

## **THE SOCIOPOLITICAL OCCURRENCE OF THE TALIBAN AND ITS IMPACT ON AFGHAN POLICY**

Hüsamettin İNAÇ\*

Jeewash KOHISTANI\*\*

Geliş Tarihi: 10/04/2022

Kabul Tarihi: 28/04/2022

### **Summary**

From the day this land has handled the name of Afghanistan till now has persistently experienced, lively and dreadful days, however, the horrendousness and delicacy of this land are greater than the sparkle. During World War two the happening of the Cold War between two monster policies, the US imperialism, and the Soviet Union socialism are shadowing the political air of Afghanistan. The Soviet Union has attempted to extend the philosophy of socialism wherever against the US philosophy of imperialism, herewith the Soviet Union involved Afghanistan in 1979 and has committed the greatest error of its political career. The US had the fire of retribution inside its psyche due to the Vietnam war yet, attempted each conceivable route with its partners Pakistan, Iran, China, and Saudi Arabia to level the land for the nasties destruction of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. Hence the US and its partners supported a gathering of extremists called Mujahideen to accomplish this work for them and following nine years of battling, the Soviet Union has tasted a gigantic checkmate and pulled out its soldiers from Afghanistan. In the end, in April 1992 Mujahideen handled the capital of Afghanistan, Kabul, and the Soviet Union's introduced, the last President Mohammad Najibullah surrendered, hence giving up the public authority of Afghanistan to Mujahideen. With the genuine guide of the US and Pakistan, a temporary Islamic Government occurred, and Sibghatullah Mojaddedi turned into the President, however, his administration didn't keep going long and gave over the public authority to Burhanuddin Rabbani. Hence Burhanuddin Rabbani turned into the President and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar began filling in as Prime Minister, meanwhile contrasts between the two got the serious shape and concluded with an enormous battle, during this fight Kabul had gotten a destroyed and crushed face. Gulbuddin Hekmatyar had the sponsorship of the US and Pakistan so the point was to get all of

\* Kütahya Dumlupınar Üniversitesi, İİBF, Siyaset Bilimi ve Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü Başkanı, Prof. Dr., [husamettin.inac@dpu.edu.tr](mailto:husamettin.inac@dpu.edu.tr), Orcid ID: [0000-0002-6922-2010](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6922-2010)

\*\* Kütahya Dumlupınar Üniversitesi, Lisansüstü Eğitim Enstitüsü, SBUİ Program, [jeewash15923@gmail.com](mailto:jeewash15923@gmail.com)

Afghanistan to make it a leveled land for the ominous policies of the US and Pakistan. Hereby Afghanistan because of unpropitious approaches of the US and particularly Pakistan has experienced a capable massacre. The civil war in Afghanistan wasn't to help the egotistical strategies of the US and Pakistan, hence they have appeared a unique radical gathering called Taliban from Pashtuns ethnic. Taliban during the battle between Afghans and the Soviet Union, have battled for Afghanistan, with the fall of the Soviet Union they went to Pakistan to master extravagant religious lessons. In 1996 the Taliban captured Kabul, and Mujahideen fled the capital to the north, in this way the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan was set up, and the Taliban opened their wings to administer Afghanistan. Whatever the US and generally Pakistan had their arrangements list towards Afghanistan was grasped by the Taliban unequivocally, thereupon, the Taliban have dubbed the Genghis Khan troops for their brutal actions.

**Keywords:** Afghanistan, Burhanuddin Rabbani, Government, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, Soviet Union and Taliban

## **TALİBAN'IN SOSYOPOLİTİK OLUŞUMU VE AFGAN POLİTİKASI ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİSİ**

### **Özet**

Bu topraklar, Afganistan adını taşıdığı günden bugüne kadar ısrarla, canlı ve korkunç günler yaşadı, ancak bu toprakların dehşeti ve inceliği ışıltısından daha büyük. İkinci Dünya Savaşı sırasında Soğuk Savaş'ın iki canavar politika, ABD emperyalizmi ve Sovyetler Birliği sosyalizmi arasında yaşanması, Afganistan'ın siyasi havasını gölgeliyor. Sovyetler Birliği, ABD'nin emperyalizm felsefesine karşı sosyalizm felsefesini her yerde genişletmeye çalıştı, bununla birlikte Sovyetler Birliği 1979'da Afganistan'ı da içine aldı ve siyasi kariyerinin en büyük hatasını yaptı. ABD, Vietnam savaşı nedeniyle henüz ruhunda intikam ateşi taşıyordu, ortakları Pakistan, İran, Çin ve Suudi Arabistan ile Afganistan'daki Sovyetler Birliği'nin kötü yıkımı için toprağı düzleştirmek için akla gelebilecek her yolu denedi. Bu nedenle ABD ve ortakları, bu işi kendileri için gerçekleştirmek üzere Mücahidler adlı aşırılık yanlılarının bir araya gelmesini desteklediler ve dokuz yıllık mücadelenin ardından Sovyetler Birliği devasa bir mat gördü ve askerlerini Afganistan'dan çekti. Sonunda, Nisan 1992'de Mücahidler Afganistan'ın başkenti Kabil'i ele almış ve Sovyetler Birliği'ni tanıtmış, son Devlet Başkanı Muhammed Necibullah teslim olmuş, dolayısıyla Afganistan'ın kamu otoritesini Mücahidlere

bırakmıştır. ABD ve Pakistan'ın hakiki rehberliği ile geçici bir İslami Hükümet ortaya çıktı ve Sibghatullah Mojadeddi Cumhurbaşkanı oldu, ancak yönetimi uzun sürmedi ve kamu otoritesini Burhaneddin Rabbani'ye devretti. Böylece Burhaneddin Rabbani Cumhurbaşkanı oldu ve Gulbuddin Hikmetyar Başbakan olarak yerini doldurmaya başladı, bu arada ikisi arasındaki zıtlıklar ciddi bir şekilde aldı ve büyük bir savaşla sonuçlandı, bu mücadele sırasında Kabil yıkılmış ve ezilmiş bir yüze kavuştu. ABD ve Pakistan, bu nedenle amaç, tüm Afganistan'ı ABD ve Pakistan'ın uğursuz politikaları için düz bir ülke haline getirmektir. Bu vesileyle Afganistan, ABD'nin ve özellikle Pakistan'ın uygunsuz yaklaşımları nedeniyle muktedir bir katliam yaşamıştır. Afganistan'daki iç savaş, ABD ve Pakistan'ın egoist stratejilerine yardımcı olmak için değildi, bu nedenle Peştun etnik kökenli Taliban adında benzersiz bir radikal toplanma ortaya çıktılar. Afganlar ve Sovyetler Birliği arasındaki savaş sırasında Taliban, Afganistan için savaşmış, Sovyetler Birliği'nin çöküşüyle birlikte abartılı dini derslerde ustalaşmak için Pakistan'a gitmişler. 1996'da Taliban Kabil'i ele geçirdi ve Mücahidler başkenti kuzeye kaçtı, bu şekilde Afganistan İslam Emirliği kuruldu ve Taliban Afganistan'ı yönetmek için kanatlarını açtı. ABD ve genel olarak Pakistan'ın Afganistan'a yönelik düzenleme listesi ne olursa olsun, Taliban tarafından açık bir şekilde kavrandı, bunun üzerine Taliban, vahşi eylemleri için Cengiz Han birliklerini adlandırdı.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Afganistan, Burhaneddin Rabbani, Hükümet, Gulbuddin Hikmetyar, Sovyetler Birliği ve Taliban

### **Introduction**

Afghanistan has been in crisis for a long time and insecurity is increasing day by day, so these insecurities have many factors including the lack of a self-sufficient economy, the lack of a spirit of national unity, weakness and corruption in the government, lack of law, unemployment, and lack of will to end this crisis. In the second step, Pakistan has been trying to stabilize itself from the crisis of Afghanistan since it emerged as a country. One of the most important problems between Pakistan and Afghanistan is the issue of Pashtunistan, according to Pakistan if Afghanistan became strong and has a regular and modern army, then the issue of Pashtunistan will practically lead to a conflict between the two countries that is why Pakistan is training and equipping the Taliban. On the other hand, Pakistan's problem with India over Kashmir and Pakistan's fear of close relations between India and Afghanistan so that India will use Afghanistan as a platform to torment Pakistan. In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, the US urged its political friend Pakistan to relinquish its support for the Taliban since

the Taliban has close ties with Osama bin Laden and Osama planned the 9/11 attacks from Afghanistan (İnaç, 2021a: 11-114). The US said Pakistan either cooperate with us in destroying Al-Qaeda and the Taliban bases, or you will be considered against the US policies which will have bad consequences for Pakistan's future. Pakistan did not want to open the door of enmity to the US, so it promised any assistance to the US. On the other hand, Pakistan was optimistic about the US entry into Afghanistan since the US presence will not allow Afghanistan to discuss the Pashtunistan issue nonetheless prevents India to have good relations with Afghanistan and use Afghanistan against Pakistan's interests. In the outcome of 9/11, the US invaded Afghanistan with the west to end Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. The US's only goal was to eliminate Al-Qaeda bases nonetheless overthrow the Taliban, so the US with the help of the West and Afghan northern groups succeeded in defeating the Taliban though, did not root out the Taliban and pursue them to distant provinces of Afghanistan, to disarm them. After the defeat, many Taliban leaders fled to Pakistan and some hid in Afghanistan's Pashtuns lived provinces. If the US goal of defeating the Taliban government came true so there was no excuse for the US to stay in Afghanistan. For this reason, they did not eliminate the Taliban at all, the existence of the Taliban in Afghanistan is a big pretext for the US to be in Afghanistan and show its loyalty to its political friend Pakistan that the government of Afghanistan will not discuss the Pashtunistan issue, on the other hand, if the new government of Afghanistan disobeys we can threaten them with the presence of the Taliban in Afghanistan (İnaç, 2021c: 99). In 2003 the Taliban resurfaced, thereupon, began threatening the Afghan government and foreign forces. The question is why the defeated Taliban re-emerged from their strongholds. Several issues need to be addressed in this regard.

- The US did not root out the Taliban to have an excuse for its presence in Afghanistan, and through Afghanistan, the US wanted to pressure the two superpowers Russia and China.
- The presence of the Taliban is necessary to shake the government of Afghanistan, therefore that Afghanistan can not become a strong government that resumes the issue of Pashtunistan seriously with Pakistan.
- The Taliban is a means for the US to set up military bases in Afghanistan to prevent Russian and Chinese interference in Afghan policies, which the US established.

Instead of diminishing the Taliban provocations despite foreign forces on the country, they have increased day by day, therewithal making life in Afghanistan more difficult for Afghans.

That is why the Afghan government is taking any action to make peace with the Taliban at the will of the people. After the successive defeats of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, who failed to land the place for the US and Pakistan's demands in Afghanistan, forced Pakistan to launch its latest project the Taliban to the Afghanistan political arena, which it had spent years trying to train and equip them. There are many theories about the emergence of the Taliban phenomenon that political experts and writers have mentioned in their books. Most of them have imagined that there were a group of mullahs that rescue women that being raped by the gunmen of the Mujahedin government, thereupon, the mullahs hanged the gunmen and start their war against the Mujahedin government, it goes without saying that at the head of these mullahs who took the name of the Taliban was Mullah Omar, who was later given the title of Amir-al-Muminin by the Taliban, thusly, the wonder of the Taliban entered the scene, however, this theory is far from the truth.

The Taliban project was created with US support, Saudi money, and capital, and Pakistani military assistance and training (İnaç2021c: 100). The Taliban was led by Pakistani Interior Minister Nasrullah Babar in a Pakistani business convoy of 80 trucks of ISI-affiliated national support moving from Pakistan to Central Asia. The convoy was guided by a local ISI office, nonetheless, in 1994 it was reported that a trade convoy was moving from Pakistan to Central Asia in Kandahar, hence, the convoy was later looted on the way by the warlords, subsequently, Nasrullah Babar announced that a small Afghan group has suppressed the warlords and returned commercial property from the looters to the Pakistanis (Dixit, 1995: 4).

Herewith, no one knew this new group, though, people praised their good deed. On October 12, 1994, the Taliban crossed the Pakistani border, hence, attacked and captured Hezb-e-Islami checkpoints in Spin Boldak. The Taliban, who were advancing rapidly, captured Kandahar the next day, nonetheless, the people, who were annoyed by the injustice, instability, and jihadi rulers welcomed the Taliban and the Taliban's slogans were so appealing in the security situation at that time (Crews and Tarzi, 2008: 76).

It attracted everyone, slogans such as peace, the destruction of fraudulent rulers, the implementation of Islamic Sharia, and white flags of peace that won the heart of the people early on and embraced the Taliban. The Taliban disarmed and punished the arbitrary rulers, therewithal, summoned people to pray during pray time, and ordered shopkeepers to keep their shops open without guards during prayers, though, no one was seen daring to steal. Due to all these deeds, the common people called them the angel of salvation, yet they were

unaware of their origin and plans. As a result, we saw that the Pakistani trade caravans became an excuse for Pakistan and the US, nonetheless, the objected scenario who were the Mujahedin to went astray and not respected Pakistan's demands, so on the other hand, Gulbuddin's defeats which had squandered all of Pakistan's assets prompted Pakistan with the US support to send its pampered young men, who had been trained for years, into Afghanistan to pave the way for their goals.

## **1. Internal Causes**

In the discussion of internal factors at the level of social analysis, I can mention the inability of jihadi leaders and Afghan groups to establish an inclusive government, political stability, internal security in the country, the stability of religious traditions, the spread of economic and cultural poverty.

### **1.1. Civil War**

One of the important factors that led to the rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan was the inability of the leaders of the Afghan jihadist groups to establish an inclusive government and the desire of some of these groups to exercise more dominance over the Mujahedin government. Nonetheless, this was especially true of Pashtun groups such as GulbuddinHekmatyar's Islamic party, which according to the long tradition of power-building in Afghanistan from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards wanted the Pashtun people to control the government institutions. The realization of the principle that the Pashtuns considered themselves in power, therewithal, the placement of a Tajik at the head of the Afghan government by Pakistan to create division among the Afghans, herewith, was performed its policy, where Afghanistan became embroiled in the deadly civil war.

Thus, with the start of the civil war, not only was Kabul divided and destroyed by the warring factions but, each of the warring factions that dominated parts of the country sought to gain more territory. These conflicts have led to unrest insecurity and instability throughout Afghanistan, therewithal, the spread of insecurity and instability helped the Taliban to emerge under the pretext of establishing stability and security by eliminating jihadist factions. As a result of all these problems, the people of Afghanistan embraced the Taliban without any questioning (Van, 2018: 92; Siddique, 2014: 47-50).

## **1.2. Deactivation of Arms**

The issue that worried the US and its policymaker Pakistan, more than the fundamentalist movements and the rise of the fundamentalists in Afghanistan was the availability of weapons to the Mujahedin. The fact was that during the Afghan war with the Soviets the fundamentalist mujahedin due to their radical spirit received enormous aid from the US and Pakistan to use in the war against the Soviets, while the countries achieved their goals of defeating the Soviets, they were worried that these weapons might be used against the interests of the US and Pakistan in the region.

Especially after the stance of the fundamentalists' parties in the Persian Gulf countries and the danger of its beginning in Central Asia, which was far from the expectations of the US, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan, therewithal, could lead to coups against the US's puppet governments and endanger the oil, strategic, and economic interests of the US and its policy-makers, herewith, these coups will destroy all their policies which have undergone massive planning and spending. The rise of the Taliban with the slogan "disarmament for security" can be considered a plan by the US and Pakistan for this strong motivation. Nonetheless, the Taliban were so serious and pressured jihadi commanders that sometimes mujahedin were forced to buy weapons at exorbitant prices from arms dealers in Afghanistan that the amount of the weapons have been previously given to the Taliban by Pakistani intelligence, herewith, the Mujahedin thought that with buying more weapons they could free themselves from the Taliban (Emami, 1999: 81-82).

Whenever the Taliban entered any area, their first plan was to disarm the Mujahedin forces so that they could not pose a threat to the Taliban in the future. On the other hand, people who saw the existence of war, bloodshed, murder, and insecurity in the country as a direct result of the presence of weapons in the hands of the Mujahedin, cooperated most with the Taliban In this regard, even most warehouses and places were reported to the Taliban by people.

It should be mentioned that in safe areas of Afghanistan, such as the city of Herat which was far from the civil war, therewithal, the people of the city were disarmed and living in safety already, though, nevertheless, its leaders were killed and people were tortured by the Taliban. Gradually these actions were revealing the true face of the Taliban to the people. Thus, the Taliban collected most of the weapons and transported them to Pakistan overnight, herewith, keeping some of them for their own needs. The initial victories of the Taliban in Kandahar and Jalalabad were due to the weakness of the government which had left the people

completely disappointed with the situation, even infidels would have come to save the Afghans from this deadly situation and formed their government, they were well received by the people.

### **1.3. The Economic Catastrophe**

Ten years of widespread Mujahedin warfare with the Soviet troops between 1979-1989, on the one hand, and the spread of instability and internal strife between Mujahedin groups on the other, shattered Afghanistan's economic foundations and caused general poverty in the country. The persistence of the general poverty on the one hand, and the lasting influence of religious traditions, on the other hand, are important factors In the emergence of the Taliban (Abbas, 2014: 78).

Therewithal, it is noteworthy that the majority of the Taliban and its cores were a group of young people from the poorer sections of Afghan society, especially Pashtuns, who attended Pakistani madrassas the year after the Soviet withdrawal with the little financial support that the religious leaders of these madrassas gave them during their education years, hence, they freed themselves from poverty (Marsden, 1998: 73-74, 120).

The economic crisis on the one hand and the continued influence of religious traditions with the willingness to attend religious madrassas were vital factors that enabled Pakistan with the US support and Saudi funding to use them to organize the Taliban as a religious-military force. Material needs and religious bigotry have been the two main pillars of the formation and expansion of the Taliban power in Afghanistan so the Taliban leaders not only paid exorbitant salaries to their fighters, though, even convinced them that fighting on the Taliban front and trying to establish the “Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan” was a form of jihad, along testing the faith and implementing the teachings of Pakistani religious madrassas (Coll, 2008: 1069-1075).

The documents obtained testify that in these madrassas only the love of jihad and the main purpose of life is jihad, were taught. Therewithal, it is also significant to know that these madrassas were funded by Saudi religious institutions, which were teaching them anti-Shiite policies, so the Taliban were so influenced by the anti-Shiite move, even the war in the north and south with the Shiites was a kind of jihad for the Taliban, nonetheless, it was considered that dying in this war meant buying heaven. This religious bigotry has attempted to establish political domination as a sacred duty for the Taliban followers, thereby, has been a significant



factor in the group's cohesion. To better understand the factors behind the Taliban's emergence, we need to further analyze these two "economic poverty and the persistence influence of religious bigotry" factors, which were the most vital in the emergence of the Taliban (Emami, 1999: 84-85).

- Material issue a factor for the rise of the Taliban: The impact of the economic factor was one of the main reasons for the growing turn of young people in Afghan society to religious madrassas and their desire for livelihood. Nemours groups of young Afghans not only met their basic material needs during their many years of study, though, also saw this type of education as a good means of livelihood in the years after graduation in Afghan society (Delanty, 2013: 114-115). Nonetheless, on the other hand, thousands of religious madrassas across Pakistan with funding from the Pakistani government and Saudi religious leaders were well-funded to attract more young people from Afghan society, therewithal, paying tuition to these young people, and meeting their material needs was also a good way to expand the power and social base of religious sects in Pakistan. The long-standing and traditional rivalry between the two Sunni sects, the "Deobandi" sect, and the "Barelvi" sect, each of which had an extensive network of religious Madrassas was a vital factor in attracting Afghan youth (Rubin, 2020: 117-119).
- With the help of Pakistani intelligence and Arab religious leaders, the two sects played a key role in military training and fanatical jihadist lessons, herewith, upon entering Afghanistan the Taliban practiced the lessons of these sects without knowing the social and state values. Thus, not only were these students in a better financial position than their counterparts in Afghanistan while studying in Pakistan, though, they also received high salaries for fighting in the Taliban queue. Besides, most of these students worked extensively with the Taliban government in hopes of gaining various political, social, and economic positions, subsequently, it should also be noted that after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, that former revolutionary motive no longer existed among the Mujahedin and their commanders, instead, was replaced by a tendency toward the position and the accumulation of financial concession.

Thus, material motivation was not only a decisive source for the Taliban, though, also the Taliban's opponents preferred to join the Taliban in the light of economic and financial motives. Nonetheless, the Taliban leaders also took full advantage of the situation and

recruited many local Mujahedin commanders, therefore, it can be said that one of the main factors in the significant progress of the Taliban throughout Afghanistan should be sought in their bribery policy, not in their military might or war strategy (Emami, 1999: 87).

Because in terms of war strategy, the Mujahedin were much more experienced than the Taliban, therewithal, this phenomenon of bribery policy, first occurred among local Pashtun commanders affiliated with Hekmatyar's Islamic Party and then among Pashtun allies of Ahmad Shah Massoud, who fled to the Taliban for financial promises, subsequently, this issue later spread to non-Pashtuns also. This policy of bribery, taught to the Taliban by the Pakistanis, was the main reason for the Taliban's rapid advance from Kandahar to the north, hence, the conquest of 14 Afghanistan's provinces before the conquest of Kabul without the slightest resistance (İnaç and RafiqSada, M.,2021b: 49-51). One of the factors that helped weaken Rabbani's government and force them to withdraw in 1996 was the flight of local commanders. Thus after the conquest of Kabul, the Taliban used the policy of bribery more, the main reason for the defeat of Mazar-e-Sharif was the opening of the gates of Mazar-e-Sharif by the Mujahedin commanders to the Taliban as a result of the bribery policy (Tomsen, 2011: 637-639).

- The impact of Madrassas: As noted, the Taliban movement is a highly religious fanatic movement, therewithal, due to the training its members received during their studies, consider participating in an armed operation to establish a religious system in Afghanistan a religious duty, nonetheless, they raised the type of activity to the level of jihad in the way of god. The anti-Shiite aspect of their teachings and the inclusion of Shiites as non-religious elements doubled their religious aspect and prejudice against military activity in the ranks (İnaç, 2021c: 107-108).

Herewith, Religious bigotry was the product of their education In religious madrassas in various parts of Pakistan. The 1979 Zakat Decree, which led to the formation of Zakat committees under the authority of religious authorities, expanded the financial, social, and political power of madrassa principals and enabled them to use large sums of money that come from Zakat collecting to create multiple madrassas. As we mentioned above, the conflict between the Deobandi and Barelvi sects, each of which sought to attract more religious students to expand its influence, accelerated the process. Therewithal, the number of these madrassas expanded after 1979, when approximately 354 madrassas belonged to the Deobandi sect and 267 to the Barelvi sect, thus, in 1996, there were 2512 religious madrassas

in Punjab state. Some of these madrassas, in particular, the Society of Islamic Sciences in Karachi which was run by Maulana Mohammad Yusuf, are world-renowned, nonetheless, young Muslims from various countries come to study at this Madrassa (Emami, 1999: 89-90).

Mullah Mohammad Omar, the former leader of the Taliban movement that founded the Islamic Emirate in Afghanistan was one of the students at this madrassa, interestingly, three members of the six-member Taliban religious leadership council in Kandahar, headed by Mullah Omar, graduated from the same madrassa (İnaç and Yacan, 2018: 324-325).

Herewith, many other key Taliban commanders also attended the same madrassa. Thereafter, in these madrassas in addition to religious lessons, students were also given political education to fight infidels and jihad against them, thus, fighting Soviet troops in Afghanistan, Indian soldiers in Kashmir, Mujahedin in Afghanistan, and afghan Shiites was considered jihad in the way of God (Berting, 2018: 44-45).

One of the salient features of the graduates of these madrassas was their intense hostility to the Shiites. Nonetheless, the Taliban were supported and strengthened by such religious sects, and its members were highly trained by these sects, therefore, they showed great cruelty to the Hazara Shiites during their attempts to seize various parts of Afghanistan. These points indicate that the influence of religious traditions and political beliefs based on the teachings of Pakistani religious madrassas, especially their anti-Shiite one, played a key role in unifying the Taliban under the leadership of one unit, compared to divisions among the Mujahedin, this feature was one of the main reasons for the Taliban's success in capturing most of Afghanistan (Tripathi, 2011: 140-141).

#### **1.4. Ethnic Factor**

Ethnic factors along with religious beliefs and financial motivation have been influential in the emergence and growth of the Taliban (Berting, 2014:77). The core and primary nuclei of the Taliban were Pashtun Afghans, nonetheless, given that Pashtuns have traditionally held power in Afghanistan since the 18<sup>th</sup> century so the Taliban saw themselves as the heirs of Pashtun power and worthy of it. Since most Afghan jihadi leaders were non-Pashtuns and Rabbani was Tajik, hence, the phenomenon of his government was unprecedented in Afghanistan's history (Shah, 2017: 16-17).

During the clashes between the Mujahedin and the Taliban, not only did most of the local commanders and Pashtun fighters on the Rabbani government side join the Taliban, though,

Pashtuns living in non-Pashtun areas also joined the Taliban in Afghanistan. The Taliban selection from Afghan Pashtuns, which trained in Pakistani religious madrassas by Pakistan has a simple philosophy, due to a large number of Afghan Pashtuns live in Pashtunistan who have been related by blood for many years, and on the other hand, they speak a common language, therewithal, have a common religion, beliefs, and habits, therefore, with the establishment of the Taliban government in Afghanistan, where the majority of the population is Pashtun, hence, there will be no disagreement among the people about the Taliban government (İnaç2021c: 96). Therewithal, the election of Pashtuns by Pakistan would be paved the way for a puppet government of Pakistan and the formation of the Pakistan-Afghanistan confederation.

## **2. External Causes**

### **2.1. Pakistan**

Pakistan's involvement in Afghanistan crisis depends on a historical-strategic approach to Afghanistan. from Pakistan's point of view, Afghanistan plays a key role in Pakistan's military strategy for several reasons, firstly, Pakistan suffers from a geographical weakness vis India, which it calls "lack of strategic depth", nonetheless, the establishment of a puppet government in Afghanistan, and indeed its informal occupation could help partially address this weakness. This weakness stems from the fact that Pakistan in addition to its weapons and humanitarian weaknesses against India, also has an inadequate geographical location, therewithal, faces so-called "territorial and border inconsistencies". A look at Pakistan's geographical location shows that it is not only extremely vulnerable to India as its biggest enemy in terms of water and sea borders, though, also suffers from a military unfavorable situation against India on its eastern borders, hence, facing a lack of strategic depth and territorial expansion (Saxena, 2019: 13-15).

From Pakistan's point of view, the informal occupation of Afghanistan and the establishment of a puppet government in Afghanistan could partially address this shortcoming, herewith, helping Pakistan reap the benefits of establishing a puppet government in the event of a possible war with India. In general, the formation of a protected government in Afghanistan, the strengthening of Pakistan's strategic depth vis India, and the resolution of the Pashtunistan issue were the country's three main political and security goals in the face of the Afghanistan crisis (Margolis, 2021: 98-99).

In 1947, when a separate country called Pakistan was formed and most of India's Muslims were replaced in this newly established country, nonetheless, the foundation of the dispute between India and Pakistan was laid at the national level. Since then, India and Pakistan have been at war with each other several times, consequently, in the current situation the common borders of India and Pakistan continue to witness the scattered daily military clashes between the forces of the two sides, nonetheless, India and Pakistan, on the other hand, have not ruled out any opportunity to weaken or overcome each other in this historic conflict. One of these opportunities is to reach allies at the regional level, that is why Afghanistan's position in this confrontation between India and Pakistan is very vital, therewithal, on the one hand, India has for many years have been tried to add to Pakistan's concerns by approaching the Afghan government and on the other, Pakistan has tried to neutralize India's policy by establishing protected or friendly government in Afghanistan, therewithal, use Afghanistan to support its regional policy (Paliwal, 2017: 27-29).

Experience has shown that Pakistan is not willing to tolerate and accept an independent government in Afghanistan, contrarily, the ideal government of Pakistan in Afghanistan is a government that is not only friendly though, also obedient to Pakistan. After the occupation of Afghanistan by the Soviet troops, India sought to expand its relations with the Afghanistan government, while the Pakistani government adopted a policy of supporting the Mujahedin to counter Soviet and Indian policies (İnaç2021c: 100). In this regard, the government of India became one of the major trading partners of the Communist government in Afghanistan, hence, undertook extensive military, political, and economic cooperation with Afghanistan, therewithal, the result of this cooperation was India's significant influence in Afghanistan, so much so Pakistan felt itself under siege by the Indian government and its allies in Afghanistan government. Although, the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan, subsequently, the occupation of Afghanistan by the Mujahedin this situation, henceforth, in the new situation, the Mujahedin took over the Afghanistan government, and this a great victory for Pakistan, which had supported them for many years. But Pakistan's miscalculation of Pashtuns' rule in Afghanistan and the formation of a Pakistani-backed government led by Pashtuns such as GulbuddinHekmatyar prompted Tajiks such as Rabbani and Ahmad Shah Massoud to work with Pakistani opposition in the region. Nonetheless, the process of change led Rabbani to cooperate with the Indian government, afterward, Hekmatyar's failure to overthrow the Tajik-led government in Afghanistan prompted Pakistan along with other

foreign stakeholders in the Afghanistan crisis to form the Taliban (Haqqani, 2013: 226-234, 256).

Therefore, in the view of Pakistani foreign policy decision-makers, the formation of a protected government in Afghanistan with full compliance with Pakistani policies at the regional level was necessary to ward off a threat from India in the region, on the other hand, by establishing a government under the protection of Pakistan to pave the way for a trade route from Pakistan to Central Asia that had to pass through Afghanistan. But as noted, Pakistan's diplomatic apparatus was not even willing to tolerate a friendly but independent government in Afghanistan, nonetheless, if Pakistan was willing to tolerate and accept such a government in Afghanistan, the conditions after the fall of the communist government would be fully prepared and suitable for its implementation (İnaç2021c: 101).

Thus, after the fall of the communist government, most of those in charge of the Afghanistan government was part of the Peshawar coalition, which resided in Peshawar from 1979 to 1992, friendship with Pakistan as the most important ally in their struggle against the communist in Afghanistan was essential and considered as the vital part of their foreign policy (Steele, 2011: 64-65).

Nevertheless, Pakistani foreign policy-makers believed that tackling the three problems of “lack of strategic depth and geographical location in the face of possible Indian military strikes” “the potential danger of the Soviets re-entering Pakistan's borders in the coming years” and “solving the problem of the Pashtunistan and Afghanistan’s historic claims to Pashtun areas” required a government in Afghanistan that was not only friendly though, obedient to Pakistan. Therefore, by dominating the Taliban in Afghanistan, Pakistan wanted to end this traditional relationship between Afghanistan and India, therewithal, change it to the relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan, thus, use it as a weapon to weaken India’s regional position (Ansary, 2014: 163, 178, 198).

Afterward, it is to bear in mind that the Taliban are already being used as one of the Kashmiri allies by Pakistan in their struggle against the Indian government. Pakistan’s involvement in the changes of Afghanistan has about a 30-year history and experience, since the occupation of Afghanistan by the Soviet troops in 1979, Pakistan has been in constant and close contact with the internal developments in Afghanistan (İnaç2021c: 97). The relationship, established in the early 1980s with the support of the CIA, nonetheless, began with the aim of destroying the Soviet military machine in Afghanistan by a military figure such as General Zia-ul-Haq

the former president of Pakistan, thus, gradually a strong and Afghan-specific organization was formed within the Pakistan armed forces and a similar organization was also formed in Afghanistan. In this regard, the Pakistani army which also controlled the government began to exert influence on former Afghan politicians, leaders of the Mujahedin groups, thereupon to establish relations with tribal leaders and local commanders so throughout more than a decade Pakistan has been able to connect with a large part of Afghanistan's political elites and mobilize them to serve Pakistan's goals (Pattanaik, 2013: 17-18).

Nonetheless, after the fall of the communist government in Afghanistan, Pakistan sought to establish its closest political-military force in Afghanistan, which Gulbuddin Hekmatyar was chosen by Pakistan to make him the first power in the scene of developments in Afghanistan to achieve the above-mentioned strategic goals (İnaç2021c: 97). Subsequently, Hekmatyar under Pakistani protection, resisted the Rabbani government, though, Hekmatyar's numerous defeats left Pakistan frustrated with Hekmatyar, herewith, in mid-1993 the Pakistani intelligence turned its attention to several thousand students who had turned to religious madrassas in Pakistani cities. Meanwhile, the Pakistanis began trying to establish a new order by organizing Afghan students in various cities in Pakistan, the leaders of the Pakistani government sought to devise a scenario for the Taliban by taking full advantage of their organizational influence in Afghanistan, which mentioned above, thereafter the Pakistanis recruited many political and military elites of the communist government, especially Pashtun generals, hence, called on Pashtun tribal leaders and political parties to join the newly formed movement (Maley, 2020: 53-55).

Nevertheless, Pakistan by relying on the same organizational influence and many years of experience in the region managed to launch the Taliban with considerable military-political power to fully occupy Afghanistan. Thus, at the forefront of Pakistan's plans over the Taliban movement was Nasrullah Babur, a Pakistani think tank who began organizing the Taliban movement by contacting various religious madrassas throughout Pakistan, especially madrassas under the Deobandi sect. Nonetheless, the Pakistani intelligence service has been leading operations in Afghanistan since the late 1970s with full autonomy, subsequently, Nasrullah Babur, who took full power from Benazir Bhutto, played a key role in Afghanistan's operations. Therewithal, Pakistani Interior Minister Babur became the main decision-maker in the Taliban movement during the rule of Benazir Bhutto. The reason for his selection as the head of the Taliban movement was that Babur himself was a Pashtun who

could through his policies encourage the Pashtun people of Pakistan and Afghanistan to support the Taliban movement, hence, mobilize in the Taliban movement, on the other hand, Babur was well acquainted with the political geography of Afghanistan, especially the Pashtun areas in the south and east of the country, herewith, had good relations with local military commanders and tribal chiefs in the Pashtun areas (Kaplan, 2001: 199-201).

Therewithal, given all this, the question is why the Taliban were chosen for the goals of Pakistan and Pakistan-supporting countries? The answer is clear, Pakistan was well aware that Afghans were xenophobic, and Afghanistan's historical record shows that no occupier in Afghanistan has succeeded in establishing lasting domination, thus, Afghans in this regard for powers such as Britain and the Soviet were choked. Nonetheless, given these circumstances, Pakistan has chosen its strategy in Afghanistan based on the administration of Afghanistan by Afghans, namely the Taliban (İnaç, H. and Rafiq Sada, M., 2021b: 116-118).

With mentioning all of Pakistan's political and regional goals over establishing the Taliban in Afghanistan, here are a few economic goals that Pakistan wanted to pursue with the establishment of the Taliban. Afghanistan's economic growth and development have been continued to be significantly dependent on Afghanistan's relations with Pakistan and the use of its resources. Afghanistan is far from the open waters of the world, therewithal, its closest points to the open waters are through Pakistan. Subsequently, Pakistan following international law on "assistance landlocked countries" has provided Afghanistan with a transit corridor so that Afghanistan can trade by Pakistan market via the Arab Sea through global markets. Nonetheless, this is one of the strengths of Pakistan towards Afghanistan that Pakistan has been always used this weakness of Afghanistan to change Afghanistan's policies against Pakistan by closing the transit routes that Afghanistan is still facing this problem (Threlkeld and Easterly, 2021: 14-16).

Before the war with the Soviet Union, Afghanistan goods were legally exported through Pakistan, goods were transported by trucks to Peshawar Pakistan, from there they were transported by rail to Karachi and from Karachi via ship to various locations. After the expansion of the Soviet's economic, military, and political influence in Afghanistan, afterward, its occupation by the Soviet troops, as well as Pakistan's support for the Mujahedin, the Afghanistan government gradually shifted its imports and exports to the north, thereafter, Afghan goods went to other markets mostly through the North and the Soviet Union (İnaç, 2021a: 13).



Thus, after the fall of the communist government in Afghanistan, Pakistan's trade-routes became significant to Afghans again, hence, the newly formed Mujahedin's government and Afghan businessmen began to increase trade with Pakistan, though, with the rise of the Taliban, the Pakistani government interfered with the Burhanuddin Rabbani-led government in supporting the Taliban in the transit of goods through its routes, thereafter, cut it off completely. Following the Taliban's takeover of areas bordering Pakistan, the route was reopened in support of the Taliban by the Pakistani government (İnaç, 2021c: 97-99).

Nonetheless, after the fall of the Soviet Union and the independence of Central Asian countries, Pakistan has been always viewed Afghanistan as a viable corridor for Central Asian commerce. The deteriorating economic situation in Pakistan since the early 1990s, Pakistan's huge debts to international institutions such as the World Bank and the International monetary fund, thus, Pakistan's inability to repay loans have put the country in a difficult economic situation. Therefore, using Afghanistan as a gateway for trade with the Central Asian republics was Pakistan's most vital economic goal over Afghanistan (İnaç, H. and Rafiq Sada, M., 2021b: 128-133).

Therewithal, the relationship between the two countries can be analyzed at the level of export and import, hence, at the level of exports, the achievement of two goals was considered by the Pakistani leaders, first, the export of the Pakistani goods to the Central Asian republics and the exploitation of the multi-million markets of these regions, second, to assist other countries in exporting to the Central Asian republics via the Arab Sea and transiting it through Afghanistan to these republics to exploiting its benefits. Thus, from 1992 onwards, Pakistan made several attempts to penetrate the economic markets of Central Asian countries, nonetheless, Pakistan's goal was to monopolize trade in raw materials, especially Central Asian cotton, and leather products, subsequently, help them to expand their textile industry. Pakistanis, on the other hand, sought to provide them with service training in banking, insurance, stock markets, and business management (İnaç, H. and Rafiq Sada, M., 2021d: 11-13).

Therefore, the realization of Pakistan's economic goals in Central Asian countries depended on its relations with Afghanistan. In terms of imports, Pakistan, on the one hand, intended to supply part of its oil and gas needs from these republics, especially Turkmenistan through Afghanistan. The passage of Central Asian oil and gas pipelines through Afghanistan to the Port of Karachi was very vital and generated huge revenues for Pakistan, moreover, the

Pakistanis could easily and cheaply consume their gas and oil. Thus, the closure of Afghanistan's transit trade would not only deprive Pakistan of the huge revenue, though, also increase economic inflation in Pakistan enormously. Therefore, Pakistan has always called on the Taliban to keep the trade route open at all times by exercising strict military control, infiltration of the undisputed markets of Central Asia, in particular, the constructions of gas and oil pipelines from Turkmenistan to Karachi via Afghanistan was at the forefront of Pakistan's economic needs in bringing the Taliban to power (İnaç, H. and Rafiq Sada, M., 2021b:66-68).

## **2.2. Saudi-Arab Emirates**

Pakistan not only relied on the US to save itself economically, to provide military resources for its country and the Taliban, though, also to the best of its ability to exploit US sanctions by promising them a share of Afghanistan's resources, namely Saudi. Nonetheless, for a variety of reasons, including the spread of Wahhabism in the region, especially in Central Asia, the weakening of Iran's Islamic Republic, the Saudis played a major role after the US in financial assistance to Pakistan that its history dates back to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan with their assistance to the Mujahedin groups (Hiro, 2018: 139-43).

Therewithal, if we consider Pakistan as the mastermind in organizing and training the Taliban, though, the sources of financial support for the Taliban movement were Saudi and, secondarily, the UAE, herewith, Saudi was not only the main provider of the financial needs of various religious madrassas in Pakistan, especially madrassas such as the Islamic Science Society, though, also played an important role in establishing the Taliban movement. Thereupon, Saudi had increased its financial support for the Taliban after the start of the Taliban operation in landing many areas, thereupon, the Taliban needed large sums of money to continue their activities and operations, which was spent on buying more weapons to carry the continuation of the war in Afghanistan. Thus, Saudi had two main motives in supporting the Taliban, first, Saudi considered itself as the "Umm-al-Qura" of the Islamic world and helping the Muslims as its duty. Indeed, Saudi through its huge annual financial donations to mosques and religious madrassas around the world and local religious leaders sought to establish itself as the main supporter of Muslims, thereafter, the leader of the Islamic world (Commins, 2006: 202).

Saudi's second motive in supporting the Taliban was to compete with the influence of Iran in Afghanistan, herewith, to isolate the Islamic Republic of Iran in Afghanistan and Central

Asia. Nonetheless, Afghanistan under the Taliban control could be a very good way of communication between Saudi and Central Asian countries, so that Saudi's rivalry with Iran over influence was not limited to Afghanistan, though, after the Islamic Revolution, spread throughout the Islamic world. Therewithal, spreading Wahhabi propaganda and inciting anti-Shiite sentiments, herewith, divisions between Shiites and Sunnis was one of Saudi's goals in Pakistan and Afghanistan, which can be called the "Islamic Cold War" between Iran and Saudi that has been lasted till now (İnaç H. and F. Ünal, 2013: 227-229).

After Saudi, the UAE was also a major financial backer of the Taliban, as said, the UAE was the third country after Pakistan, and Saudi to recognize the Taliban as the legitimate government of Afghanistan, providing huge financial assistance to the Taliban. On the other hand, it should be said that the currency of the Taliban government was widely printed in the UAE, subsequently, should be noted that after Pakistan and Saudi, the UAE was the largest contributor to the Taliban movement (İnaç, 2003: 344-345).

Given that the international community had completely rejected the Taliban movement since their heinous crimes against humanity, which I will analyze in the following pages, though, the reason for the UAE's support for the Taliban was the global disregard for the UAE's claims to the three Iranian islands, sowith the widespread strengthening of the Taliban in Afghanistan, the UAE wanted to put pressure on Iran to seize the islands (İnaç, H. and Yacan, İ., 2018: 319-321).

### **2.3. Russia**

After the fall of the communist government and the rise of the Mujahedin government, the general atmosphere in Afghanistan tended to be strongly opposed to Russia. This issue, in addition to the Russians' desire to expand relations with the West, prevented Russia as the successor to the Soviet Union, from investing heavily in Afghanistan, herewith, another issue that exacerbated the trend was the public opinion of the Russian in early 1990s, thus, the Russian people, who saw the actions of their former leaders in invading Afghanistan as a strategic mistake, believed that the Kremlin had misappropriated the lives of thousands of the Soviet soldiers and billions of dollars in wealth from the Russian people. For this reason, the Russian people were not only opposed to their country's possible intervention in post-communist Afghanistan but were also concerned about the deaths of other Russian soldiers in Afghanistan (Cordovez and Harrison, 1995: 357-358).

Therewithal, as a result, Russian officials sought to defend themselves in areas where the Western government had made less political, military, and economic progress, to strengthen their defense and security positions. In this context, new security agreements were signed with Central Asian countries, thus, the Russians moved the first line of their security borders to the common borders of these republics with Afghanistan. On the other hand, the outbreak of the civil war in Afghanistan and the struggle between Afghan groups for power helped Russia to be more active inside Afghanistan, Meanwhile, some Afghan groups have turned to Russia for more cooperation to overcome their rivals. For example, in the conflict between Gulbuddin and Rabbani, the Russians preferred to help Rabbani so Rabbani was also pleased with this cooperation (Kalinovsky, 2011: 229-32).

After the formation of the Taliban movement by the US and Pakistan, the Russians felt the need for a more active presence in Afghanistan, since they felt that the Taliban movement was created to push the Western and Russian border conflicts to the borders of Afghanistan and Central Asia (İnaç2021a: 80). Therewithal, another issue that helped the Russians to become more actively involved in the Afghanistan crisis was the shift in Russian public opinion, so the change for public opinion includes, reviving the spirit of confrontation with the West in the Russian people and defending Russia's national and security resources in the surrounding areas without sending troops, which the Russian people faced with the security and economic invasion of the West in their borders, subsequently, on the other hand, the people of Russia believed that Russia should regain its former power. With having said all this, we must analyze Russian's intentions towards Afghanistan, which are as follows:

- Preventing the infiltration of the Taliban's petrified ideas into Central Asian countries
- Preventing the Western world from advancing towards Russia's security borders
- Confronting the united action of the US and some other regions in the equations of the region
- Restoration of influence in the periphery of Russia
- Preventing the domination of non-regional countries over the reserves and economic resources of Central Asia. Having mentioned Russia's goals in Afghanistan, therewithal, I must throw some light on some of the things that show Russia's strengths and capabilities concerning the crisis in Afghanistan and the Taliban movement (İnaç, 2007: 23-25).

Nonetheless, few countries can be found that know as much as Russia about the Afghanistan crisis and the environment in which this crisis is lasting. Decades of continuous communication between Russia and Afghanistan have made it possible for Russian foreign policy decision-makers to have more information and data needed from the internal environment of the Afghan crisis than their counterparts in other countries, so they have used this information and data in their decision-making platform. Subsequently, the Russians were the main designers of transportation routes, important relations, and strategy in Afghanistan, so Afghanistan's resources and mines were carefully studied by the Russians and Russia was more aware of Afghanistan's mineral resources than any other country. On the other hand, all the forces that were fighting each other in the Afghanistan civil war used mainly Russian weapons, therewithal, at the same time, the Russians were one of the most knowledgeable countries in understanding the tribal system and structure of political power in Afghanistan (İnaç 2004: 36-39). Thereupon, from 1955 until the fall of the communist regime in 1992, the Russians trained Afghanistan's political and military elites, though, in the Afghan crisis, the political and military elites were removed from the Afghanistan leadership scene. nevertheless, the Russian had learned a lot from their years of confrontation with the Mujahedin leaders so the Russians were well aware of the Mujahedin's morale and policies.

Apart from these, another strength of Russia was the existence of powerful and influential allies, which in the sensitive and geopolitical region of the world is always a valuable privilege for an international player who wants to move in the particular region. Thereafter, one of the advantages and possibilities that enjoyed in the face of the Afghan crisis was the existence of suitable allies with effective power in the region where the Afghan crisis had continued, therewithal, the three republics, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan have long-standing ties with Russia since their years of membership in the Soviet Union, thus, all three countries due to their strong ties with Russia, decided to follow Russia's policy of confronting the Taliban in the face of the Afghan crisis (İnaç H. and Yaman, M., 2015: 19-21). Herewith, Tajikistan meanwhile has become more influential, so many experts have even attributed that the signing of the Tajikistan peace treaty in Moscow was Russia's strong influence on Tajikistan's foreign and domestic policy, hence, the experts also believed that Russia was working to build greater cohesion among Central Asian countries to fight the Taliban besides had facilitated the process of achieving peace in Tajikistan. Nevertheless, the Russians had sought to establish the necessary coordination between the three countries and other Central Asian countries with Russia in adopting a common approach to the Afghan

crisis in both political and military terms and to some extent had been implemented (Rashid, 2000: 192-197).

Therewithal, in this regard, the Russian former Defense Minister has met with his counterparts in Central Asian countries and discussed the need for joint defense against the possible dangers of the Taliban (İnaç 2016: 58-60) politically, the former Russian Foreign Minister also met several times with his counterparts In the Central Asian republics, hence, in these meetings in addition to emphasizing the common defense and security approach to the Afghan crisis, the non-recognition of the self-proclaimed Taliban government in Afghanistan and the continued support of Burhanuddin Rabbani's government as the legitimate government of Afghanistan had also been discussed (İnaç, 2017: 118-120).

Nonetheless, the failure of the Pakistani Foreign Minister GoharAyub Khan on his trip to the Central Asian republics to win the support of these countries for Islamabad's plan to hold a peace conference on the Afghan crisis and get them to recognize the Taliban as the legitimate government confirmed that Russia could influence the foreign policy of the Central Asian countries, especially in Afghan crisis (İnaç, H. and Yacan, İ., 2018: 329-330).

In addition to Central Asian countries, there is no doubt that Iran was one of Russia's most important partners in the region. Iran which itself had many opportunities and strength to implement its policies in Afghanistan, therewithal, not only did not feel many conflicts between its policies and Russia's policies in face of the Afghanistan crisis, also assumed that Russia's policies were largely in the same way with Iran's. Nevertheless, Tehran and Moscow were once considered two opposing sides in the Afghanistan crisis, though, during the civil war and the Taliban movement behaved in the same way and this was a winning card for the Russians, before the Afghanistan civil war and the Taliban movement, at the time of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, Iran, and the Soviet Union had pursued conflicting policies so Iran supported the Mujahidin and in contrast, the Soviet Union supported the communist government, though, in the wake of the Taliban's crisis in Afghanistan the situation had changed so much that Iran and Russia were increasing their presence in the face the Taliban crisis (İnaç, H. and Yacan, İ., 2018: 321).

Although, Russia and Iran have cooperated at the micro-level of their foreign policy so this cooperation in addition to the issue of Afghanistan was in some cases like the legal problem of the Caspian Sea and countering the US hegemony in global equations, nonetheless, it is

undoubtedly worth considering that the crisis of the Taliban movement was a key element of bilateral cooperation between Russia and Iran (İnaç, H. and Yacan, İ., 2018: 320).

Thereafter, the last thing that can be mentioned as Russia's strength is Russia's permanent membership in the UN council and its veto power. Thus, there is ample evidence that the collapse of the Soviet Union and the decline of its superpower position in the global equation, although leading to a decline in Russian power, though, Russia was still not so weak in Central Asia and the Caucasus that a regional crisis could be easily resolved regardless of its views. Hereby, Russia was not only possessed nuclear power, but it is still slowly making enormous efforts to gain the former foothold of the Soviet Union in the world so at the time of the ongoing Afghan crisis the conditions of Russia's political and international power, especially in the UN security council were such that any international or regional solution to the Afghan crisis could not escape Russia's view. For example, if the Taliban sought any approval for their self-proclaimed government in the international community they would have to somehow neutralize Russian forces to establish a legitimate government with the cooperation of the US and Pakistan, which was difficult and even impossible (İnaç, H. and Rafiq Sada, M.,2021b: 72-73).

Subsequently, it can be said that Russia had valuable experiences with the dimensions and critical environment of Afghanistan, though, the occurred problems since the collapse of the Soviet Union and its aftermath created significant and vital problems for the new Russian foreign policy. Therewithal, Russia with the support of international coalitions was able to act regionally against the Taliban and its backers to prevent them from advancing toward Russia's security borders but in connection with the Afghan crisis, they could not play a key role to provide the necessary support to the Rabbani government to keep Afghanistan away from the terror of the Taliban.

#### **2.4. United State**

Before the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and its occupation in 1979, Afghanistan had no priority in US foreign policy, although during the Daud Khan administration, the US provided little economic assistance to Afghanistan through Iran and Pakistan. But with the Soviet intervention to save the communist regime in Afghanistan and Moscow's long-term goals, the US policy faced a new transformation, namely the protection of the US interests in the Persian Gulf, and the Indian subcontinent by supporting Pakistan and overthrowing the pro-Soviet regime by strengthening the Mujahedin. With the signing of the 1994 Geneva agreement

between Kabul-Islamabad and the withdrawal of the Soviet troops, the US pledged to the Soviet Union to abandon its long-standing policy and abandon Afghan militant groups(Bowker, 2007: 41-45).

Therewithal, with the collapse of the Soviet Union which we mentioned above, a widespread political-economic crisis swept through Russia, in return, the US not only failed to meet its commitments, though also devised a comprehensive long-term strategy for Afghanistan and the surrounding areas to serve the interests of the US and its allies for years to come (İnaç2021a: 76-78). It should be noted that in addition to controlling the Persian Gulf as the most important center of oil and gas energy production, the US considered Asia as the most vital geopolitical center in the rivalry of powers, in this context, the Indian subcontinent was of great importance as the main bridge connecting the important countries of the former Soviet Union with Asia. Before the victory of the Islamic revolution, the US did not hesitate to protect its interests with a secure presence in Iran and Pakistan, but the fall of Shah's rule in Iran caused the US to lose one of its most important allies in the region, which could have supported its vital interests in the Persian Gulf (İnaç, H., 2021c: 109-110).

On the other hand, India and Russia shortly after the collapse of the Soviet Union, revived their former relations and reshaped their long-standing alliance, at the time, the US felt that Russia despite its internal problems was still pursuing a strategic policy of looking to Asia and India's warm Waters so that there was no reason for the US to ally with India, hereby, Pakistan's situation could not meet the strategic needs of the US. Thus, the temporary disregard of the US to Pakistan for a decade due to the US's desire for proximity to India partly led to a power vacuum in Pakistani, so Pakistan saw its life in maintaining its military position to compete with India, nonetheless took advantage of China's enmity with India in the region and completed its unfinished nuclear project with the help of China (Hilali, 2017: 250-52).

This situation raised further concerns in the US to prevent complete isolation on the Indian subcontinent, so with this concern, the US government saw a more effective presence in Afghanistan through Saudi Arabia as a strategic ally and this prompted Pakistan to be one of the main axes of intervention in Afghanistan to revitalize with the US and prevent isolation in the region. Subsequently, for the US the domination of Afghanistan has always been a strategic need nothing else. The US goals in Afghanistan at a critical juncture and at all times have been so diverse so it can be said that its regional goals go far beyond the benefits of



Afghanistan itself. Given the issues, we have outlined above, the geographical and historical situation of Afghanistan despite its ethnicity, ancient divisions, bloody conflict, and unstable governments in recent years has made Afghanistan valuable in the regional policy. Nonetheless, the strategic position of oppressed Afghanistan in the past and the present crisis has forced the US to dominate this sensitive area at any cost.

### **3. Conclusion**

Thereafter, the US has been pursued several key objectives in Afghanistan that we have reasonably analyzed.

- **Pressurization on Russia:** Afghanistan was geographically the closest country to the borders of the Soviet Union, through which the US could control Russia's developments. Nonetheless, not should overlook the fact that despite the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, the global conflict between Russia and the US has not diminished and continues to this day. Moving away from its hasty dash to the West in the early 1990s, Russia sought to restore the lost global prestige after the collapse of the Soviet Union to counter the expansionism of the US and some other Western countries near its security border. Therewithal, the US and the West, with realizing that Russia as the successor to the former Soviet Union might once again move toward reviving a multinational empire, sought to move closer to Russia's security borders to inspect its regional and international movements (Cooley, 1999: 180-83).

In this regard, Eastern European countries were accepted as members of Western transnational institutions such as NATO and the European Union to deprive Russia of access to these regions as breathing space and the creation of a strong union. Thus, the same experience can be seen in Central Asia where Afghanistan was as a cover for Russia's security had become the scene of the US and its regional allies efforts, hereby, the US policies are now being pursued in the same way in Afghanistan (İnaç2021a: 82). Nevertheless, the next stage of US policy was the digestion of the former Soviet republics in the Western world as the closest areas to Russia's geographical borders, so if the Afghan crisis had proceeded in a manner contrary to Russia's wishes, Russia's enemies including the US would have been able to reach Russia's security borders in Central Asia. Although it was difficult for the Western transnational institutions such as NATO and the European Union to digest the Central Asian republics and other remnants of the Soviet Union in Russia's neighborhood at

the time, though, the US and its allies have spared no effort to limit Russia's security borders and push back these borders to the geographical borders of Russia. With stating all these, one of the US goals in supporting the Taliban through Pakistan was to narrow the space for Russia's objectives, that the US was not wanting Russia to form again a strong alliance with Central Asian countries to prevent the US policies towards Russia and access to Central Asian oil and gas reserves(Rashid, 2008: 213-216).

- Central Asia's economic reserves: In addition to its proximity to Russia's security borders, access to Central Asia's economic resources has been a separate and important principle in the US foreign policy toward this sensitive and geopolitical region of the world. Herewith, the Americans have been realized that the economic factor would be one of the most vital determinants of the national power of the world in the coming centuries. Therefore paid special attention to the economic resources of the republics leftover from the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, the discovery of huge gas and oil reserves in the Caspian Sea, Russia's potential for oil and gas production, the existence of enormous natural gas reserves in Turkmenistan, and crude oil in Kazakhstan, have made this region one of the alternatives in the Persian Gulf. The US, by relying on the high power of exploration and extraction technology and having big financial capital to invest in the region's oil and gas industry, has sought a reliable solution to dominate and transfer these resources to the global market (İnaç,2021a:174-175).

In this regard, the US sought to dominate the two important areas of resources, namely the Caspian Sea and the Gulf, so according to this rule, the US took steps to strengthen its supremacy in the Persian Gulf to grab more of the resources and reserves of the Caspian Sea, herewith the Azerbaijani government had allowed the American companies and other Western companies to exploit the oil and gas resources of the region. The US, based on a policy pursued several years ago under the pretext of protecting the environment, though, essentially was preserving its domestic oil resources for future generations, afterward, concluded that investing in foreign oil resources, given the US influence in international oil pricing was far cheaper than to extract and produce US's oil at the wages of American workers. Hence, the US oil companies began planning to renew their reserves by investing in Central Asian countries. Therewithal, the Central Asian countries were more attractive to American

companies than The Middle Eastern, because in the extraction of oil resources there were no anti-foreign ideological differences like Middle Eastern (Qadir, 2013: 70-74).

Consequently, this move to Central Asian countries required the construction of oil pipelines in which regional stability was playing a key role, so peace and stability in Afghanistan was a prerequisite for the construction of oil pipelines. Among the American companies, the most bankable was UNOCAL, which planned to build an 8 billion dollars oil pipeline through Afghanistan, herewith, the Clinton administration openly welcomed the UNOCAL project. Thereafter, UNOCAL needed a stable Afghanistan to carry out its project that the Taliban was the only option to land the platform for the dreams of the UNOCAL company, thus, UNOCAL through Pakistan made extensive efforts to achieve its goals with the Taliban government in Afghanistan by providing big assistance to the Taliban movement (Levine, 2007: 340-344).

Nevertheless, in Afghanistan, the situation was awful and the people of Afghanistan who cried out in fear of the tyranny of the Taliban movement did not receive any sympathy from the great powers, though, on the contrary for their own economic and geopolitical interests they were increasingly straining their ties with the animal movement of the Taliban, thereby, encouraging them to take any inhuman action instead of cursing them to pave the way for the sinister goals the US and its regional ally Pakistan.

Thus, after the occupation of Kabul by the Taliban in September 1996, UNOCAL executives expressed their happiness, namely, Richard Deckler the company's chief operating officer in Pakistan, said he hopes that the Taliban would come to power to prepare the ground of Afghanistan for our economic goals from Central Asia through Afghanistan. On the other hand, the US cautiously welcomed the creation of a government that would safeguard the US and Pakistan's interests in the region, besides having believed that the Taliban would end the civil war in Afghanistan. But, the joy of UNOCAL officials and the US government will not be incoming, because the Afghan people's resistance front was a major obstacle to the dominance of the foreign-sponsored movement, namely the Taliban. Therefore, any attempt to persuade American companies to build an oil pipeline in the Taliban territory was unsuccessful, as the US government wanted the Taliban with the enormous financial and military assistance they received through Pakistan to defeat the resistance front that had Ahmad Shah Massoud at the helm of it, so there would have been no obstacle to the

construction of the oil pipeline from Central Asia through Afghanistan (Raghavan, 2018: 328-29).

Therewithal, when the Taliban arrived in Kabul early on, they had no idea of ruling Afghanistan, contrarily they were formed to carry out the US and Pakistan's goals in the region, though, the fierce resistance of Ahmad Shah Massoud and his troops to the north, which thwarted any attempt of the Taliban, dashed the hopes of the American companies.

Eventually, the continuing war in Afghanistan, with the ambiguity of the Taliban's future and its legitimacy went hand in hand, so in mid-1998, it ousted US-based UNOCAL from investing in Central Asia's oil through Afghanistan. Undoubtedly, until a complete ceasefire was reached in Afghanistan and a strong central government would have not taken the government of Afghanistan to take an effective step to seize arms from the Taliban opposition groups, it was difficult to implement any pipeline crossings through Afghanistan. The presence of large armed groups in Afghanistan, which each had part of Afghanistan and its routes, was an important deterrent to operations such as pipelines to transport gas from Central Asia through Afghanistan. Thus, it would have been impossible for American companies to take any action that would jeopardize their vast capital and technical strength until peace was established in Afghanistan. As a result of the Taliban's numerous defeats against the Northern resistance front, American companies have stopped investing in Central Asia's economic reserves (Durani, 2002: 27-28).

- Proximity to Iran's national interests: After the Islamic revolution, the Islamic Republic of Iran has become one of the great opponents of the US in the world. Nevertheless, after the Cold War, Iran's specific was to make neighboring countries part of its Shiite creed, though, Saudi was one of Iran's main opponents and Iran's Shiite policy in the region. In opposite Saudi, with its massive financial support of the Taliban in Afghanistan, sought to create the Wahhabi ideology and at the same wanted to cut all the ties of Shiite people in Afghanistan who had close ties with the Iranian government. consequently, on the other hand, the US which had long-standing relations with its ally Saudi did not want Iran's policy in the region to become popular and pose a serious threat to the US's interests in the Persian Gulf in the future. Thus, the current crisis at that time had allowed the US to enter the regional equation with the support of one of the parties to the conflict in the crisis closest to the borders of Iran. Nevertheless, the general support of the US for Pakistan in equipping and

training the Taliban to take over the government of Afghanistan, indicated that the US and Pakistan with killing Shiites by the Taliban in Afghanistan, on the one wanted to please their longtime ally Saudi, on the other punish Iran since its action over the Persian Gulf (Dreyfuss, 2005: 335-337).

On top of all this, the city of Herat which was considered a safe and disarmed city during the civil war, and the Taliban did not need to kill people due to disarming the area, though, the US and Pakistan wanted to create insecurity on the Iranian borders, herewith, the border city of Iran, Herat was occupied by the Taliban. Subsequently, the US believed that the policy of Herat occupation was designed to create insecurity on Iran's security borders, so in this way, a big part of Iran's power and energy will be spent on dealing with the negative effects of the crisis, herewith, it will deprive Iran's necessary power and leisure to oppose the Middle East peace process and Afghanistan's crisis. Afterward, based on the US policy the presence of the Taliban in the city of Herat had endangered Iran's border security for a long time.

## References

- Abbas, H. (2014). *The Taliban Revival*. "Violence and Extremism on the Pakistan-Afghanistan Frontier. Yale University Press.
- Ansary, T. (2014). *Games Without Rules: The Often-Interrupted History of Afghanistan*. Public Affairs.
- Berting, J. (2014). *Siyasi Kriz Çağında Yaşamak*. (H. İnaç, Çev.). İstanbul: Ka Kitap.
- Berting, J. (2018). *Kimlik Siyaseti*. (H. İnaç, Çev.). İstanbul: Bilge Kültür Sanat.
- Coll, S. (2008). *The Bin Ladens "An Arabian Family in The American Century"*. The Penguin Press. USA
- Commins, D. (2006). *The Wahhabi Mission and Saudi Arabia* (London and New York: IB Tauris).
- Cordovez, D., Harrison, S. S., & Harrison, S. S. (1995). *Out of Afghanistan: The Inside Story of The Soviet Withdrawal*. Oxford University Press on Demand.
- Crews, R. D., & Tarzi, A. (Eds.). (2009). *The Taliban and the Crisis of Afghanistan*. Harvard University Press.

- Delanty, G. (2013). *Avrupa'nın İcadı*. (H. İnaç, Çev.). Ankara: Adres Yayınları.
- Dixit, A. (1995). The Afghan Civil War: Emergence of the Taliban as Power Broker. *South Asian Survey*, 2(1), 111-118.
- Dreyfuss, R. (2005). *Devil's Game: How the United States Helped Unleash Fundamentalist Islam*. Owl Books "Henry Holt and Company, LLC", Macmillan.
- Durani, M. U. & Khan, A. (2002). Pakistan-Afghan Relations: Historic Mirror. *The Dialogue*, 4(1), 25-61.
- Emami, H. (1999). *Afghanistan and Appearance of the Taliban* "افغانستان و ظهور طالبان". Tehran. Shahab Foundation.
- Haqqani, H. (2013). *Magnificent Delusions "Pakistan, the United States, and an Epic History of Misunderstanding"*. PublicAffairs. U.S.
- Hilali, A. Z. (2017). *US-Pakistan Relationship: Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan*. Taylor & Francis.
- Hiro, D. (2018). *Cold War in the Islamic World "Saudi Arabia, Iran, and the Struggle for Supremacy"*. Oxford University Press. NY.
- İnaç H. and F. Ünal (2013). The Construction of National Identity in Modern Times: Theoretical Perspective. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 3(11), 223-232.
- İnaç H. and Yaman, M. (2015). Ulus İnşa Stratejileri Bağlamında Avrupa Milli Marşlarının Sosyo-Politik Mukayesesi. *Süleyman Demirel Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi*, 20(3), 17-34.
- İnaç, H. (2003). Makro Toplumsal Kuramlar Açısından Postmodernizm. *Dumlupınar Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 8, 341-351.
- İnaç, H. (2004). Identity Problems of Turkey during the European Union Integration Process. *Journal of Economic and Social Research*, 6(2), 33-62.
- İnaç, H. (2007). Rethinking Democracy and Governance in the EU. *Journal of Academic Studies*, 9(32), 1-31.
- İnaç, H. (2016). *Türkiye'nin Kimlik Problemleri*. Ankara: Adres Yayınları

- İnaç, H. (2017). *Faşizmin ve Sosyalizmin Sosyo-politik Kökenleri*. 2. Baskı, İstanbul: Bilge Kültür Sanat Yayınları
- İnaç, H. (2021a). *Uluslararası Güvenlik, Yeni Dünya Düzeni ve Türkiye*. İstanbul: Bilge Kültür Sanat Yayınları.
- İnaç, H. (2021c). Taliban'ı İktidara Taşıyan Sosyopolitik Saıklar. *Türkiye Günlüğü*. 148, 95-111.
- İnaç, H. and Rafiq Sada, M. (2021b). *Taliban'ın Afganistan'ı: Devlet, Toplum, Siyaset*. İstanbul: Bilge Kültür Sanat Yayınları.
- İnaç, H. and Rafiq Sada, M. (2021d). Ulus İnşası ve Uluslaşma. *Uluslararası Eşitlik Politikaları Dergisi*. 1(1).
- İnaç, H. and Yacan, İ. (2018). Ülkelerin Markalaşma Süreci ve Marka Kavramı. *Uluslararası Yönetim Akademisi Dergisi* 1(3), 317-331.
- Kalinovsky, A. (2011). *Long Goodbye "The Soviet Withdrawal From Afghanistan"*. Harvard University Press.
- Kaplan, R. D. (2001). *Soldiers of God: With Islamic Warriors in Afghanistan and Pakistan*. Vintage.
- Levine, S. (2007). *The Oil and the Glory*. Random House, Inc. U.S.
- Maley, W. (2020). *The Afghanistan Wars*. Bloomsbury Publishing, Red Globe Press.
- Margolis, E. (2021). *War at the Top of The World: The Struggle For Afghanistan, Kashmir and Tibet*. Routledge.
- Marsden, P. (1998). *The Taliban: War, Religion and the New Order in Afghanistan*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Paliwal, A. (2017). *My Enemy's Enemy "India in Afghanistan From the Soviet Invasion to the US withdrawal"*. Oxford University Press. NY.
- Pattanaik, S. S. (2013). *Afghanistan and Its Neighborhood "In search of a Stable Future"*. PRIO. India.
- Raghavan, S. (2018). *Fierce Enigmas "A Story of the United States in South Asia"*. Basic Books. NY.
- Rashid, A. (1999). *The Taliban Exporting Extremism*. Council on Foreign Relations.

- Rashid, A. (2008). *Descent into Chaos “the United States and the Failure of Nation Building in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia”*. Penguin Group. NY.
- Rubin, B. R. (2020). The Political Economy of War And Peace in Afghanistan. *World development*, 28(10), 1789-1803.
- Shah, K. M. (2017). The Pashtuns, the Taliban, and America’s Longest War. *Asian Survey*, 57(6), 981-1007.
- Saxena, C. (2019). A Case for Coherence as Analytical Tool: ISI’s Use of Taliban and Pakistan’s Foreign Policy. *Jadavpur Journal of International Relations*, 23(2), 121-141.
- Siddique, A. (2014). *The Pashtun question: The unresolved key to the future of Pakistan and Afghanistan*. Hurst & Company Limited.
- Steele, J. (2011). *Ghosts of Afghanistan: The Haunted Battleground*. Portobello Books.
- Threlkeld, E. & Easterly, G. (2021). *Peaceworks “Afghanistan-Pakistan Ties and the Future Stability in Afghanistan”*. United States Institute of Peace Press. Washington.
- Tripathi, D. (2011). *Breeding Ground: Afghanistan and The Origins of Islamist Terrorism*. Potomac Books, Inc..
- Tomsen, P. (2011). *The Wars of Afghanistan: Messianic Terrorism, Tribal Conflicts, And The Failures of Great Powers*. Hachette UK.
- Van Linschoten, A. S.& Kuehn, F. (2012). *An enemy we created: The myth of the Taliban-al Qaeda merger in Afghanistan*. Oxford University Press, USA.