAPTER 01

The Issues of Durand Line and Pashtunistan

The history and nature of Pak-Afghan relations cannot be understood without looking at the history of issues of Durand Line and Pashtunistan. Both the issues have remained constant irritants between Afghanistan and Pakistan. They have brought ups and downs in the Pak-Afghan relations since the emergence of Pakistan till present. The dispute of boundary demarcation still remains unresolved. Both the states try to win over territories along the border based on different claims. This continuous struggle has brought the mutual relations between both the neighbors to a standstill multiple time. The policies of one state against the other are generally influenced by the issue of Durand Line. A corollary to the Durand line problem is the issue of Pashtunistan which has made the authorities in Pakistan skeptical towards Afghanistan as well as the Pashtun nationalist parties existing in Pakistan. The existence of these two issues has continuously deteriorated the relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan on the one hand and Pakistan and its Pashtun population on the other hand. For better understanding of Pak-Afghan relations, better understanding of the issues of Durand line and Pashtunistan is essential.

The Demarcation of Durand Line: 1893

The border which separates Afghanistan and Pakistan is known as Durand Line. Its length is about 2500 kilometer stretching from Wakhan to the Iranian border.⁴ The boundary is named after Sir Henry Mortimer Durand who was a British Anglo-Indian diplomat and member of the Indian Civil

⁴ Luftur Rehman, "Durand Line: A Pakistani Perspective", in *Pakistan and Changing Scenario: Regional and Global*, ed. Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, Muneer Mahmud and Muntansar Billah (Islamabad: Islamabad Research Institute, 2008), 132.

Service. As the Foreign Secretary of India, Sir Henry Mortimer Durand negotiated the issue of demarcation of Durand Line with the Afghan authorities. The demarcation agreement was signed by Mortimer Durand on behalf of British India and Amir Abdur-ur-Rehman on behalf of Afghanistan in 1893.⁵ The demarcation of Durand Line has to be seen in the context of rivalry between major powers of that time in the 19th century. The two great powers of that time, Russia and the Great Britain, were engaged in a struggle called “The Great Game”. This struggle was basically aimed at capturing more and more territories and extending the sphere of influence. The British feared that that Russia was advancing east wards towards British India. This boundary line was meant to serve twin purposes: the establishment of buffer zone between British India and Russia, and the increase of British dominance in the region through forward policy.⁶ Buffer zone is basically a territory between two potential rival states aimed at preventing conflict between them. This buffer zone doesn’t allow two rival states to come into contact with each other for conflict. Moreover, the Forward Policy of British was basically a set of foreign policy doctrines applicable to territorial ambitions and disputes in which emphasis was placed on securing control of targeted territories by invasion, annexation or by the political creation of compliant buffer states. The aim was to keep Russia away from the borders of British India. Coming back to the developments which took place between Afghanistan and the British, Afghanistan and British have fought three wars in history. These wars are known as Anglo-Afghan wars. The first Anglo-afghan war was fought from 1839 to 1842, which ended with the defeat of British. The Second AngloAfghan war was initiated in 1878, in which the British got success by installing the government of their own choice. They installed Sher Ali as the Amir of Afghanistan. The Treaty of Gandamak was signed

⁵ M. Hassan Kakar, *A Political and Diplomatic History of Afghanistan 1863-1901* (Brill, Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2006), 116. In history,

⁶ Jeffrey A. Gritzner, *Afghanistan* (New York: Infobase Publishing, 2007), 38.

in 1879 between Afghanistan and the British. This treaty resulted in the loss of Afghan sovereignty over its foreign affairs and loss of its control over regions east of the Durand Line including the Pashtun areas of present Pakistan (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Pashtun areas of Balochistan and Tribal regions) to the British India.⁷ The British used these areas as a bulwark against the future Russian invasions. In exchange, Afghanistan was given assurance of British help in case of an external attack against her. Hence, the demarcation of Durand Line border took place in 1893.⁸ The British were able to secure a buffer territory against the Russian expansion. The Russian border had expanded to Central Asia and had almost reached Afghan borders in 1876, which was a matter of concern for the British.⁹ The buffer territory included frontier regions with both settled areas and the tribal belt. The region was used as a ‘frontier of separation’ rather than the ‘frontier of contact’.¹⁰ The region was later to be administered through special regulations called Frontier Crimes Regulation Act.¹¹

This Durand line agreement was reinforced after the end of the Third Anglo-Afghan war in 1919. This war was launched by the then King of Afghanistan, Amanullah Khan (1919 – 1929) to end the British control over the foreign policy of Afghanistan. He got success in achieving the goal of ending British control over the foreign affairs of Afghanistan but did not get back the lost territories.¹² Since then, the year 1919 is celebrated as the year of independence and August 19 is

⁷ Hassan Kakar, *A Political and Diplomatic History of Afghanistan* (Brill, Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2006), 17.

⁸ Algernon Durand, *The Making of Frontier: Five Years’ Experiences and Adventures in Gilgit, Hunza, Nagar, Chitral and the Eastern Hindu-Kush*, (London: John Murray, 1899), 1.

⁹ Abubakar Siddique, *The Pashtun Questions: The Unresolved key to the Future of Pakistan and Afghanistan*, (London: Hurst and Company, 2014), 34.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ainslie Embree, *Pakistan’s Western Borderlands: The transformation of a Political Order*, (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing house, 1977), 10-40.

¹² Martin Ewans, *Conflict in Afghanistan: Studies in Asymmetric Warfare* (London: Francis and Taylor, 2005), 76.

still celebrated as the “Independence Day of Afghanistan”. Afghanistan got independence regarding its foreign policy and in return recognized the validity of Durand Line border between British India and the state of Afghanistan through the Treaty of Rawalpindi which was signed between the authorities of the two states in Rawalpindi on August 8, 1919.¹³

The Treaty of Rawalpindi resolved the issue between Afghanistan and the British India. Both the states succeeded in securing their interests. Afghanistan got independence vis-à-vis its foreign relations with other states while the British India got control of the frontier regions for its own safeguard as a buffer region against the Russian assaults. The problem began to rise again in 1940s when the political atmosphere in British India predicted drastic changes in the near future. The Afghan leadership started showing their concerns about the territories east of the Durand line. The British announced the partition of India between India and Pakistan and declared the end of British colonialism in India in 1947. Now with the exit of British (party to the agreement of Durand Line), a hope generated in Afghanistan for the regain of lost territories. Not to miss the opportunity, the Afghan leadership started making claims as a legitimate owner of the region east of the Durand Line. In this regard, they started approaching both the British rulers of Subcontinent and the leadership of Indian National Congress to address their reservations.

On the eve of partition of Subcontinent, the Afghan rulers demanded the restoration of the areas east of Durand Line based on the assumption that with the withdrawal of British, the Durand Line agreement of 1893 has lapsed automatically.¹⁴ The Indian leaders did not agree with them and did not consider their reservations. The British government in India reminded Afghanistan that the

¹³ Fraser Tytler, *A Study of Political Developments in Central and Southern Asia* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), 196.

¹⁴ Mujtaba Razvi, “Pak – Afghan Relation since 1947: An Analysis”, *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 32, no. 4 (1979), 34-50.

Durand Line was now an international frontier and that what happened on the Indian side was none of their business.¹⁵ The Afghans were also told that the agreements with the tribes on the NorthWest Frontier of India would have to be negotiated with appropriate successor authority.¹⁶ Moreover, the Indian leaders also challenged the Afghan claims.¹⁷

As religion played a vital role in the partition of India, the Muslim majority areas established Pakistan and the Hindu majority areas formed India. Resultantly, the Pashtun areas east of the Durand line were inherited by the state of Pakistan. As a successor state, Pakistan also inherited the treaties signed between British and Afghanistan. Pakistan's position regarding the Durand Line agreement is based on the international law under the principle of *uti possidetis Juris*. This principle implies that the newly created states can keep their internal borders which were hitherto part of the preceding entity. According to Paul Hensel and others, the principle of *uti possidetis juris* was applied by courts in different countries and the Vienna Convention has universally validated this principle by arguing that bilateral agreements and treaties are "passed down to successor states". Boundary adjustments can be made through bilateral negotiations rather than unilateral decisions.¹⁸ Afghanistan refused to recognize the Durand Line as a de jure international border.

This territorial issue between the state of Afghanistan and British Empire transferred to Pakistan as one of the successor states to British Empire in the subcontinent. Since the partition of India and emergence of Pakistan as the inheritor of the Pashtun areas erstwhile controlled by British, the

¹⁵ Arnold Fletcher, *Afghanistan: Highway of Conquest* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1965), 249.

¹⁶ Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A New History* (Richmond: Curzon Press, 2001), 106.

¹⁷ Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, (Bombay, Orient Longmans: 1959), 193.

¹⁸ Paul Hensel, Michael Allison, and Ahmed Khanani, "Territorial Integrity Treaties, Uti Possidetis, and Armed Conflict over Territory", Presented at the Shambaugh Conference "Building Synergies: Institutions and Cooperation in World Politics", University of Iowa, October 13, 2006.

Durand Line is a bone of contention between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Linked with the Durand Line is the issue of Pashtunistan which has continuously kept Pakistan at guard against the state of Afghanistan and the Pashtun ethno-nationalist leadership within its own country.

The Genesis of Pashtunistan issue:

In corollary to the Durand Line issue, the problem of Pashtunistan has also worked to the detriment of Pak-Afghan relations. The question of Pashtunistan emerged on the eve of partition when the Pashtun majority areas were granted to Pakistan. In the words of Nabi Misdaq, “The Durand Line become a bone of contention between Afghanistan and Pakistan including the irredentism on Pashtunistan, claiming separate homeland for the Pashtuns”.¹⁹ In 1929, Pashtun nationalists under the leadership of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan also known as Bacha Khan launched a movement called Khudai Khidmatgar Movement. Khudai Khidmatgars were also known as the Red Shirts because of the red color of the dress they wore. Khudai Khidmatgars (the Servants of God) led by Bacha Khan used non-violent means of protests, demonstrations, and civil disobedience to get independence from the British colonialism.”²⁰ These Pashtun nationalists and the Indian National Congress made an alliance because of their common cause of anti-colonialism. This alliance resulted in advantages for both i.e., the Congress got political base in the Northwest Frontier Province and the Khudai Khidmatgars gained a major ally in the shape of Indian National Congress.²⁰ Another reason for the Red Shirts’ preference to Congress over the Muslim League was the maintenance of a distinct Pashtun identity. The Muslim League wanted the integration of

¹⁹ Nabi Misdaq, *Afghanistan: Political Frailty and External Interference* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 61. ²⁰ Raja Qaiser Ahmed and Rafiullah Khan, “The Rise of Peripheral Nationalism in Pakistan and the Pashtun Tahfuz Movement”, *Asian Ethnicity* (2020), 8. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14631369.2020.1785840>.

²⁰ Syed Waqar Ali Shah, *Ethnicity, Islam and Nationalism: Muslim Politics in North West Frontier 1937-1947*, (Islamabad: UNHCR, 2005), 15.

Pashtun ethnic group into the larger category of Muslims by denying acceptance of their separate identity.²¹

When the British announced the “3rd June Plan” for the division of Subcontinent based on religious identity, the Pashtun frontier areas were supposed to become part of Pakistan by the virtue of their Muslim identity and geographic contiguity. Bacha Khan reminded congress of their collective struggle against the British imperialism and for the independence of United India and asked them to resist the partition. The Congress accepted the partition. Bacha Khan considered it as a betrayal of Red Shirts by the Congress and commented, “You have thrown us to the wolves”.²² According to Ahmed and Khan, “This was the turning point in the evolution of Pashtun nationalism as it changed from anti-colonial towards the transnationalism based on the irredentist claims and cultural ties of Pashtuns with Afghanistan.”²³

The option of being part of the United India was ruled out. Bacha Khan chalked out a separate choice for the Pashtuns. This choice was the idea of Pashtunistan, a separate and independent homeland for the Pashtun population of the areas east of the Durand Line. He demanded the inclusion of Pashtunistan as an option for Pashtuns besides the option of India and Pakistan. He wanted that the Pashtuns should be provided a third option apart from joining either India or Pakistan in the referendum. His demand for the option of Pashtunistan was rejected. The people of NWFP (now KPK) were provided two options either to vote for Pakistan or India. The Red

²¹ Ibid.

²² Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, *My Life and Struggle*, Translated by Helen H. Bouman (India: Hind Pocket Books, 1969).

²³ Raja Qaiser Ahmed and Rafiullah Khan, “The Rise of Peripheral Nationalism in Pakistan and Pashtun Tahfuz Movement”, 8.

Shirts boycotted and abstained from participating in the referendum. “Out of the total 572,799 eligible votes, 292,118 (51%) were polled of which 289,244 (99%) went in favor of Pakistan and only 2874 in favor of India.”²⁴ In this way, NWFP became part of Pakistan.

Rehman Pezhwak in his book, “Pakhtoonistan”, demarcated the territories which were encompassed by the idea of Pashtunistan. These territories included; Chitral, Hazara, Kohistan, Swat, Dir, Buner, Peshawar, Tirah, Bajaur, Kohat, Bannu, Dera Ghazi Khan, Dera Ismail Khan, Waziristan, Khyber, Pezu, Gomal and Malakand.²⁵ The author has failed to mention the Pashtun areas of Balochistan which include Quetta city, Bolan, Chaman, Pishin, Qila Abdullah among others. All these territories complete the idea of Pashtunistan. In short, the political phrase of the idea of Pashtun homeland is encapsulated in following words, “La Bolana Thar Chitrala Pakhtunkhwa Da” (From Bolan to Chitral is Pakhtunkhwa, Pashtun homeland).

The rulers of Afghanistan initially showed their reservations regarding Durand Line but to no avail. Now the resistance of indigenous Pashtuns for independence provided a golden opportunity to the state of Afghanistan to pursue its unfulfilled objective of regaining the lost territories. They started supporting the Pashtun nationalist leaders in their struggle for Pashtunistan. “The Government of Afghanistan, seeing possibilities of territorial expansion, thought it convenient to take up the issue of "Pakhtoonistan", as it could fruitfully be exploited to denounce the Treaty of 1893 and to assert claim to a new international frontier, perhaps reaching as far as the Arabian Sea.”²⁶ Both the Pashtun ethnic nationalist leadership and the state of Afghanistan started making irredentist claims.

²⁴ Adeel Khan, *The Politics of Identity: Ethnic nationalism and the State in Pakistan* (New Delhi: Sage Publication, 2005), 97.

²⁵ Louis Dupree, Abdul Rahman Pazhwak and Shah Muhammad Rais, *Pashtunistan* (Afghanistan, Kabul Shah Books and Co, 2003), 10.

²⁶ Mujatba Razvi, “Pak-Afghan Relation Since 1947: An Analysis”, 34.

The Question of Linkage and Co-existence of Durand Line and Pashtunistan:

The issue of Durand Line and Pashtunistan are interlinked and inseparable. One is cause and the other is effect. Both the issues have roots in the colonial legacy of India. The demarcation of Durand Line and later on the partition of Subcontinent were the repercussions of the British Empire in the region. Had Durand line border not been demarcated and the areas to its east not given in the control of British India, there would have been no issue of Pashtunistan as these areas would have been part of Afghanistan, their original country. The problem of Durand Line gave rise to the issue of Pashtunistan as it divides one ethnic group i.e. Pashtuns into two states.

The state of Afghanistan demands the restoration of Greater Afghanistan, which includes the Pashtun regions comprising Pakistan. Being a weak state as compared to a nuclear armed state of Pakistan, she has not been able to reclaim its territories via the use of force. However, she embarked on the indirect path by creating internal fissures within Pakistan through its support to the Pashtunistan movement. They are of the view that if Pashtunistan became a reality, then it would be easy to convince the leadership in becoming part of Afghanistan on the basis of “One Nation One State” principle.

Afghan claims regarding the legality of the Durand line and her support for the Pashtunistan cause are contradictory in nature. It is the existence of Durand line border which has made the Pashtun population and areas part of Pakistan. This implies that undoing of Durand Line would automatically bring the Pashtuns and their concerned areas into the fold of Afghanistan. However, undoing Durand Line and wishing freedom for the Pashtuns of Pakistan in the shape of formation of Pashtunistan are opposite to each other. These two demands cannot co-exist. This contradiction in Afghan claims has been aptly put by S. M. Qureshi in his article, “Pakhtunistan: The Frontier dispute between Afghanistan and Pakistan”. He writes;

“The two contentions of Afghanistan that the Durand Line be revoked, and that Pakistani Pashtuns be given freedom seem to be incompatible. Theoretically, the Afghan claim would have more weight if the line of argument followed was that the Durand Line is the frontier of Afghanistan, but that the Pashtuns, who are not Pakistanis, should have the right of self-determination and Afghan interest in their fate is purely altruistic. Alternatively, Afghanistan should seek a re-demarcation of her frontier with Pakistan on the ground that the Durand Line was never recognized by her but merely accepted under the pressure of superior British arms. In this case, Afghanistan should not have any interest in Pakhtunistan and the Pashtuns. That Afghanistan has chosen neither of these courses, but a combination of both, is confusing.”²⁷

It has not only been the state of Afghanistan which has used the issue of Pashtunistan to their advantage but the Pashtun nationalists of Pakistan also pursue their political interests in the name of Pashtunistan and Durand Line. Pashtun ethno-nationalist parties like Awami National Party (ANP) and Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PKMAP) frequently use the slogan of “Lar Ao Bar Yo Afghan” which means “Afghans at either side of the Durand line are one”. It is a kind of implied warning reminding the state of Pakistan that Pashtuns have an option if they are forced to choose.

The Afghan Perspective on Durand Line and Pashtunistan:

Since day one of the emergence of the state of Pakistan, Afghanistan refuses to recognize the Durand line as an international border. Afghan governments have challenged its legitimacy and struggle to undo it. They do not consider the Durand line as the real frontier. They are of the view that the treaty regarding the Durand line was imposed upon them by one of the great powers of the time. They are of the view that the Durand Line Agreement was against the wishes of Afghan

²⁷ S. M. Qureshi, “Pakhtunistan: The Frontier Dispute between Afghanistan and Pakistan”, *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 39, no. ½ (Spring-Summer, 1966), 110.

people.²⁸ It was an unfair and undue agreement imposed under duress upon Afghanistan.²⁹ To them, it was an understanding between the two great powers i.e., the expansionist Russia and the Imperial British India to avoid direct conflict.³⁰ According to the canons of International Law, the treaty signed or agreement made under duress is considered as null and void. Thus, the rulers of Afghanistan consider that the treaty handing over the Pashtuns areas across the Durand Line to the British India and later to Pakistan is illegal and does not hold water. Therefore, it must be undone and reversed to do justice to the state and people of Afghanistan.

Similarly, like Durand Line issue, the state of Afghanistan refuses to acknowledge the Pashtun population across the border as part of Pakistan. They consider them as a separate and distinct nation which should have the right to self-determination and statehood of their own. The Pashtuns of Pakistan are distinct in culture, language and ways of life from the rest of Pakistan's population. They believe that Pashtuns were forcibly made part of Pakistan indicating towards the boycott of referendum by the Red Shirts under the leadership of Bacha Khan. Different officials of Afghanistan on different occasions have made these points revealed.

S. M. Qureshi has also indicated towards the attitude of Afghanistan on the issue of Durand Line and Pashtuns. He considers these two problems as the main cause of trouble between the two states. He writes "According to Afghanistan, the two main points of dispute between her and Pakistan are: (i) the Durand Line is not a legitimate international frontier between them, and (2) the transborder Pathans are not a part of Pakistan, and, therefore, should form a separate nation of their

²⁸ Hassan Kakar, *A Political and Diplomatic History of Afghanistan*, 183.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 182

³⁰ Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (New Jersey: Preston University Press, 1980), 424.

own.”³¹ Afghanistan interprets her support to the Pashtuns of Pakistan in terms of altruism. They say that they support the right to self-determination for each nation.

There is a misperception among the masses of Afghanistan regarding the time period of the Durand Line treaty. Most of the people believe that the treaty was signed for a particular period. In case of Durand Line, they are of the view that it was for a period of 100 years. This implies that after the completion of that period, the treaty will automatically come to an end. If this is true, then the treaty being signed in 1893 should have come to an end in 1993, after the completion of hundred years of its validity. But that is not the case. According to Qassem and Durand;

“This presumption is so deeply engraved in the political psyche of the Afghan masses that even some of the eminent figures in Afghan politics have been unable to deny it. Nevertheless, neither the Afghan government, nor the most active proponents of this view have ever presented any overt instrument proving their claim, nor do we find, upon examining the relevant documents, i.e. the Durand Line agreement and the rest of the documents ratified until 1896 by the respective councils for determination and demarcation of the British-Afghan border, any provision restricting the term of the agreement to 100 years. It is indeed a mystery, how this opinion could spread across the country without being questioned at all.”³²

Furthermore, Afghanistan denies the argument of Pakistan that Pashtuns joined her out of free will and through a transparent process of free and fair referendum. Instead, she believes that the referendum was limited because all Pashtuns and particularly the Red Shirts did not participate in the referendum as a protest for not giving them the option of Pashtunistan. The Khudai Khidmatgar

³¹ Qureshi, “Pakhtunistan: The Frontier Dispute Between Afghanistan and Pakistan”, 107.

³² Ahmed Shaye Qassem and H. M. Durand, “Pak-Afghan Relations: the Durand Line Issue”, *Pakistan Perspectives*, Vol. 5, no. 2 (April 2008), 89.

movement which was also in power in the province with majority in the provincial legislature was a potent political force in the Pashtun areas. The absence of participation of such a main actor casts genuine doubts on the transparency and fairness of the plebiscite held. In this way, the claim of Afghanistan regarding the forcible merger of Pashtuns in Pakistan holds water.

Abubakar Siddique in his book, *The Pashtun Question*, writes that Kabul called a Loya Jirga in July 1949 as a reaction to Pakistan's bombardment on a village on the Afghanistan's side of the border. The Jirga concluded with following decisions;

“The Jirga declared support for Pashtunistan and affirmed Kabul's position that Pakistan was a new state, rather than a successor state, to British India. This, the Jirga declared, made all past treaties with the British pertaining to the status of the border null and void. The agreements included in this renunciation were the 1879 Treaty of Gandamak, the 1893 Durand Agreement, the Anglo-Afghan Pact of 1905, the Treaty of Rawalpindi of 1919 and the Anglo-Afghan Treaty of 1921.”³³

Pakistan's Perspective on the Durand Line and Pashtunistan Issue:

Pakistan rejects the claims made by Afghanistan regarding the validity of Durand Line and the Pashtunistan issue. She refuses to recognize the reservations made by the state of Afghanistan over the legitimacy of international border between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Pakistani rulers consider the Durand Line as a settled issue, which is not worthy of any further discussion or debate. The Durand Line is a non-negotiable issue for Pakistan. Pakistan justifies the legitimacy of Durand Line as an international border based on the following arguments. First, Pakistan considers itself

³³ Abubakar Siddique, *The Pashtun Question: The Unresolved Key to the Future of Pakistan and Afghanistan*, 38.

as the legitimate successor state to British India.³⁴ Second, the Pashtuns themselves via referendum decided to join Pakistan.³⁶

Pakistan denies both the claims of Afghanistan vis-à-vis Durand Line and her altruistic support to the Pashtuns of Pakistan. Instead, Pakistan is cynical of Afghanistan's moves and policies towards Pakistan. She views them as a security threat to the integrity and stability of the state and society. "Afghanistan wants to annex the areas west of the River Indus and east of the Durand Line, and that the professedly altruistic interest in the right of self-determination of the Pakhtuns is a pretext to start a process of disintegration in West Pakistan."³⁵

Islamabad has deployed regular troops at the border region for the sake of security against any attack from the security forces of Afghanistan. Pakistan falsifies the claim of Afghanistan that the Pashtuns of Pakistan want independence and separate state of their own. She believes that there is no such desire among the Pashtuns because they are happy in Pakistan by enjoying the benefits of the state. Moreover, the idea of Pashtunistan is concocted by the imagination of the Afghan rulers. The administration in Kabul wants to annex Pashtun majority areas of Pakistan. Furthermore, Pakistan believes that the Pashtuns are not forced into the state of Pakistan, but they have chosen to become part of it through free and fair referendum and local Jirga.

Pakistan accepts the distinct and different ethnic identity of the Pashtun populace, and so she also accepts the diverse and heterogeneous nature of the society. Like India and Afghanistan, Pakistan too is home to multiple ethnic groups who have their own languages, cultures and traditions. The presence of heterogeneity and multiplicity of ethnic groups does not necessarily warrant the

³⁴ Kalim Bahadur, "Pakistan Policy Towards Afghanistan", in K. P. Misra, ed., *Afghanistan in Crisis* (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1981), 89. ³⁶ Mujtaba Razvi, *The Frontiers of Pakistan: A Study of Frontiers Problems in Pakistan's Foreign Policy* (Karachi: National Publishing House Ltd, 1981), 89.

³⁵ Ibid., 108.

genesis of ideas of liberation and independence. The existence of multicultural and multiethnic state has become a new reality. If demands for the plebiscite of ethnic groups is accepted, then it would proliferate across all the states composed of multiple ethnic groups. Afghanistan itself is home to multiple ethnic groups like Uzbek, Tajik, and Hazara who also have their own states in Central Asia. They will also demand a right to self-determination which the state of Afghanistan would be unable to afford.

The issue of Durand Line and the idea of Pashtunistan are the twin problems which have dominated the Pak-Afghan relationship and directed its direction. The highs and lows of this relationship are contingent upon the stance of the two states on the above issues. The Durand Line was a frontier made between the British India and Afghanistan in 1893, which resulted in the British control of the Pashtun majority areas east of the Durand Line. After the exit of British from Subcontinent and the partition of United India, the newly emerged state of Pakistan inherited the Durand Line along with the Pashtun dominated regions. Afghanistan protested the validity of the border and the inclusion of Pashtun areas into Pakistani state. Pakistan considers Durand Line as a legitimate, legal and valid international border. However, Afghanistan contests the legitimacy and validity of it and desires to undo it.

Linked with the Durand line issue is the problem of Pashtunistan. Though the idea of a separate homeland for the Pashtuns of Pakistan was an indigenous idea erupted out of the politics of the Subcontinent on the eve of partition, yet it was exploited by the rulers of Afghanistan for their advantage to pressurize Pakistan. When the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement, under the leadership of Bacha Khan, felt betrayed by the Indian National Congress, they demanded the option of independent state of their own named Pashtunistan. The demand was refused and not accepted.

The slogan of Pashtunistan till present is used both by the state of Afghanistan and the ethnonationalist Pashtun leadership in Pakistan for the sake of their own interests.

The Afghan reservations regarding the issue of Durand Line are valid and genuine, yet Pakistan being the successor state to British Indian Empire inherited it. Likewise, Pakistan is also valid in its claim over the legitimacy of Durand Line as an international border because the International Law dictates its rightness and recognizes it. The border between Pakistan and Afghanistan is just one of the countless instances where colonial empires have carved out artificial, and logic-defying boundaries and borders merely for the sake of convenience for colonial objectives and goals.

Both the issues of Durand Line and Pashtunistan have roots in the colonial era and its policies. The persistence of both problems has proved a constant spoiler in Pak-Afghan relations. Despite having cultural, linguistic, religious and historical commonalities, the two Muslim neighboring states remained at odds with each other most of the time. It is high time for both the states to chalk out mechanism to resolve the outstanding issues to the mutual benefit of people of both states.

CHAPTER 02

Pak-Afghan Relations from 1947-1973

The Pak-Afghan relationship began on a hostile note with the emergence of Pakistan in 1947. The elements of Pashtunistan and Durand Line were the basic contributing factors. For majority of years, hostility was to characterize the nature of relationship between both the states. Both Pakistan and Afghanistan looked at each issue in different manner and interpreted accordingly. Both the states expressed reservations and provided justifications for their stance. Claims and statements were given befitting response from each side. Most of Afghan governments repeatedly raised voice about the issue of Durand Line and Pashtunistan. Similarly, Pakistan reacted accordingly, no matter who remained in power in Pakistan whether civilian or military dictator, none was ready to compromise on the question of Durand Line. They considered it a settled and non-negotiable issue. In the words of Mujtaba Rizvi, Pakistan's response was; "If Pakistan is dependent on Afghanistan for its defense against Central Asia, Afghanistan, for its part, gets protection from the barrier Pakistan's territory presents to any maritime power."³⁶ Afghanistan is a land locked country. All of its trade is dependent upon sea route for which she needs transit route through Pakistan. In order to break the prison of geography and end its landlocked position, it needs access to warm water. The nearest and the most advantageous and appropriate destination is the Arabian Sea. And the most suitable path is to undo the Durand Line and get control of Pashtun areas which will provide her access to the sea. In order to get access to the sea, the state of Afghanistan continuously made fuss about the validity of Durand Line and extended support for the Pashtunistan agenda. The

³⁶ Mujtaba Rizvi, *The Frontiers of Pakistan* (Karachi, National Publishing House: 1971),14.

Afghan Prime Minister Hashim Khan said in his comment on the 3rd June Plan regarding the partition of Subcontinent, "If an independent Pakhtoonistan cannot be set up, the Frontier Province should join Afghanistan to get an outlet to the sea."³⁷

The Ups and Downs of Pak-Afghan Relationship: 1947-1973:

. Qassem and Durand have also blamed the above two problems of Durand Line and Pashtunistan as the root causes of the “tinge relationship” between the two countries since the inception of Pakistan. They write, “There are mainly two interrelated, historical reasons for this: the problem of “Durand Line” - the shared but disputed border of the two countries; and Afghan support for the ‘Pakhtoonistan’ movement in Pakistan's North West Frontier Province (NWFP).”³⁸ However, Abubakar Siddique considered the “Pashtun Question” as the “key to the future of Pak-Afghan relations”.³⁹ Most of the authors treat Durand Line and Pashtunistan issue as separate and distinct problems but in reality, they are a one issue. Talking about Durand Line implies discussion about the Pashtuns of Pakistan and vice versa.

Afghanistan’s Refusal to Support Pakistan’s Membership into the UN:

This resentment between the two states was first observed on the international forum of United Nations General Assembly when the authorized representative of Afghanistan didn’t support the entry of Pakistan into the United Nations. Afghanistan was the first state which voted against the membership of Pakistan in the United Nations. Hussain Aziz was the representative of Afghanistan

³⁷ *The Statesman*, New Delhi, 22 June 1947.

³⁸ Ahmed Shaye Qassem and H. M. Durand, “Pak-Afghan Relations: The Durand Line Issue”, 87-88.

³⁹ Abubakar Siddique, *The Pashtun Question: The Key to the Future of Pakistan and Afghanistan*, (London: Hurst and Company, 2014).

in the UN. He provided following explanation for the opposition of Pakistan into the membership of UN;

“This unhappy circumstance is due to the fact that we do not recognize the old North West Frontier Province as part of Pakistan so long as the people of the North West Frontier Province have not been given an opportunity free from any kind of influence to determine for themselves, whether they wish to be independent or to become a part of Pakistan.”⁴⁰

Afghanistan tried to take benefit of the prevailing circumstances. At that time, there was conflict between India and Pakistan over the control of multiple princely states such as Kashmir, Hyderabad Deccan and Junagarh. Kabul was expecting a united front in alliance with India against Pakistan. Being a nascent state, Pakistan was facing existential security threat on its eastern border from India which was not ready to accept the partition and emergence of Pakistan. Indian leadership was hell bent on undoing Pakistan. They were of the view that Pakistan would not survive long and will soon reintegrate into mother India. Afghanistan wanted to take advantage of the situation by raising its reservation concerning the status of Durand Line. They were of the view that the perception of security threat on both eastern and western border might compel the leadership in Pakistan to accommodate the claims of Afghanistan. But Pakistan withstood the pressure and stood steadfast on the issue of Durand Line.

After the first show of resentment at the floor of the United Nations, Afghanistan made a conciliatory move to negotiate a way forward. Afghanistan sent her representative Najibullah Khan to Pakistan in 1948. He met with the Governor General and founder of Pakistan Muhammad Ali

⁴⁰ Abdul Samad Ghaus, *The Fall of Afghanistan: An Insider's Account* (Washington: Pergamm Brassey's International Defence Publishers, 1988), 69.

Jinnah and presented the demands on behalf of Afghanistan. Afghanistan made three demands to be fulfilled by Pakistan. First, the formation of tribal areas into a free and sovereign province, second; Afghanistan should be granted an access to the sea via the formation of an Afghan Corridor in the West Baluchistan or making a free Afghan zone in Karachi, third; both the states should enter into a treaty of neutrality which will bind each party to remain neutral in case of an attack on the other.⁴¹ Pakistan did not accept a single demand.

Afghanistan was playing the card of ethnic politics in Pakistan. The state of Pakistan herself was quite averse to the assertion of ethnic identities inside its jurisdiction. Pakistan was created based on Islamic ideology and wanted to preserve her integrity through the use of religion as a binding and cohesion tool. The founder of the state, Quaid-i- Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah himself declared the “provincialism a poison”⁴⁴. Apart from using religious card and other material tools to pacify the tribal people, Pakistan gave a cold shoulder to Afghanistan’s claims.

Despite the initial show of resentment and hostility on behalf of Afghanistan, Pakistan offered the establishment of diplomatic and friendly relations. The rulers of Afghanistan despite the fact of having reservations vis-à-vis the territorial delimitations of Pakistan were willing to set up diplomatic relationship. Thus, both Pakistan and Afghanistan established diplomatic relations with each other.

After the establishment of diplomatic relations, a slight thaw in the relationship took place. The posture and stance of the Afghan ambassador was conciliatory and pacifying. He did not question the Durand Line. He accepted it as the natural border between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

⁴¹ I. H. Baqui, "Relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan", *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 1 (September 1948), 216-218.

⁴⁴ Madiha Afzal, “Why is Pakistan’s Military Repressing a Huge, Non-Violent Pashtun Protest Movement”, *Brookings* (blog), February 7, 2020.

Ambassador being representative of the state speaks for the state not for himself. This change of stance was welcoming. In his address to the Aligarh Association in Pakistan, he repudiated the claims of Afghanistan over the territories of Durand Line. He told the audience that Afghanistan has given up her claims in favor of Pakistan. Following were his exact words;

“Our King has already stated, and I, as the representative of Afghanistan, declare that Afghanistan has no claims on the frontier territory, and even if there were any they have been given up in favour of Pakistan. Anything contrary to this which may have appeared in the press in the past or may appear in future should not be given credence at all and should be considered just a canard.”⁴²

However, with the immediate withdrawal of ambassador back to Afghanistan indicated that the ambassador was not uttering the stance of Afghanistan but his own opinion on the issue. It took long time before another ambassador was sent to Pakistan to revive the stalled diplomatic relationship.

During the same period, Pakistan also got involved in a dispute with India over the Kashmir issue. The uprising in Kashmir by the Muslim population against the rule of Hari Sing prompted the tribal Pashtuns to help their Muslim brothers. They invaded Kashmir, which in turn provided ground for the involvement of Indian forces leading to war between India and Pakistan. Surendra Chopra is of the view that Kashmir’s misadventure by the tribal people resulted in a lot of casualties of their near and dear ones, which created disaffection among them against the government of Pakistan.⁴³ Meanwhile, the Afghan government once again boosted up their propaganda against

⁴² *Pakistan News*, London, June 16, 1948.

⁴³ Surendra Chopra, “Afghan Pakistan Relations: The Pakhtoonistan Issue, *Indian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 35, no. 4 (Oct-Dec 1974), 314.

Pakistan. King Zahir Shah in Afghan Parliament once again reiterated the uncompromising stance on the issue of Durand Line and the Pashtuns. Chopra writes;

“The Afghan king Zahir Shah opened the seventh session of the Afghan National Assembly with sharp utterances against Pakistan and in favour of the Pakhtoons’ right to self-determination. The Assembly passed a resolution repudiating all treaties, conventions and agreements concluded between the Afghan Government and the British Indian Government thus repudiating the Durand Line. The resolution also condemned Pakistan’s government for following repressive policies against Pakistani people.”⁴⁴

The Pashtunistan Movement in the Tribal Region:

The semblance of Pashtunistan state was established for a brief period in the tribal areas by Haji Mirza Ali Khan alias Fakir of Ipi. Mirza Ali Khan was believer of the independence of Pashtuns and continued his armed resistance for the establishment of itg. Unlike Bacha Khan who believed in the non-violent resistance, he was convinced of resistance through violence. He led an armed resistance against the British colonizers and continued the same against the state of Pakistan after partition.⁴⁵ Furthermore, Bacha Khan later accepted the reality of Pakistan and also took oath as member of the constituent assembly of Pakistan. However, Mirza Ali Khan refused to recognize the state and government of Pakistan and continued his struggle for the independence of Pashtuns.

Mirza established his own government in the tribal areas and called it the government of Pashtunistan. “On August 12, 1949, Afridi sympathizers declared a Pakhtunistan state in the Tirah Valley of the Khyber Agency and a Pakhtunistan National Assembly, under the leadership of

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Milan Hauner, “One Man Against the Empire: The Faqir of Ipi and British in Central Asia on the Eve of and During the Second World War”, *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 16 (1981), 183-212.

Mirza Ali Khan, the ‘Faqr of Ipi’.⁴⁶ It was supported and sponsored by the government of Afghanistan. “He was usually supported with money and military hardware by the Afghan authorities, especially so after the partition, when he became the symbol of Independent Pashtunistan.”⁴⁷ Safe havens, financial and other material assistance was extended to the irregular fighters fighting in the tribal areas. Pashtunistan flags were hoisted, and anti-Pakistan leaflets were distributed in Afghanistan.⁴⁸ Moreover, it is believed that some 500 Afghan troops entered the tribal areas to support the Pashtunistan government of Ipi.

This blatant support for the proponents of Pashtunistan inside Pakistan by the rulers of Afghanistan was the breach of Pakistan’s sovereignty. This unwelcomed interference to destabilize Pakistan angered Islamabad. Pakistan launched counter military offensive against the tribal fighters and the Afghan infiltrators. They were pushed back after six days of conflict. They were defeated in their motive of establishing an independent state in the tribal region.

The underground activities of the Fakir of Ipi in collaboration with Afghanistan brought Pak-Afghan relations to nadir and lowest possible point. Pakistan was infuriated to the extent that war was in the making had sane voices not prevailed. Pakistan even debated the option of sending a battalion to Afghanistan. The border was sealed. The relationship was embittered and hostile.

One Unit System and the Pak-Afghan Ties:

Pakistan comprised of two wings i.e. the East Pakistan (Bengal) and the West Pakistan (the present Pakistan). These two wings were separated from each other by 1000 miles of intervening Indian

⁴⁶ Robert Nichols, “The Pashtun Borderlands: Development, Nation, and Agency 1947-55”, *Afghanistan*, Vol. 4, 2(2021), 114-141.

⁴⁷ Milan Hauner, “One Man Against the Empire”, 183.

⁴⁸ Mujtaba Razvi, “Pak-Afghan Relations Since 1947: An Analysis”, 38.

territory. Any kind of communication between the two wings required passage through the Indian territory. India and Pakistan were archrivals, the former with the determination of breaking up the latter. The East Pakistan was in majority with respect to population as compared to the West

Pakistan. However, the West Pakistan had control over the institutions and resources of the state. The East Pakistan was at the mercy of the West Pakistan. The presence of democratic setup necessitated the sharing of state ownership with the Bengalis. In order to strike equity with the East Pakistan, the then leadership of West Pakistan created one unit system.

The One Unit System was an arrangement in which the country was categorized into two units. One unit was called East Pakistan and the second unit was called West Pakistan. The West Pakistan unit was made by putting together the provinces (Balochistan, NWFP, Sindh and Punjab) into a single unit. This obliterated the distinct identity and status of provinces. Majority of ethnic groups of the respective provinces protested the move but failed to undo it. The One Unit system was implemented in 1955. Apart from indigenous resistance against the move, external anger was also observed. This anger from outside was manifest in Afghanistan.

The Afghan rulers showed resentment over the move of the government of Pakistan to amalgamate the Pashtuns majority province of the Northwest Frontier Province into One Unit mechanism. Mob violence against the functionaries of Pakistan's government in Afghanistan took place. Pakistani consulate and embassy were assaulted. Pakhtoonistan flag was hoisted in place of Pakistani flag on Islamabad embassy in Kabul.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ *Economist*, London, May 14, 1955.

This episode of assaults and attacks brought a halt in the relationship. Pakistan ended its diplomatic presence in Afghanistan. Pak-Afghan border was closed for months. Trade halted between the two states. Pakistan's prime minister strongly reacted to the attitude of Afghanistan towards Pakistan's internal affairs. He warned the Afghan counterparts in following words; "We have tolerated the anti-Pakistan activities of the Afghan ruling junta for long, in the hope that wiser counsels might perhaps eventually prevail. We shall not tolerate such activities any longer."⁵⁰

The relations returned to normalcy in 1956 by virtue of the mediation carried out by some Muslim states, particularly Turkey. High level official visits and exchanges took place. Prime Minister Suhrawardy visited Kabul, and the Afghan prime minister Sardar Daud Khan visited Karachi. Everything seemed back in place. Complete diplomatic relations were again re-established.

Pak-Afghan Relations in the Shadow of Cold War:

The Cold war was fought between the USSR and the United States of America for the primacy and supremacy in the world affairs. After the end of World War II, both USSR and USA emerged as superpowers. Ideologically, and politically different, USSR controlled the Eastern Europe and USA became the leader of Western Europe. The Cold war was an ideological war between the USSR led communism and the USA spearheaded capitalism. Both the states were looking for states to increase their spheres of influence than that of the opponent. Mostly, this cold war took place in non-aligned third world post-colonial states of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The Soviet Union was one of two superpowers of post-World War II Cold War era. The Soviet Union in the initial years of Pak-Afghan dispute over the issue of Durand Line and right to self-determination of the Pashtuns of Pakistan remained silent. But when Pakistan sided with the USA

⁵⁰ Surendra Chopra, "Afghan Pakistan Relations: The Pakhtoonistan Issue", 315.

led capitalist bloc against the communist bloc led by USSR, Russia began to take interest in the Pak-Afghan dispute. Pakistan joined Southeast Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) and Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) in 1954 and 1955 respectively. This made Pakistan an opponent in the eyes of Soviets.

The USSR and USA supported different actors in the region in order to pursue their own interests. The Soviets along with India supported Afghanistan in its rivalry with Pakistan. The Soviets were on good terms with Afghans due to Afghanistan's strategic importance and proximity.⁵¹ The Soviet Premier, Marshal Bulganin had remarked in 1955 that they share sympathies with Afghanistan on Pashtunistan issue and it should be solved with Pashtun consultation.⁵² The shared interests brought USSR and Afghanistan close to each other to support each other's cause.⁵³ Abubakar Siddique has mentioned the interests pursued by both USSR and India in Afghanistan. He argues, "The Soviet Union and India paid lip service to Pashtunistan while pursuing their own interests. Moscow's aim was to prevent Afghanistan from joining a Western military alliance. New Delhi wanted to divert Pakistani military resources from Indian borders by stoking fears of an unstable western border."⁵⁴ On the other hand, Pakistan being the formal member of US alliance against the communist bloc was supported by the administration of Washington in her interests vis-à-vis

⁵¹ Lawrence Ziring, *Iran, Turkey and Afghanistan: A Political Chronology* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2007), 12.

⁵² Thomas T. Hammond, *Red Flag Over Afghanistan: The Communist Coup, The Soviets Intervention and the Consequences* (Colorado: Westview, 1984), 24.

⁵³ *Pakistan Times*, 11 May 1955.

⁵⁴ Abubakar Siddique, *The Pashtun Question: The Unresolved Key to the Future of Pakistan and Afghanistan*, 38. ⁵⁸ Herbert Feldman, *Revolution in Pakistan: A Study of the Martial Law Administration* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1967), 169.

Afghanistan. Through CENTO and SEATO, the United States of America and the United Kingdom strengthened Pakistan's defense.⁵⁸ They declared Durand Line as permanent international border between Pakistan and Afghanistan⁵⁵.

In 1955 when Pakistan imposed One Unit system by amalgamating the provinces of Balochistan, Sindh, NWFP and Punjab into a single unit called West Pakistan, the then Russia supported the "right of self-determination of the Pashtuns of Pakistan". Afghanistan's pro-Pashtunistan leadership became emboldened and strengthened with the support of Soviet Union on the issue of Pashtunistan.

In 1960, the U2 incident took place which infuriated the Soviets. The US spy plane took off from Pakistan for the purpose of reconnaissance deep inside the Soviet territory. It was shot down by the Russian defense. Pakistan's involvement in the episode made USSR hostile towards Islamabad and friendly towards Kabul. Nikita Khrushchev threatened Pakistan with an aerial bombardment of the frontier region.

In the 1960s, the USSR started taking side with Afghanistan against Pakistan. She started supporting the Pashtunistan idea of the Pashtuns residing in Pakistan. In this regard, she provided support to the state of Afghanistan which was in connection with the proponents and leadership of Pashtunistan in the tribal areas of Pakistan. Khrushchev is reported to have mentioned "Historically Pashtunistan has always been a part of Afghanistan."⁵⁶ Russia extended her support to Kabul in her tussle with Islamabad.⁶¹

⁵⁵ Zarina Salamat, *Pakistan 1947-1958: An Historical Review* (Islamabad: International Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 1992), 192.

⁵⁶ S. M. Qureshi, "Pakhtunistan: The Frontier Dispute Between Afghanistan and Pakistan", 106. ⁶¹ *Hindustan Times*, March 4, 1960.

In 1960, the relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan deteriorated because of the issue of princely state of Dir. The government of Pakistan initiated military action against the Nawab of Dir. This internal chaos provided opportunity to the rulers of Afghanistan to exploit it to their advantage. In 1961, clashes took place between Afghanistan forces and Pakistani troops in the tribal areas. Afghan troops infiltrated through the border. This led to the closure of border and transit trade route between the two states. Anees Jillani writes, "Transit trade facilities were also again suspended which proved to be a severe economic blow to Afghanistan, particularly in the sphere of its fruit trade. The Soviet government expectedly came to the rescue of Kabul by purchasing the entire stock of fruit, otherwise the suspension could have resulted in an internal strife against the rulers of Kabul."⁵⁷

Sardar Daud's Stance against Pakistan and his Removal from the Office:

The Prime minister of Afghanistan, Daud Khan was a staunch supporter of the Pashtunistan cause and he relentlessly pursued it. With the advent of Russian support, he further intensified his campaign against Pakistan. The standoff and stalemate between Afghanistan and Pakistan was because of the reckless policies of Daud, which resulted in economic loss for Afghanistan. Apprehensive of the economic instability and the closure of border with Pakistan, King Zahir Shah recognized the failure of Daud Khan's policies. He dismissed him from the post of premiership. The king held him responsible for the economic collapse and endangering of the Afghan nonaligned neutrality by providing space to Soviet interference in the affairs of the state.⁶³

The relations between the two states remained tense. The United States of America provided her good offices to strike an agreement between Pakistan and Afghanistan but failed. The Shah of Iran

⁵⁷ Anees Jillani, "Pak Afghan Relation: 1958 to 1988", *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol.46, no.1 (January 1993): 38. ⁶³ Ibid.

announced his intentions of offering good offices to bring normalcy in the relations between the two states. Both Kabul and Islamabad welcomed the offer. People and leaders on both sides of the Durand line were hopeful and optimistic about the positive outcomes of the Iranian efforts. The ruler of Iran paid official visits to Afghanistan and Pakistan respectively to know about the reservations, positions and conditions of both the states.

Through the reconciliatory efforts of Iran, diplomatic relations resumed, and borders were reopened resulting in the continuity of the halted trade. However, Afghanistan's demands of reopening of consulate and trade offices in Peshawar and Quetta were not fulfilled by the government of Pakistan.⁵⁸ Iran continued her efforts of mediation and reconciliation. The change of premier in Afghanistan provided opportunity for the full reestablishment of consular and diplomatic relations between the two states. Premier Daud was replaced with Muhammad Yousaf. Thus, Pakistan agreed to permit Afghanistan to reopen her consulates in Peshawar and Quetta and in return Pakistan was allowed to reopen her consulates in Jalalabad and Kandahar.

Indo-Pak Wars and the Neutrality of Afghanistan:

After the restoration of relations in 1963, Pak Afghan relations remained normal. There was no untoward incident which would have deteriorated the relations. President Ayub Khan visited Kabul in 1964 and in 1966. These visits created an environment of trust and friendship between the two countries. The manifestation of improvement in the relationship was the Pak-Afghan Transit trade agreement. This agreement was reached in 1964, and ratified in 1965, which was valid for five years.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Surendra Chopra, "Afghan Pakistan Relations: The Pakhtoonistan Issue", 323.

⁵⁹ Mujtaba Razvi, "Pak-Afghan Relation Since 1947: An Analysis", 43.

Pakistan and India were archrivals since the day of partition. India wanted to see the disintegration of Pakistan. For this to happen, she did not let any opportunity out of her hands to inflict cuts on Pakistan. Kashmir had been the bone of contention between the two states since 1947. Both India and Pakistan had claims over the control of Kashmir. Both states waged their first war in 1948 over the issue of Kashmir. The outcome of war resulted in the de jure occupation of Kashmir territories by both India and Pakistan. Since then both India and Pakistan are in control of the territories of the princely state Kashmir.

According to the partition plan of Subcontinent, princely states were given options either to join India, or Pakistan. Kashmir was one of the princely states whose majority population was Muslim who were tired of the oppression of the Dogra Raj. They wanted to join Pakistan, for this to happen, they started protesting the Dogra rule. The ruler of Kashmir called in the Indian forces for help in return for Kashmir's annexation. Pakistan also sent forces to retain Kashmir as part of Pakistan. The war occurred, which ended in 1949. Indian controlled Kashmir and Pakistan controlled Kashmir were separated by the Line of Control (LOC).

In 1948 war, the Pashtuns of tribal regions as an irregular force participated in the war against India. They suffered heavy casualties. The rulers of Afghanistan at that time strongly condemned the state of Pakistan for the loss of lives of Pashtuns and called for the self-determination right to be given to them. Moreover, Afghanistan sensed it as an opportunity to promote her own goals of Durand Line claim and support for the Pashtunistan state. However, this was not the case during the Indo-Pak wars of 1965 and 1971.

Pakistan and India went for second war in 1965 over the Kashmir problem. Pakistan through the operation Gibraltar tried to get Kashmir out of the Indian control which backfired in the form of a

full war waged by India. During this war, Afghanistan adopted stringent neutrality. It did not do anything which might have caused any sort of diversion for Pakistan. Similarly, Pakistan and India again were at loggerhead in 1971. This time the war was not over Kashmir but Indian involvement in the civil war of Pakistan. Civil war erupted between West Pakistan and East Pakistan (Bengal).

India supported Bengali separatists by training and equipping the Mukti Bahini and by blocking air access to Pakistani Air force over her territories. Pakistan lost her eastern wing in the shape of emergence of Independent State of Bangladesh on December 16, 1971. Afghanistan had the golden opportunity to pursue her interests by easily compelling the Pakistani government to yield into the demands of Kabul but the ruler of Afghanistan, Zahir Shah, not only observed neutral position but ensured Pakistan of its neutrality, non-interference, and support. According to Anees Jillani, Afghanistan adopted this neutral stance in the face of external pressure exerted by Russia.⁶⁰

Miscellaneous Events that Caused Deterioration of Pak-Afghan Relations:

Pak-Afghan relations remained smooth after 1963 and hostility remained dormant until 1966. From 1966 onward till 1973, due to certain developments, Pak-Afghan relations turned tense off and on. However, the level of hostility remained low and limited to verbal attacks and criticisms. The events which caused stir in the relationship between the two states, included the readjustment of Pakistan's borders vis-à-vis China and Iran, Pakistan's refusal to provide route for Afghanistan to trade with India, and the celebration of Pakhtoonistan day by the officials of Afghan government.

The first event which created anger among the rulers of Afghanistan, and they were compelled to react by criticizing the actions of government of Pakistan was in 1963 when Pakistan embarked on re-demarcation of her borders against China and Iran. Pakistan adjusted her borders with China by

⁶⁰ Anees Jillani, "Pak Afghan Relation: 1958-1988", 38.

renouncing certain territory in favor of China. Likewise, Pakistan adjusted her boundaries with Iran by exchanging 300 square miles of territory in return for 90 square miles. The leadership of the state of Afghanistan got infuriated over the exchange of boundaries with China and Iran.

Afghanistan put forward their stance over the Afghan-British agreements regarding the Durand Line. They questioned the sanctity and fixed nature of the borders if they are negotiable as Pakistan negotiated with two of her neighbors.

Furthermore, the refusal of Pakistan to provide overlay to Afghanistan for her trade with India also angered Afghanistan. Pakistan adopted this tough stance due to the Indo-Pak war of 1965. Pakistan did not want Afghanistan to have trade with India in order to isolate India in the region. But this move on behalf of Islamabad offended the government in Kabul. Afghanistan's economy was in decline and wanted to support it through trade with India. Upon the consistent refusal of Pakistan, Afghanistan started the propaganda of Pashtunistan. Afghanistan officially celebrated the 50th anniversary of Pashtunistan and once again emphasized on the self-determination right of the Pashtuns.

Apart from these events which worsened the relationship, there were other actions which resulted in some problems in the Pak-Afghan relations. The change of command in Pakistan from President Ayub Khan to General Yahya Khan took place in 1969. Yahya Khan promised to hold general elections in the country and dissolved the One Unit system in 1970. Provinces were re-established. This action of Yahya Khan was welcomed by the government of Afghanistan. According to

Surendra Chopra, “The decision to break up the One Unit Plan in 1970 too had a salutary effect on their relations as this assuaged the injured feelings of the Pakhtoons and there was a chance for the fulfilment of their aspirations.”⁶¹

The relations from 1970 onward to 1973 remained normal. There emerged no such events which would have caused trouble in the relations. After the break-up of Pakistan in 1971, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto became the president of Pakistan. The first capital he visited was Kabul. Leadership in both states was ready to reach an understanding and build durable relations for the economic development and prosperity of both the states. Unfortunately, multiple incidents took place in 1973, which changed the direction of Pak-Afghan relationship from one of friendliness, cooperation and stability to enmity, non-cooperation and instability. The next chapter will throw light on these events and their impact on the Pak-Afghan relation.

From 1947 to 1973 different events shaped the relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan. These events were used by Afghanistan to justify her stance on the issues of Durand Line border and Pashtunistan. Pak-Afghan relationship remained tense due to two problems namely, Durand Line and the idea of Pashtunistan. Both problems are interlinked to each other. Both problems have root in the colonial period of the Subcontinent. British colonized the Subcontinent and ruled over it for approximately two hundred years. During these two hundred years of rule, they brought large number of socio-economic, cultural and geographical changes in the region. One of the geographical changes was the Treaty of Durand Line which was inked with the Amir of Afghanistan. Through this treaty, British India got control of the frontier region east of the Durand Line.

⁶¹ Surendra Chopra, “Afghan Pakistan Relations: The Pakhtoonistan Issue”, 326.

After the exit of British from Subcontinent and the end of colonialism in India, India was divided into two states i.e., Pakistan and India. Pakistan inherited the Muslim majority areas east of Durand line as a successor state to the British India. Afghanistan came forward with reservations against the validity of the Durand Line border on the basis that the Durand Line treaty was signed under duress by the colonial power of the time. Now in the absence of that power, the treaty holds no validation and legitimacy. Though neither Pakistan nor the international community accepted the argument. The first show of distrust, resentment and hostility on behalf of the Afghanistan was her refusal to vote in favor of Pakistan's membership into the United Nations.

Apart from the Durand Line issue, the problem of Pashtunistan also obstructed the smooth functioning of relations between the two countries. The concept of Pashtunistan emerged out of the Indian politics in the last days of partition. Pashtun nationalists known as the Red Shirts led by Bacha Khan worked in coalition with Indian National Congress against the British colonizers for the independence of United India. However, when the partition plan was announced based on religious principle, Bacha Khan got disenchanted with the leadership of Congress and demanded the option of independence for the Pashtuns of Frontier region to be included in the referendum. They boycotted the referendum and pro-Pakistanis voted in favor of joining Pakistan. In this way, the frontier region became part of Pakistan.

Afghanistan has used the Pashtunistan issue multiple times by emphasizing on the self-determination right of the Pashtuns residing in Pakistan. They consider the Pashtuns of Pakistan separate and distinct nation, which deserve the right to be independent. Afghanistan provided both financial, material and human resources to the fighter of Fakir of Ipi who set up a shadowy government of Pashtunistan in tribal areas. These actions of Afghanistan frustrated Pakistan which

then was compelled to close border and stop the import and export of goods to keep the rulers of Afghanistan in pressure.

With Daud Khan in the office of Prime minister, Afghanistan adopted aggressive pro-Pashtunistan policy against Pakistan. Adding fuel to the fire, the U2 incident brought the factor of USSR into the Pak-Afghan relationship. Russia started supporting the pro-Pashtunistan stance of Afghanistan. This further emboldened and encouraged Daud to pursue his objectives more intensely against Pakistan. The border readjustment between Pakistan and China and Pakistan and Iran in 1963 provided an example set to show that British drawn borders are not sacrosanct and can be altered. Kabul celebrated the anniversaries of Pashtunistan day by hoisting flag of Pashtunistan. All these activities contributed to the worsening of the relationship between the two states.

From 1947 to 1973, there were also times when Pak-Afghan relationship was at its best. There were official visits by the high officials of the state, import and export of the trade, and the Afghanistan-Pakistan transit trade agreement which fostered cordial and friendly relations between the two Muslim neighboring countries. Even in the most favorable times and having the Achilles heel of Pakistan, Afghanistan refrained from doing any harm to her. For instance, during the India Pakistan wars of 1965 and 1971, Kabul not only remained neutral but also provided surety, cooperation and support to Pakistan.

The relationship between Islamabad and Kabul saw highs and lows during the period of 1947-1973. It deteriorated to the extent that the two countries were brought to the brink of war and improved to that extent that transit trade agreement was inked to facilitate trade, and economic development.

CHAPTER 03

Pak-Afghan Relations from 1973 – 1977

Pak–Afghan relations touched new heights of animosity and hostility from 1973 to 1977. This hostility in relations was caused by the occurrence of certain course-changing events. These events included the overthrow of King Zahir Shah by Sardar Daud Khan, dismissal of NAP government in Balochistan by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, and the consequent incarceration of Pashtun leadership. These happenings provided reason to each state to interfere in the affair of the other to achieve her own vested interests. Afghanistan with her new president revived the dormant issues of Pashtunistan and Durand Line with greater thrust and force. Meanwhile, Pakistan also started her intervention through Islamist proxies to keep Daud’s government entangled in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

Daud at the helm of affairs in Kabul, the internal security situation caused by the dismissal of NAP Government in Baluchistan and NAP’s coalition government in NWFP by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in Pakistan created an explosive mixture to deteriorate relations between the two countries. Daud and his team missed no chance to avail this opportunity of creating instability in Pakistan. They supported both Pashtun and Baloch rebels. Likewise, Pakistani counterparts did not remain silent but actively intervened in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. Pakistan supported those Islamists who were against Daud’s regime in Afghanistan. All these events proved deadly for Pak-Afghan ties.

This chapter discusses the change of government in Kabul, the revival of the Pashtunistan and Durand Line issue, the internal political and security situation in Pakistan and the consequent repercussions of these occurrences on the Pak-Afghan relationship in the period of four years from 1973 to 1977.

The Overthrow of King Zahir Shah and the Rise of Sardar Daud Khan to Power:

King Zahir Shah had come to understanding with Pakistani counterparts to foster friendly relations. He had considered the issue of Pashtunistan a spoiler of relations with Pakistan because Islamabad was not ready to compromise on her integrity at any cost. Border remained open, and trade was fully operational. Diplomatic and consular relations were established. Everything was working normal until the overthrow of King Zahir Shah's government.

Daud Khan was a key proponent and supporter of Pashtunistan issue. During his first tenure as premier of Afghanistan from 1953 to 1963, Daud Khan availed each forum and opportunity to criticize Pakistan and raise the issue of Pashtun's self-determination. It was his strong opposition to Pakistan and Washington which compelled King Zahir Shah to dismiss him from the post of premiership. This action on behalf of King Zahir Shah was also an indication that he wanted to push the issue of Pashtunistan aside to have positive and win-win relations with Pakistan. From 1963 to 1973, the relation between the two states observed some hostility but throughout this decade the relation remained stable and cooperation based.

On July 17, 1973, Daud Khan overthrew King Zahir Shah and declared Afghanistan as a republic and announced himself as president. Zahir Shah was accused of harming the cause of Pashtunistan and having failed to stage a strong reaction against Pakistan government for her actions of dismissal of National Awami Party Government in Balochistan. Daud openly expressed his feelings for Pashtun and Baloch cause on July 24, 1973, in the following words; "It was a reality which cannot be denied but it could admit of an amicable solution in accordance with the

aspirations of Pashtuns.”⁶² Abubakar has mentioned the same reasons as the basis for the coup of Sardar Daud Khan in following words,

“Daud Khan accused Zahir Shah’s government of neglecting Pashtunistan in a bid to improve relations with Washington and Islamabad. Daud also accused the king of failing to respond forcefully to the sacking of Pashtun and Baloch ethno-nationalist administrations in Pakistan’s NWFP and Balochistan.”⁶³ However, there is another implicit reason too which is responsible for the coup of Daud against King Zahir Shah. The reason is the vengeance. Daud was dismissed by King Zahir Shah in 1963 for supporting the Pashtunistan cause which resulted in the stoppage of American aid to Afghanistan. Therefore, Sardar Daud by staging the coup inflicted a revenge against the King for not supporting the cause of Pashtunistan. According to President Daud , the coup was meant to replace the corrupt and ineffective government with that of republican system as per the “genuine spirit of Islam”.⁶⁴ It was believed that this coup and change of regime will democratize the country in a genuine way.

It is also believed by a section of Afghan society that the coup was backed and supported by the Soviet Union. Mehrunnisa Ali has indicated towards the covert support of Russia in engineering of the coup and provided reasons for doing so. She writes;

“In view of Daud's past policy of maintaining close relations with Russia, it was believed by some that the coup had been engineered by the Soviet Union. There is no doubt the Soviet-trained officers equipped with Russian arms played an important role in carrying out the coup. Of equal

⁶² Syed Abdul Quddus, *Afghanistan and Pakistan: A Geopolitical Study* (Lahore: Ferozsons Ltd. 1982), 128.

⁶³ Abubakar Siddique, *The Pashtun Question: The Unresolved Key to the Future of Pakistan and Afghanistan*, 39.

⁶⁴ See the Text of Daud’s Radio Broadcast, *The Pakistan Times*, Lahore, July 18, 1973.

significance in this context was the presence of Soviet military advisers in the Afghan Defence Ministry. Also, there is no denying that Daud's return to power was a source of satisfaction to the Soviet Union which was the first country to recognize the new regime.”⁶⁵

This event caused apprehensions among the rulers of Pakistan knowing the history of Daud's anti-Pakistan attitude. Notwithstanding, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto treaded a cautious path by maintaining neutral posture regarding the internal affairs of Afghanistan. Pakistan recognized the new government of Daud. However, these conciliatory approach and good-gestures of Pakistani government did not prevent Daud from the propagation of Pashtunistan agenda. In his maiden speech, he referred to the issue of Pashtunistan by saying “between Afghanistan and Pakistan there exists no issue, except that of Pakhtoonistan”.

Kabul again embarked on the journey of mistrusts, hostility and rivalry against the state of Pakistan. Through a “dubious radio station” called “Azadi radio”, the issue of Durand Line was revived.⁶⁶ From the moment he assumed power in Kabul, he started interfering in the internal affairs of Pakistan. He made attempts to incite the people of Balochistan and the North West Frontier Province to rebel against the state of Pakistan.⁶⁷ It is believed that he even wrote letters to different heads of Muslim counties asking for international intervention in Pakistan.⁶⁸ Hussain Haqqani is of the view that Daud being the consistent supporter of the Pakhtunistan wanted to use

⁶⁵ Mehrunnisa Ali, “The Attitude of the New Afghan Regime towards its Neighbors”, *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 27 no. 2 (Third Quarter, 1974), 43-69.

⁶⁶ Mairaj-ul-Hamid, “Pak-Afghan Ties: Evolution, Challenges and the Way Forward”, *Policy Perspectives*, Vol, 14, no. 1 (2017), 68.

⁶⁷ Mujtaba Razvi, *The Frontiers of Pakistan*, 62.

⁶⁸ Mehrunnisa Ali, “The Attitude of the New Afghan Regime towards its Neighbors”, 53.

Pakistan's troubled situation to his own benefit by forcing the re-opening of talks regarding the Durand Line issue.⁶⁹ By the virtue of these actions of the new Afghan regime, the relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan nosedived.

The Dismissal of NAP Government in Balochistan:

Pakistan held her first general elections in 1970. The maiden election resulted in the disintegration of Pakistan. The eastern wing of Pakistan known as Bengal got separated because of the reluctance of West Pakistani establishment to let the head of Awami League, Sheikh Mujibur Rehman form government after emerging as winner of the elections. After the separation of Bangladesh, provincial governments were formed in the four provinces of the remaining Pakistan. In Balochistan and NWFP, National Awami Party (NAP) formulated the government. NAP was a secular, and leftist political party of predominantly Pashtun and Baloch leftists. Attaullah Mangal was the chief minister of Balochistan. In the center, Pakistan People's Party (PPP) of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto formed the government.

In 1973, Bhutto dismissed the NAP government of Balochistan on the pretext of Baloch conspiracy to launch rebellion against the state of Pakistan. Pakistani forces discovered a cache of 300 Soviet submachine guns and 400 rounds of ammunition from the Iraqi Embassy in Islamabad via an operation.⁷⁰ Later on, it was revealed that these weapons were not meant to for Baloch rebels of Pakistan but Iran. In the words of Hussain Haqqani, "U.S. diplomats and Pakistani intelligence officials knew that the Iraqi arms were meant for Baloch rebels in the Iranian part of Balochistan—

⁶⁹ Hussain Haqqani, *Pakistan between Mosque and Military*, (Lahore: Vanguard Book, 2005), 168.

⁷⁰ Adeel Khan, "Renewed Ethno-nationalist Insurgency in Balochistan, Pakistan: The Militarized State and Continuing Economic Deprivation", *Asian Survey*, Vo. 49, No. 6 (Nov / Dec 2009), p. 1076.

Iraq's response to Iran's support for Kurdish rebels in Iraq.”⁷¹ As an act of solidarity, NAP coalition government in NWFP voluntarily resigned. The dissolution of government in Balochistan resulted in the insurgency. Baloch leaders led an insurgency against the government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. The insurgency continued for four years until the dismissal of Bhutto government by the then Chief of Army Staff, General Zia Ul Haq in 1977.

The dismissal of governments in Balochistan and NWFP and the consequent arrest of their leaders angered Daud's government in Afghanistan. The regime condemned and severely criticized the actions of Bhutto government. It extended its heartfelt sympathy and support to Baloch rebels who took guns and climbed to the mountains against the government of Pakistan. The decision in Kabul regarding the celebration of Balochistan day on October 11, 1974 was also taken.⁷² The statement of Afghan Deputy Foreign Minister, Waheed Abdullah, is self-evident. He said “Afghanistan could not remain indifferent to Pakistan's use of force and arms against Pashtuns and Baloch and Afghanistan regarded this (the fate of the Pashtuns and Baloch) as a national issue.”⁷³ This internal matter of Pakistan was linked with the issue of Afghanistan by President Daud. Kabul's stance regarding the Pashtunistan issue and Pashtuns' right to self-determination makes some sense in the context of Durand Line, and Pashtun irredentist claim but supporting Baloch in their insurgency against the state of Pakistan was a blatant interference in the affairs of Pakistan. Thus, once again the relations between the two countries remained strained and tense from 1973 to 1977.

⁷¹ Hussain Haqqani, *Pakistan between Mosque and Military*, 102.

⁷² Government of Pakistan, *White Paper on Balochistan* (Rawalpindi: October 19, 1974), 41-42.

⁷³ Abdul Samad Ghaus, *The Fall of Afghanistan: An Insider's Account* (Washington: Pergamm Brassey's International Defence Publishers, 1988), 112.

Pak-Afghan Relations during the Regimes of Bhutto and Daud :

The relations between two states touched the climax in terms of hostility and animosity during the regimes of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in Islamabad and Daud Khan in Kabul.

Sardar Daud Khan's ascent to power in Kabul caused apprehensions and fear in the leadership of Pakistan because he was a diehard supporter and proponent of Pashtunistan. He considered the issue of Pashtunistan as an "incontrovertible reality"⁷⁴ for which the state of Afghanistan would continue to find a solution. In reaction to the hostile and warmongering speeches and statements of Daud, Prime Minister of Pakistan Zulfikar Ali Bhutto said "Pakistan can defend itself and I warn Kabul against fomenting any kind of instability inside Pakistan".⁸¹ Pakistan-Afghanistan border was securitized in the face of verbal war between the leaders of the two states. Troops were deployed on the border to check any kind of infiltration or attack from the Afghan side.

Both the states started supporting dissident groups and factions inside each other's countries to destabilize the other. Both the states provided sanctuaries and safe havens to the opponents of one another. Kabul provided shelter to some 30000 Baloch insurgents who led to escape the wrath of Pakistani government and "in response Islamabad sheltered and provided military training to Afghan Islamists such as Ahmed Shah Masood and Gulbadin Hikmatyar."⁷⁵

"Afghanistan provided overt and covert military and political support to Baloch and Pashtun nationalists."⁷⁶ In response, for the first time a special cell, named Afghan Cell, was established in

⁷⁴ Niloufer Mahdi, *Pakistan Foreign Policy 1971-1981: The Search for Security* (Lahore: Ferozsons, 1999): 129. ⁸¹ Mohammed Ayoob, "Pakhtunistan: A Ghost Resurrected", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 8, No. 39 (September 29, 1973), 1758-59.

⁷⁵ Abubakar, *The Pashtun Question: The Unresolved Key to the Future of Pakistan and Afghanistan*, 40.

⁷⁶ Hanif ur Rehman, "Pak-Afghan Relations during Z. A. Bhutto Era: The Dynamics of Cold War", *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture*, Vol. XXXIII, No. 2 (2012), 31.

the foreign office of Pakistan to deal with the Afghan affairs under the charge of Major General Naseer Ullah Khan Babar.⁷⁷ Afghan Cell remained functional for four years till 1977.

These activities performed by both the regimes to the detriment of the other made the relations worse. Pakistan hosted the second annual meeting of Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) in Lahore in 1974. Being member of the OIC, the president of Afghanistan was supposed to make sure his presence in Pakistan. But President Daud did not attend the meeting and sent Abdur Rahman Pazhwak, an Afghan envoy, as his representative to the OIC meeting. He talked about the Pashtunistan problem on OIC forum expecting support from the heads and representatives of other Muslim countries.

The relationship further deteriorated with the assassination of Hayat Muhammad Khan Sherpao – leader of Bhutto's party and the Chief Minister of the then Khyber Pakhtunkhwa – on February 8, 1974, resulting in the ban on the National Awami Party (NAP) and incarceration of Wali Khan, and Asfandiyar Wali Khan.⁷⁸ Ajmal Khattak another diehard proponent of Pashtunistan was residing in Afghanistan. Pakistan was quite aware of the subversive activities of the Afghan government inside Pakistan with the collaboration of the Pashtun and Baloch nationalists.

For the purpose of countering the Afghan subversive activities against Pakistan, Islamabad started paying in the same coin to Kabul by supporting the Islamists groups of Afghanistan in their struggle against the left oriented government of Daud. In retaliation to the shelter and support of Afghanistan for the Pashtun and Baloch nationalists, the government of Bhutto provided shelter and military training and support to Afghan Islamists and pro-monarchy opposition.⁷⁹ These

⁷⁷ A.Z. Hilali, *US-Pakistan Relationship: Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan* (London: Ashgate Company, 2005), 180-84

⁷⁸ Hanif ur Rehman, "Pak-Afghan Relations during Z. A. Bhutto Era: The Dynamics of Cold War", 32-33.

⁷⁹ Tahir Amin, "Afghan Resistance: Past, Present, and Future", *Asian Survey*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (April 1984), 373-99

groups did not share the sentiments of Pashtunistan and Durand Line against Pakistan. They were against the Soviet-Daud communist nexus.

It is also believed that Pakistan's support for the Afghan Islamists was not only meant to counter Afghanistan's subversive activities to destabilize Pakistan but also to contain the expansion of communism in the region. Pakistan was hunting two birds with one stone. By supporting, equipping and militarily training Islamists Pakistan was aiming to create problems for Daud's regime inside Afghanistan and by extension to create a bulwark in the shape of religiously motivated Afghans against the possible invasion of Soviets. Pakistan was fearful of the Russian increasing presence and influence in Afghanistan. Islamabad was apprehensive that the presence of Soviets in Afghanistan would pose threats to the security and stability of Pakistan because Russia wanted to reach the warm waters of Arabian Sea. Pakistan not only trained 5000 anti-Daud Islamists in different secret camps in Peshawar but also established contact with the exiled king Zahir Shah, who was in Rome, Italy, in case Daud was ousted by the efforts of Islamists.⁸⁷

All these moves and counter moves to destabilize and bring down the other led to some positive changes in the end. Bhutto's policies of creating an internal challenge in the shape of Islamists gave hard time to the regime of Daud. Daud was unable to deal with the internal security situation and also engender fissures inside Pakistan through the Pashtuns and Baloch nationalist proxies. In the long run, Daud was convinced of the folly of his own actions against Pakistan. Being a landlocked country, Afghanistan was dependent on Pakistan for access to water and for having trade with India. She was unable to pursue economic growth because the advantages of good

⁸⁷ Marvin Weinbaum, *Pakistan and Afghanistan: Resistance and Reconstruction* (Lahore: Pak Book Corporation,

1994), 5

relations with neighboring country Pakistan were not available. Kabul's stubborn attitude and behavior towards Islamabad cost her hugely in terms of economy and trade.

Later on towards 1976, Daud realized that developing good relations will be in the benefit of Afghanistan. Thus, he embarked on the road of mending ways and creating an ambience of trust between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The first step in this direction was an invitation from the Afghan president Sardar Daud to Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to discuss the outstanding issues between the two states. Bhutto in his book *If I am Assassinated* has mentioned that he was invited by Daud to Kabul for the settlement of the political differences between the two countries.⁸⁰ This was a turning point in the Pak-Afghan relations. A diehard pro-Pashtunistan proponent Daud had melted down to give up the claims on Durand Line against Pakistan.

The relations started improving by the virtue of the goodwill gestures on the part of Afghanistan towards Pakistan. After the initial visit of Bhutto to Afghanistan, Daud also paid visit to Pakistan. These visits by the heads of Pakistan and Afghanistan provided a beacon of hope for the people of both states that friendly relations are awaiting the two countries. "These reciprocal visits helped in reviving trust, defusing tension, resolve of peaceful coexistence and finding pacific settlement of disputes."⁸¹ The change of heart on the behalf of Daud did bear fruits in the form of Pak-Afghan friendship. A friendship agreement was signed between the two countries.

These reciprocal and mutual visits were followed by reciprocal actions for the mutual appeasement of each other. Bhutto's government in Pakistan agreed to release the incarcerated Pashtun and Baloch leaders of the National Awami Party (NAP), transit route was made functional, and even

⁸⁰ Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, *If I am Assassinated*, (Lahore: Agha Ameer Hussain, 1994), 127.

⁸¹ Hanif ur Rehman, "Pak-Afghan Relations during Z. A. Bhutto Era: The Dynamics of Cold War", 34.

Afghanistan was permitted to trade with India. An agreement between the two states was reached in which Afghanistan agreed to withdraw from the cause of Pashtunistan, in return, Pakistan agreed to release NAP leaders and activists from prison.⁸² Bhutto eulogized himself for the agreement in the following words, “I arrived at after an assiduous and tenacious endeavor spanning over eleven years of negotiationsthe agreement of mine, concluded in June 1976, will perhaps my greatest achievement and contribution to the survival of our people and our nation.”⁹¹ These actions were meant to serve two purposes. First, as a welcoming and good will gesture for the change of behavior in Kabul to let them know how beneficial Pakistani friendship to Afghanistan is. Second, to mollify and appease Daud regime to give up the claim on Durand line and accept it as an international border between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Pakistan succeeded in extracting the recognition of Durand line from the state of Afghanistan. The president of Afghanistan Sardar Daud after consulting the Loya Jirga agreed to recognize Durand Line as an international border between Pakistan and Afghanistan.⁸³

The two regimes under Bhutto and Daud from 1973 to 1977 pushed the Pak-Afghan relations to the apex of hostility and enmity in the initial years but later the same regimes started efforts to normalize relations to the extent of resolving the outstanding issue of Durand Line once and for all. Daud agreed to recognize the legitimacy of border between Pakistan and Afghanistan as an international border. Things were becoming normal between the two countries when some new events took place in both Afghanistan and Pakistan, which put a halt on the progress made in Pak-Afghan relations. In Pakistan, the government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was dissolved by the then

⁸² Z. A. Bhutto, *If I am Assassinated*, 127.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁸³ Babar Shah, “Pakistan’s Afghanistan Policy: An Evaluation”, *Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (2000), 168-224.

Chief of Army Staff, General Zia ul Haq. Martial law was imposed on 5th of July 1977. Similarly in Afghanistan, the regime of Daud was overthrown as a result of the Saur Revolution in 1978.

It is widely believed that both these coups were engineered in the context of US-Russian rivalry. Each state wanted to punish its own client state for charting out an independent foreign policy. Russia disliked the inclination of Daud government towards the United States of America and softening its stance on the question of Pashtunistan vis-à-vis Pakistan. Likewise, the United States of America punished Bhutto for his policies. Hence, the brief honeymoon period, which just started between Pakistan and Afghanistan came to an end.

The period of 1973-77 remained one of the tensest phases in the Pak-Afghan relations. This tense nature of the relations was caused by the unexpected change in the political landscape of Afghanistan. Sardar Daud – a diehard Pashtun nationalist – staged a coup against King Zahir Shah and ended his kingship in Afghanistan. Afghanistan was transformed from a constitutional monarchy to a republic. He made himself the president of Afghanistan. In Pakistan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was ruling the country as a prime Minister. This change of power in Afghanistan caused fear and apprehensions in the ruling circles of Pakistan. The fear was justified because of Daud's historical role in the destabilization of Pakistan by supporting the Pashtunistan agenda during his last stint in power as a prime minister from 1953 to 1963.

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto extended hand of friendship on behalf of Pakistan despite the experience of hostility between Pakistan and Afghanistan during Daud's premiership. Pakistan recognized the new regime in Afghanistan as legitimate and showed her interest of developing friendly and cooperation based relations with Kabul. Bhutto emphasized on the commonalities shared by the two countries to urge and convince Daud to let go old grudges against Pakistan and except Durand

Line as an international border between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

But it seemed that Daud was not coming slow on Pakistan. In his maiden speech, after taking power in Kabul, he alluded towards the issue of Durand Line and Pashtunistan by saying that Afghanistan has no other issue with Pakistan except that of Pashtunistan. Daud's aggressive posture against Pakistan deteriorated the relations between the two states as usual. Pakistan also reacted in strong words and warned Afghanistan that any mischievous behavior against Pakistan would cost her dearly. These warmongering and threats loaded verbal attacks and criticism against each other resulted in the militarization of border between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Trade was closed. Troops were deployed on the border.

Adding fuel to the fire, Bhutto dismissed the government of NAP in Balochistan and NWFP and incarcerated the Pashtun and Baloch nationalist leaderships. To this, Daud reacted strongly by condemning the actions of Bhutto government and criticized the state of Pakistan for the violation of Pashtun and Baloch rights. In retaliation to the actions of Bhutto, Baloch tribes started an armed insurgency against the state of Pakistan. In order to serve his own interests, Daud provided safe havens to Baloch insurgents and Pashtun leaders in Afghanistan. In order to counter these moves of Kabul regime, Pakistan did the same by providing support and military training to Afghan Islamists who were against Daud's regime. Thus, both the states started using proxies to weaken and destabilize the government of other from within.

Apart from these internal factors, there were also external dimension to the rivalry between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The external dimension was the Cold War between USSR and USA. Pakistan was a formal ally of the US led anti-communist bloc and was supported both financially and militarily by Washington to contain the expansion of communism in the region. This made Russia angry at Pakistan. In order to create problems for Pakistan, she supported Daud's regime

to raise the issue of Pashtunistan and Durand Line against Pakistan. It is believed that Daud's coup against Zahir Shah was assisted and engineered by the Soviets because of the latter's tilt towards Washington and giving up of claims on Durand Line against Pakistan.

However, despite all these odds and misconduct on behalf of Daud, he finally gave up on the idea of Pashtunistan and got ready to accept the legitimacy of Durand Line as an international border between Pakistan and Afghanistan. He realized that the cost of having enmity and hostility with the immediate neighbor of Afghanistan was very high in terms of stability, economy and development. He invited Bhutto to Kabul to resolve the issues between the two countries. Bhutto accepted his offer and welcomed the change of attitude in Kabul. Later, Daud paid visit to Pakistan. These reciprocal visits diffused the tensions and paved the way for durable cordial relations. Borders were reopened, trade resumed, and Afghanistan was allowed to trade with India.

After the tumultuous period Pak-Afghan relations during the initial years of Bhutto and Daud regimes, improvement was witnessed in the later years. Unfortunately, this bonhomie did not sustain for long because of the overthrow of Bhutto's government in Pakistan at the hands of military dictator, Zia ul Haq in 1977. This brought the on-going initiative of friendly relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan to an end.

CHAPTER 04

Pak-Afghan Relations from 1977-79

The relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan during the period of 1977 -79 were dominated by instability, rivalry and negative role of the external actors. All the positive developments which were made by the regimes of Bhutto and Daud in their later periods of rule ended in smoke. This is because of the two monumental events, which took place both in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The Fall of Bhutto's Regime and the Saur Revolution:

One was the imposition of martial law in Pakistan by military. The other event happened in Afghanistan when Daud's government was overthrown by communists through a revolution called Saur Revolution. These two events, a martial law in Pakistan which toppled down the government of Bhutto and Saur Revolution in Afghanistan which dethroned the regime of Daud, brought new actors in power in both Pakistan and Afghanistan. These actors had different objectives and ends from that of the previous ones. General Zia ul Haq seized power in Pakistan and Noor Muhammad Tarakai in Afghanistan. Tarakai regime once again started everything from the scratch. He raised the issue of Durand Line and also manifested his desires of supporting the Baloch and Pashtun nationalists in Pakistan. Pakistan once again became the prime target of Kabul's criticism. The renewed debate on the issue of Durand Line caused fear and anger among Pakistani rulers. Tarakai refused to abide by the treaties, agreements, and understanding reached by Bhutto and Daud regarding the issue of Durand Line and Pashtunistan.

Afraid of the activities of Tarakai regime to create internal fissures inside Pakistan, General Zia ul Haq sketched out a counter plan in line with that of Zulfikar Bhutto. He supported and trained the Islamists to engender resistance against the communist regime of Tarakai. The purpose was also similar that was to make it difficult for the Tarakai regime to support the Pashtun and Baloch of

Pakistan. Zia like Bhutto succeeded in making Afghan president realized that having rivalry with Pakistan is not in the best interests of Afghanistan. Afghan government became ready to improve relations with Pakistan.

When Zia and Tarakai were mending ways to improve Pak-Afghan relations, Tarakai was killed in a palace coup. Hafizullah Amin came to power. An understanding with him was also developed. But unfortunately, he did not last longer in that position. Soviet forces under the leadership of Babrak Karmal entered Kabul, assassinated Hafiz and installed the government of Karmal. Situation in the region got disturbed. Afghanistan and by extension Pakistan became the ground for the Cold War rivalry between the USSR and USA.

The influence of Soviets in Afghanistan proved one of the significant reasons for the destabilization of relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The Soviets backed government emboldened by the support of Russia adopted aggressive posture vis-à-vis Pakistan by questioning the legitimacy of Durand Line as an international border. In the toppling and killing of both Daud and Hafizullah Amin, there was a clandestine hand of Soviets.

This chapter discusses Pak-Afghan relations for 1977 to 1979, during the regime of Zia ul Haq in Pakistan and different rulers in Afghanistan. It also sheds light on the role of external actors in deteriorating the relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Pak-Afghan relations received set back due to the removal of Bhutto government in Pakistan. General Zia-ul-Haq came to power in Pakistan as a Chief Marshal Administrator. The rapprochement reached between Bhutto and Daud could not last for long. Despite the change of executive in Pakistan, Daud regime was ready to continue what they had started under the Bhutto

era. But Daud too was removed from power in a bloody coup staged by the Soviets supported communist party of Afghanistan. He was killed in cold blood.

The coup against Daud is known as the Saur Revolution. This happened in 1978. There are multiple reasons behind this revolution against the government of Daud. But one of the significant factors was the displeasures of Soviets from Daud's non-aligned and independent policies. Daud started molding the foreign policy of Afghanistan on bilateralism by developing friendly relations with other states based on mutual benefits. Hanif ur Rehman argues,

“In 1977, Daud visited Moscow where he was rebuked by Brezhnev for allowing western ‘spies’ to work in Afghanistan under the guise of technical experts. But Daud dismissed all those strictures and insisted that unacceptable interference would not be allowed in the domestic affairs of his country.”⁸⁴

By adopting independent attitude and chalking out an independent and sovereign foreign policy for the state of Afghanistan, Daud shortened the days of both his life and government. In other words, he signed his own death warrant.⁸⁵

After the coup, new regime under the presidency of Noor Muhammad Tarakai was installed in Kabul. Hafizullah Amin became prime minister in this new setup. However, after the Saur Revolution, political situation in Afghanistan did not remain stable. Political instability, palace intrigues and connings became new normal. Political killings and assassinations for the control of power were not uncommon. In such unstable scenario, the most affected country was Pakistan.

⁸⁴ Hanif ur Rehman, “Pak-Afghan Relations during Z. A. Bhutto Era: The Dynamics of Cold War”, 37.

⁸⁵ Nabi Misdaq, *Afghanistan: Political Frailty and External Interference*, (London: Routledge, 2006), 95-96.

The immediate effect of the coup was the influx of refugees to Pakistan. Pakistan hosted hundreds of thousands of Afghan refugees who fled to avoid the worst consequences of the instability in their country.

The coup was led by the Khalqi faction of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). "The overthrow ended the Durrani ruling dynasty and opened Afghan political space to a new kind of competition. It shattered the relative peace and stability in the Pashtun borderlands and marked the beginning of a new generation of conflict."⁸⁶ Political infighting among different groups and within the communist party of Afghanistan created vacuum for the external players to fill it. These internal fissures and fragmentation led to intervention of Russian forces, converted Afghanistan into a battleground. Afghanistan was forced to host the USSR and USA war for ten years.

Noor Muhammad Tarakai's Policies towards Pakistan:

Tarakai deliberately tried to disguise the communist nature of the revolution against the regime of Daud to gain legitimacy in the Afghan society. He put forward policies of his regime fashioned in the style of Afghan nationalism. He announced that policy of the new regime would be Afghan nationalism, social and economic justice under Islam and non-alignment in foreign policy.⁹⁶ The leaders of the regime considered themselves heirs of the late King Amanullah Khan.⁸⁷ Notwithstanding, Taraki regime failed to sell his Afghan nationalism agenda. The beans were spilled sooner than later. The immediate recognition along with the economic aid to the regime on

⁸⁶ Abubakar Siddique, *The Pashtun Question: The Unresolved Key to the Future of Pakistan and Afghanistan*, 40. ⁹⁶ Tahir Amin, "Afghan Resistance: Past, Present and Future", 379.

⁸⁷ Louis Dupree, *Red Flag Over the Hindu Kush: The Accidental Coup or Taraki in Blunderland*, American Universities Field Staff Reports, no. 45 (Hanover: N.H., 1979).

behalf of the Soviet Union revealed the communist nature of the government. Hence, rendering it the prime target of Islamists.

With this new dispensation in Kabul, the fear of Pakistan once again raised high. The regime dug up the old issue of Pashtunistan and Tarakai refused to recognize the agreements which were signed by Daud with Pakistan. He expressed his feelings of supporting the Baloch and Pashtuns nationalists fighting for their rights in Pakistan. His regime emphasized the support for the Pashtunistan movement.⁸⁸ Moreover, a treaty of friendship was signed between Kabul new regime and Soviet Union in 1978.⁸⁹ Pakistan felt threatened with the coalition of Kabul and Kremlin.

Pakistan asked for Washington's aid, but she did not consider the urge and was worried about the Islamic revolution in Iran.⁹⁰

Despite the callous behavior of Tarakai regime towards Islamabad, Zia tried to assuage the Kabul administration by recognizing the new regime in Afghanistan. In this regard, Zia ul Haq also paid an official visit to Kabul to strike a friendly relationship between the two countries. But these efforts on behalf of Zia did not yield the expected results. Tarakai was adamant on his anti-Pakistan and pro-Pashtunistan stance. They rejected the Durand Line as foreign imposed border by the force of gun and recognized Pashtuns across the border as one and ought to form one single state of their own. These kind of statements and sentiments were equivalent to disintegration of Pakistan.

Pakistan being threatened by the motives of Soviet backed Tarakai regime started charting out a way to keep the state secure against the subversive activities of the Kabul regime. Zia followed the strategy of Bhutto. He organized an armed Islamist resistance against the government of Tarakai

⁸⁸ Rizwan Hussain, *Pakistan and the Emergence of Islamic Militancy in Afghanistan*, (London; Ashgate Pub Ltd, 2005): 89 -126

⁸⁹ Azmat Hayat, *The Durand Line: Its Geo-Strategic Importance*, (Peshawar: Area Study Centre, 2000), 279.

⁹⁰ Hussain Haqqani, *Pakistan between the Mosque and Military*, 177.

to take his eyes off the issue of Pashtunistan. Hanif ur Rehman in his article has pointed towards this strategy and policy of Pakistan vis-à-vis the communist regime of Tarakai. He writes;

“The PDPA regime’s anti-Pakistan statements and its links with Moscow prompted General Ziaul-Haq to organize the Pakistan-based Islamist parties into a viable political and military force. Jamaat-e-Islami was co-opted for devising an Islamist policy aimed at destabilizing the pro-Soviet Karmal regime in Afghanistan.”⁹¹

Zia co-opted the Islamists of Pakistan and Islamists and war lords of Afghanistan against the Soviets and Soviets backed communist regime of Tarakai. The purpose of this policy was to create challenges and obstacles to the government within Afghanistan so that it cannot be able to cope with its own internal challenges and support the Pashtunistan issue at the same time.

Bhutto had also adopted the similar kind of policy of defeating and weakening the spirit of Kabul by challenging it from within rather than from without. Bhutto succeeded in making Daud give up on his anti-Pakistan activities. Zia following the same approach towards the Tarakai administration succeeded in bring him to the table and negotiating a compromise between the two states. Tarakai got ready to discuss the issues of Durand Line and Pashtunistan with Pakistan on. Zia and Tarakai met during the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) meeting held in Cuba and discussed the concerned issues between the two countries. An understanding was reached between the two leaders regarding the relations of two countries. They agreed to stop interfering in the internal affairs of each other’s country. Pakistan agreed not to destabilize Afghanistan and in return Kabul agreed to

⁹¹ Hanif ur Rehman, “Pak-Afghan Relations during Z. A. Bhutto Era: The Dynamics of Cold War”, 39.

give up her own subversive activities by supporting the Pashtuns and Baloch movements of liberation in Pakistan.

Hafizullah Amin's Regime in Afghanistan and the Invasion of USSR:

It seemed that Pak-Afghan relations were once again seeing the light of dawn. Hopes of better relations generated in both countries after this meeting. Pakistan's foreign Minister was supposed to visit Kabul. However, it seemed that a section of people was not in favor of this bonhomie. Prior the fixed date of meeting, Tarakai was killed in his palace by the people of the other faction. Hafizullah Amin took control of the administration. For one more time, the rapprochement in the making was destroyed.

Pakistan was facing hard times because of instability in Afghanistan. Instable Afghanistan implied instability and chaos in Pakistan. Pakistan was the first country to face the spillover effect of whatever was going on in Afghanistan. Islamabad was continuously making efforts to bring stability in the country and strike a deal with the government of the time to eliminate her own security threat regarding Durand line. Zia administration without wasting time recognized the new regime of Hafizullah Amin. The purpose was to have friendly relations with Afghanistan and resolve the issue of Pashtunistan and Durand Line.

Unlike his predecessors, Hafiz was moderate and compromising. He was ready to diffuse tensions between the two countries. Though during his premiership under the regime of Tarakai, he was anti-Pakistan and followed pro-Pashtunistan agenda. But after the coup against Tarakai, he did not continue with his vitriolic approach towards Pakistan. He accepted peace-making attitude and good-will gestures of Zia. He invited Zia to visit Kabul to discuss the issues. Unfortunately, before

that happened, Hafiz was removed by Soviet forces and murdered in Kabul and Babrak Karmal was installed as new president of Afghanistan. Soviet invasion of Afghanistan brought the Cold War to the neighborhood of Pakistan. The use of religiously conservative Islamist forces by Pakistan came in handy to put off the threat of communism from Pakistan. This policy of using religious militancy inside Afghanistan to secure the territorial boundaries of Pakistan was dubbed as the “strategic depth” policy. Strategic depth is a military warfare term which implies the distance between the enemy’s forces and one’s economic and industrial hub. In other words, one keeps the enemy at bay from the economic and social lifeline of the state. Pakistan got success in the use of strategic depth policy by keeping both Russia and Indian influence in Afghanistan ineffective to harm her. Pakistan fought her war of defense and security in the fields of Afghanistan against the Soviets and Soviets and Indians supported Afghan government.

Pak-Afghan Relations under the Shadow of Kabul-Moscow-New Delhi Nexus:

Besides the inherent antipathy of Afghan regimes towards Pakistan, external factors such as Russia and India also played their part in the deterioration of Pak-Afghan relations. These states invested in the anti-Pakistan governments of Afghanistan to use them as proxies in order to serve their own interests. They brought their friendly and protégé governments into power to make them serve their interests and fulfill their desires. The intervention of these actors particularly Russia in the internal affairs of Afghanistan caused political instability and war situation. The multiple coups and counter coups in Kabul were engineered and backed by Moscow.

First, Russia made Daud capable of seizing power in Kabul by overthrowing the kingship of Zahir Shah. Later, when Daud started treading his independent way irrespective of the Russian say then

he was killed in another engineered coup led by Noor Muhammad Tarakai. When he failed to follow the line of Moscow, he too was made to pay the price through his life. He was killed by Hafizullah Amin, who was assassinated by Babrak Karmal faction in 1979 along with the intervention of Russian troops in Afghanistan. This tale of unending palace coups, intrigues and conspiracies along with assassinations and murders indicates towards the relentless interference of Russians in the affairs of Afghanistan. However, there was one factor common in all these incidents. Each time a regime failed to carry on enmity with Pakistan, it was disposed and replaced with the regime of someone else. Anyone who was stuck to hostility towards Pakistan, made antiPakistan statements, refused to recognize the Durand Line border, and supported Pashtuns and Baloch nationalists struggle in Pakistan, his regime enjoyed stability and longevity. The moment a regime stopped sharing all these sentiments, it was ended. The above mentioned all cases suggest that whenever the relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan moved towards normalcy and friendship, some phenomenal change occurred in the power corridors of Afghanistan which brought everything back to square one.

Pakistan became formal ally of the American led capitalist bloc by signing the treaties of SEATO (1954) and CENTO (1955) because of its “vulnerability to Indian threat” and alignment for the fulfillment of “its defense needs from the US.”⁹² This made USSR unhappy. He wanted to punish Pakistan for siding Washington instead of Moscow. The easier way was to use Afghanistan as a launching pad against Pakistan because Afghanistan already had reservations against Pakistan on the issue of Durand Line and consequently on the Pashtunistan issue. In March 1960, Nikita

⁹² Niloufer Mahdi, *Pakistan's Foreign Policy, 1971-1981: The Search for Security* (Rawalpindi: Ferozsons Ltd, 1984), 222.

Khrushchev asked for the solution of Pashtunistan issue according to the principles of UN Charter.⁹³ In 1979, Soviets direct intervention into Afghanistan made Pakistan uneasy about its own security. Pakistan was afraid of the Soviets expansion into Pakistan to reach warm waters of Arabian Sea.

Apart from Soviet Union, India also used Afghanistan to hurt Pakistan. India and Pakistan are rival since the partition of the subcontinent. India is hell-bent on undoing and disintegrating Pakistan since then. Moreover, Kashmir is a constant bone of contention between the two states. India used Afghanistan to create security situation on the Western Border of Pakistan. India succeeded in thinning out the Pakistani troops on the eastern border because of the bumpy relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan most of the time.

India and Afghanistan have one thing in common and that was hostility against Pakistan. Thus, India was considering Afghanistan a friend against their common adversary, Pakistan. Indian policy towards Afghanistan was shaped by Chanakya Kautilya's statement that "enemy of my enemy is my friend".⁹⁴ Pakistan and Indian border are heavily militarized. Both states have deployed large number of troops. By developing influence inside Afghanistan, India was sandwiching Pakistan on both her eastern and western borders. Pakistan's security was under threat both from her western neighbor Afghanistan and eastern neighbor India. Ian Stephan called such security situation from both east and west simultaneously as "pincer movement" to undo Pakistan.⁹⁵ Pakistan was apprehensive of the close relation between India and Afghanistan because of the paranoia that a pincer movement would paralyze Pakistan.⁹⁶ The Indian motive behind

⁹³ Raghunath Ram, *Soviet Policy Towards Pakistan* (New Delhi: S. Chand and Co. Ltd, 1983), 100-101.

⁹⁴ Kautilya, *The Arthashastra* (India: Penguin Classics, 2000), 168.

⁹⁵ Ian Stephens, *Horned Moon*, (London: Ernest Benn, 1963), 108

⁹⁶ Mahdi, *Pakistan's Foreign Policy, 1971-1981: The Search for Security*, 123.

supporting Afghanistan on Pashtunistan cause was based on the perception and calculation that in case of war with Pakistan, the Afghans would also attack from the Western side.⁹⁷ This was envisioned by Ayub Khan too. He indicates towards the Indian support to Afghanistan in the following words:

“In this claim (of Pashtunistan) the Afghans were backed by India whose interest lay in ensuring that in the event of war with us over Kashmir, the Afghans should open a “second front” against Pakistan on the North West Frontier. They also reasoned if they had this understanding with Afghanistan, we would not be able to use the Pathan tribesmen against them. The Indian thought that they would thus be able to hem us in and embarrass us by a pincer movement”.⁹⁸

Furthermore, India also shared ideological tendencies with Russia. The founding leaders of India were progressive, anti-imperialist and left oriented. Despite being member of Non-Aligned Movement, India was inclined towards Moscow. This alliance and coalition of Afghanistan, India and Russia posed security challenges for the state of Pakistan. The presence of Soviet troops and their puppet government in Kabul was a nightmare for Pakistan. Islamabad was facing a “formidable Kabul-Delhi-Moscow Axis”⁹⁹ on its eastern border. Pakistan was facing two-dimensional threat to her security.¹⁰⁰

The enmity of Pakistan provided a common reason for India and Afghanistan to come closer and develop friendly ties to the detriment of Pakistan. India was a hard-die enemy and adversary of

⁹⁷ Safdar Mehmood *Pakistan's Political Roots and Developments 1947-1999* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 223.

⁹⁸ Muhammad Ayub Khan, *Friends Not Masters: A Political Biography* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1967), 174-175.

⁹⁹ Rizwan Hussain, *Pakistan and the Emergence of Islamic Militancy in Afghanistan*, 98.

¹⁰⁰ K.M. Arif, *Working with Zia: Pakistan's Power Politics 1977-88*, (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1995), 303.

Pakistan since the first day of her birth. Afghanistan was having unfriendly relations because of the unsettled Durand Line issue. Pakistan became the common target of both the states to aim at. Besides, both New Delhi and Kabul had close ties with Moscow, bringing the trio together to pressurize Pakistan.

Pakistan was trapped by the nature of her own geography. The Cold War took the shape of hot war in Afghanistan. Pakistan was the state to bear the repercussions of the war in terms of security, law and order situation, and economy. Pakistan's apprehension and anxiety increased manifold with the presence of Soviet troops next to her western border. The insecurity was further intensified by the warm water theory. The proponents of the warm water theory proposed that Pakistan would be the ultimate stop for Soviet forces.¹⁰¹ The invasion of Afghanistan by USSR posed direct threat to the integrity of Pakistani state.

Pakistan had no option but to respond to the demands of new security environment in the most appropriate way. According to Mohib Ullah Durrani and Ashraf Khan, Pakistan had three options to choose from; "accept it as the fait accompli or provide full support to freedom fighters resisting against the invasion, or mobilize international community to put political pressure on Soviet Union along with covert support to the resistance forces."¹⁰² Pakistan went for the second option of supporting the freedom fighters against the troops of Soviet Union. Abdul Sattar, the former Foreign Minister of Pakistan, provided the reason for choosing the option of assisting the freedom fighter. He writes;

¹⁰¹ Imtiaz Shahed, *Pakistan Affairs*, (Lahore: Advance Publishers, 2008), 790.

¹⁰² Mohib Ullah Durrani and Ashraf Khan, "Pakistan – Afghan Relations; Historic Mirror", *The Dialogue*, Vol. IV, No. 1, 39.

“The Soviet military intervention provoked a deep sense of alarm in Pakistan. Suddenly the buffer disappeared and if the Soviet rulers consolidated their control in Afghanistan, they could use it as springboard to reach the warm waters of the Arabian Sea. Pakistan could not afford to acquiesce in the Soviet intervention. But neither could it afford a confrontation with a superpower. Islamabad, therefore, decided on the middle course, avoiding confrontation but raising a low-pitched voice of concern and protest.”¹⁰³

Pakistan was provided both financial and military aid by the United States of America for the objective of providing training and weapons to Mujahedeen who were fighting the Russians in Afghanistan.¹⁰⁴ Washington wanted to contain the expansion of Red Army in South Asia. America fully supported both Pakistan and by extension mujahedeen against the Soviet troops. American Intelligence agency CIA and Pakistani intelligence agency ISI succeeded in defeating the Soviet Union forces. Pakistan successfully defended her integrity and eliminated the threats presented by the presence of Russian troops by forcing them into a humiliating exit from Afghanistan.

Pak-Afghan relations from 1977 to 1979 remained troubled. There were two reasons for that; first the overthrow of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto government in Pakistan by the military dictator Zia ul Haq, and second, the overthrow of Daud regime in Afghanistan at the hands Of Khalqi faction of communists led by Noor Muhammad Tarakai in what became known as Sour revolution. These two events derailed the progress made in Pak-Afghan relations between both the leaders of the two countries. Daud and Bhutto reached an understanding of give and take. The former got ready to give up on the Pashtunistan issue and recognized Durand line as an international border between

¹⁰³ Abdul Sattar, “Afghanistan: Past, Present and Future, From Jihad to Civil War”, *The Institute of Regional Studies*, Islamabad, (1997), 462-63.

¹⁰⁴ Mouhammad Yousaf and Mark Adken, *The Bear Trap: Afghanistan's Untold Story* (Lahore: Jang Publishers, 1992), 45.

Pakistan and Afghanistan. The later promised to open border, resume trade and provides transit route to Afghanistan. The two overthrows in both the countries brought an end to above improvements in Pak-Afghan relations.

Zia-ul-Haq tried to develop friendly relations with the new regime in Afghanistan by recognizing it as a legitimate government of Afghanistan. However, this did not bear fruit because of two reasons. First, the anti-Pakistan posture adopted by the new regime of Tarakai. Second, the unending political instability in the Afghan corridors of power since the 1978 sour revolution. Internal frictions and palace intrigues resulted in multiple coups and countercoups in Afghanistan. It got entangled with itself.

These political assassinations created internal vacuum in the political landscape of Afghanistan. The internecine fighting and disputes provided ground for the maneuvering and interference of the external players to play their great powers game in the destabilized Afghanistan. Soviet troops intervened in Afghanistan in 1979 preparing stage for proxy war with United States of America in Afghanistan. In addition, Moscow and India both made alliance with Afghanistan to create security hurdles for Pakistan both from within and outside. India wanted to use Afghanistan's hostility towards Pakistan to her own advantage. Soviet Union wanted to make Pakistan regret for her decision of joining the US led capitalist bloc against the Russian led communist bloc in Cold War and to get access to warm waters. This Moscow-Delhi-Kabul nexus created fear among the rulers of Pakistan for her own security. Pakistan was threatened by the possibility of "pincer movement" on behalf of the Afghanistan and India supported by the communist Russia.

For the sake of integration of Pakistan, Islamabad adopted the strategy of providing support and training to Mujahedeen who were fighting against the invasion of Soviet troops. Washington

sensing the opportunity of trapping Russia in the “graveyard of empires. The US along with Pakistan supported, aided, trained and equipped them with latest weapons against the Soviet troops. Pakistan succeeded in preventing the expansion of communist Russia eastward. The USSR was defeated and exited Afghanistan forever.

CONCLUSION

The relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan have remained hostage to the twin problems of Durand Line and Pashtunistan issue. Both these problems are interlinked with each other and are inseparable. And both problems have roots in the colonial era of British India. British colonized India and wanted to keep it protected from the access of Russians, their major competitor of the time. For this purpose, a region to act as a buffer against the possible Russian invasion was required. That buffer region was provided by the frontier region of Afghanistan. Most of the invasions carried out against India in the past have been managed and directed through this frontier region of tribal areas.

The British wanted to secure that region and used it as a buffer zone against the Tsarist Russia which prompted them into wars with Afghanistan. They fought three Anglo Afghan Wars. As a result of these Afghan wars and consequent treaties such as the Treaty of Gandamak and Durand Line, the frontier region of Afghanistan was handed over into the control of British India. The Treaty of Durand Line was signed between the British and Amir Abdur Rehman of Afghanistan in 1893. Over the course of time, the treaty was ratified and validated by different rulers of Afghanistan. Thus, the frontier and tribal region of Afghanistan became part of the British India. The partition of India in 1947 gave rise to the issue of Pashtunistan, an independent state for the Pashtuns of frontier region.

After the end of colonialism in India and the departure of British from Subcontinent, Afghanistan asserted her claims to Durand Line territories to be given back to her. The rulers of Afghanistan were of the view that the Durand Treaty became null and void after the departure of British who were one of the parties to the treaty. Pakistan refused the claims of Afghanistan as bogus because

as a successor state to the British India, she had the right to inherit the agreements and treaties of British. These two issues of Durand Line and Pashtunistan deteriorated the Pak-Afghan relations for maximum period.

Pak-Afghan relations have also depended upon the personalities of the leadership in Afghanistan. King Zahir Shah realized the negative consequences of having hostile relations with Pakistan in terms of economic development. However, Sardar Daud, who was anti-Pakistan and pro-Pashtunistan, adopted an aggressive and brinkmanship attitude and behavior towards Pakistan. In 1960s, during his premiership, relations got so worsened that diplomatic relations were severed, border was closed and even troops were deployed. Relations returned to normalcy when King Zahir Shah deposed him from the post of premiership. In 1973 by dethroning King Zahir Shah, Daud controlled the power in Afghanistan and declared himself president of the country. With his ascent to power, Pak-Afghan relations once again nosedived.

The issue of Pashtunistan and Durand Line were also exploited by the external actors such as USSR and USA for their own interests. The Cold War pitted USSR and USA against each other. Both the states were playing power politics in the third world post-colonial neutral states. The USA wanted to contain the expansion of communism. Pakistan earned the wrath of Soviets for being the ally of USA by joining the SEATO and CENTO. Russia used Afghanistan to destabilize Pakistan. Daud regime in Afghanistan was emboldened and strengthened by the support of Russia to interfere in the internal affairs of Pakistan by supporting the ethno-nationalist movements inside Pakistan.

Apart from the interplay of Cold War politics in Pak-Afghan relations, Indian factor also prevented the two neighboring states from having friendly and cordial relations. From the very beginning,

the Indian leadership was against the formation of Pakistan and now wanted to undo by any means possible. Pakistan was afraid of Pincer movement that is being trapped on both eastern and western borders by two hostile neighbors. Moreover, Pakistan had experienced its dismemberment in the shape of Bangladesh at the hands of India.

Pakistan and Afghanistan need to adopt a friendly posture. Sane voices should prevail. Compromise and consensus are key to hammer out the irritants. It is in the interest of both states to have friendly, cordial and cooperative relations with each other. Afghanistan, being a landlocked country, is heavily dependent upon Pakistan for her trade and economy. Pakistan can provide an easy access to Afghanistan to reach water. Pakistan being afraid of the Indian sinister designs is in search of strategic depth in Afghanistan. This policy of strategic depth has undermined the sovereignty of Afghanistan and created mistrust, doubt and suspicions between the two states.

The presence of hostility, mistrust and enmity between the two states is not only harmful to the mutual interests of each state but also provided fertile ground for external actors to intervene in the internal affairs of these states in pursuit of their own goals. The Russian and Indian support to Afghanistan government created tensions within the state. The series of political assassinations, coups and countercoups were engineered and supported by the external actors particularly Russia. These interventions led to permanent disability and chaos in Afghanistan which was followed by the invasion of Afghanistan by Russian in 1979.

Pakistan and Afghanistan have a lot common between them. These commonalities range from cultural ties, religious ideology, shared ethnicity, language and history to geographical proximity. It is not impossible that the two states cannot have good relations. Instead, it is natural for the two states to have friendly relations. Both the states have developed good relations at times and more

importantly during testing times. Afghanistan not only adopted neutral position but provided assurances of her neutrality to Pakistan during India – Pakistan wars of 1965 and 1971. This was even though Afghanistan had good relations with India and strained relations with Pakistan. This indicates towards the natural tendency and potential between the two states to have smooth, friendly and good relations.

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