Afghanistan
a country study

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Foreword

This volume is one of a continuing series of books prepared by Foreign Area Studies, The American University, under the Country Studies/Area Handbook Program. The last page of this book provides a listing of other published studies. Each book in the series deals with a particular foreign country, describing and analyzing its economic, national security, political, and social systems and institutions and examining the interrelationships of those systems and institutions and the ways that they are shaped by cultural factors. Each study is written by a multidisciplinary team of social scientists. The authors seek to provide a basic insight and understanding of the society under observation, striving for a dynamic rather than a static portrayal of it. The study focuses on historical antecedents and on the cultural, political, and socioeconomic characteristics that contribute to cohesion and cleavage within the society. Particular attention is given to the origins and traditions of the people who make up the society, their dominant beliefs and values, their community of interests and the issues on which they are divided, the nature and extent of their involvement with the national institutions, and their attitudes toward each other and toward the social system and political order within which they live.

The contents of the book represent the views, opinions, and findings of Foreign Area Studies and should not be construed as an official Department of the Army position, policy, or decision, unless so designated by other official documentation. The authors have sought to adhere to accepted standards of scholarly objectivity. Such corrections, additions, and suggestions for factual or other changes that readers may have will be welcomed for use in future new editions.

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Preface

In December 1979 Soviet armed forces seized power in Kabul and installed their puppet, Babrak Karmal, as president. Six years later an estimated 115,00 or more Soviet military personnel continued to wage war against the Afghan people. About one-third of the country's pre-invasion population had fled the country, most of them to Pakistan. Numerous bands of *mujahidiin* (literally, holy warriors, also known as freedon fighters) continued in 1985 to inflict heavy damage on the Soviet forces and on the remnants of Afghanistan's armed forces, but the warriors, their people, and their homelands have also suffered massive damage and losses.

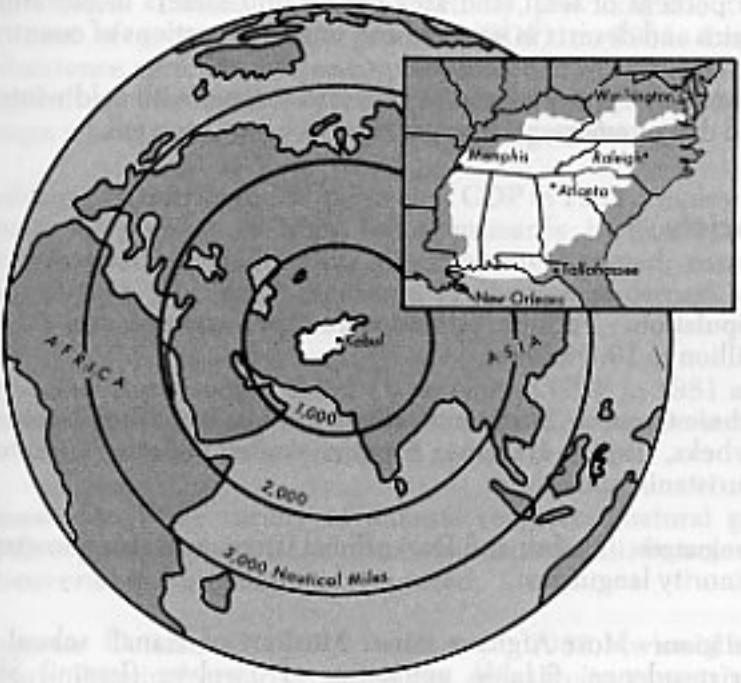
Afghanistan: A Country Study replaces the *Area Handbook for Afghanistan*, which was published in 1969 and updated and republished in 1973. Like its predecessor, the present book is an attempt to treat in a compact and objective manner the dominant historical, social, economic, political, and national security aspects of contemporary Afghanistan. Sources of information included scholarly books, journals, and monographs; official reports and domestic newpapers and periodicals; and interviews with individuals having special competence in Afghan affairs. Relatively up-to-date economic data were available from several sources, but the sources were not always in agreement. Most demographic data should be viewed as estimates based on fragmentary information.

Chapter bibliographies appear at the end of the book; brief comments on some of the more valuable sources for further reading appear at the conclusion of each chapter. Measurements are given in the metric system; a conversion table is provided to assist those who are unfamiliar with the metric system (see table 1, Appendix). A glossary of foreign and other words and phrases is also included.

The transliteration of various words and phrases posed a problem. For many words of Arabic origin—such as Muslim, Quran, hadith, and *zakat*—the authors followed a modified version of the system adopted by the United States Board on Geographic Names and the Permanent Committee on Geographic Names for British Official Use, known as the BGN/PCGN system; the modification entails the omission of diacritical markings and hyphens. The BGN/PCGN system was also used to transliterate other languages, such as Dari, Pashtu, and Russian. The reader may note, therefore, the seeming contra-

diction between Tajik in reference to a major ethnic group in Afghanistan and Tadzhik Soviet Socialist Republic in the Soviet Union. The spellings of place-names generally adhere to those established by the United States Board on Geographic Names in its official gazetteers; the gazetteer for Afghanistan was published in July 1971. Finally, the reader should also note that the Khan that appears with numerous names--such as Genghiz Khan, Abdur Rahman Khan, Daoud Khan, and Ayub Khan—is an honorific and almost never a surname.

Country Profile



Country

Formal Name: Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.

Short Form: Afghanistan or DRA.

Term for Citizens: Afghan(s).

Capital: Kabul.

Geography

Size: Approximately 637,397 square kilometers.

Topography: Extremely mountainous in country's midsection; 49 percent of total land area over 2,000 meters in elevation; plains and deserts in western and southern portions of country.

Climate: Typical of arid or semiarid steppe, with cold winters and dry summers; some areas receive heavy snowfall.

Society

Population: Various estimates in 1985 ranged from 14.7 million to 19.7 million.

Ethnic Groups: Numerous ethnic groups, including Pashtuns, Uzbeks, Tajiks, Hazaras, Kirghiz, Arabs, Baluch, Turkmen, Nuristanis, and others.

Languages: Pashtu and Dari official languages; also numerous minority languages.

Religion: Most Afghans Sunni Muslims of Hanafi school of jurisprudence. Sizable minorities of Twelver (Imami) Shia Muslims and Ismaili Muslims; small minorities of Hindus and Sikhs.

Education: Five years of primary school and five years of secondary school; two universities. Government reportedly waging campaign against illiteracy.

Health: Mobile medical units; medical brigades; few hospitals and physicians. Most of country's physicians and hospital beds located in Kabul.

Economy

Gross National Product (GNP): According to government, Af154.3 billion in 1981 (in 1978-79 prices), drop from 1978 level of Af159.7 billion (for value of the afghani—see Glossary). GNP per capita fell from Af7,370 in 1978 to Af6,852 in 1982, based on estimated population of 15 million.

Agriculture: Dominant economic activity, providing about 63 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 1981. Large subsistence agriculture economy not included in official GDP. Agriculture employed 56 percent of labor force in 1982. Main crops: wheat, corn, rice, fruits, nuts, and vegetables.

Industry: Contributed 21 percent of GDP in 1982, employing about 10 percent of labor force, primarily in handicrafts. Principal modern industries, all government-owned: natural gas, textiles, and food processing. Production of carpets and rugs most important handicraft activity.

Services: Represented about 10 percent of GDP in 1981 and employed roughly one-third of labor force. Key service sector activities included trade, transport, and government.

Resources: Wide variety of mineral resources: natural gas, coal, copper, iron, barite, chrome, and lapis lazuli. Petroleum discoveries and uranium finds reported.

Exports: Totaled US$707.7 million in 1982, twice 1978 figure. Principal exports: natural gas, dried fruits, carpets and rugs, and karakul sheep skins.

Imports: Totaled US$695 million in 1982, 50 percent higher than 1978. Principal imports: machinery, manufactured goods, and refined petroleum products. Also large food imports, both commercial and aid-financed.

Balance of Payments: During mid-1970s Afghanistan accumulated foreign currency reserves, despite constant current account deficit. By 1980s worker remittances from Persian Gulf and foreign aid inflows diminished, resulting in overall balance of payments deficit, reaching negative US$70.3 million in 1982.

Exchange Rate: Official rate Af50.6 per United States dollar

in 1985. In Kabul money bazaars, United States dollar bought over 100 afghanis in late 1984.

Fiscal Year: March 21 to March 20.

Transportation and Communications

Railroads: In 1985 Soviets building railroad over Amu Darya toward Pol-e Khomri and Kabul; also short spurs of Soviet rail lines at Towraghondi and Kheyrabad.

Roads: In 1978 total of 18,752 kilometers, of which 2,846 paved.

Ports: River ports on Amu Darya at Jeyretan, Shir Khan, and Towraghondi.

Airfields: Total of 41 in 1985; Kabul International Airport the largest. Second largest airport at Qandahar but handled little traffic.

Pipelines: Natural gas pipelines out of Sheberghan into Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic and Tadzhik Soviet Socialist Republic.

Government and Politics

Government: In late 1985 structure and function of government defined by Fundamental Principles of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, adopted by Revolutionary Council (RC) of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan on April 14, 1980. Loya Jirgah, or grand national assembly, designated "highest organ of state power." Actual power wielded by RC; RC elected Presidium and Council of Ministers. Chairman of Presidium, concurrently president of RC, head of state. Soviet advisers played supervisory and controlling role in all important state ministries. Afghan officials had little or no independece.

Politics: People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), founded in 1965, defined in Soviet literature as "revolutionary vanguard party of the working people." Membership in mid-

1980s not certain; one estimate as low as 11,000; late 1984 official figure 120,000. Organized according to Leninist principle of "democratic centralism." Top officials: PDPA secretary general and members of the Political Bureau (Politburo). Politburo selected by Central Committee, itself chosen by Party Congress (as of late 1985 only one Party Congress held in PDPA history, in January 1965). PDPA divided since 1967 into Parcham (Banner) and Khalq (Masses) factions. Parcham dominant since Soviet invasion of December 1979, but animosity between factions remained intense in late 1985.

Justice: Highest judicial organ Supreme Court, administering courts on provincial, municipal, and district levels. Special courts established to try political cases. Human rights violations numerous.

Administrative Divisions: Country divided into 29 provinces (*wilayat*); provinces divided into districts (*wuluswali*) and subdistricts (*alaqadari*). Eighty percent of country reportedly outside government control.

Foreign Affairs: Afghanistan closely tied to Soviet Union. Soviet advisers reportedly have preponderant say in formulation of foreign policy. "Proximity talks" with Pakistan continuing in late 1985. Relations tense with Pakistan, Iran, China, and Arab world. Relations with India generally friendly. From 1980 to 1985 United Nations General Assembly annual resolutions called for pullout of foreign troops from country.

The Resistance: Resistance goups operating throughout country in as many as 90 localities. *Mujahidiin* leaders receive arms and funds from parties based in Peshawar, Pakistan. Seven major emigré parties divided into two groups, "Islamic fundamentalist" and "traditionalist." Shia Muslim groups—some with ties to Iran—and leftist groups also in resistance.

National Security

Armed Forces: Total strength in 1985 reported about 47,000 (actual figure probably lower): army, 40,000 (mostly conscripts); air force, 7,000. Divisions reportedly averaged 2,500, about quarter strength. Desertion common. Terms of service (males 15-55): volunteers, two years; conscripts, three

to four years. About 20,000 Sarondoy (Defenders of the Revolution) in charge of rural security; KHAD (secret police), 25,000 to 35,000; militia, around 40,000.

Military Units: Army general headquarters commands three numbered corps: 1st corps (Bagrami, south of Kabul); 2d corps (Qandahar); 3d corps (Gardez). Eleven infantry divisions and three armored brigades compose principal units of three corps; all understrength.

Equipment: Tank inventory mostly Soviet-made-T-34s/-54s/-55s/-62s. In 1985 army had over 400 armored personnel carriers, primarily Soviet-made BTR-40s/-50s/-60s/-152s. Air force had over 150 combat aircraft, completely maintained and controlled by Soviets. Most aircraft MiG-17s/-21s or Su-17s; helicopters: Mi-24s, Mi-4s, and Mi-8s.

Police: Heavily purged after 1978 coup; number given by government 60,000 in 1983. Duration of training course reduced from eight to three months in 1978.

Soviet Forces: Total 105,000 to 115,000; (60,000 combat troops, 30,000 to 40,000 support troops, 10,000 paratroopers, 5,000 air assault troops). Operational headquarters Turkestan Military District, Tashkent in Soviet Union.

Resistance Forces: Estimated 90,000 guerrillas (possibly 20,000 intermittently active) supported by about 110,000 "reserves." Equipment: small arms, 122m howitzers, AGS-17 30mm grenade launchers, M-41 82mm mortars, SA-7 surface-to-air missiles.

Introduction

AFGHANISTAN is one of the few countries of the modern world to have experienced a drastic decline in its population. Between April 1978, when a violent coup d'état brought to power a radical, pro-Soviet political party, and early 1986 perhaps one-third of the populace fled the country. Although accurate data were not available in the mid-1980s, most observers estimated that 2.5 to 3 million Afghans lived in refugee camps in Pakistan, as many as 1.9 million were resident in Iran, and perhaps 150,000 had sought refuge elsewhere, including the United States. According to the United Nations (UN), this constituted the largest refugee population in the world. In addition, since the April 1978 coup—and particularly since the December 1979 Soviet invasion—hundreds of thousands have been killed or have died as a result of wounds, diseases, or other hardships and deprivations caused by warfare.

Although the refugees are known as Afghans and the name of the country literally means "land of the Afghans," within the national society the term *Afghan* usually refers specifically to a Pashtu (or Pakhtu) speaker who is recognized as a member of one of the several Pashtun tribes (see Ethnicity and Tribe, ch. 2). An estimated 50 percent of the population—and reportedly over 50 percent of the refugees—are Pashtuns. The royal families from 1747 to 1973 were Pashtuns, and Babrak Karmal, who was installed as president by the Soviets in 1979 and who remained in nominal power in 1986, was a Pashtun. Although the figures were actually guesses, some observers suggested that Tajiks account for about 25 percent of the population and Uzbeks and Hazaras for about 9 percent each. Baluch, Turkmen, and other small ethnic groups compose the remainder (see fig. 5). The mother tongue of about half the population is Pashtu; Dari (Afghan Farsi or Persian) is the first language of about 35 percent: and Turkic (especially Uzbek and Turkmen), about 11 percent. There is extensive bilingualism.

All but a minuscule number of Afghans are Muslims. Islam is a central facet in the day-to-day life of the overwhelming majority of the members of society. Pashtuns, for example, accept it as a given that to be Pashtun is to be Muslim. Their ethnohistory stipulates that their apical ancestor, Qays, was

converted by the Prophet Muhammad (see Meaning and Practice, ch. 2). In a society in which tribal, ethnic, linguistic, and class cleavages determine most social relations, Islam and the sense of belonging to and participating in the Islamic community (*umma*) continued in the mid-1980s to provide the overriding cohesive force for the freedom fighters. The name used by the resistance forces, *mujahidiin* (sing., *mujahid*), means those engaged in jihad (see Glossary), i.e. warriors of Islam.

Nevertheless, the Islamic community in Afghanistan is a heterogeneous one. A majority—something in excess of two-thirds—are Sunnis (see Sunnis of the Hanafi School, ch. 2). The remainder consist of adherents either of Twelver or Imami Shiism (the dominant faith in neighboring Iran) or of one of the sects of Ismaili Shiism (see Twelver or Imami Shia; Ismailis, ch. 2). Numerous Afghan Muslims, particularly many Sunnis, are practicing Sufis (see Sufis, ch. 2).

These disparate and frequently warring peoples were first incorporated into a nation-state, albeit a fragile one, in 1747 by Ahmad Shah (see Ahmad Shah and the Durrani Empire, ch. 1). His descendants, or those of his collateral lineages, ruled the nation with only brief interruptions until 1978. In 1973 the monarchy was abolished and a republic established by Mohammad Daoud Khan, who as a cousin and brother-in-law of the deposed king was a senior member of the royal family. The peoples of the region had always resisted government control of any kind, and they had contested with particular vigor invasions by non-Muslim aliens. In the nineteenth century the British Indian government sought on two occasions to establish a government in Kabul that would be amenable to British guidance, but in neither instance was it successful (see The First Anglo-Afghan War; The Second Anglo-Afghan War, ch.1). Because of their political victories in the aftermaths of these wars and of a brief border war that they provoked with the British in 1919, the Afghans have evinced pride that theirs is one of the few Muslim states never to be subjugated by a non-Islamic power.

Throughout the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth the kingdom's domestic affairs and its relations with its neighbors reflected its location between the expanding British and Russian empires. By the late 1890s the two imperial governments had determined Afghanistan's northern and eastern boundaries and had been instrumental in fixing the western boundary with Iran (see fig. 1). In 1893 the British Indian government coerced the Afghan ruler, Abdur Rahman Khan, to agree to a permanent boundary—the Durand Line. The central part of the boundary placed more than half of the

Pashtuns within British India and the remainder in Afghanistan. Abdur Rahman disliked the division, and he and his successors continued to claim that they retained the right to protect the interests of the Pashtuns in British India. When in 1947 British India was partitioned and the new state of Pakistan was formed, the Kabul government launched a campaign to declare null and void the treaty that had established the Durand Line. This eventually created what became known as the Pashtunistan issue, which in essence was a demand that the Pashtuns in Pakistan should be granted autonomy within Pakistan, outright independence, or the right to join Afghanistan.

Pakistan obviously insisted on the validity of the Durand Line, and Britain and most Western countries supported Pakistan's position. During the 1950s Pakistan became increasingly aligned with the United States, Britain, and numerous Asian nations in bilateral agreements and multilateral treaties that were designed to prevent or contain Soviet and Chinese expansion. Because of its close relationship with Pakistan and other related reasons, the United States declined repeated Afghan invitations to supply military equipment, training, and assistance. Kabul then turned to Moscow for assistance, and within a few years Soviet economic aid had become critically important to the Afghan economy, and its military aid and training had become pervasive. By the late 1970s almost all army and air force equipment was of Soviet or East European manufacture, thousands of Afghan officers and noncommissioned officers (NCOs) had received training in the Soviet Union, Soviet military advisers were posted throughout the Ministry of National Defense and almost all levels of the two services, and the Russian language was used extensively in the officer corps. In addition, the officer corps had become increasingly politicized (see Background; Politicization of the Officer Corps, ch. 5).

On April 27-28, 1978, elements in the armed forces carried out a successful coup d'état that toppled the regime of President Daoud. A few days later the Revolutionary Council (RC) of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, a body dominated by civilian leaders of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), assumed power. Nur Muhammad Taraki, PDPA secretary general, was designated president of the new republic. In the months following the coup, he and other party leaders initiated radical policies that challenged both traditional Afghan values and well-established power structures in the rural areas. The measures—especially those dealing with changes in the status of women and the nature of marriage, the abolition of usury, and land reform—were so unpopular that by late 1978 insurrections had begun in various parts of the

country. These movements were headed both by traditional political and religious leaders and by a new generation of Islamic fundamentalist leaders who had been actively opposing Afghan regimes since the mid-1970s (see Political Bases of the Resistance, ch. 4).

The PDPA was a Marxist-oriented party whose following was largely limited to an educated minority in the urban areas. Because this group's perceptions and values were at variance with those of the vast majority of conservative, rural Afghans, it enjoyed a minimum of popular support. The party was further weakened by bitter and sometimes violent internal rivalries. Two years after its founding in January 1965, the PDPA split into two factions that in terms of membership and ideology operated essentially as separate parties: the radical Khalq (Masses) faction, led by Taraki, and the more moderate Parcham (Banner) faction, headed by Karmal. Khalq's adherents were primarily Pashtuns recruited from the nonelite classes. Parcham's adherents included other ethnic groups and tended to come from the Westernized upper classes. At the urging of foreign communist parties and probably the Soviet Union, the two factions agreed in 1977 to reunite as a single PDPA. But once the party was in power, Khalqis, having a strong following in the military, initiated a purge of Parchamis. Following an alleged Parchami plot in the summer of 1978, many Parchamis were thrown in prison and tortured. Parchami leaders, such as Karmal, were sent abroad as ambassadors in mid-1978, and they remained in exile in Eastern Europe or the Soviet Union rather than return to Afghanistan and face certain death (see A Revolution Backfires, ch. 4).

The internal situation deteriorated further through 1979. Armed opposition to the regime spread to practically every region of the country, and there were several serious mutinies within the Afghan armed forces. Hafizullah Amin, a ruthlessly ambitious Khalqi leader, became the most powerful man in the regime as he sought to undermine the position of the less astute Taraki. When Taraki attempted to remove Amin in September 1979, the latter, warned by an informer, turned the tables, arrested Taraki after a shootout at the Presidential Palace in Kabul, and assumed the highest party and state posts. In October Taraki was dead, murdered in prison by Amin's agents.

Amin sought desperately to preserve his country's independence from steadily growing Soviet influence. By late November-early December, the Soviets, acting on the advice of high-ranking military personnel who had toured the country to assess the political and military situation, prepared for a mili-

tary intervention. On December 27, 1979, Soviet troops seized the center of Kabul. Amin was killed (he probably died fighting the Soviets, though official accounts relate that he was executed for counterrevolutionary activities), and the Soviets installed Karmal as the new president.

The Soviet role in Afghan internal politics before the invasion is unclear. It was, however, probably substantial. The PDPA adhered to the Soviet model of revolution, and its leaders in both Khalq and Parcham had close ties with Moscow's embassy in Kabul and operatives of the KGB, the Soviet secret police. Soviet advisers may have played a role in the April 1978 coup détat, and during the 19 months following the coup, the regime became increasingly dependent on Soviet aid and military backing. The Soviets were probably involved in the September 1979 attempt to remove Amin. The December 1979 invasion, undertaken to rescue a friendly regime and prevent the establishment of a hostile new regime (similar ideologically, perhaps, to the radical regime in Iran) on the Soviet Union's southern border, was apparently intended to be a short-term operation. But in early 1986, six years after the invasion, an estimated 118,000 Soviet troops were deployed in Afghanistan and played the principal role in combating the *mujahidiin*.

In the mid-1980s Soviet advisers supervised and controlled state institutions on the national, provincial, and—where guerrilla resistance did not prevent it—district levels. Afghan foreign policy was, according to Afghan defector sources, virtually dictated by the Soviets. Moscow's attempts to foster the development of a stable and viable political system, however, were largely unsuccessful. The central government controlled little more than a fifth of the country's land area. Popular support was estimated to amount to little more than 3 to 5 percent of the total population. Millions had fled to Pakistan or Iran to escape what they perceived as an intolerable situation under de facto Soviet rule. Although Karmal and his associates established bodies like the National Fatherland Front and convened a Loya Jirgah (grand national assembly) in early 1985 in attempts to garner public support and an aura of legitimacy, they relied increasingly on Soviet-backed coercion to remain in power (see The Soviet Occupation, ch. 4). Instruments of coercion included not only Soviet troops and the regime's own armed forces and paramilitary units but also the State Information Service (Khadamate Ettelaate Dowlati, in Dari—KHAD), the dreaded and pervasive secret police that retained close ties to the KGB (see Internal Security, ch. 5). After the invasion, Parcham became politically dominant, but

the rivalry between the two factions continued to smolder, and violence erupted periodically.

Resistance forces in the mid-1980s reflected the divisions and diversity of Afghan society. There were as many as 90 different localities throughout the country where guerrilla commanders and their forces operated. To Western observers, the seven major émigré parties, based in Peshawar, Pakistan, were the most prominent goups in the resistance. These were divided into two loose coalitions of "traditionalists" and "Islamic fundamentalists." Although they provided the in-country commanders with much needed arms and other forms of aid and represented the Afghan struggle to sympathizers and supporters in the Arab and Western worlds, the émigrés did not possess the guerrillas' unconditional allegiance or maintain well-defined chains of command. Most *mujahidiin*, unified but also divided by their allegiance to Islamic values and hostility to the atheistic Soviet invader, operated with substantial autonomy. In the central part of the country, known as the Hazarajat, Shia Muslim Hazaras maintained their own resistance groups, some of which had ties with Iran.

Desertion had thinned the ranks of the Afghan army to about 40,000 men in the mid-1980s, compared with 90,000 to 110,000 before the April 1978 coup. Morale and the quality of personnel were low. Most soldiers were conscripts, often rounded up by press-gangs, and soliders frequently went over to the *mujahidiin* rather than fight. Soviet commanders considered them undependable, often using them to spearhead offensives or defend isolated posts of secondary importance in guerrilla territory. The air force consisted of about 7,000 men. Both on the ground and in the air, the most advanced equipment was used only by Soviet troops, for it was feared that Afghan troops might allow them to fall into the guerrillas' hands (see The Afghan Armed Forces, 1985, ch. 5).

Soviet military operations in the mid-1980s were designed to deprive the resistance of sustenance and popular support by destroying local economies and communications networks, causing large-scale migration to urban areas and neighboring countries, and infiltrating guerrilla organizations to stir up intergroup and intragroup conflict and defections (this latter activity was largely the responsibility of KHAD). The guerrillas, in turn, sought to cripple the regime by sabotaging strategic facilities, such as bridges and power plants, and by assassinating regime officials and collaborators. Western observers noted that despite long-standing rivalries between the émigré resistance groups, commanders on the battlefield possessed far greater coordination and effectiveness than in the months after

the invasion, when they fought the Soviets using traditional tribal tactics. The *mujahidiin* were learning, through costly trial and error, how to fight a modern, well-armed opponent (see Resistance Forces, ch. 5).

The Soviet invasion precipitated a crisis with serious implications for the South Asian and Middle Eastern regions. The presence of as many as 3 million Afghan refugees on Pakistani soil was a source of concern for Islamabad. Pakistan continued, however, to offer sanctuary and aid to the refugees and guerrillas based in the mountainous border region, despite repeated Soviet and Afghan army incursions into Pakistani territory. India, enjoying comparatively good relations with the PDPA regime, viewed foreign, and especially United States, military aid to Pakistan as a potential threat to itself. Principal material and moral support for the resistance came from the Arab world, the Western alliance, and China. The UN General Assembly, in resolutions passed overwhelmingly since 1980, repeatedly called for withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan.

In early 1986 UN-sponsored "proximity talks" between the foreign ministers of Afghanistan and Pakistan were continuing; the "proximity" meant that the minister did not meet face to face but negotiated through a senior UN official. Many observers believed that it was possible that procedures could be worked out that would result in the gradual withdrawal of Soviet forces and the acceptance by all parties of some form of national government of a truly neutral Afghanistan. Other observers, however, while hoping that such an agreement could be achieved, doubted that the *mujahidiin* would accept any proposal that failed to provide not only for the departure of the Soviets but also all Afghans who had collaborated with the Soviets. A central feature of the Pashtun code–Pashtunwali—is an insistence on revenge (*badal*). To one degree or another every *mujahid* has a grudge; loss of kin, loss of property, personal injury, eviction from the land of the lineage and its ancestors, torture, and related grievances not only justify acts of revenge but also make them a matter of family and personal honor. For any realistic resolution of the occupation of Afghanistan, the claims of the *mujahidiin* will have to be resolved.

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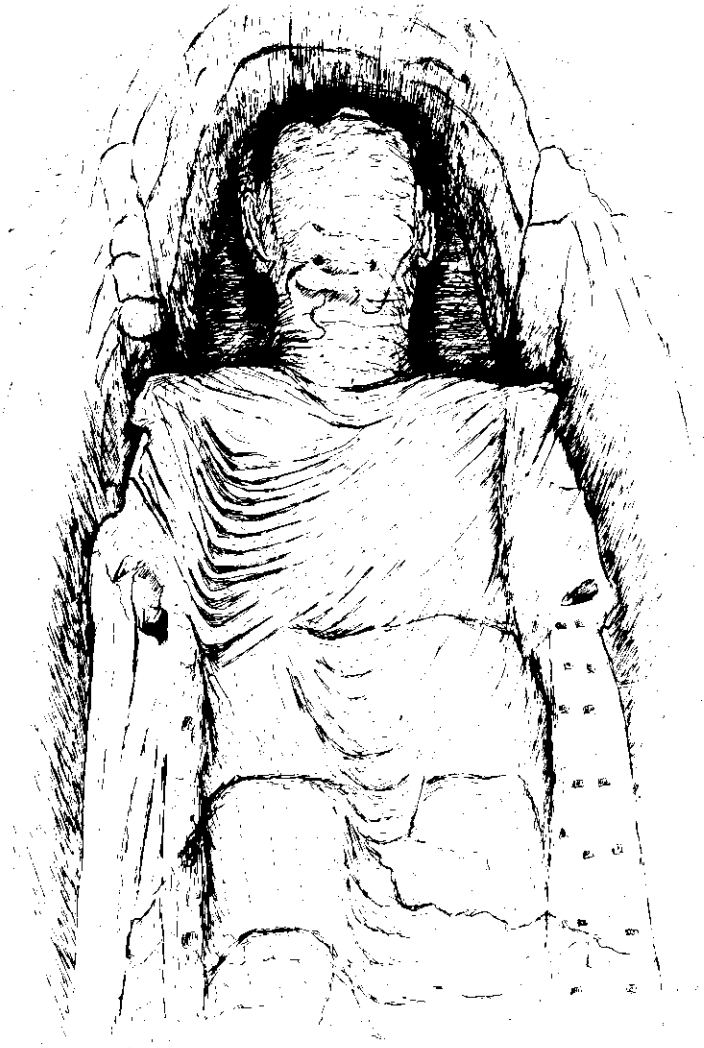
January 15, 1986

Chapter 1. Historical Setting



Statue of the Buddha, 53 meters high, carved into a sandstone cliff at Bamian in central Afghanistan; constructed around the fourth to fifth century A.D.

AFGHANISTAN'S HISTORY, its internal political development, its foreign relations, and its very existence as an independent state have been largely determined by its location at the crossroads of Central, West, and South Asia. Waves of migrating peoples poured through the region in ancient times, leaving a human residue to form a mosaic of ethnic and linguistic groups. In modern times, as well as in antiquity, great armies passed through the region, establishing at least temporary local control and often dominating Iran and northern India as well.

Although it was the scene of great empires and flourishing trade for over two millennia, Afghanistan did not become a truly independent nation until the twentieth century. For centuries a zone of conflict among strong neighboring powers, the area's heterogeneous groups were not bound into a single political entity until the reign of the brilliant Ahmad Shah Durrani, who in 1747 founded the monarchy that ruled the country until 1973. After his death, the absence of a strong successor possessed of military and political skills resulted in the temporary disintegration of the kingdom he had created, a frequent pattern in the society's history.

Just as it was the arena of conflict between the Mughal Empire of India and the Safavi Empire of Iran in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, Afghanistan in the nineteenth century lay between the expanding might of the Russian and British empires. It was in the context of this confrontation that Afghanistan in its contemporary form came into existence during the reigns of Dost Mohammad Khan and Amir Abdur Rahman Khan.

Historical patterns of the past several centuries remained relevant to the nation's situation in the mid-1980s. First, because of Afghanistan's strategic location geopolitically, great rival powers have tended to view the control of Afghanistan by a major opponent as unacceptable. Sometimes the Afghans have been able to use this circumstance to their benefit, but more often they have suffered grievously in the great power struggles. Great powers have considered Afghanistan's internal politics more as a reflection of international rivalry than as events in themselves.

A second pattern has been the inability of central governments to establish effective and permanent control over the

numerous peoples of the society. Only in response to foreign invasions or as part of a conquering army outside the country have the many diverse groups found common cause. In the more remote areas tribal warriors—particularly the Pashtuns, the largest ethnic group—have successfully resisted foreign domination for centuries. Neither the heirs of Alexander the Great nor those of Genghis Khan, Timur, or Ahmad Shah were able to subdue the tribes permanently.

A third enduring pattern in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has been the gradual extension of Russian control into Central Asia. The strategies used by the tsar's generals to subdue the khans north of the Amu Darya may have been instructive to Soviet commanders who moved across the river in 1979. The Afghans, like the Turks and Iranians, historically have had both a fear of the Soviet Union and a desire to benefit from relations with their northern neighbor.

Finally, one cannot examine Afghan history without noting the key role of Islam. Even Genghis Khan was unable to uproot Islam, and within two generations his heirs had become Muslims. Religious leaders have always played a political role and, as in many other nations, religion has served as a means of political expression. An important, if often unacknowledged, event in Afghan history that played a role in the politics of Afghanistan's neighbors and the entire region up to the present was the rise in the tenth century of a strong Sunni dynasty—the Ghaznavids—whose power prevented the eastward spread of Shiism from Iran and thereby assured that the majority of Muslims in Afghanistan and South Asia would become Sunnis.

The Pre-Islamic Period

Archaeological exploration in Afghanistan began in earnest only after World War II and proceeded promisingly until disrupted by the Soviet invasion of December 1979. Artifacts have been found that are typical of the Paleolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze, and Iron ages. It is not yet clear, however, to what extent these periods were simultaneous with similar stages of development in other areas. The area that is now Afghanistan seems in prehistory—as well as in ancient and modern times—to have been closely connected with the neighboring regions to the east, west, and north. Urban civilization in the Iranian Plateau, which includes most of Iran and

Afghanistan, may have begun as early as 3000 to 2000 B.C. About the middle of the second millennium B.C., people speaking an Indo-European language may have entered the eastern part of the Iranian Plateau, but there is little information about the area until the middle of the first millennium B.C., when its history began to be recorded under the control of the Achaemenid Empire.

Achaemenid Rule, ca. 550-331 B.C.

The area that is present-day Afghanistan comprised several satrapies (provinces) of the Achaemenid Empire at its most extensive under Darius the Great (ca. 500 B.C.). The Iranians had subdued these areas to the east with only the greatest difficulty, however, and had to keep substantial garrisons in some of the satrapies in the Hindu Kush areas (see fig. 4). Bactriana, with its capital at Bactria (which later became Balkh), was reputedly the home of Zoroaster, who founded the religion that bears his name.

By the fourth century B.C., Iranian control of outlying areas and the internal cohesion of the empire had become tenuous. Although such areas as Bactriana had always been restless under Achaemenid rule, there were Bactrian troops at the decisive Battle of Gaugamela (330 B.C.) fighting on the side of the Iranians, who were defeated by Alexander the Great.

Alexander and Greek Rule, 330-ca. 150 B.C.

It took Alexander three years, about 330-327 B.C., to subdue the areas that now make up Afghanistan and adjacent areas in the Soviet Union. Moving eastward from the area of Herat, the Macedonian leader encountered fierce resistance from local rulers who had been satraps of the Iranians. Alexander overwhelmed local resistance and even married Roxane, a daughter of the satrap of Bactriana. In 327 B.C. Alexander entered the Indian subcontinent, where the progress of his conquest was stopped only by a mutiny of his troops. Although his expedition through what is now Afghanistan was brief, he left behind a Hellenic cultural influence that lasted several centuries.

Upon Alexander's death in 323 B.C., his empire, never politically consolidated, broke apart. His cavalry commander, Seleucus, took nominal control of the eastern lands and found-

ed the Seleucid Dynasty. Under the Seleucids, as under Alexander, Greek colonists and soldiers came to the region of the Hindu Kush, and many are believed to have remained. At the same time the Mauryan Empire was developing in the northern part of the Indian subcontinent, and it managed, beginning about 30 years after Alexander's death, to take control of the southeasternmost areas of the Seleucid domains, including parts of what is now Afghanistan. The Mauryans introduced Indic culture, including Buddhism, into the area. With the Seleucids on one side and the Mauryans on the other, the people of the Hindu Kush were in what would become a familiar position in modern as well as ancient history, i.e., between two empires.

The Seleucids were unable to hold the contentious eastern area of their domain, and in the middle of the third century B.C. an independent, Greek-ruled state was declared in Bactria. With the decline of even nominal Seleucid control, the period from shortly after the death of Alexander until the middle of the second century saw a variety of Greek dynasties ruling out of Bactria. The farthest extent of Graeco-Bactrian rule came in about 170 B.C., when it included most of the territory that is now between the Iranian deserts and the Ganges River and from Central Asia to the Arabian Sea. Graeco-Bactrian rule fell prey to the internecine disputes that plagued Greek rulers to the west, to ambitious attempts to extend control into northern India, and to pressure from two groups of nomadic invaders from Central Asia—the Parthians and Sakas (perhaps the Scythians). Greek civilization left few, if any, permanent effects, whereas characteristics of Iranian civilization were accepted and retained by the peoples of the Hindu Kush.

Central Asian and Sassanian Rule, ca. 150 B.C.-700 A.D.

The third and second centuries B.C. witnessed the advent to the Iranian Plateau of nomadic people speaking Indo-European languages. The Parthians established control in most of what is now Iran as early as the middle of the third century B.C., and about 100 years later another Indo-European group—either the Sakas or the Kushans (a subgroup of the tribe called the Yueh-chih by the Chinese)—entered what is now Afghanistan and established an empire that lasted almost four centuries. The Kushans, whose empire was among the most powerful of its time, were pushed into the Hindu Kush

area by the Hsiungnu (Huns) of Central Asia, who had themselves been thwarted in their attacks on China by the powerful Han Dynasty.

The Kushan Empire spread from the valley of the Kabul River to defeat other Central Asian tribes that had conquered parts of the northern central Iranian Plateau that had been ruled by the Parthians. By the middle of the first century B.C. the Kushans controlled the area from the Indus Valley to the Gobi Desert and as far west as the central part of the Iranian Plateau. Early in the second century A.D. under Kanishka, the greatest of the Kushan rulers, the empire reached its greatest geographic extent and became a center of literature and art. Kanishka spread Kushan control to the mouth of the Indus River, into Kashmir, and into what are now the Chinese-controlled areas north of Tibet. Although details of his rule are fragmentary, Kanishka is believed to have ruled from a capital not far from present-day Peshawar, with a summer residence at Kapisa, north of what is now Kabul (see fig. 1). Kanishka was a patron of the arts and religious learning. It was during his reign that Mahayana Buddhism, brought to Northern India earlier by the Mauryan emperor Asoka (ca. 260-232 B.C.), reached its peak in Central Asia. The Kushan Empire was a center of trade, especially in silk, and the Buddhism of its rulers followed trade routes into East Asia, with which Kanishka and his successors maintained commercial relations.

In the third century A.D. Kushan control degenerated into independent kingdoms that were easy targets for conquest by the rising Iranian dynasty, the Sassanians (c. 224-561 A.D.). Although the Sassanians conquered as far east as the Punjab, by the middle of the third century most of the kingdoms that were fragments of the Kushan Empire were in practice semi-independent. These small kingdoms were pressed not only by the Sassanians from the west but also from the Indian subcontinent by the growing strength of the Guptas, a dynasty established in northern and central India as early as the beginning of the fourth century.

The disunited Kushan and Sassanian kingdoms were in a bad position to meet the threat of a new wave of nomadic, Indo-European invaders from the north. The Hepthalites (or White Huns) swept out of Central Asia in the fourth or fifth century into Bactria and the areas to the south, overwhelming the last of the Kushan-Sassanian kingdoms. Although little is known of these people—as is the case with most of the pre-Islamic, Central Asian invaders of the Hindu Kush area—it is

believed that their control lasted about a century and was marked by constant warfare with the Sassanians to the west.

By the middle of the sixth century, at the latest, the Hepthalites were defeated in the territories north of the Amu Darya (in present-day Soviet Union) by another group of Central Asian nomads, the Western Turks, and by the resurgent Sassanians in the lands south of the Amu Darya (frequently cited in old texts as the Oxus River). Up to the advent of Islam, the lands of the Hindu Kush were dominated up to the Amu Darya by small kingdoms under general Sassanian overlordship but with local rulers who were Kushan or Hepthalite.

In the mid-seventh century, in the last years before the end of Buddhist and Zoroastrian cultures in the area, a Chinese pilgrim, Hsuan Tsang, passed through Balkh to India. Historian W. Kerr Fraser-Tytler recounts Hsuan Tsang's findings:

> He found in the north a Turkish ruler . . . a devout Buddhist who treated his revered guest with kindness and sent him to visit Balkh before starting on his difficult journey across the mountains. At Balkh Hsuan Tsang found that, in spite of the ravages of the Ephthalites, there were still a hundred monasteries in and around a city lying amid fertile lands and valleys, where today there is only desolation and arid waste. He crossed the Hindu Kush and . . . reached Bamiyan, at that time a flourishing community, including ten monasteries in that high beautiful valley in the heart of the mountains through which all the caravans from China passed on their journey down to India . . . He reached Kapisa . . . and there found a Turkish (or Ephthalite) ruler whose dominion extended as far as the Indus and who, commanding as he did the main trade routes to India, was of sufficient importance to send a present of horses, for which the country was then famous, to the Son of Heaven, the Emperor T'ai-tsung, and to receive presents in exchange. Thence the pilgrim passed . . . into India, noting . . . the contrast between the fierce tribesmen of the mountains and the more effeminate Indians of the lower valleys.

Of this great Buddhist culture and earlier Zoroastrian civilization there remain few, if any, traces in the life of the people of Afghanistan. On the ancient trade routes, however, there are still stone monuments of Buddhist culture. Two great sandstone Buddhas, 35 and 53 meters high and dating from the third and fifth centuries A.D., overlook the ancient route through Bamian to Balkh. In this area and other spots within what is now Afghanistan, archaeologists have found frescoes, stucco decorations, statuary, and rare objects from China, Rome, and Phoenicia that were made as early as the second century A.D. and that bear witness to the richness of the ancient civilizations of the area.

Islamic Conquest

In 637 A.D., only five years after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, the Arab Muslims shattered the might of the Iranian Sassanians at the battle of Qadisiya, and the invaders began to reach into the lands east of Iran. The Muslim conquest was a prolonged struggle in the area that is now Afghanistan. Following the first Arab raid into Qandahar in about 700, local rulers, probably either Kushans or Western Turks, began to come under the control of Ummayid caliphs, who sent Arab military governors and tax collectors into the region. By the middle of the eighth century the rising Abbasid Dynasty was able to subdue the area. There was a period of peace under the rule of the caliph, Harun al Rashid (785-809), and his son, in which learning fluorished in such Central Asian cities as Samarkand, located in what is now the Soviet Union. Over the period of the seventh through the ninth centuries, most inhabitants of what is now Afghanistan, Pakistan, the southern parts of the Soviet Union, and some of northern India were converted to Sunni (see Glossary) Islam, which replaced the Zorastrianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and indigenous religions of previous empires (see Religion, ch. 2).

During the eighth and ninth centuries, partly to obtain better grazing land, ancestors of many of the Turkic-speaking groups now identifiable in Afghanistan settled in the Hindu Kush area. Some of these tribes settled in what are now Ghor, Ghazni, and Kabul provinces and began to assimilate much of the culture and language of the already present Pashtun (see Glossary) tribes (see Tribe, ch. 2).

By the middle of the ninth century, Abbasid rule had faltered, and semi-independent states began to emerge throughout the empire. In the Hindu Kush area three short-lived, local dynasties emerged. The best known of the three, the Sammanid, ruling out of Bukhara (in what is now the Soviet Union), extended its rule briefly as far east as India and west into Iran. Bukhara and neighboring Samarkand were centers of science, the arts, and Islamic studies. Although Arab Muslim intellectual life still centered on Baghdad, Iranian Muslim scholarship, i.e., Shia (see Glossary) Islam, at this time predominated in the Sammanid areas. By the mid-tenth century the Sammanid Dynasty crumbled in the face of attack from the Turkish tribes to the north and from a rising dynasty to the south, the Ghaznavids.

Ghaznavid and Ghorid Rule

Out of the Sammanid Dynasty came the first great Islamic empire in Afghanistan, the Ghaznavid, whose warriors raided deep into the Indian subcontinent and at the same time assured the domination of Sunni Islam in what is now Afghanistan, Pakistan, and parts of India. In the middle of the tenth century Alptigin, a Turkish slave warrior of the Sammanid garrison in Nishapur (in present-day Iran) failed in a coup attempt against his masters and fled with his followers to Ghazni, which became the capital of the empire ruled by his successors. The most renowned among them was Mahmud, who consolidated control over the areas south of the Amu Darya, then carried out devastating raids into India, looting Hindu temples and seeking converts to Islam. With his booty from India he built a great capital at Ghazni, founded universities, and patronized scholars, such as historians Al Biruni and Al Utbi, and the poet Firdawsi. Mahmud was recognized by the caliph in Baghdad as the temporal heir of the Sammanids. By the time of his death, Mahmud ruled all the Hindu Kush area and as far east as the Punjab, as well as territories well north of the Amu Darya.

As occurred so often in this region, the death of the military genius who extended the empire to its farthest extent was the death knell of the empire itself. Mahmud died in 1130, and the Seljuk Turks, also Muslims by this time, attacked the Ghaznavid empire from the north and west, while the rulers of the kingdom of Ghor, southeast of Herat, captured and burnt Ghazni, just as the Ghaznavids had once conquered Ghor. Not until 1186, however, was the last representative of the Ghaznavid Dynasty uprooted by the Ghorids from his holdout in the Punjab.

By 1200 Turkish dynasties were in power in all of the easternmost areas of the Abbasid empire, whose caliph was, by this time, a ruler in name only. The Ghorids controlled most of what is now Afghanistan, eastern Iran, and Pakistan, while parts of central and western Iran were ruled by Seljuk Turks (who would eventually sweep all the way to what is now Turkey). Around 1200 most Ghorid lands came into the hands of the Khwarazm Turks, who had invaded from Central Asia across the Amu Darya.

Mongol Rule, 1220–1506

In 1220 the Islamic lands of Central Asia were overrun by the armies of a Mongol invader, whom scholar Louis Dupree

describes as "the atom bomb of his day" because of his widespread destruction of cities and people. Genghis Khan (ca. 1155–1227) laid waste to many civilizations and created an empire that stretched from China to the Caspian Sea, but he failed to destroy the strength of Islam in Central Asia. By the end of the thirteenth century, Genghis Khan's descendants were themselves Muslims.

In south central Asia the Mongols destroyed the Buddhist monuments and buildings in the ancient trading city of Balkh and sacked Herat, the old Buddhist centers in the Bamian valley, and Peshawar. The European traveler, Marco Polo, traveling to the court of Genghis Khan's grandson toward the end of the thirteenth century, reported that Balkh was still a noble city, though ravaged. Sixty or more years later Ibn Batuta, a Moorish traveler, found Balkh destroyed and the cities that were probably Kapisa and Ghazni much diminished by the depredations of the invaders. Unlike other invaders before and after them, the Mongols never attempted to extend their control to India, although they conducted raids into the northern part of the subcontinent. From the death of Genghis Khan in 1227 until the rise of Timur (Tamerlane) in the 1380s, Central Asia went through a period of fragmentation. Although there were 11 Mongol rulers in the area during this period, a Tajik dynasty—the Karts—came to power in Herat and ruled almost independently until Timur destroyed their power in 1381.

Timur was of both Turkish and Mongol descent and claimed Genghis Khan as an ancestor. From his capital of Samarkand, Timur created an empire that by the late fourteenth century extended from India to Turkey. In 1398 he invaded India and plundered Delhi with a ferocity that matched that of Genghis Khan or Mahmud of Ghazni. His successors, however, became supporters of Islamic art, culture, and the sciences. A grandson of Timur built an observatory outside of Samarkand, and under the rule of the last of Timur's successors in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, artists—like the poet Jami and the artist Behzad—and scholars flourished under royal patronage in the capital at Herat. The end of the Timurid Empire came around the turn of the sixteenth century when another Mongol-Turkish ruler overwhelmed the vitiated Timurid ruler in Herat. Muhammad Shaybani (also a descendant of Genghis Khan) and his successors ruled the area around the Amu Darya for about a century, but in the south and west

of what is now Afghanistan two powerful dynasties began to compete for influence.

Mughal-Safavid Rivalry, ca. 1500–1747

Early in the sixteenth century Babur, who was descended from Timur on his father's side and Genghis Khan on his mother's, was driven out of his father's kingdom in Ferghana (now in the Soviet Union) by the Shaybani Uzbeks who had taken Samarkand from the Timurids. After several attempts to regain Ferghana and Samarkand, Babur crossed the Amu Darya and captured Kabul from the last of its Mongol rulers. In an invasion of India in 1526, Babur's army of 12,000 defeated a less mobile force of 100,000 at the First Battle of Panipat, about 45 kilometers northwest of Delhi. Although the seat of the great Mughal Empire that Babur founded was in India, in his memoirs he stressed his love for Kabul, which was not only a commercial and strategic center but also a beautiful highland city with a climate that Babur's memoirs call "extremely delightful."

Although Mughal rule lasted technically until the nineteenth century in India, its days of power were from 1526 until the death in 1707 of Babur's great-great-grandson, Aurangzeb. Although the Mughals came originally from Central Asia, once they had taken India the area that is now Afghanistan became only an outpost of the empire. Indeed, most of the Hindu Kush area during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was a major bone of contention between the Mughals of India on the one hand and the powerful Safavi Dynasty of Iran on the other. Just as Kabul commands the high road from Central Asia into India, Qandahar commands the only approach to the Indian subcontinent that skirts the Hindu Kush. The strategically important Kabul-Qandahar axis was the main area of competition between the Mughals and Safavis, and Qandahar itself changed hands many times during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Safavis and the Mughals were not the only contenders, however. Less powerful but closer at hand were the Uzbeks of Central Asia, who contended for control of Herat and the northern regions where neither the Mughals nor the Safavis were powerful.

The Mughals desired not only to block the historic western invasion routes into India but also to control the fiercely independent tribes who accepted only nominal control from Delhi in their mountain strongholds between the Kabul-Qandahar

axis and the Indus River—especially in the Pashtun area of the Suleiman mountain range. As the area around Qandahar shifted back and forth between the two great empires on either side, the local Pashtun tribes were able to exploit the situation to their advantage, extracting concessions from both sides. By the middle of the seventeenth century the Mughals had abandoned the Hindu Kush north of Kabul to the Uzbeks, and in 1748 they lost Qandahar to the Safavis for the third and last time.

Toward the end of the seventeenth century, as the power of both the Safavis and the Mughals waned, new groups began to assert themselves in the Hindu Kush area, beginning in 1667 with a Pakhtun tribe, the Yusufzais. Although the tribal revolts were successful, they were not linked, and there was no hint of unified action by their leaders. Early in the eighteenth century one of the Pashtun tribes, the Hotaki, took Qandahar from the Safavis, and a group of Ghilzai Pashtuns made even greater inroads into Safavi territory. The Ghilzai Pashtuns even managed to hold briefly the Safavi capital of Isfahan, and two members of this tribe ascended the throne before the Ghilzai were evicted from Iran by a man who became one of the great conquerers of his time, Nadir Shah.

Qandahar and Kabul were conquered in 1738 by Nadir Shah, who was called the Napoleon of Persia. He defeated a great Mughal army in India, plundered Delhi, and massacred thousands of its people. He returned home with vast treasures, including the Peacock Throne, which served as a symbol of Iranian imperial might almost to the end of the twentieth century.

The peoples of the Hindu Kush region fought fiercely, and during the battles the usually hostile Pashtun tribes banded together to face a common enemy. After defeating the tribes Nadir Shah displaced some of them from their homelands. The present location of some Pashtun tribes results from Nadir Shah's efforts to disperse an enemy of which he was both admiring and wary.

Ahmad Shah and the Durrani Empire

From the death of Nadir Shah in 1747 until the communist coup of April 1978, Afghanistan was governed—at least nominally—by Pashtun rulers of the Abdali tribe. Indeed, it was under the leadership of the first Pashtun ruler, Ahmad Shah,

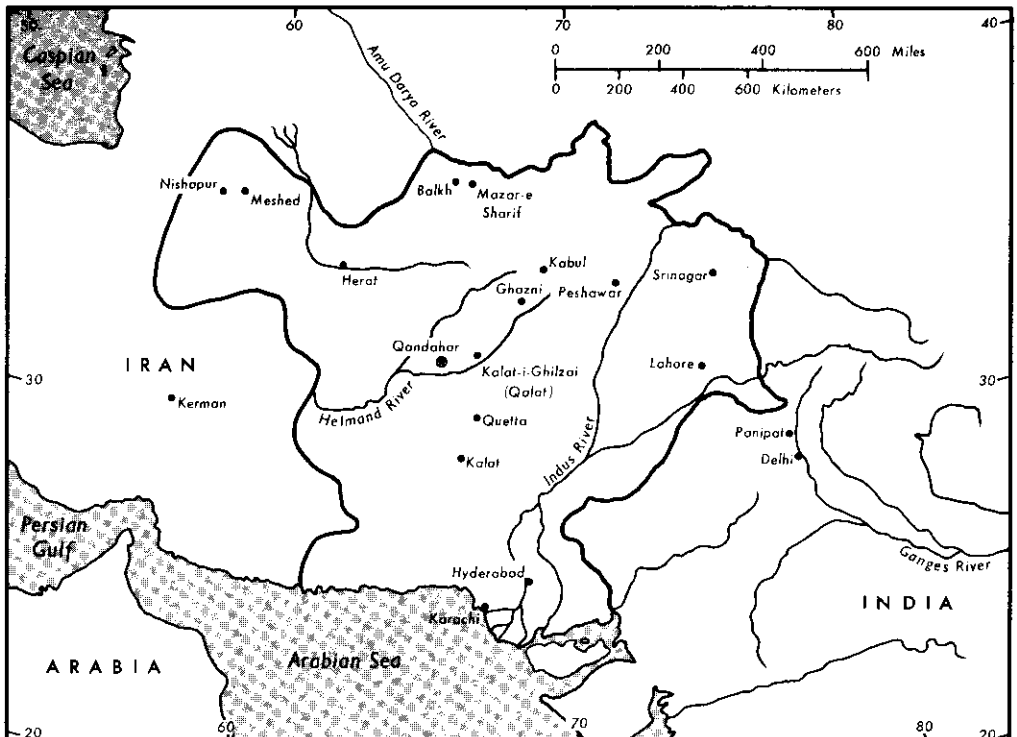
that the nation of Afghanistan began to take shape after centuries of fragmentation and rule by invaders. Even before the death of Nadir Shah, the tribes of the Hindu Kush area had been growing stronger and were beginning to take advantage of the waning power of their distant rulers.

The Ghilzai Pashtuns had risen in rebellion against Iranian rule early in the eighteenth century, but they had been subdued and relocated by Nadir Shah. Although tribal independence would remain a threat to rulers of Afghanistan, the Abdali Pashtun established political dominance, starting in the middle of the eighteenth century with the rise of Ahmad Shah. Two lineage groups within the Abdali ruled Afghanistan from 1747 until the downfall of the monarchy in the 1970s—the Sadozai of the Popalzai tribe and the Muhammadzai of the Barakzai tribe.

Although the names of Timur, Genghis Khan, and Mahmud of Ghazni are well-known for the destruction they wrought in South and Central Asia, the name of the founder of the Afghan nation-state is relatively unknown to Westerners, though Ahmad Shah created an Afghan empire that, at its largest in the 1760s, extended from Central Asia to Delhi and from Kashmir to the Arabian Sea (see fig. 2). There have been greater conquerers in the region before and since Ahmad Shah, but never before his reign and rarely since has there been a ruler of this fragmented area capable not only of subduing the truculent Afghan tribes but also of pulling them together into a nation.

Ahmad was the second son of the chief of the Sadozai, which although small was the most honored of the Abdali lineages. Along with his brother, he had risen in rebellion against Nadir Shah and had been jailed by the Ghilzai in Qandahar. Finally released by Nadir Shah in 1738 when he took the city from the Ghilzai, Ahmad rose in the personal service of the Iranian monarch to the post of commander of an elite body of Afghan cavalry. When Nadir Shah, who had become vicious and capricious in his later years, was killed by a group of dissident officers, Ahmad and some 4,000 of his cavalrymen escaped with the treasury Nadir Shah always carried with him for payments and bribes en route.

Ahmad and his Abdali horsemen rode past Herat and southeastward, joining the chiefs of the Abdali tribes and clans at a shrine near Qandahar to choose a paramount chief. Although his rivals for the post included Haji Jamal Khan—chief of the Muhammadzai, chief branch of the Barakzai, which



Source: Based on information from Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan*, Princeton, 1973, 320.

Figure 2. Ahmad Shah Durrani's Empire, 1762

would be the other royal branch of the Abdali—and although only 23, Ahmad was finally chosen after more than a week of discussion and debate.

Despite being younger than other claimants, Ahmad had several factors in his favor. He was a direct descendant of Sado, eponym of the Sadozai; he was unquestionably a charismatic leader and seasoned warrior, who had at his disposal a trained, mobile force of several thousand cavalrymen; and he had part of Nadir Shah's treasury in his possession. In addition, the other chiefs may have preferred someone from a small tribe who would always need the support of the larger groups to rule effectively.

One of Ahmad's first acts as chief was to adopt the title "Durr-i-Durran" (meaning "pearl of pearls" or "pearl of the age"), whether because of a dream or because of the pearl earrings worn by the royal guard of Nadir Shah. The Abdali Pashtuns were known thereafter as the Durrani.

Ahmad's rise was owing not only to his personality and talents but also to extraordinary luck. His reign coincided with the deterioration of the empires on both sides of Afghanistan—the Mughals to the southeast and the Safavis to the west. Even his first days as paramount chief were blessed with good fortune. Just before arriving in Qandahar, where some resistance was expected, Ahmad encountered a caravan bound for the Iranian court laden with treasure. The new ruler seized it, used it to pay his cavalry and to bribe hostile chiefs, and invited its Qizilbash (Turkmen Shia who served as palace guards for many Afghan and Iranian rulers) escort to join his service.

Ahmad Shah began by taking Ghazni from the Ghilzai Pashtuns and then wrested Kabul from a local ruler. In 1749 the Mughal ruler, to save his capital from Afghan attack, ceded to Ahmad Shah sovereignty over Sind province and over the areas of northern India west of the Indus. He returned to his headquarters in Qandahar to put down one of an endless series of tribal uprisings and then set out westward to take Herat, which was ruled by Nadir Shah's grandson, Shah Rukh. Herat fell to Ahmad after almost a year of bloody siege and conflict, as did also Meshed (in present-day Iran). Ahmad left Shah Rukh, a 16-year-old who had previously been blinded by a rival, to rule the eastern Iranian province of Khorasan for him. At Nishapur, Ahmad was temporarily halted, but the following spring he struck again, this time employing a cannon that fired a 500-pound projectile. Although the cannon exploded on its first shot, Ahmad Shah's determination and the effect of the

huge missile convinced the local rulers that they should surrender. Before returning to Herat, Ahmad's troops plundered the city and massacred much of the population.

Stopping by Meshed to remind the rebellious Shah Rukh of his subservient position, Ahmad next sent an army to subdue the areas north of the Hindu Kush. In short order the army brought under control the Turkmen, Uzbek, Tajik, and Hazara tribes of northern Afghanistan. Ahmad invaded India a third, and then a fourth, time, taking control of the Punjab, Kashmir, and the city of Lahore. Early in 1757 he sacked Delhi, but he permitted the attenuated Mughal Dynasty to remain in nominal control as long as the ruler acknowledged Ahmad's suzerainty over the Punjab, Sind, and Kashmir. Leaving his second son Timur (whom Ahmad married to a Mughal princess) in charge, Ahmad left India to return to Afghanistan. Like Babur, he preferred his homeland to any of his other domains. Dupree quotes an Afghan writer's translation of one of Ahmad Shah's poems:

> Whatever countries I conquer in the world, I would never forget your beautiful gardens. When I remember the summits of your beautiful mountains I forget the greatness of the Delhi throne.

The collapse of Mughal control in India, however, also facilitated the rise of rulers other than Ahmad Shah. In the Punjab the Sikhs were becoming a potent force, and from their capital at Poona the Marathas, who were Hindus, controlled much of western and central India and were beginning to look northward to the decaying Mughal empire, which Ahmad Shah now claimed by conquest. After Ahmad returned to Qandahar in 1757, he was faced not only with uprisings in Baluch areas and in Herat but also with attacks by the Marathas on his domains in India, which succeeded in ousting Timur and his court. Herat was quickly brought under control, and the Baluch revolt was quelled by a combination of siege and compromise, but the campaign against the Marathas was a more substantial operation.

Ahmad called for Islamic holy war against the Marathas, and warriors from the various Pashtun tribes, as well as other tribes such as the Baluch, answered his call. Early skirmishes ended in victory for the Afghans, and by 1759 Ahmad and his army had reached Lahore. By 1760 the Maratha groups had coalesced into a great army. Once again Panipat was the scene of a historical confrontation between two contenders for con-

trol of northern India. This time the battle was between Muslim and Hindu armies, numbering as many as 100,000 troops each, who fought along a 12-kilometer front. Although he decisively defeated the Marathas, Ahmad Shah was not left in peaceful control of his domains because of other challenges to the ailing monarch in his last years. Moreover, the ultimate effect of the 1761 Battle of Panipat may have had detrimental effects on the rule of Ahmad Shah's descendants; by thwarting the consolidation of Maratha power in northern and central India, the battle may have set the stage for the rise of both Sikh and British power in the region.

The victory at Panipat was the high point of Ahmad Shah's—and Afghan—power. Afterward, even before his death, the empire began to unravel. Ahmad Shah was less fit to cope with insurrection because he suffered from severe ulceration of the face, an ailment that was probably cancer. Even before the end of 1761 the Sikhs had risen and taken control of much of the Punjab. In 1762 Ahmad Shah crossed the passes from Afghanistan for the sixth time to subdue the Sikhs. He assaulted Lahore, and when he had taken the Sikh holy city of Amritsar, he massacred thousands of its Sikh inhabitants, destroyed their temples, and desecrated their holy places with cow blood.

The Sikhs rebelled again within two years, but Ahmad Shah's efforts to put down the uprising of 1764 were not as successful. Again in 1767 he crossed the mountain passes. Although much harassed by Sikh guerrilla warfare, Ahmad Shah took Lahore and again laid waste to Amritsar, killing many of its inhabitants. After this attempt Ahmad Shah tried two more times to subjugate the Sikhs permanently, but he failed. By the time of his death, he had lost all but nominal control of the Punjab to the Sikhs, who remained in control until defeated by the British in 1849.

It was not only the fierce Sikhs who rebelled against the rule of Ahmad Shah. His empire was being seriously eroded in other areas as well. Ahmad Shah's Indian domains refused to pay homage, and other regions simply declared their independence. The amir (ruler) of Bukhara claimed some of the northern provinces, and Ahmad Shah reached an agreement with him to accept the Amu Darya as the border between them. Three years before his death, Ahmad Shah had to put down a revolt in Khorasan.

In 1772 Ahmad Shah retired to his home, the mountains east of Qandahar, where he died. He was buried in Qandahar,

where his epitaph, recalling his early connection with the Iranian monarchy, calls him a ruler equal to Emperor Cyrus. Despite his relentless military attacks and his massacres of Sikhs and others in imperial warfare, he is known in Afghan history as Ahmad Shah Baba, or "father." Although confusion reigned after his death, Ahmad Shah was clearly the creator of the nation of Afghanistan. As scholar Leon B. Poullada notes, the loyalty of the Afghan tribes was not transferred from their own leaders and kin to the concept of nation, but Ahmad Shah succeeded to a remarkable degree in balancing tribal alliances and hostilities and in directing tribal energies away from rebellion into his frequent foreign excursions. He certainly enjoyed extraordinarily good luck, but he was clever in exploiting his good fortune, and he showed exemplary intelligence in dealing with his own people. Having started his rule as merely the paramount chief of the Durrani, Ahmad Shah never sought to rule the Pashtuns by force. He reigned in consultation with a council of eight or nine sirdars (or sardars), the most powerful Durrani Pashtuns, each of whom was responsible for his own group. He sought the advice of his council on all major issues. Although he favored the Durrani, and especially his own lineage, the Sadozai, he was conciliatory to the other Pashtun chiefs as well. Ahmad Shah's successors were not so wise, and the nation he had built almost collapsed because of their misrule and the intratribal rivalry that they could not manage.

By the time of Ahmad Shah, the Pashtuns included many groups whose greatest single common characteristic was their Pashtu language. Their origins were obscure; most were believed to have descended from ancient Aryan tribes, but some, such as the Ghilzai, may have been Turks. To the east, the Waziris and their close relatives, the Mahsuds, have been located in the hills of the central Suleiman Range since the fourteenth century. By the end of the sixteenth century and the final Turkish-Mongol invasions, tribes such as the Shinwaris, Yusufzais, and the Mohmands had moved from the upper Kabul River Valley into the valleys and plains west, north, and northeast of Peshawar, and the Afridis had long been established in the hills and mountain ranges south of Khyber Pass. By the end of the eighteenth century the Durranis had blanketed the area west and north of Qandahar.

Successors of Ahmad Shah

Ahmad Shah's successors presided incompetently over a

period of unrest so marked that within half a century of Ahmad Shah's death, Afghanistan was embroiled in civil war. Many of the territories conquered by the military skill of Ahmad Shah fell to others in the 50 years following his death. Sind was virtually independent by 1786; much of northern Afghanistan was controlled by semi-independent khans by 1800; Baluchistan, virtually independent by the 1790s, was annexed by the Sikhs in 1818; and the nominal control of the Punjab was lost to the Sikhs in 1818 and Kashmir to them the following year. By 1818 the Sadozai rulers who succeeded Ahmad Shah controlled little more than Kabul and the territory within a 160-kilometer radius. They not only lost the outlying territories but also alienated the other tribes and lineage groups among the Durrani Pashtuns.

Timur Shah, Ahmad's second son and designated heir, still formally turned to the other Durrani sirdars for advice (especially the chief of the powerful Muhammadzai, Painda Khan), but in other ways he alienated his fellow Pashtuns. Although there were only two major internal rebellions in the 20 years of Timur's reign, his turn away from the council of Durrani advisers to the Qizilbash guards began a process of alienation of the Sadozai rulers from their Pashtun subjects. Although Timur's reign was relatively uneventful by Afghan standards of the day and although the Durrani Empire still included (at least nominally) all of the Hindu Kush area and much of northern India, Baluchistan, and Iranian Khorasan, the seeds of the downfall of the dynasty had been sown. Ahmad Shah had involved his heir in a number of dynastic marriages, and when Timur died suddenly in 1793, he left 36 legitimate children, of whom over 20 were sons. He had failed to designate an heir, and all his sons claimed the throne.

The three strongest contenders were the governors of Qandahar, Herat, and Kabul, although the latter, Muhammad Zeman, was in the most commanding position. When Painda Khan, who had been Timur's adviser and was the chief of the Muhammadzai clan, came to Zeman's support, his accession to the throne was assured. Zeman, Timur's fifth son, became shah at the age of 23; his half-brothers accepted this only by force majeure, having been imprisoned upon their arrival in the capital to elect a shah. The quarrels among Timur's descendants threw Afghanistan into turmoil and provided the pretext for the intervention of outside forces in the country for the first time since its unification under Ahmad Shah in 1747.

The efforts of the Sadozai heirs of Timur to impose a true

monarchy on the truculent Pashtun tribes and to rule absolutely and without the advice of the other (larger) Pashtun tribes' leaders were ultimately unsuccessful. The accession of Zeman was the beginning of a long quarrel that ended with the deposition of the Sadozai by the Muhammadzai, who were of the largest and most powerful lineage of the Barakzai. Zeman's reign lasted only seven tumultuous years. Zeman's half-brothers rose in revolt every time he left Kabul to subdue a rebellion in an outlying area. The Sikhs were particularly troublesome and, after several unsuccessful efforts to subdue them, Zeman made the mistake of appointing a forceful young Sikh chief, Ranjit Singh, as his governor in the Punjab. Ranjit Singh became an implacable enemy of Pashtun rulers in Afghanistan.

Zeman's downfall was triggered by his attempts to consolidate power. Although it had been through the support of the Muhammadzai chief, Painda Khan, that Zeman had come to the throne instead of his brothers, Zeman began removing prominent Muhammadzai leaders from positions of power and replacing them with men of his own lineage, the Sadozai. This upset the delicate balance of Durrani tribal politics that had been established by Ahmad Shah and may have prompted Painda Khan and other Durrani chiefs to plot against the shah. Although it is uncertain whether such a plot existed or not, Zeman moved against the tribal leaders, executing Painda Khan and the chiefs of two other Durrani clans (the Nurzai and the Alizai), as well as the chief of the Qizilbash. This was an act of foolhardiness for a ruler who reigned not by reason of his tribe's size and power but by its royal antecedents and by the consent of the other Durrani chiefs. Painda Khan's son fled to Iran and offered the substantial support of his Muhammadzai followers to a rival claimant to the throne, Zeman's older brother, Mahmud. The tribes of the other chiefs who had been executed by Zeman joined the rebels, and they took Qandahar without bloodshed. The shah was blinded and imprisoned, but he escaped to spend the rest of his life as a pensioner of the British in India.

The overthrow of Zeman in 1800 was not the end of civil strife in Afghanistan; it was the beginning of even greater violence. Shah Mahmud lasted only three years before being replaced by yet another of Timur Shah's sons, Shuja, who ruled for six years, from 1803 to 1809. Only a few weeks after signing an agreement with the British in 1809, Shuja was deposed by his predecessor, Mahmud, whose second reign lasted nine years, until 1818.

Mahmud's downfall in 1818 was certainly the result of his foolish behavior. He had returned to the throne again only as a result of the support of Painda Khan's son, Fateh Khan, now chief of the Muhammadzai and the most powerful chief among the Durrani Pashtuns. Fateh Khan was an able administrator, and some semblance of normal life returned to parts of Afghanistan during this period. He appointed his brothers to important posts all over the country and to some of the remaining outside provinces. While defending Herat against an Iranian assault, Fateh Khan arrested the governor of the city. A serious breach of custom occurred when he sent his younger brother, Dost Mohammad Khan, into the deposed governor's harem, where he snatched a jeweled girdle from a woman who was the daughter of Mahmud. When news of this reached Mahmud's heir, Kamran, who already resented the power of Fateh Khan and his brothers, the young man urged his father to act against the powerful Muhammadzai chief. Fateh Khan was seized and blinded. His 20 brothers, most of whom were in important posts all over Afghanistan, led the Muhammadzai in rebellion. Fateh Khan's youngest brother, Dost Mohammad, whose mother had been a Qizilbash, persuaded his mother's tribesmen in Kabul to join him in removing all of the shah's followers from Kabul. Mahmud and his followers took refuge in Herat.

For eight years, from 1818 until the ascendancy of Dost Mohammad in 1826, chaos reigned in the domains of Ahmad Shah's Afghanistan while various sons of Painda Khan struggled among themselves for supremacy. Afghanistan ceased to exist as a single nation, disintegrating temporarily into a group of small units, each ruled by a different Durrani leader. Mahmud and Kamran controlled Herat, where they later acknowledged the sovereignty of the Iranian monarch. Mahmud died in 1829, and his heir, Kamran, ruled the city until he was assassinated in 1842. Different sons of the dead Painda Khan controlled Kabul, Qandahar, Kashmir, and Peshawar.

The Rise of Dost Mohammad and the Beginning of the Great Game

It was not until 1826 that the energetic Dost Mohammad was able to exert sufficient control over his own brothers to take over the throne in Kabul, where he proclaimed himself amir, not shah. Although the British had begun to show interest in Afghanistan as early as 1809 with their agreement with Shuja, it was not until the reign of Dost Mohammad, the first of

the Muhammadzai rulers, that the opening gambits were played in what came to be known as the Great Game. The Great Game involved not only the confrontation of two great empires whose spheres of influence moved steadily closer to one another until they met in Afghanistan, but also the repeated attempts by a foreign power to impose a puppet government in Kabul. The remainder of the nineteenth century was a time of European involvement in Afghanistan and the adjacent areas and of conflicting ambitions among the various local rulers.

Dost Mohammad achieved predominance among his ambitious brothers through clever use of the support of his mother's Qizilbash tribesmen and his own youthful apprenticeship under his brother, Fateh Khan. He was, by all accounts, a shrewd and charming leader. Many problems demanded his attention: consolidating his power in the areas under his command, controlling his half-brothers who ruled the southern areas of Afghanistan, defeating Mahmud in Herat, and repulsing the encroachment of the Sikhs on the Pashtun areas east of the Khyber Pass. After working assiduously to establish control and stability in his domains around Kabul, the amir next chose to confront the Sikhs.

In 1834 Dost Mohammad defeated an invasion by ex-shah Shuja, but his absence from Kabul gave the Sikhs the opportunity to expand westward. The forces of Ranjit Singh occupied Peshawar and moved from there into territory ruled directly by Kabul. In 1836 Dost Mohammad's forces, under the command of his son, defeated the Sikhs at Jamrud, a post some 15 kilometers west of Peshawar. The Afghan leader, however, did not follow up this triumph by retaking Peshawar. Instead, Dost Mohammad decided to contact the British directly for help in dealing with the Sikhs. In the spring of 1836 he wrote the new governor general of India, Lord Auckland, a letter of congratulations and asked his advice on dealing with the Sikhs. Just as Dost Mohammad's letter formally set the stage for British intervention in Afghanistan, so also did Lord Auckland's reply foreshadow the duplicitous policy of the British in dealing with the Afghans. Auckland responded that he would send a commercial mission to Kabul and stated that "it is not the practice of the British Government to interfere with the affairs of other independent states." In fact, at the heart of the Great Game lay the willingness of Britain and Russia to subdue, subvert, or subjugate the small independent states that lay between them.

The British—through the East India Company—had first

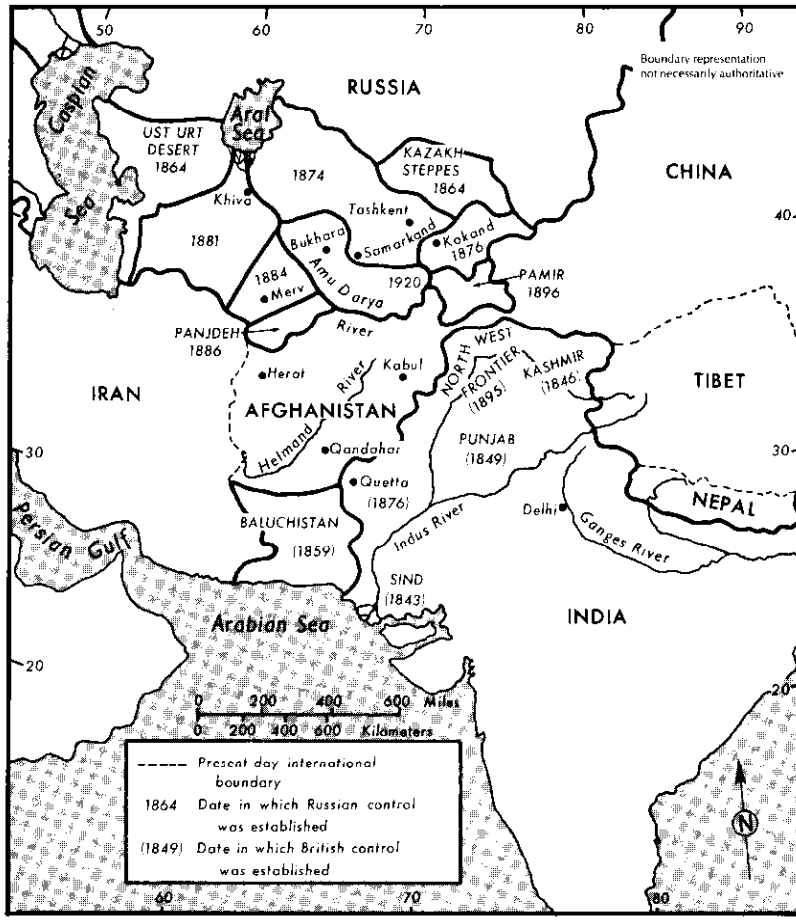
become involved in the subcontinent of India in 1612 during the heyday of the Mughal Empire. British influence spread until, by the end of the eighteenth century, their interests in northern India impinged on Central Asia. Although by that time the empire of Ahmad Shah Durrani was already disintegrating, the British were well aware of his exploits in northern India only four decades before, and they feared what they thought was a formidable Afghan force. By the end of the eighteenth century the British had approached the Iranians, asking that they keep the Afghans in check. By the last years of the eighteenth century, a new worry motivated the British in the region—fear of French involvement. Napoleon was, in the British view, capable of overrunning areas of Central Asia and northern India, just as he had defeated much of Europe. In 1801 the British signed an agreement with Iran not only to halt any possible Afghan moves into India by attacking their western flank but also to prevent the French from doing the same thing. In 1807 Napoleon signed with the tsar of Russia the Treaty of Tilsit, which envisaged a joint invasion of India though Iran. The British hastened to cement their relationship with the Iranians and signed an agreement with Shuja in 1809, only a few weeks before he was deposed.

The debacle of the Afghan civil war left a vacuum in the Hindu Kush area that concerned the British, who were well aware of the many times this area had been the invasion route to India. In the first decades of the nineteenth century it became clear to the British that the major threat to their interests in India would not come from the fragmented Afghan empire, the vitiated Persians, or from the French, but from the Russians, who had begun a steady advance southward from the Caucasus.

As in earlier times, two great empires confronted each other, with Central Asia lying between them. The Russians feared permanent British encroachment into Central Asia as the British moved northward, taking control of the Punjab, Sind, and Kashmir. Equally suspicious, the British viewed Russian absorption of the Caucasus and Georgia, Kirghiz and Turkmen lands, and Khiva and Bukhara as a threat to British interest in the Indian subcontinent (see fig. 3).

Background to the First Anglo-Afghan War

Historians are unanimous in condemning the stupidity of Auckland's policies, which led to the British invasion of Af-



Source: Based on information from Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan*, Princeton, 1973, 342; and W. Kerr Fraser-Tytler, *Afghanistan: A Study of Political Developments in Central and Southern Asia*, New York, 1967, 128.

Figure 3. British and Russian Advances Toward Afghanistan in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries

ghanistan in 1838. The governor general sent to Kabul a young official of the East India Company, Alexander Burnes, without investing him with appropriate negotiating powers and without heeding the sensible advice that Burnes sent back. Auckland ignored not only the advice of Burnes but also that of other advisers on his staff, and the First Anglo-Afghan War, unlike most other military adventures of imperial Britain in the nineteenth century, was unpopular with many journalists and prominent officials in London.

In addition to the general rivalry that existed between Russia and Britain, there were two specific reasons for British concern over Russia's intentions. First was the Russian influence at the Iranian court, which culminated in Russian support for the Iranian attempt to take Herat, historically the western gateway to Afghanistan and northern India. Herat was still formally ruled by the deposed Sadozai, Kamran. In 1837 the Iranians advanced on Herat with the support and advice of Russian officers. The second immediate reason for British anxiety over Russian intentions was the presence in Kabul in 1837 of a lone Russian agent who was ostensibly there, like Burnes, for commercial discussions.

The concerns of Dost Mohammad are also easy to discern. Although he was certainly interested in gaining control of both Herat and Qandahar (which was under the control of his brothers), his most immediate objective was to remove the Sikhs from the area around Peshawar. To that end he was willing to delay taking Herat and Qandahar and to deal with whatever foreign power could advance his objectives. Clearly he preferred the British, and he was apparently even willing to agree to the humiliating British ultimatum delivered to him by Burnes in March 1838. The British demanded that Dost Mohammad desist from all contact with the Iranians and Russians, dismiss the Russian agent from Kabul, surrender all claims to Peshawar, and respect Peshawar's independence as well as that of Qandahar. In return, the British government suggested that it would ask Ranjit Singh to reconcile himself with the Afghans and to appoint any Afghan he chose, on whatever terms he chose, to rule Peshawar. Dost Mohammad's agreement to these disadvantageous terms was not enough to placate Auckland, however, and when he refused to put the agreement in writing, Dost Mohammad turned away from the British and began to negotiate with the Russian agent.

In July 1838 an agreement was signed by Auckland, Ranjit Singh, and Shuja. By the agreement's provisions, Shuja would regain control of Kabul and Qandahar with British and Sikh assistance, Herat would remain independent, and Shuja would accept Sikh rule of the former Afghan provinces that Ranjit Singh already controlled. In practice the plan was to replace Dost Mohammad with a British protégé whose autonomy would be as limited as that of the various princes in British India. Although this plan was formulated in light of the pressing Iranian-Russian threat to occupy Herat, the withdrawal of the Iranians and their Russian advisers from the siege of Herat

in September 1838 did not alter Auckland's determination to depose Dost Mohammad. As British historian Sir John W. Kaye declared in his 1874 study of the First Anglo-Afghan War, as soon as the Iranian-Russian threat to Herat had been removed, the plan to invade Afghanistan became "a folly and a crime."

It soon became apparent to the British that Sikh participation—to advance by way of the Khyber Pass toward Kabul while Shuja and the British advanced through Qandahar—was not going to be forthcoming. Auckland's plan in the spring of 1838 for the Sikhs—with some British support—to place Shuja on the Afghan throne was transformed by summer's end to a plan for the British alone to impose the compliant Shuja.

Historians have had difficulty understanding Auckland's wrong-headed policy, but a twentieth-century analyst of the First Anglo-Afghan War, J. Norris, suggests that the global great power situation must also be taken into consideration in assessing British policy at this point. The determination to avoid war with Russia in Europe and to coax the tsar into a joint great power strategy with respect to the faltering Ottoman Empire (the "Eastern question") made it necessary to tread very lightly in Central Asia, where British interests were to be protected as far as possible without directly engaging the Russians. The Russians, meanwhile, having suffered a disappointment in their support of the Iranian siege of Herat, continued to be as suspicious of the British as the British were of them.

The First Anglo-Afghan War

To justify his plan, Auckland ordered a manifesto issued on October 1, 1838, at Simla that set forth the reasons for British intervention in Afghanistan. The Simla Manifesto stated that the welfare of India required that the British have on their western frontier a trustworthy ally. The British pretense that their troops were merely supporting the tiny force of Shuja in retaking what was once his throne fooled no one. Although the Simla Manifesto asserted that British troops would be withdrawn as soon as Shuja was installed in Kabul, Shuja's rule depended entirely on British arms to suppress rebellion and on British funds to pay tribal chiefs for their support. Like other interventions in modern times, the British denied that they were invading Afghanistan but claimed they were merely supporting its legitimate government (Shuja) "against foreign interference and factious opposition."

From the point of the view of the British, the First Anglo-Afghan War (often called "Auckland's Folly") was an unmitigated disaster, although it proved surprisingly easy to depose Dost Mohammad and enthrone Shuja. An army of British and Indian troops set out from the Punjab in December 1838 and by late March 1839 had reached Quetta. By the end of April the British had taken Qandahar without a battle. In July, after a two-month delay in Qandahar, the British attacked the fortress of Ghazni, overlooking a plain that leads to India, and achieved a decisive victory over the troops of Dost Mohammad, which were led by one of his sons. The Afghans were amazed at the taking of fortified Ghazni, and Dost Mohammad found his support melting away. The Afghan ruler took his few loyal followers and fled across the passes to Bamian, and ultimately to Bukhara, and in August 1839 Shuja was enthroned again in Kabul after a hiatus of almost 30 years. Some British troops returned to India, but it soon became clear that Shuja's rule could only be maintained by the presence of British forces. Garrisons were established in Jalalabad, Ghazni, Kalat-i-Ghilzai (Qalat), Qandahar, and at the passes to Bamian. After a winter in temporary quarters, the British thought to move their Kabul garrison to the great fort, Bala Hissar, overlooking the city, but Shuja, either on his own or under pressure, refused to sanction the move.

Omens of disaster for the British abounded. Opposition to the British-imposed rule of Shuja began as soon as he assumed the throne, and the power of his government did not extend beyond the areas controlled by the force of British arms. The British cantonment in Kabul was eventually constructed on a virtually indefensible open plain northeast of the city, with the commissariat and munitions outside the low walls of the garrison. Early in 1841 a new commander, who was elderly, ill, and indecisive, joined the British troops in Afghanistan.

After several attacks on the British and their Afghan protégé, Dost Mohammad decided to surrender to the British and in late 1840 was allowed to go into exile in India. Sir William Macnaghten, one of the principal architects of the British invasion, wrote to Auckland two months later, urging good treatment for the deposed Afghan leader. With that fairness and clearsightedness that, in retrospect, was characteristic of British colonial officials, Macnaghten said:

> His case has been compared to that of Shah Shoojah . . . but surely the cases are not parallel. The Shah [Shujal] had no claim on us. We had

> no hand in depriving him of his kingdom, whereas we ejected the Dost, who never offended us, in support of our policy, of which he was the victim.

Dual control (by Shuja and the British) was unworkable. Shuja did not succeed in garnering the support of the Afghan chiefs on his own, and the British could not—or would not—sustain their subsidies. When the cash payments to tribal chiefs were curtailed in 1841, there was a major revolt by the Ghilzai.

By October 1841 disaffected Afghan tribes were flocking to the support of Dost Mohammad's son, Muhammad Akbar, in Bamian. Burnes was murdered in November 1841, and a few days later the commissariat fell into the hands of the Afghans. Macnaghten, having tried first to bribe and then to negotiate with the tribal leaders, was killed at a meeting with the tribal chiefs in December. On January 1, 1842, the British in Kabul and a number of Afghan chiefs reached an agreement that provided for the safe exodus of the entire British garrison and its dependents from Afghanistan. Unfortunately, the British would not wait for an Afghan escort to be assembled, and the Ghilzai and allied tribes had not been among the 18 chiefs who had signed the agreement. On January 6 the precipitate retreat began and, as they struggled through the snowbound passes, the British were attacked by Ghilzai warriors. Although a Dr. W. Brydon is usually cited as the only survivor of the march to Jalalabad (out of more than 15,000 who undertook the retreat), in fact a few more survived as prisoners and hostages. Shuja remained in power only a few months and was assassinated in April 1842.

The destruction of the British garrison prompted brutal retaliation by the British against the Afghans and touched off yet another power struggle among potential rulers of Afghanistan. In the fall of 1842 British forces from Qandahar and Peshawar entered Kabul long enough to rescue the British prisoners and burn the great bazaar. All that remained of the British occupation of Afghanistan was a ruined market and thousands of dead. Although the foreign invasion did give the Afghan tribes a temporary sense of unity they had lacked before, the accompanying loss of life and property was followed by a bitterness and resentment of foreign influence that lasted well into the twentieth century and may have accounted for much of the backlash against the modernization attempts of later Afghan monarchs.

The Russians advanced steadily southward toward Afghanistan in the three decades after the First Anglo-Afghan War, and historians of the period generally agree that the Russians were motivated, at least in part, by British intervention in Afghanistan. In 1842 the Russian border was on the other side of the Aral Sea from Afghanistan, but five years later the tsar's outposts moved to the lower reaches of the Syr Darya. By 1865 Tashkent had been formally annexed, as was Samarkand three years later. A treaty with the ruler of Bukhara virtually stripped him of his independence, and by 1869 Russian control ran as far as the northern bank of the Amu Darya. As the Russians overran much of Central Asia north of the river, the British advanced toward Afghanistan as well, absorbing territories that had once been part of Ahmad Shah Durrani's empire: Sind in 1843, Kashmir in 1846, the Punjab in 1849, Baluchistan in 1859, and the North-West Frontier in 1895 (see fig. 1).

The Second Anglo-Afghan War

After months of chaos in Kabul, Mohammad Akbar secured local control, and in April 1843 his father, Dost Mohammad, returned to the throne of Afghanistan. In the following decade, Dost Mohammad concentrated his efforts on reconquering Mazar-e-Sharif, Konduz, Badakhshan, and Qandahar. During the Second Anglo-Sikh War, in 1848-49, Dost Mohammad's last effort to take Peshawar failed.

In 1854 the British were interested in resuming relations with Dost Mohammad, whom they had more or less ignored since 1842. In the period immediately preceding the outbreak of the Crimean War, British officials in India, though they had no immediate concerns for Russian involvement, thought to make Afghanistan a barrier to Russian penetration across the Amu Darya. Dost Mohammad agreed, apparently perceiving the utility of British backing against the Russians and even the Iranians, to whom the independent rulers of Herat always turned for support against re-absorption into the Afghan kingdom. In 1855 the Treaty of Peshawar reopened diplomatic relations, proclaimed respect for each sides' territorial integrity, and committed each to be the friends of each other's friends and the enemies of each other's enemies.

In October 1856 the Iranians siezed Herat, and the British, whose policy it was to maintain the independence of this city, declared war against Iran. After three months the Iranians

withdrew from Herat and committed themselves never again to interfere there or elsewhere in Afghanistan. This brief war convinced the British that they should bolster the strength of Dost Mohammad in an attempt to enable him to meet future challenges by the Iranians. In 1857 an addendum was signed to the 1855 treaty that permitted a British military mission to go to Qandahar (but not to Kabul) and to provide a subsidy during conflict with the Iranians. Fraser-Tytler notes that as Dost Mohammad signed the document he proclaimed, "I have now made an alliance with the British Government and come what may I will keep it till death." Even during the 1857 Sepoy Rebellion in India, when British forces in the Punjab were thinned dramatically, Dost Mohammad refused to take advantage of British vulnerability to retake the Pashtun areas under British control.

The British governor general of India at the time of the 1857 agreement with Afghanistan stated in a memorandum that the British would never again intervene in Afghan internal affairs or send an army across its borders unless Herat was besieged, and then only with Afghan consent. He went so far as to argue in favor of the Afghan absorption of Herat. In 1863 Dost Mohammad retook Herat with British acquiescence. A few months later Dost Mohammad died and, although his third son, Sher Ali, was his proclaimed successor, he did not succeed in taking Kabul from his brother, Muhammad Afzal (whose troops were led by his son, Abdur Rahman) until 1868. Abdur Rahman retreated across the Amu Darya and bided his time.

The disaster of the First Anglo-Afghan War continued to haunt the British for decades, and the 70 years following the defeat of 1842 were a period of extraordinary vacillation in British policy toward Afghanistan. Not only were political perspectives different in Delhi and London, but there were also changes in government between what writer John C. Griffiths calls "half-hearted Imperialists and ill-informed Liberals." The former favored what was called the Forward Policy, which held that the defense of India required pushing its frontiers to the natural barrier of the Hindu Kush so that Afghanistan (or at least parts of it, such as Herat) would be brought entirely under British control. The Liberal policy rested on the assumption that the Forward Policy was immoral and impractical. Many of its adherents believed that the Indus River formed the natural border of India and that Afghanistan should be maintained as a buffer state between the British and Russian empires.

In the years immediately following the First Anglo-Afghan War, and especially after the 1857 Sepoy Rebellion in India, Liberal governments in London tended toward the buffer-state approach. By the time Sher Ali had established control in Kabul in 1868, he found the British ready to provide arms and funds in support of his regime, but nothing more. Fraser-Tytler reports that Sher Ali declared, "As long as I am alive, or as long as my governments exists, the foundation of friendship and goodwill between this and the powerful British Government will not be weakened." From this high point, relations between the Afghan ruler and the British steadily deteriorated over the next 10 years. Despite the good feeling between Sher Ali and the British in 1869, the sensitivities engendered by the First Anglo-Afghan War made it impossible for Sher Ali to accept a British envoy in Kabul, and there is no doubt that misperceptions colored the unfortunate sequence of events that led to the Second Anglo-Afghan War. In 1873 relations between Sher Ali and the British viceroy began to become strained. The Afghan ruler was worried about the southern movement of Russia, which in 1873 had taken over the lands of the khan (ruler) of Khiva. Sher Ali sent an envoy to ask the British for advice and support. In 1872, however, the British had signed an agreement with the Russians in which the latter agreed to respect the northern boundaries of Afghanistan and to view the territories of the Afghan amir as outside their sphere of influence. With this agreement in mind, and still following a noninterventionist policy as far as Afghanistan was concerned, the British refused to give any assurances to the disappointed Sher Ali.

In 1874 Benjamin Disraeli became prime minister of Britain, and in 1876 a new viceroy was dispatched to Delhi with orders to reinstate the Forward Policy. Sher Ali rejected a second British demand for a British mission in Kabul, arguing that if he agreed the Russians might demand the same right. The Afghan ruler had received intimidating letters from the Russians, but the British offered little in return for the concessions they demanded. Sher Ali, still sensitive to the probable reaction in Afghanistan to the posting of British officers in Kabul or Herat, continued to refuse to permit such a mission.

After tension between Russia and Britain in Europe ended with the June 1878 Congress of Berlin, Russia turned its attention to Central Asia. In the summer of 1878 Russia sent an uninvited diplomatic mission to Kabul, setting in motion the train of events that led to the Second Anglo-Afghan War. Sher

Ali tried to keep the Russian mission out but failed. The Russian envoys arrived in Kabul on July 22, 1878, and on August 14 the British demanded that Sher Ali accept a British mission. Sher Ali had not responded by August 17 when his son and heir died, throwing the court into mourning.

When no reply was received, the British dispatched a small military force, which was refused permission to cross the Khyber Pass by Afghan authorities. The British presumably considered this an insult, but more likely it was viewed at the highest levels as a fine pretext for implementing the Forward Policy and taking over most of Afghanistan. The British delivered an ultimatum to Sher Ali, demanding an explanation of his actions. The Afghan response was viewed by the British as unsatisfactory, and on November 21, 1978, British troops entered Afghanistan at three points. Sher Ali, having turned in desperation to the Russians, received no assistance from them. Appointing his son, Yaqub, regent, Sher Ali left to seek the assistance of the tsar. Advised by the Russians to abandon this effort and to return to his country, Sher Ali returned to Mazar-e Sharif, where he died in February 1879.

With British forces occupying much of the country, Yaqub signed the Treaty of Gandamak in May 1879 to prevent British invasion of the rest of Afghanistan. According to this agreement and in return for an annual subsidy and loose assurance of assistance in case of foreign aggression, Yaqub agreed to British control of Afghan foreign affairs, British representatives in Kabul and other locations, extension of British control to the Khyber and Michni passes, and the cession of various frontier areas to the British.

An Afghan uprising against the British was, unlike that of the First Anglo-Afghan War, foiled in October 1879. Yaqub abdicated because, as Fraser-Tytler suggests, he did not wish to share the fate of Shuja following the first war.

Despite the success of the military venture, by March 1880 even the proponents of the Forward Policy were aware that defeating the Afghan tribes did not mean controlling them. Although British policymakers had briefly thought simply to dismember Afghanistan a few months earlier, they now feared they were heading for the same disasters that befell their predecessors at the time of the First Anglo-Afghan War. Fraser-Tytler summarizes the position of the viceroy:

> He could hardly have based his policy on the assumption that after overrunning the country and thereby once more inflaming the hatred

> of every patriotic Afghan against us, we should by some magic discover among the Afghan chiefs a leader who would be acceptable both to *ourselves and to the Afghan people . . . And yet this is what he did . . .* The amazing thing is that while his assumption was wholly unwarranted his gamble was successful. While the British and Indian Governments were arguing over the dismembered corpse of the Afghan Kingdom, the one man who could fulfil the requirements of a desperately difficult situation was moving southwards into Afghanistan.

Just as the British interventionists were reaching this conclusion, the Liberal Party won an electoral victory in March 1880. This assured the end of the Forward Policy, which had been a major campaign issue.

Abdur Rahman Khan, 1880-1901

As far as British interests were concerned, Abdur Rahman came almost as an answer to prayer: a forceful, intelligent leader capable of welding his fractured peoples into a state, yet willing to accept the limitations on his power imposed by British control of Afghan foreign affairs and the British buffer-state policy. His 21-year reign was marked by his efforts to modernize and establish control of the kingdom, which was, during the same period, delineated in its modern borders by the two empires that surrounded it. Caught between the Russians and the British, Abdur Rahman turned his formidable energies to what turned out to be virtually the creation of the modern state of Afghanistan, while the British and the Russians, with the Afghans as bystanders, determined the borders of the Afghan state.

Abdur Rahman consolidated the Afghan state in three ways. First, he suppressed various rebellions and followed up his victories with harsh punishment, execution, and deportation. Second, he broke the power of many Pashtun tribes, most notably by forcibly transplanting them. He moved his most powerful Pashtun enemies, the Ghilzai, and other tribes from southern and south-central Afghanistan to areas north of the Hindu Kush that had predominantly non-Pashtun populations, whether Tajik, Uzbek, Hazara, or Turkmen. Although they had revolted against Durrani rule in their original homelands, the Pashtun tribes who relocated in non-Pashtun areas supported the Durrani leader, who shrewdly managed to keep the tribal leaders in Kabul under his control by creating a council that presumably advised him but which in fact had no power at

all. Abdur Rahman also ingratiated himself with non-Pashtun people by lifting the tax with which Sher Ali had burdened them.

A third mechanism Abdur Rahman used to cement the fragmented state was the creation of a system of provincial governorates that were not synonymous with old tribal boundaries. Provincial governors had a great deal of power in local matters, and an army was placed at their disposal to enforce tax collection and suppress dissent. Abdur Rahman kept a close eye on these governors, however, by creating an effective intelligence system. During his reign tribal organization in some areas began to erode as provincial government officials allowed land to change hands outside the traditional clan and tribal limits.

In addition to forging a nation from the splintered regions that made up Afghanistan, Abdur Rahman tried to modernize his kingdom by creating a regular army and the society's first institutionalized bureaucracy, which included government agencies that functioned like cabinet ministries. Although distinctly authoritarian, Abdur Rahman also established a general assembly (the Loya Jirgah), in addition to his royal council. The latter, which had only advisory powers, included tribal leaders, various advisers, and agency heads, as well as state secretaries for the major regions of the country. The Loya Jirgah (jirgah—see Glossary), which did not interfere with Abdur Rahman's autocracy any more than the council, included royal princes, important notables from other regions of the country, and religious leaders. Although these bodies and the government agencies he created did not have independent powers, their creation bespoke the ruler's concern for more efficient administration as well as more centralized rule. According to Abdur Rahman's autobiography (which he never saw in its final form but which Poullada suggests is generally consistent with what is known of the ruler's views from other sources), Abdur Rahman had three goals: subjugation of the tribes, extension of government control through the creation of a strong army, and reinforcement of the power of the ruler and the royal family.

Another aspect of Abdur Rahman's modernization was his attention to technological development. He brought to Afghanistan foreign physicians, engineers (especially for mining), geologists, and printers. He imported European machinery and encouraged the establishment of small factories for soap, candles, and leather goods. He sought outside advice on communications, transport, and irrigation.

Despite his strong internal policies, Abdur Rahman's foreign policy was completely in foreign hands. Vigorous leader though he was, he could not stand up to the overwhelming force represented by the two empires, which faced one another with his kingdom in the middle. Abdur Rahman honored his commitment to give the British control of Afghan foreign relations.

The first important frontier dispute was the Panjdeh crisis of 1885, brought on by Russian advances in Central Asia. Having seized the Merv (now Mary) Oasis by 1884, Russian forces were now directly adjacent to Afghanistan. There were conflicting claims to the Panjdeh Oasis, but the Russians were keen to take over all the Turkomen domains of this area before a planned Russian-British border commission could meet to decide on the border. The British urged the Russians not to attack the Panjdeh area, but they worded their warning against an attack on Herat so much more strongly that the Russians were apparently left in doubt about what the British would do if they attacked Panjdeh. After a battle with Afghan forces in March-April 1885, the Russians seized the oasis. As war clouds gathered, Russian newspapers urged their government to seize Herat as a prelude to moving all the way to the Indian Ocean. Troops were called up in both Russia and Britain, but the two powers were willing to compromise: Russia had what it wanted, and the British felt they could now keep the Russians from advancing any farther. Without Afghan participation the British and the Russians agreed that the latter would give up the area that was the farthest point of their advance but keep Panjdeh. After much disagreement over previous agreements and demarcations, the Joint Anglo-Russian Boundary Commission of 1886 finally agreed on a boundary along the Amu Darya. The Russian-British agreement on these sections of the border achieved a permanent northern frontier for Afghanistan but the loss of much territory, especially around Panjdeh.

The second area of the Afghan border that was demarcated (at least partially) during Abdur Rahman's reign was in the Wakhan area (see fig. 4). In 1891 the Russians began to explore this area all the way to the Amu Darya. The British reacted with great dispatch, deeply concerned that the Russians might outflank Afghanistan and threaten India. The British insisted that Abdur Rahman accept sovereignty over the Wakhan Corridor. Although he was reluctant to rule this remote region in which unruly Kirghiz held sway, he had no choice but to accept the compromise that Britain desired. In

1895 and 1896 another Joint Anglo-Russian Boundary Commission agreed on the frontier to the far northeast of Afghanistan, reaching to Chinese territory (although the Chinese did not formally agree on a border with Afghanistan until 1964). Although the frontiers between Afghanistan and Russia now appeared quite clear, by some oversight no agreement was reached on exactly where on the Amu Darya the border was to be fixed. A subject of disagreement over many years, this issue was not finally resolved until 1946, when the border was fixed at the thalweg line (the mid-point of the channel of the river).

Because the British were primarily concerned with Afghanistan as a buffer between India and the Russians, their greatest interest lay in the definition of the Afghan boundary with Russia. For Abdur Rahman, however, the delineation of the boundary with India, through the Pashtun area, was far more significant, and it was during his reign that the Durand Line was drawn. By the early 1890s the situation in these areas was unsatisfactory both to the British and to the Afghan ruler. In the preceding years the Indian government had pushed farther and farther into Pashtun lands at the expense of Afghan governments that were in no position to gainsay British firepower. Nevertheless, the British were concerned about incursions by the fierce mountain tribes. For his part, Abdur Rahman feared continuing British encroachment into Pashtun areas, and in 1892 he sent his concerns directly to London, bypassing Delhi, which he doubted would treat him fairly in this matter.

Under pressure, Abdur Rahman agreed in 1893 to accept a mission headed by the British Indian foreign secretary, Sir Mortimer Durand, to delineate the limits of British and Afghan control in the Pashtun areas. Abdur Rahman at first seemed to welcome the mission, perhaps because of British railroad construction that was aimed toward Qandahar and Kabul, which he called "a knife into my vitals" and which made him fear further British encroachment unless an agreement were reached. Boundary limitations were agreed upon between Durand and Abdur Rahman before the end of 1893, but there is some question about the degree to which Abdur Rahman willingly ceded certain areas. Scholars have found in his papers and autobiography indications that he regarded the Durand Line as a delimitation of areas of political responsibility, not permanent international frontiers, and that he did not explicitly cede control over the areas (such as Kurram and Chitral) that had already come under British control under the Treaty of

Gandamak. The amir's reluctant agreement to the Durand Line was only achieved with an increase of his subsidy from the British government and quiet threats by Durand.

Although Fraser-Tytler argues that the Durand Line may have been the best line possible under the circumstances, it made little sense. The Durand Line cut through tribes and even villages and bore little relation to the realities of topography, demography, or even military strategy. Devised to divide the tribes that looked to Kabul for leadership from those that looked to Peshawar or other areas under British control, and designed to establish tranquility in the border areas, the Durand Line did neither. It resulted in bloodshed even as it was being fixed, and it laid the foundation not for the peace of the border regions but for heated disagreement between the governments of Afghanistan and British India and, later, between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The clearest manifestation of Abdur Rahman's establishment of control in Afghanistan was the peaceful succession of his son, Habibullah, to the throne upon his father's death in October 1901. Although Abdur Rahman had fathered many children, he had groomed Habibullah to succeed him, and he had made it difficult for other sons to contest the succession by preventing them from assuming positions of power and by keeping them in Kabul under his control.

Reign of Habibullah, 1901-19

Habibullah, although Abdur Rahman's eldest son and heir, was the child of a slave mother, and he had to keep a close eye on the palace intrigues that swirled around the person of Abdur Rahman's most distinguished wife (a granddaughter of Dost Mohammad), who sought the throne for her son. Secure in his rule by virtue of the support from the army created by his father, Habibullah was not as domineering as Abdur Rahman, and his reign saw the rising influence of religious leaders, as well as that of Mahmoud Beg Tarzi. Tarzi, a highly educated and well-traveled poet and journalist, founded an Afghan nationalist newspaper with the ruler's agreement, and until 1919 he used it as a platform for reform, for rebuttal to clerical criticism of Western-influenced changes in government and society, and for espousing full Afghan independence (from British control of its foreign policy). Although Tarzi often fell into disagreement with Habibullah in the later years of

his reign, Tarzi's passionate Afghan nationalism influenced a generation of Asian nationalists, and the ruler could not but agree with his demands for an end to British tutelege.

Habibullah came to power at a time when Britain was once again pushing forward its outposts in the Pashtun areas. Upon Habibullah's succession to the throne, the British viceroy of India, Lord Curzon, took the surprising step of demanding that Habibullah renegotiate the treaty reached between his father and the British. Because the British had always demanded that treaty commitments be honored by a ruler's successor, Habibullah was insulted and wary of new British demands. He refused Curzon's invitation (virtually an order) that he come to India for consultation on this matter. If Curzon had had his way, another British invasion of Afghanistan might have resulted, but a more judicious policy prevailed.

The Afghan monarch cleverly decided that, if the British did not regard the old treaty as binding, he need no longer let Britain control Afghan foreign policy. He made known his interest in establishing diplomatic relations with Russia, Japan, Turkey, the United States, and other countries and, no doubt as he had expected, the British quickly sent a mission to negotiate a new agreement, which was reached early in 1905. New demands that the British had been prepared to press upon the Afghans were dropped, and the 1905 Anglo-Afghan treaty was little more than a replacement of the previous one.

Several other foreign policy events with implications for the future occurred in the reign of Habibullah. A boundary with Iran was fixed to replace the ambiguous delineation that had been made by a British commission in 1872 but which had been unsatisfactory to both the Iranians and the Afghans. The British were keen to draw the boundary, concerned as they were with Russian influence at the Iranian court and in the areas adjacent to Afghanistan. In mid-1904 a boundary commission completed its work, which was accepted by both states. A further effort to reach agreement on the distribution of the waters of the Helmand River was more difficult. The scheme proposed in May 1905 was accepted by Habibullah but not by the Iranian government.

Like all the foreign policy developments of this period that affected Afghanistan, the conclusion of the Great Game between Russia and Britain occurred without the participation of the Afghan ruler. The great power configuration changed in the early years of the twentieth century. Four factors combined to bring about the new situation: Russia's defeat in the

1904-1905 Russo-Japanese War, the rising power of Germany in Europe, continued Russian interest in Iran, and British interest in lands adjacent to India (such as Tibet). By 1906 the Russians and the British—brought together by their alliance against Germany in Europe—were discussing a division of spheres of influence in Central Asia and the Middle East, and by 1907, after 18 months of negotiation, they had reached an agreement. The 1907 Anglo-Russian Convention not only divided the region into areas of Russian and British influence but also established the foundation for Afghan neutrality. The convention included provisions for dividing Iran into areas of Russian influence in the north and British in the east and south and granting each side the right to occupy its area of influence if threatened by a third party (a provision that provided the legal pretext for British and Russian occupation of Iran during World War II); providing for Russian acquiescence in Afghanistan's exclusion from its sphere of influence and Russian agreement to consult with Britain on all matters relating to Afghanistan; and providing British agreement not to occupy or annex Afghanistan or interfere in its internal affairs.

A final clause of the convention required Afghan consent to make the treaty binding, but when Habibullah refused to accept the treaty in the making of which he had had no voice, the Russians and the British declared the agreement valid anyway. Encouraged by the Russian defeat by the Japanese, Habibullah wanted British support in an attack on Russia to regain the lands in Turkestan taken by the Russians in the nineteenth century. Britain, far more interested in the European power struggle and the defense of India through an Afghan buffer state, was uninterested in such a scheme.

During World War I Afghanistan remained neutral, despite pressure to support Turkey when its sultan proclaimed his nation's participation in a holy war. Habibullah did, however, entertain a Turco-German mission in Kabul in 1915. Although, after long procrastination, he won agreement from the Central Powers to a huge payment and provision of arms if he would attack British India, the crafty Afghan ruler clearly viewed the war as an opportunity to play one side off against the other, for he also offered the British to hold off the Central Powers from an attack on India in exchange for an end to British control of Afghan foreign policy.

Reign of King Amanullah, 1919-29

On February 20, 1919, Habibullah was assassinated on a hunting trip. Theories about his murder abound and, although arrests were made, there is still some uncertainty about the affair.

Habibullah had not declared a successor, but his third son, Amanullah, had been left in control in Kabul when his father left on his last hunting trip. Controlling both the national treasury and the army, Amanullah decided to seize power, although his two older brothers and his uncle had equal claims to rule. There had been rumors of Amanullah's involvement in his father's murder, which added to the claims of his rivals. Soon, however, the support of the army allowed Amanullah to suppress other claims and imprison those of his relatives who would not swear loyalty to him. Within a few months the new amir had gained the support of most tribal leaders and had established control over the cities as well.

The 10 years of Amanullah's reign were a period of dramatic change in Afghanistan in both foreign and domestic politics. Starting with the achievement of complete independence after his attack on Britain in the month-long Third Anglo-Afghan War, Amanullah went on to alter Afghan foreign policy through his new relations with external powers and to transform domestic politics through his social, political, and economic reforms. Although Amanullah's reign ended in tragedy, he achieved some notable successes, and the failure of his efforts can be traced as much to the centrifugal forces in tribal Afghanistan and the machinations of Russia and Britain as to political folly on his part.

Amanullah came to power just as the détente between Russia and Britain broke down following the Russian revolution of 1917, and once again Afghanistan provided a stage on which the great powers played out their schemes against one another. Amanullah's dramatic changes in foreign policy began as soon as he had ascended the throne. Sensing postwar British fatigue, the frailty of British positions along the Afghan border, unrest in British India, and confidence in the consolidation of his power at home, Amanullah suddenly attacked the British in May 1919 in two thrusts. Although, as Poullada reports, Amanullah had written the British viceroy, rejecting British control of his foreign policy and declaring Afghanistan fully independent, the British were taken by surprise. Afghan forces achieved some success in the early days of the war as Pashtun

tribesmen from both sides of the border joined forces with them. The military skirmishes soon ended in stalemate as the British recovered from their initial surprise. The war did not last long, however, because both sides were soon ready to sue for peace; the Afghans were unwilling to sustain continued British air attacks on Kabul and Jalalabad, and the British were unwilling to take on an Afghan land war so soon after the bloodletting of World War I. What the Afghans did not gain in battle they gained ultimately at the negotiating table.

The British virtually dictated the terms of the 1919 Rawalpindi Agreement, a temporary armistice agreement that did provide—somewhat ambiguously—for Afghan autonomy in foreign affairs. Before negotiations on a final agreement were concluded in 1921, however, Afghanistan had already begun to establish its own foreign policy, including diplomatic relations with the new government in the Soviet Union in 1919.

The second round of Anglo-Afghan negotiations on a final peace were inconclusive. Although both sides were ready to agree on Afghan independence in foreign affairs, as mentioned in the previous agreement, the two nations disagreed on the issue that had plagued Anglo-Afghan relations for decades and would continue to cause friction for many more, i.e., authority over the Pashtun tribes on both sides of the Durand Line. The British refused to agree to Afghan control over tribes on the British side of the line, while the Afghans insisted on it. The Afghans regarded the 1921 agreement as an informal one.

The 1920s saw diplomatic relations established between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union in 1919; Iran in 1921; Britain, Turkey, and Italy in 1922; and France in 1923. Other manifestations of Amanullah's independence were his change of title from amir to padshah (king) in 1923 and his series of visits in 1927 to the capitals of British India, Egypt, Turkey, Iran, and most of the European nations, including Britain.

Despite his newly independent foreign policy, Amanullah's relations with the British and the Soviets remained the most important aspects of Afghan foreign policy during his reign. In the aftermath of the 1907 Saint Petersburg Convention between the British and the Russians, the Great Game tensions over Afghanistan had subsided greatly. The rivalry of the great powers in this area might have remained subdued had it not been for the dramatic change in government in Moscow with the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. Facing many internal and external challenges, the Bolshevik leaders could not immediately and straightforwardly subjugate their Muslim

subjects, who then made up about 15 percent of the population. Moscow initially adopted a strategy of appeasement. In their efforts to placate the Muslims within their borders, the Soviet leaders were eager to establish cordial relations with neighboring Muslim states. In the case of Afghanistan, the Soviets could achieve a double purpose: by strengthening relations with the leadership in Kabul they could also threaten Britain, which was one of the Western states supporting counterrevolution in the Soviet Union.

When Amanullah, trying to move away from British control of Afghan foreign policy, sent an emissary to Moscow in 1919, Lenin received the envoy warmly and responded by sending a Soviet representative to Kabul and offering aid to Amanullah's government. As Poullada notes, this entente with the Soviets left Amanullah in a position to exploit Britain's weak, post-World War I position in India during and after the Third Anglo-Afghan War of 1919 and helps to explain how Afghanistan was able to turn a weak military position in that war into a brilliant diplomatic triumph.

Throughout Amanullah's reign, Soviet-Afghan relations waxed and waned according to how valuable Afghanistan was to the Soviet leadership at any particular time. The Soviets valued Afghanistan only insofar as it was a tool for dealing with Soviet Muslim minorities and for threatening the British, and therefore they were truly cordial to Amanullah only when they were appeasing the Soviet Muslims or when Anglo-Soviet relations were poor. The Soviets wanted Amanullah to help them suppress anti-Bolshevik elements in Central Asia in return for help against the British, but the Afghans were still interested in regaining lands across the Amu Darya lost to Russia in the nineteenth century. Afghan attempts to regain the oases of Merv and Panjdeh were easily repulsed by the Red Army, which was rapidly subduing the rebellious Central Asian khans. Throughout the 1920s rebellious Muslims revolted against the growing consolidation of Soviet rule in Central Asia. Amanullah clearly sympathized with these rebels, whom the Soviets called *bashmachi*. Amanullah, despite his sympathy, could offer little support, although volunteers from both Afghanistan and British India were permitted to cross the border to aid their fellow Muslims in Soviet Central Asia.

Poullada's extensive study of the reign of Amanullah makes it clear that the king mistrusted the Soviets but wanted aid from them and wished to use his relations with them as a prod to the British. In May 1921 the Afghans and Soviets

signed a Treaty of Friendship, Afghanistan's first international agreement since gaining full independence in 1919. The Soviets provided Amanullah with aid as early as 1919, and throughout the 1920s they made cash subsidies; provided 13 airplanes, pilots, and transport and communication technicians; and carried out the laying of telephone lines between Kabul and Mazar-e Sharif and Herat and Qandahar. Despite this, Amanullah became increasingly disillusioned with the Soviets, especially as he saw growing Soviet oppression of his fellow Muslims across the border. Thousands of Muslims fled to avoid Soviet efforts to pacify Soviet Central Asia through deportations, secularization, and oppression.

Anglo-Afghan relations during Amanullah's reign soured over British fear of Afghan-Soviet friendship, especially the introduction of Soviet planes into Afghanistan. In addition, Amanullah maintained contacts with Indian nationalists and gave them asylum in Kabul. He also used his Soviet connection to taunt the British, and he sought to stir up unrest among the Pashtun tribes across the border. For their part the British were assiduously patronizing in their dealings with Amanullah. Poullada recites a litany of the insults the British visited upon the Afghan ruler, including their refusal for many years to call him "Your Majesty," restrictions on the transit of goods through India, and a host of other petty refusals to treat Afghanistan as an independent state.

Amanullah's domestic reforms were no less dramatic than his initiatives in foreign policy, but the king's achievement of complete independence was not matched by equally permanent gains in domestic politics. The great Afghan intellectual and nationalist, Tarzi, was Amanullah's father-in-law, and he encouraged the monarch's interest in social and political reform. Tarzi, however, urged gradual reform built on the basis of a strong army and central government, as had occurred in Turkey under Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk), who offered to send Turkish officers to train the royal army. Amanullah, however, was unwilling to put off implementing his ideas. His reforms touched on many areas of Afghan life, but among the first (and perhaps the most important) were those that affected the army.

Although Amanullah has been accused of neglecting the army and of trying to strip it of its power, the foremost scholar of this period, Poullada, concludes that the king was simply trying to cast the army in a different mold. It was under Amanullah, for instance, that in 1921 the Afghan air force was

established, based on a few Russian planes and pilots; Afghan personnel later received training in France, Italy, and Turkey.

The king had come to power through the army's support, but within a few years he had begun a process that steadily eroded military loyalty to his regime. Having raised military pay substantially as soon as he took power, he subsequently lowered it in the expectation of making up for the loss to individual soldiers by providing increased benefits (better food and shelter). He also hoped that the pay reduction would decrease the size of the army, as recommended by his Turkish advisers, who were totally unfamiliar with Afghan notions of military service. When the other benefits did not materialize in the wake of the pay reduction, however, the soldiers were alienated. Amanullah infuriated the tribes by changing recruitment methods to prevent tribal leaders from controlling who joined the army and by increasing the period of conscription from two years to three.

His Turkish advisers also suggested that the king retire older officers and men who were set in their ways and could be expected to resist the creation of a more professional army. Amanullah's minister of war, General Muhammad Nadir Khan, opposed these changes, preferring to recognize tribal sensitivities. The king's refusal to heed Nadir Khan's advice created an anti-Turkish faction, and in 1924 Nadir Khan left the government to become ambassador to France, ostensibly because he (and his brothers) could not support the king's domestic policies.

Amanullah's reforms—if fully enacted—would have totally transformed Afghanistan. Most of his proposals, however, died with his abdication. Among the social and educational reforms were the adoption of the solar calendar; requirement of Western dress in parts of Kabul and a few other areas; discouragement of the veiling and seclusion of women; abolition of slavery and forced labor; introduction of secular education, including education for girls; adult education classes; and education for nomads.

Political and judicial reforms were equally radical for the time and included Afghanistan's first constitution (1923); guarantee of civil rights (first by decree and then in the constitution); universal national registration and issuance of identity cards; establishment of a legislative assembly; creation of a court system and of secular penal, civil, and commercial codes; prohibition of blood money; and abolition of subsidies and privileges for tribal chiefs and the royal family. Although sharia

(Islamic law) was to be only the residual source of law, it regained its prominence after the Khost rebellion of 1923–24. Religious leaders, who had become influential under Amanullah's father, were unhappy over the king's extensive religious reforms. Economic reforms instituted by Amanullah included the reorganization and rationalization of the entire tax structure, antismuggling and anticorruption campaigns, a livestock census for taxation purposes, the first budget (1922), use of the metric system (which did not take hold), establishment of the Banki-i-Melli (National Bank) (1928), and introduction of the afghani (see Glossary) as the new unit of currency (1923).

Conventional wisdom holds that the tribal revolt that overthrew Amanullah grew out of opposition to his reform program. Poullada, however, makes a strong argument against this position. The people most affected by Amanullah's reforms were the urban dwellers, not the tribes, and urban Afghans were not universally opposed to his policies. Poullada believes that Amanullah's opponents simply seized on his radical reform program as a means to transform a minor tribal revolt into a major one. Religious leaders who were threatened by the king's reforms found common cause with tribal leaders, whose power Amanullah had systematically undermined through his efforts to create a modern administrative and political system. The loyalty of the army, which had been the base of Amanullah's accession to power, had been eroded by the measures the king had taken to create a professional army. Poullada concludes that "social change or religious liberalism did not destroy Amanullah so much as his efforts to create a strong central government . . . and this classical struggle between centralized power and tribal separatism was resolved in blood."

In late 1928 Amanullah's regime started to unravel as Shinwari tribesmen revolted in Jalalabad. Many of the king's troops deserted as tribal forces advanced on the capital. He faced two threats, for in addition to the Pashtun tribes, forces led by a Tajik were moving toward Kabul from the north. In January 1929 Amanullah abdicated in favor of his oldest brother, Inayatollah, who ruled only three days before going into exile in India. Amanullah's efforts to recover power by leading a small, ill-equipped force toward Kabul failed. The deposed king crossed the border into India and went into exile in Italy.

Tajik Rule, January-October 1929

The man who seized Kabul from the faltering hands of Amanullah was a Tajik tribesman from Kala Khan (a village about 30 kilometers north of Kabul), whom historians usually describe as a Tajik bandit. The new Afghan ruler called himself Habibullah Khan, but he was called by others Bacha-i Saqqao (Son of the Water Carrier). A deserter from the Afghan army, he had worked in Peshawar as a tea seller and then served 11 months in prison for housebreaking. He had participated in the Khost rebellion of 1924 and then had become a highwayman. Although Bacha-i Saqqao robbed Afghan officials and the wealthy, he was generous to the poor. His attack on Kabul was shrewdly timed, following the Shinwari Rebellion and the defection of much of the army. Habibullah was probably the first Tajik to rule in the area since before the coming of the Greeks, with the possible exception of the brief Ghorid Dynasty of the twelfth century.

Little is written of his nine-month reign, but most historians agree that he could not have held power for very long under any condition. None of the powerful Pashtun tribes—even the Ghilzai, who in the beginning had supported him against Amanullah—would long tolerate rule by a non-Pashtun. When Amanullah's last feeble effort to regain his throne failed, the clearest contenders for the throne were the Musahiban brothers, who were also Muhammadzai Barakzai and whose great-grandfather was an older brother of the great nineteenth-century ruler, Dost Mohammad.

There were five prominent Musabihan brothers. Nadir Khan, the eldest, had been Amanullah's minister of war until he left office in dissent over Amanullah's military and domestic reforms. Although it has generally been believed that the British had a hand in the overthrow of Amanullah and in the accession to power of Nadir, such scholars as Louis Dupree, Fraser-Tytler, and Poullada concur that the British did not bring down Amanullah and that while the British hoped that the Musahiban brothers would establish control, they tried to maintain some degree of neutrality in the contest. Fraser-Tytler derides the rules established by the British for dealing with this situation as "a mixture of the rules of cricket and football." The brothers were permitted to cross through the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) to go into Afghanistan to take up arms. Once on the other side, however, they were not to be permitted to go back and forth across the border to

use British territory as sanctuary, nor were they allowed to gather a tribal army on the British side of the Durand Line. The restrictions were successfully ignored by the Musahiban brothers and the tribes.

After being thrown back several times, Nadir and his brothers finally raised a sufficiently large force (mostly from the British side of the Durand Line) and took Kabul on October 10, 1929. Six days later the eldest of the Musahiban brothers was proclaimed King Nadir Shah. The Tajik Habibullah fled Kabul, was captured in Kohistan, and was executed on November 3, 1929, despite promises of reprieve.

King Muhammad Nadir Shah, 1929-33

The new ruler quickly abolished most of Amanullah's reforms, but despite his efforts the army remained weak while the religious and tribal leaders grew somewhat in strength. There were uprisings by the Shinwari and another Tajik leader in 1930, and in the same year a Soviet force crossed the border in pursuit of an Uzbek leader who had been harassing the Soviets from his sanctuary in Afghanistan. He was driven back to the Soviet side by the Afghan army in April 1930, and by the end of 1931 most of the country had been subdued.

Nadir Shah named a 10-man cabinet, consisting mostly of members of his family, and in September 1930 he called into session a Loya Jirgah of 286 men to confirm his accession to the throne. At the king's direction, the Loya Jirgah chose 105 members to make up a National Council. This body, with which the king was supposed to consult on legislation, automatically approved decisions by the cabinet. In 1931 the king promulgated a new constitution. Dupree's analysis of the 1931 constitution concludes that although it incorporated many of the ideals of Afghan society and appeared to establish a constitutional monarchy, in fact the document created a royal oligarchy, popular participation being only an illusion.

Although Nadir Shah placated religious elements with a constitutional emphasis on orthodox religious principles, he also worked to modernize Afghanistan in material ways, although far less obtrusively than his more impulsive cousin, Amanullah. He worked on the construction of roads, especially the Great North Road through the Hindu Kush, and improved the means of communication. Commercial links were also forged with the foreign powers with which Amaullah had

established diplomatic relations in the 1920s, and, under the leadership of several leading entrepreneurs, a banking system and long-range economic planning were started. Schools, which had been closed during the chaos of the Tajik interregnum, were reopened. Although his efforts to improve the army did not bear fruit immediately, Nadir Shah, who had inherited virtually no national army at all, created a 40,000-strong force before his death in 1933, and he also established a military school and an arsenal. Except for a gift of rifles and a small sum of money from Britain, Nadir Shah's reintegration of the Afghan nation was carried out with no external assistance.

Nadir Shah's reign was brief and ended in violence, but he accomplished a feat of which his illustrious great-great-uncle, Dost Mohammad, would have been proud: He reunited a fragmented Afghanistan. Nadir Shah fell prey to assassination by a young man whose family had been carrying on a feud with the king since his accession to power. Only six months after his brother, Muhammad Aziz Khan, had been assassinated in Berlin by a young Afghan, Nadir Shah was shot and killed by the young son (or adopted son, according to some scholars) of a man whom he had had executed a year before. As Dupree comments, if the classic pattern of Afghan royal politics had prevailed, the 19-year-old crown prince would have been displaced by one of his uncles, one of whom was in Kabul and in command of the army. Remarkably, a new attitude prevailed in the royal family, and the uncles of the new king, Muhammad Zahir Shah, were content to remain the power behind the throne on which they placed their nephew.

King Muhammad Zahir Shah, 1933-73

Zahir Shah, the last king of Afghanistan, was a patient man. For 30 of his 40 years on the throne he accepted the tutelege of powerful advisers in the royal family—his uncles for the first 20 years and his cousin, Mohammad Daoud Khan, for another 10 years. Only in the last decade of his reign did Zahir Shah rule as well as reign.

Zahir Shah and his Uncles, 1933-53

Three of the Musahiban brothers were still alive after Nadir Shah's death, and they exercised decisive influence over decisionmaking during the first 20 years of Zahir Shah's reign.

The eldest, Muhammad Hashim, who had been prime minister under the late king, retained that post until 1946, when he was replaced by the youngest of the Musahiban brothers, Shah Mahmud.

Hashim is described by Fraser-Tytler as a statesman of great administrative ability and high personal integrity who devoted all of his energy to his country. In the months immediately following Nadir Shah's assassination, while the tribes remained quiet and the followers of ex-king Amanullah remained disorganized and impotent, Hashim began to put into practice the policies already planned by the Musahiban brothers. Internal objectives of the new Afghan government, up to the outbreak of World War II, were focused on improving the army and developing the economy (including transport and communications). Both goals, however, required external assistance. Seeking to avoid involvement with the Soviet Union and Britain, Hashim turned to a far-off nation that had both the interest and the technical expertise required—Germany. By 1935 the Afghan government had invited German experts and businessmen to help set up factories and build hydroelectric projects. Lesser amounts of aid were also accepted from Italy and Japan, but these two countries did not achieve Germany's level of prominence in Afghanistan's foreign relations. By the beginning of the 1940s Germany was Afghanistan's most important foreign friend.

Afghanistan joined the League of Nations in 1934, the same year that the United States accorded Afghanistan official recognition. Regional ties to nearby Islamic states were reinforced by the conclusion in 1937 of friendship and nonaggression pacts with Turkey and Iran. Although never implemented because World War II intervened, Dupree notes that the pacts laid the groundwork for coordination among the three states in later periods. The relationship with Turkey was especially close.

A few relatively minor uprisings along the Afghan border, including one on behalf of ex-king Amanullah, occurred late in the 1930s, but these were overshadowed by the outbreak of World War II. The king issued a proclamation of Afghan neutrality on August 17, 1940, but the Allies were unhappy with the presence of a large group of German nondiplomatic personnel. In October the British and Soviet governments demanded that Afghanistan expel all nondiplomatic personnel from the Axis nations. The Afghan government considered this an insulting and illegitimate demand, but it undoubtedly found

instructive the example of Iran, which Britain and the Soviet Union had invaded and occupied in August 1941 after the Iranian government ignored a similar demand. Zahir Shah and his advisers found a face-saving response, ordering all nondiplomatic personnel from the belligerent countries out of Afghanistan. A Loya Jirgah called by the king at this time supported his policy of absolute neutrality. Although World War II disrupted Afghanistan's incipient foreign relationships and to some extent the government's domestic goals, it also provided larger markets for Afghan agricultural produce (especially in India). By the war's end the government had exchanged official missions with both China and the United States, and the latter had replaced Britain as the major market for Afghanistan's principal export, karakul skins.

Shortly after the end of the war, Shah Mahmud replaced his older brother as prime minister, ushering in a period of great change in both the internal and external politics of Afghanistan. Among other things, the new prime minister presided over the inauguration of the giant Helmand Valley Project (which brought Afghanistan into a closer relationship with the United States) and the beginning of relations with the newly created nation of Pakistan, which inherited the Pashtuns on the side of the Durand Line formerly ruled by Britain. The issue of Pashtunistan (or Pakhtunistan)—agitation for an independent or semi-independent state to include the Pashtu and Pakhtu speakers within Pakistan, whether officially joined with Afghanistan or not—would have a resounding impact on Afghanistan politics, as would the political liberalization inaugurated by Shah Mahmud.

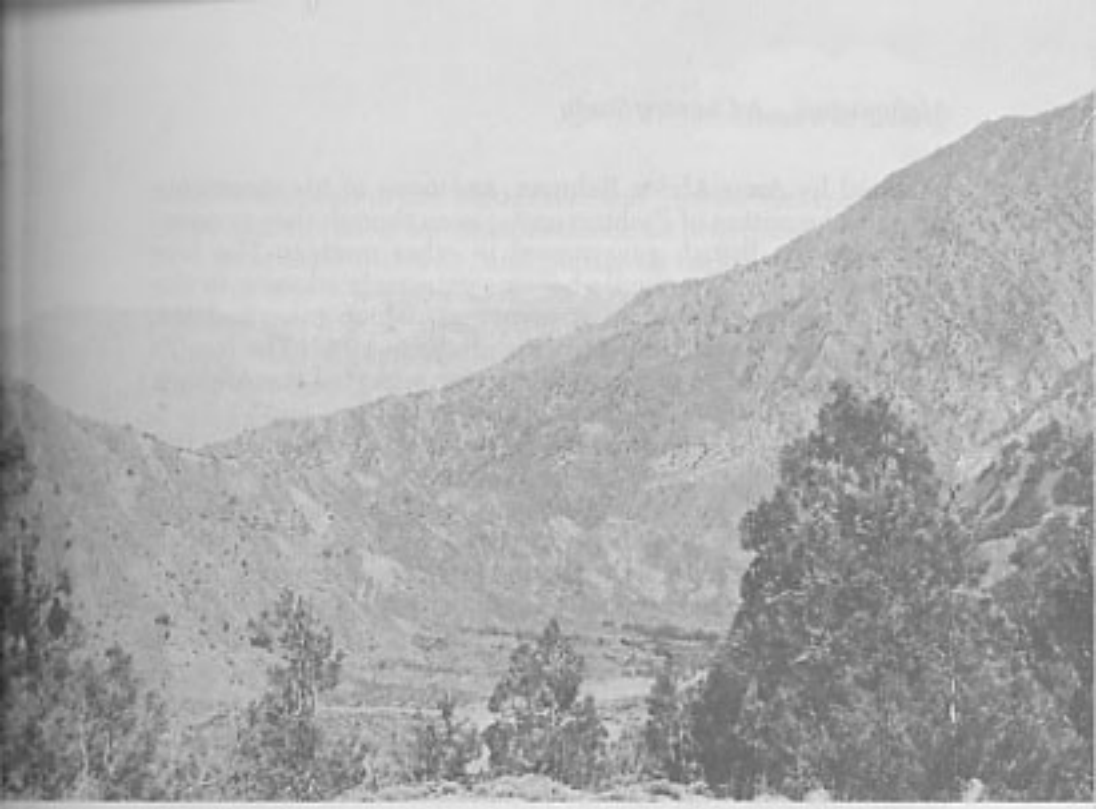
The Helmand Valley Project, inaugurated in 1945 with an agreement between the Afghan government and an American company, was designed to harness the irrigation and hydroelectric potential of the Helmand. There were myriad problems with the project, and although parts of it were completed before 1953, it was not until Daoud became prime minister in 1953 that the project began to move toward completion.

The Pashtunistan Issue

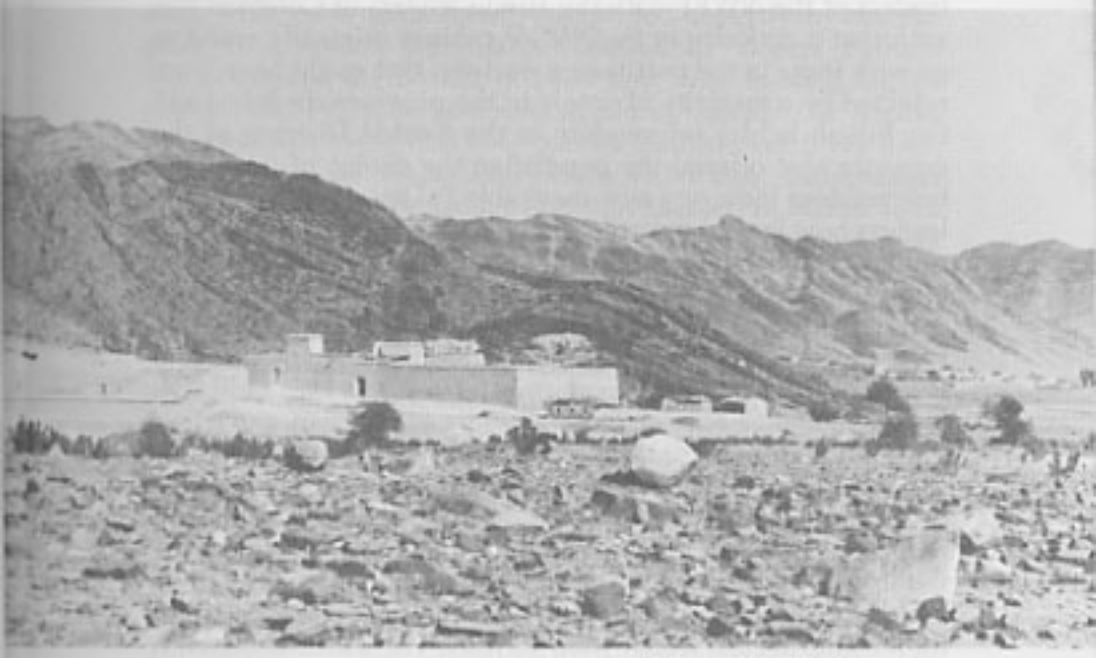
In their colonial period, European nations created frontiers throughout Asia and Africa that left legacies of bitterness, and often of war, for the independent nations that emerged from colonial rule. Although it was never colonized, Afghanistan was no exception. The Durand Line had been bitterly

Crossing Kabul River on inflated cowskins

Elderly mujahid holding Enfield rifle, World War I vintage



Mountains in Lowgar Province



Village in Paktia Province
Photos courtesy Kurt Lohbeck

resented by Amir Abdur Rahman, and none of his successors gave up the notion of Pashtun unity, even though they cooperated with the British government in other matters. The line dividing the Pashtun people became extremely irksome to the Afghans and the Pakistani government, which inherited the frontier upon the partition of British India in 1947. The fragility of the new nation of Pakistan may have incited the Afghans to reassert the concept of Pashtunistan in 1947.

Although the issue became most vexing at the time of the partition, British policy in the area before 1947 also contributed to the development of the Pashtunistan problem. In 1901 they had created a new administrative area, the NWFP, which they detached from the Punjab, and had divided the new province into Settled Districts and Tribal Agencies, the latter ruled not by the provincial government but by a British political agent who reported directly to Delhi. This separation was reinforced by the fact that the experiments in provincial democracy inaugurated in 1919 were not extended to the NWFP.

In the 1930s Britain extended provincial self-government to the NWFP. By this time the Indian National Congress (Congress), which was largely controlled by Hindus, had extended its activities to the province. The links between the political leaders of the NWFP with the Hindu leaders of Congress was such that a majority in the NWFP cabinet originally voted to go with India in the partition, a decision that might have been rejected by a majority of voters in the province. In July 1947 the British held a referendum in the Settled Districts of the province that offered the population the choice of joining an independent India or a now-inevitable Pakistan. Although local leaders now leaned toward independence, a position officially supported by the Afghan government, this was not an option offered in the vote. Although these leaders advocated a boycott of the referendum, an estimated 56 percent of the eligible voters participated, and of these over 90 percent voted to join Pakistan. In the Tribal Agencies a Loya Jirgah was held. Offered the choice between joining India or Pakistan, the tribes declared their wish for the latter.

Both the Afghan and Indian leaders objected to both procedures, declaring that, because the tribes had the same kind of direct links to the British as the princely states of India, the Pashtun tribes should be treated the same way, i.e., they should be offered a third option of initial independence until they could decide which state to join. The birth, along with India, of the independent nation of Pakistan, accompanied by

massive dislocation and bloodshed, was thus further complicated by the agitation for independence or provincial autonomy by a significant minority, and perhaps a majority, of the residents of the NWFP. This issue poisoned relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan for many years. The conflict between Pakistan and Afghanistan over the Pashtunistan issue was manifested not only in bitter denunciations but also by such actions as Afghanistan's casting of the sole negative vote on Pakistan's admission to the United Nations (UN) and Pakistan's meddling with the transit of commodities to its landlocked neighbor.

Although both Afghanistan and Pakistan made conciliatory gestures—including Afghanistan's withdrawal of its negative UN vote and the exchange of ambassadors in February 1948—the matter remained unresolved. In June 1949 a Pakistani air force plane bombed a village just across the frontier in one of the government's attempts to suppress tribal uprisings. In response, the Afghan government called into session a Loya Jirgah, which promptly proclaimed that it recognized "neither the imaginary Durand nor any similar Line" and declared void all agreements—from the 1893 Durand agreement onward—related to the issue. There was an attempt to set up an independent Pashtun parliament inside the Pashtun areas of Pakistan, which was undoubtedly supported covertly by the Afghan government. Irregular forces led by a local Pashtun leader crossed the border in 1950 and 1951 to back Afghan claims. The Pakistani government did not accept the Afghan government's claim that they had no control over these men, and both nations' ambassadors were withdrawn. Ambassadors were exchanged once again a few months later. In March 1952 the assassination of the Pakistani prime minister by an Afghan citizen living in Pakistan was another irritant in bilateral relations, although the Pakistani government accepted Afghan denials of any involvement on its part.

The Pakistani government, despite its preoccupation with many other problems, adopted from the beginning a very conciliatory attitude toward its Pashtun citizens. The residents of the Tribal Agencies were permitted to retain virtual autonomy, expenditures on health and other services in the NWFP were disproportionately higher than in other areas of the country, and only a few units of a locally recruited Frontier Corps were left in the Tribal Agencies (in contrast with the 48 regular army battalions that had been kept there under British rule). The government also continued to pay subsidies to hundreds of *maliks* (chiefs or leaders) in the tribal areas.

The issue of the international boundary through Pashtun areas was of the greatest possible importance to the policymakers in Kabul, just as it had been in the days of Amir Abdur Rahman. The beginning in recent times of Afghanistan's ties to the Soviet Union grew at least partially from the Pashtunistan and related issues. By the 1950s the United States—which had replaced Britian as the major Western power in the region—had begun to develop a strong relationship with Pakistan. When in 1950 Pakistan stopped vital transshipments of petroleum to Afghanistan for about three months, presumably to retaliate for the attacks across the border by Afghan tribes, the Afghan government became more interested in offers of aid from the Soviet Union and, in July 1950, signed a major agreement with the Soviet Union.

Early Links with the Soviet Union

Although Afghanistan had established diplomatic ties with the Soviet Union in one of its earliest gestures of independence in 1919 and although extensive bilateral trade contacts had come into being by the late 1930s, the cutoff of petroleum by Pakistan over the Pashtunistan issue and the consequent trade agreement between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union were major watersheds in bilateral relations. As Dupree states, the 1950 agreement was far more than a barter agreement to exchange Soviet oil, textiles, and manufactured goods for Afghan wool and cotton; the Soviets offered aid in construction of petroleum storage facilities, oil and gas exploration in northern Afghanistan, and permission for free transit of goods to Afghanistan across Soviet territory. The new relationship was attractive to the Afghans not only because it made it difficult for Pakistan to disrupt the economy with a blockade or a slowdown of transshipped goods but also for a political purpose traditionally dear to Afghan rulers, i.e., it provided a balance to American aid in the Helmand Valley Project. In the years following the 1950 agreement, Soviet-Afghan trade increased sharply, and the Afghan government welcomed a few Soviet technicians and a Soviet trade office.

Experiment with Liberalized Politics

The third major policy focus of the immediate postwar period in Afghanistan was the experiment in political liberalization implemented by Shah Mahmud. Encouraged by young,

Western-educated members of the political elite, the prime minister allowed national assembly elections that were distinctly less controlled than ever before, resulting in the "liberal parliament" of 1949. He also relaxed strict press censorship and allowed opposition political groups to come to life. The most important of these groups was Wikh-i-Zalmayan (Awakened Youth), a movement made up of diverse dissident groups founded in Qandahar in 1947. As the new liberal parliament began taking its duties seriously and questioning the king's ministers, students at Kabul University also began to debate political questions. A newly formed student union provided not only a forum for political debate but also produced plays critical of Islam and the monarchy. Newspapers criticized the government, and many groups and individuals began to demand a more open political system.

The liberalization clearly went further than the prime minister had intended. His first reaction was to ride the tide by creating a government party, but when this failed, the government began to crack down on political activity. The Kabul University student union was dissolved in 1951, the newspapers that had criticized the government were closed down, and many of the leaders of the opposition were jailed. The parliament elected in 1952 was a large step backward from the one elected in 1949; the experiment in open politics was over.

The liberal experiment had an important effect on the nation's political future. It provided the breeding ground for the revolutionary movement that would come to power in 1978. Nur Muhammad Taraki, who became president following the 1978 coup d'état claimed in his official biography to have been the founder of the Wikh-i-Zalmayan and the dissident newspaper, *Angar* (Burning Embers). Writer Beverley Male notes, however, that the claim appears exaggerated. Babrak Karmal, who became president after the Soviet invasion of December 1979, was active in the Kabul University student union during the liberal period and was imprisoned in 1953 for his political activities. Hafizullah Amin later claimed to have also played a role in the student movement, although his activities were apparently not so noteworthy as to bring about his imprisonment by the government.

The government crackdown in 1951 and 1952 suddenly ended liberalization and alienated many young, reformist Afghans who may have originally hoped only to reform the existing structure rather than radically transform it. As Male suggests, "the disillusionment which accompanied the abrupt

termination of the experiment in liberalism was an important factor in the radicalisation of the men who later established the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan."

Daoud as Prime Minister, 1953-63

In the wake of the failed political reforms of the 1949–52 period came a major shakeup within the royal family. Fraser-Tytler notes that since the advent of Nadir Shah to the throne in 1929, Afghanistan had been ruled by the royal family as a united group. By mid-1953, however, the younger members of the royal family (including perhaps the king himself) had challenged the dominance of the king's uncles, and in September 1953 the rift became public when the king's first cousin and brother-in-law, Daoud (son of the third Musahiban brother, Muhammad Aziz, who had been assassinated in Berlin in 1933), became prime minister. The king's uncle, Shah Mahmud, left his post, but he continued to proffer his support and advice to the new leaders. The change occurred peacefully, entirely within—and apparently with the consent of—the royal family.

Prime Minister Daoud was the first of the young, Western-educated generation of the royal family to wield power in Kabul. If the proponents of the liberal experiment hoped that he would move toward a more open political system, they were disappointed. Daoud was, as Fraser-Tytler puts it, "by temperament and training...of an authoritarian habit of mind." By all accounts, however, he was a dynamic leader whose accession to power marked major changes in Afghanistan's policies, both domestic and foreign.

Although Daoud was concerned to correct what he perceived as the pro-Western bias of previous governments, his keen interest in modernization manifested itself in continued support of the Helmand Valley project, which was designed to transform life in southwestern Afghanistan. Another area of domestic policy initiative by Daoud included his cautious steps toward emancipation of women. At the fortieth celebration of national independence in 1959, Daoud had the wives of his ministers appear in public unveiled. When religious leaders protested, he challenged them to cite a single verse of the Quran that specifically mandated veiling. When they continued to resist, he jailed them for a week. Daoud also increased control over the tribes, starting with the repression of a tribal war in the contentious Khost area adjacent to Pakistan in Sep-

tember 1959 and the forcible collection of land taxes in Qandahar in December 1959 in the face of antigovernment demonstrations promoted by local religious leaders.

Daoud's social and economic policies within Afghanistan, reformist but cautious, were relatively successful; his foreign policy—which was carried out by his brother, Mohammad Naim—although fruitful in some respects, resulted in severe economic dislocation and, ultimately, his own political eclipse. Two principles guided Daoud's foreign policy: to balance what he regarded as the excessively pro-Western orientation of previous governments by improving relations with the Soviet Union but without sacrificing economic aid from the United States, and to pursue the Pashtunistan issue by every possible means. The two goals were to some extent mutually reinforcing because hostilities with Pakistan caused the Kabul government to fall back on the Soviet Union as its trade and transit link with the rest of the world. Daoud believed that the rivalry between the two superpowers for regional clients or allies created the conditions in which he could play one off against the other in his search for aid and development assistance.

Relations between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union in the 1953–63 period began on a high note with a Soviet development loan equivalent to US$3.5 million in January 1954. Daoud's desire for improved bilateral relations became a necessity when the Pakistani-Afghan border was closed for five months in 1955. When the Iranian and American governments declared that they were unable to create an alternate Afghan trade access route of nearly 5,800 kilometers to the Persian Gulf or the Arabian Sea, the Afghans had no choice but to request a renewal of the 1950 transit agreement. The renewal was ratified in June 1955 and followed by a new bilateral barter agreement: Soviet petroleum, building materials, and metals in exchange for Afghan raw materials. After a December 1955 visit to Kabul by Soviet leaders Nikolay Bulganin and Nikita Khrushchev, the Soviet Union announced a US$100 million development loan for projects to be mutually agreed upon. Before the end of the year the Afghans also announced a 10-year extension of the Soviet-Afghan Treaty of Neutrality and Non-Aggression, originally signed in 1931 by Nadir Shah. Afghan-Soviet ties grew throughout this period, as did Afghan links with the Soviet Union's East European allies, especially Czechoslovakia and Poland.

Despite these strengthened ties to the Soviet Union, the Daoud regime sought to maintain good relations with the Unit-

ed States, which began to be more interested in Afghanistan as a result of the efforts by Dwight D. Eisenhower's administration to solidify an alliance in the "Northern Tier" (Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan). Adhering to its nonaligned stance, the Afghan government refused to join the American-sponsored Baghdad Pact, although Eisenhower's personal representative was courteously welcomed when he came to discuss regional issues in 1957. These rebuffs did not deter the United States from continuing its relatively low-level aid program in Afghanistan. Its other projects in the 1953-63 period included the Qandahar International Airport (which became obsolete with the advent of jet aircraft), assistance to Ariana Afghan Airlines, and continuation of the Helmand Valley Project.

The United States was reluctant to provide Afghanistan with military aid, and the Daoud government successfully sought it from the Soviet Union and its allies. These nations agreed to provide Afghanistan with the equivalent of US$25 million worth of military matériel in 1955 and also undertook the construction of military airfields in Mazar-e Sharif, Shindand, and Bagrami. Although the United States did provide military training for Afghan officers, it made no attempt to match Soviet arms transfers. Dupree points out that eventually the United States and Soviet aid programs were bound to overlap, and when they did there developed a quiet, de facto cooperation between the two powers.

All other foreign policy issues faded in importance, given Daoud's virtual obsession with the Pashtunistan issue. His policy disrupted Kabul's important relationship with Pakistan and—because Pakistan was landlocked Afghanistan's main trade route—the dispute virtually cut off development aid, except from the Soviet Union, and sharply diminished Afghanistan's external trade for several years.

In 1953 and 1954 Daoud simply applied more of the same techniques used in the past to press the Pashtunistan issue, i.e., hostile propaganda and payments to tribesmen (on both sides of the border) to subvert the Pakistani government. In 1955, however, the situation became more critical from Daoud's point of view. Pakistan, for reasons of internal politics, abolished the four provincial governments of West Pakistan and formed one provincial unit (like East Pakistan). The Afghan government protested the abolition of the NWFP (excluding the Tribal Agencies), and in March 1955 a mob in Kabul attacked the Pakistani embassy and consulate and tore down

their flags. Retaliatory mobs attacked the Afghan consulate in Peshawar, and soon both nations recalled their officials from the neighboring state. Despite the failure of mediation by a group of Islamic states, tempers eventually cooled, and flags were rehoisted above the diplomatic establishments in both countries. This incident left great bitterness in Afghanistan, however, where interest in the Pashtunistan issue remained high, and the closure of the border during the spring and fall of 1955 again underlined to the Kabul government the need for good relations with the Soviets to provide assured transit routes for Afghan trade.

Although the Afghan side was not resigned to accepting the status quo on the Pashtunistan issue, the conflict remained dormant for several years, during which relations improved slightly between the two nations. Nor did the 1958 coup that brought General Mohammad Ayub Khan to power in Pakistan bring on any immediate change in the situation. In 1960, however, Daoud sent Afghan troops across the border into Bajaur in an unsuccessful and foolhardy attempt to manipulate events in that area and to press the Pashtunistan issue. The Afghan forces were routed by the Pakistan military, but military skirmishes along the border continued at a low level in 1961, often between Pakistani Pashtun (armed by the Afghans) and Pakistani regular and paramilitary forces. The propaganda war, carried out by radio, was more vicious than ever during this period.

Finally, in August 1961 Pakistan used another weapon on Afghanistan: It informed the Afghan government that its subversion made normal diplomatic relations impossible and that Pakistan was closing its consulates in Afghanistan, requesting that Afghanistan follow suit. The Afghan government, its pride severely stung, responded that the Pakistanis had one week to rescind this policy, or Afghanistan would cut diplomatic relations. When the Pakistanis failed to respond to this, Afghanistan severed relations on September 6, 1961. Traffic between the two countries came to a halt, just as two of Afghanistan's major export crops were ready to be shipped to India. The grape and pomegranate crops, grown in traditionally rebellious areas, were bought by the government to avoid trouble. The Soviet Union stepped in, offering to buy the crops and airlift them from Afghanistan. What the Soviets did not ship, Ariana Afghan Airlines airlifted to India, so that in both 1961 and 1962 the fruit crop was exported successfully. Dupree notes that although the loss of this crop would not have been as

disastrous to the average Afghan as observers generally suggest, the situation did provide the opportunity for a fine public relations gesture by the Soviets. At the same time, although the United States attempted to mediate the dispute, it was clearly linked closely to Pakistan.

More than the fruit crop was jeopardized by the closure of Afghanistan's main trade route. Much of the equipment and material provided by foreign aid programs and needed for development projects was held up in Pakistan. Another outgrowth of the dispute was Pakistan's decision to close the border to nomads (members of the Ghilzai, variously known as Powindahs or Suleiman Khel), who had been spending winters in Pakistan and India and summers in Afghanistan as long as anyone could remember. Although the Pakistani government denied that the decision was owing to the impasse with Afghanistan, this claim appeared disingenuous, and the issue added weight to the growing conflict between the two countries. Afghanistan's economic situation continued to deteriorate. The nation was heavily dependent upon customs revenues, which fell dramatically; trade suffered, and foreign exchange reserves were seriously depleted.

It became clear by 1963 that the two stubborn leaders, Daoud of Afghanistan and Ayub Khan of Pakistan, would not yield and that one of them would have to be removed from power to resolve the issue. Despite growing criticism of Ayub among some Pakistanis, his position was strong internally, and it was Afghanistan's economy that was suffering most. In March 1963 King Zahir Shah, with the backing of the royal family, asked Daoud for his resignation on the basis that the country's economy was deteriorating because of Daoud's Pashtunistan policy. During the decade that Daoud was prime minister, the king, who was his peer in age, had become better known by the public and more influential in the royal family and the political elite. Because he controlled the armed forces, Daoud almost certainly had the power to resist the king's request for his resignation, but he did not do so. Daoud bowed out, as did his brother Naim, and Zahir Shah named as the new prime minister Muhammad Yousuf, a non-Pashtun, German-educated technocrat who had been serving as the minister of mines and industries.

The King Rules: The Last Decade of Monarchy, 1963–73

The decision to ask Daoud to step down had been reached

not only within the royal family but also with the involvement of other members of the Afghan political elite. This set the tone for the 10 years to follow, in which Zahir Shah ruled as well as reigned but with a broad base of support within the political elite. The reaction to the dramatic change in Kabul was subdued. Although some Afghans attributed Daoud's fall to covert American intervention (because of Daoud's friendship with the Soviets), others were delighted that the unnatural strain in relations with Pakistan could be ended. A thriving black market trade had continued across the border, but the hostility had weighed heavily on the daily life of many Afghans, especially city dwellers, who had experienced a doubling of prices for many essential commodities since the 1961 border closing. Dupree observes that devout Afghans expected an end to Daoud's secularization, intellectuals anticipated social and political reforms, and the population in general seemed to feel that while Daoud's economic reforms had benefitted the nation, his stubbornness on the Pashtunistan issue made his departure necessary. He notes that only three groups were unhappy over Daoud's resignation: the Pashtunistan fanatics, royal family members who worried about giving nonfamily members any power in decisionmaking, and pro-Soviet Afghans.

Although it could not provide the immediate transformations the public expected, the new government clearly both represented and sought change. The prime minister and at least one other cabinet member were non-Pashtuns; only four of the new cabinet were Durrani, and none was a member of the royal family. Before the end of May the government had appointed a committee to draft changes in the constitution, had ordered an investigation into the abysmal conditions of Afghan prisons, and had reached agreement with Pakistan on the reestablishment of diplomatic and trade relations.

The single greatest achievement of the 1963–73 decade was the 1964 constitution. Only two weeks after the resignation of Daoud, the king appointed a committee to draft a new constitution. By February 1964 a draft document had been written, and within a few months another royal commission, including members of diverse political and ethnic backgrounds, had reviewed and revised the draft. In the spring of 1964 the king ordered the convening of a Loya Jirgah—a national gathering that included the members of the National Assembly, the Senate, the Supreme Court, and both constitutional commissions. One hundred seventy-six members were

elected by the provinces, and 34 members were appointed directly by the king. As Dupree notes, Afghan monarchs had abused the mechanism of a Loya Jirgah in the past by allowing only their own supporters to attend. Although the assemblage of 452 persons (including six women) that met in September 1964 was composed predominantly of officials who could be expected to support the royal line, the Loya Jirgah also included members elected from the entire nation. Dupree notes that the government did screen out many potential dissidents but concludes that "on the whole. . .delegates to the Loya Jirgah appeared to represent the full range of social, political, and religious opinion."

The 10-day deliberation of the Loya Jirgah produced heated debates and significant changes in the draft constitution. On September 20 the constitution was signed by the 452 members, and on October 1 it was signed by the king and became the constitution of Afghanistan. The constitution—and the deliberations that produced it—demonstrated several interesting changes in political thinking. It barred the royal family, other than the king, from politics and government—a provision that was viewed as being aimed at keeping Daoud out of politics. Individual, as opposed to tribal, rights were strongly championed by provincial delegates, and most conservative religious members were persuaded to accept provisions that they had previously suggested were intolerably secular. The succession issue within the royal family was settled to common satisfaction. The most interesting aspect of this discussion was one delegate's query as to why the throne should not go to the king's eldest daughter if there was no qualified male heir. Although some delegates were horrified and the question was not seriously considered, Dupree notes that the mere fact of its being asked was a sign of growing political sophistication among Afghans. Although there was lengthy debate over the use of the word *Afghan* to denote all citizens of Afghanistan (many people regarding it as a reference to Pashtuns alone), it was agreed by the Loya Jirgah that this term should refer to all citizens. The constitution provided that state religious rituals be conducted according to the Hanafi rite and identified Islam as "the sacred religion of Afghanistan," but it was still necessary to persuade many conservative religious members of the group that Islam had been enshrined in the constitution. Although Article 64 provided that there be no laws that were "repugnant to the basic principles" of Islam, Article 69 defined laws as resolutions passed by the houses of parliament and

signed by the king, with sharia to be used when no such law existed. The constitution's provisions for an independent judiciary gave rise to heated debate among religious leaders, many of whom supported the existing system of religious laws and judges. The new constitution incorporated the religious judges into the judicial system, but it also established the supremacy of secular law.

The new constitution provided for a constitutional monarchy with a bicameral legislature, but predominant power remained in the hands of the king. Despite the difficulties imposed by widespread illiteracy, low voter turnout, attempts by some government officials (especially in the outlying areas) to influence the results, the lack of political parties, and the fact that Afghanistan was a tribal society with no tradition of national elections, most observers described the 1965 election as remarkably fair. The 216-member Wolesi Jirgah, the lower house of parliament, included representation by not only antiroyalists but also by both the left and right of the political spectrum. It included supporters of the king, Pashtun nationalists, entrepreneurs and industrialists, political liberals, a small leftist group, and conservative Muslim leaders who still opposed secularization. In heated early debates some members castigated the members of Yousuf's transitional cabinet. A student sit-in in the lower house of parliament was followed by demonstrations in which government troops killed three civilians, shocking many Afghans. The king nominated another prime minister, Mohammad Hashim Maiwandwal, who quickly established a firm but friendly relationship with the students. There were, of course, rumors in Kabul about outside support for these and subsequent demonstrations. Dupree, who was in Kabul at the time, finds it unlikely that they were the work of outside agitators but rather resulted from "homegrown dissatisfaction with the ministerial clique which had played musical chairs during the Daoud regime and the succeeding interim regime."

On January 1, 1965, the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) was founded. This was not an orthodox Marxist party but an entity created out of diverse leftist groups that united for the principal purpose of gaining parliamentary seats in the elections. The fact that four PDPA members won parliamentary seats suggests that government efforts to intervene in the balloting to prevent the success of its leftist opponents were halfhearted.

The press was semicontrolled. Starting in 1966, as many as

30 newspapers were established and, although some were short-lived, they provided the focus for the many political groups in Kabul that now began to make their views known. Taraki, one of the four PDPA members elected to parliament in 1965, started the first major leftist newspaper, *Khalq* (Masses), which lasted little more than a month before being banned by the government.

Student unrest continued and escalated into violence, which included police beatings of student and faculty demonstrators. For a month and a half in 1969 there was a citywide student strike in Kabul, but the government refused to give in to student demands, and the university was peacefully reopened in November.

The Afghan political system remained suspended between democracy and monarchy, though much closer to the latter. Political parties remained banned because the king refused to sign legislation that had passed the parliament allowing parties. The lower house of parliament engaged in free and often insulting criticism of government policies and personnel. Although unorganized as a legislative body, the Wolesi Jirgah was able to exert some influence on the royal administration.

By 1969 the PDPA had already undergone an important split, the faction of Babrak Karmal parting company ideologically with Taraki (see Evolution of the PDPA as a Political Force, ch. 4.) The new group's newspaper, *Parcham* (Banner), operated from March 1968 until July 1969 when it was closed. It was not long before other divisions within the PDPA began to occur.

The 1969 parliamentary elections (in which voter turnout was not much greater than that of 1965) produced a parliament that was more or less consistent with the real distribution of power and population in the Afghan hinterland; conservative landowners and businessmen predominated, and many more non-Pashtuns were elected than in the previous legislature. Most of the urban liberals and all female delegates lost their seats. There were few leftists in the new parliament, although Karmal and Hafizullah Amin (a mathematics teacher educated in the United States) had been elected from districts in and near Kabul. Former prime minister Maiwandwal, a democratic socialist, lost his seat because of government interference.

The years between 1969 and 1973 saw a critical downturn in Afghan politics. The parliament—on which hopes for democracy in Afghanistan had depended—was lethargic and

deadlocked; Griffiths reports that it passed only one minor bill in the 1969–70 session. Public dissatisfaction over the lack of stable government reflected the fact that there were five prime ministers in the decade starting in 1963. There was a growing polarization of politics as the left and the right began to attract more and more members. The king, although still personally popular, came under increasing criticism for not supporting his own prime ministers and for withholding support from legislation passed by the parliament (such as the political parties bill). Some critics of the government blamed not the king but his cousin (and son-in-law) General Abdul Wali, a key military commander, or other members of the royal family. Abdul Wali, commander of the Kabul region and of the palace guard, was especially hated by leftists for having ordered troops to fire on demonstrators in October 1965. Other disruptive elements were two successive years of drought followed by a tragic famine in 1972 in which as many as 100,000 Afghans may have perished. Relief efforts and foreign donations were mishandled, and there were accusations of speculation and hoarding that eroded public confidence in government administration. Finally, the Indo-Pakistani War and the secession of Bangladesh from Pakistan in 1971 was closely watched in Afghanistan, where interest in Pakistani politics was great and where the Pashtunistan issue always lurked near the surface of politics.

It was in this atmosphere of external instability and internal dissatisfaction and polarization that Daoud executed a coup d'état that he had been planning for more than a year in response to the "anarchy and the anti-national attitude of the regime." While the king was out of the country for medical treatment, Daoud and a small military group took power with strong resistance only from the regent, Abdul Wali. The stability Zahir Shah had sought through limited democracy under a constitution had not been achieved, and there was a generally favorable popular response to the reemergence of Daoud, even though it meant the demise of the monarchy established by Ahmad Shah Durrani in 1747.

Daoud's Republic, 1973-78

The welcome Daoud received upon returning to power on July 17, 1973, reflected the popular disappointment with the lackluster politics of the preceding decade. Daoud was a par-

ticularly appealing figure to military officers. It had been under his leadership in the 1950s and early 1960s that the military had been modernized and expanded. The more conservative upper echelons of the military—most from leading Pashtun families—were reassured by the fact that in addition to his assiduous attentions to the army when he was prime minister, Daoud was a prominent member of the royal family. The coup may have been accepted by some conservative elements both within and outside the army in the same way that their ancestors had allowed the throne to change hands among royal brothers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In addition, Daoud's strong position on the Pashtunistan issue had not been forgotten by conservative Pashtun officers.

Western journalists speculated that the Daoud coup was procommunist not only because of his good relationship with the Soviets during his decade as prime minister but also because of the evident support of the coup by elements of the PDPA. The important question of Daoud's relationship with the PDPA—especially with Karmal's Parcham faction—is viewed somewhat differently by the various scholars and journalists who have analyzed the 1973 coup. There is general agreement that Daoud had been meeting with various "friends" (in Daoud's own words) "for more than a year." Journalist Anthony Hyman suggests that although these meetings included liberals as well as left-wing civilians and officers, the coup was carried out by junior officers trained in the Soviet Union. Dupree believes that some Parcham members were integrally involved in planning the coup with Daoud. Male suggests that Daoud had entered into a temporary alliance with the Parcham faction solely for convenience because it was Parcham (rather than Khalq) who had focused recruitment efforts on the military between 1969 and 1973. An Afghan specialist in international affairs, writing under the pseudonym Hannah Negaran, believes that Khalq and Parcham were the "backbone" of the 1973 coup and that Daoud, who was asked to lead the movement because he was well-known, later removed them from power. Journalist Henry S. Bradsher notes that some Afghans suspected that Daoud and Karmal had been in touch for many years and that Daoud had used Karmal as his major source of information on the leftist movement. No strong evidence can be cited to support this, other than the fact that Karmal's father, an army general, was close to Daoud. Bradsher believes that Parcham's role in Daoud's coup could not have been very significant because by 1973 Parcham had

not, despite its efforts, built a strong network in the army. It is difficult to assess exactly which of the officers who took part in the coup were PDPA members and of which faction because, as Bradsher notes, there were changes in allegiance following the coup.

Although leftists had certainly played some role in the coup itself, and despite the appointment of two leftists as ministers (Faiz Mohammad as minister of interior and Pacha Gul Wafadar as minister for tribal affairs), the weight of the evidence suggests that the coup was Daoud's. The new president declared that his government had no "connection with any group" and refused to be linked with any faction, communist or other. Officers personally loyal to him were soon placed in key positions while young Parchamites were sent to the provinces, ostensibly to give them the opportunity to put their ideas into practice but probably to get them out of Kabul. They met with the sometimes violent resistance of rural Afghans. By 1974 Daoud felt he could begin to purge leftists and put relatives and other loyal figures in their place. By the end of 1975 Daoud had purged leftist officers, and the last Parchami left the cabinet when interior minister Faiz Mohammad was replaced by a former chief of police.

In 1975 Daoud established his own political party, the National Revolutionary Party, which was to be the focus of all political activity. In January 1977 a Loya Jirgah approved Daoud's constitution, which established a presidential, one-party system of government.

Resistance to the new regime from any quarter was repressed. A coup attempt by Maiwandwal, which may have been planned before Daoud took power, was put down shortly after Daoud's coup. In October 1973 the former prime minister—who was also a highly respected former diplomat—died in prison under circumstances that supported the widespread belief that he had been tortured to death. Bradsher reports that there were hundreds of arrests, five political executions (the first in more than 40 years), and failed coup attempts in 1974, 1975, and 1976.

Parcham's collaboration with Daoud had not provided them with any more power in the long run than Khalq's more cautious attitude. Despite Daoud's purge of leftists by late 1975, Parcham and Khalq were as bitter as ever toward one another, perhaps more so in the wake of a reported plan by Parchamites to assassinate the Khalq leadership. Taraki, in his later writings, reports that in 1976 Amin, organizer of the

PDPA's military arm, declared that the party was in a position to take power. Taraki refused to move, however. As Male points out, this decision had unfortunate repercussions for the Khalqis because the Parchami faction, which organizationally (if not wholeheartedly) rejoined the PDPA in July 1977, was in a position to share power when the PDPA took over the government in 1978.

Daoud still favored a state-centered economy, and three years after coming to power he drew up an ambitious seven year-economic plan (1976-1983) that included major schemes and would have required a major influx of foreign aid (see Growth and Structure of the Economy, ch. 3). Daoud's turn away from the left in domestic politics was matched by a move as early as 1974 to move away from the steadily increasing reliance on the Soviet Union for military and economic support. As early as 1974 Daoud had begun a military training program with India, and in the same year he began talks with Iran on economic development aid. The shah of Iran, under the impression that the recent quadrupling of his nation's oil revenues would make vast amounts of money available to influence regional politics, agreed in October 1974 to give Afghanistan a US$10 million grant to study the feasibility of several development projects, and some observers reported that the shah might provide as much as US$2 billion in aid over the next decade. Daoud turned not only to the conservative Iranian regime for aid but also to other oil-rich Muslim nations, such as Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Kuwait. The overheated Iranian economy showed signs of strain by 1975, however, and by 1977 it was clear that Iran could not provide the amount of aid envisaged earlier.

Pashtunistan zealots confidently expected that the new president would push this issue with Pakistan, and in the first months of the new regime bilateral relations were in fact poor. Efforts by Iran and the United States to cool a tense situation succeeded after a while, and by 1977 relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan improved notably. Visits between the heads of state of the two nations were exchanged, and during Daoud's March 1978 visit to Islamabad an agreement was reached, providing that President Mohammad Zia ul Haq of Pakistan would release from prison Pashtun and Baluch militants and that Daoud would reduce support for these groups and expel Pashtun and Baluch militants who had taken refuge in Afghanistan. Bradsher suggests that Daoud backed away from his previous stance on the Pashtunistan issue not only

because of Iranian and other foreign pressure but also because the Soviets would not support as tough a line as Daoud had once taken.

Daoud's ties with the Soviet Union, like his relations with Afghan communists, deteriorated during the five years of his presidency. Although, as Bradsher notes, Soviet aid during the five-year period amounted to more than Iranian, Saudi, and Western aid combined, the Soviets continually urged Daoud to include the PDPA in his government. Daoud's initial visit to the Soviet Union in 1974 was friendly, despite disagreement on the Pashtunistan issue, and the Soviets promised more aid and granted a moratorium on part of Afghanistan's bilateral debt. President Nikolay Podgorny of the Soviet Union visited Kabul in late 1975, but the official communiqués were somewhat less warm than those of the previous year.

By the time Daoud visited the Soviet Union again in April 1977, the Soviets were aware of his purge of the left that began in 1975, his removal of Soviet advisers from some Afghan military units, and his diversification of Afghan military training (especially to nations like India and Egypt, where they could be trained with Soviet weapons but not by Soviets). Despite the official goodwill, there were unofficial reports of sharp Soviet criticism of anticommunists in Daoud's new cabinet, of his failure to cooperate with the PDPA, and of Daoud's criticism of Cuba's role in the nonaligned movement. Bradsher cites reports by Afghans that Daoud responded to Leonid Brezhnev's bullying tactics either by slamming his fist on the conference table or by walking out of a meeting.

The Soviets could not have been happy with Daoud's more diversified foreign policy. He was friendly with Iran and Saudi Arabia; he had also scheduled a visit to Washington in the spring of 1978, and the administration of President Jimmy Carter was expected to increase the diminishing level of United States aid to Afghanistan.

By 1978 Daoud had achieved little of what he had set out to accomplish. Although there had been good harvests in 1973 and subsequent years, no real progress had been made, and the average Afghan's standard of living—which by UN standards was very low—had not improved. Most key political groups had been alienated by the spring of 1978. If intellectuals and liberals had hoped that Daoud's coup would break the power of the conservatives who controlled parliament and usher in a period of political progress, they were sorely disappointed. Daoud had simply gathered power into his own hands; dissent

was not tolerated. Muslim fundamentalists had been the object of repression as early as 1974, but their numbers increased nonetheless. Diehard Pashtunistan supporters (who were still numerous in the upper levels of the military) were disillusioned by Daoud's rapprochement with Pakistan, especially by what they regarded as his commitment in the 1977 agreement not to aid Pashtun militants in Pakistan.

Most ominous for Daoud were developments among Afghan communists. Whether under Soviet pressure or through the efforts of some other communist party, in March 1977 Khalq and Parcham had reached a fragile agreement on reunification. The two groups remained mutually suspicious, and the military arms of each faction remained uncoordinated because, by this time, Khalqi military officers vastly outnumbered Parchamis and feared that the latter might betray them to Daoud. Plans for a coup had long been discussed, but according to a statement by Amin afterward, the April 1978 coup was carried out about two years ahead of time. As Male suggests, Daoud's own actions in 1978 made the PDPA act sooner than planned.

On April 17, 1978, Mir Akbar Khyber, a key ideologue of the Parcham faction, was murdered in Kabul. This was the third political assassination in nine months and, like the killing of a strike leader in August and of the minister of planning in November 1977, has remained unsolved. There were unconvincing reports that Khyber had been killed by Iran's Savak or by the Soviet KGB. He could also have been murdered by Khalqis or by someone in Daoud's government. Rumors of government involvement were current within hours of his death. His funeral on April 19 served as a major rally for Afghan communists. Estimates of the crowd ranged from 10,000 to 30,000. Taraki and Karmal both made stirring speeches, and Daoud, worried about this demonstration of communist strength, ordered the arrest of PDPA leaders.

Bradsher suggests that Daoud's policy toward the PDPA—which he knew was operating clandestinely—had been based on the notion that it was a small, ineffective organization like the Parcham faction that he had so easily purged in 1975. According to this analysis, communist strength manifested at Khyber's funeral shocked Daoud into taking the communists more seriously. Unfortunately for Daoud, his reaction was strangely sluggish. It took him a week to arrest Taraki, and Amin was only placed under house arrest. According to subsequest PDPA writings, Amin, from his home under armed guard

and using his family as messengers, sent complete orders for the coup. Bradsher also suggests that other factors might have precipitated the coup. The army had been put on alert on April 26 because of a presumed "anti-Islamic" coup. Given Daoud's repressive and suspicious mood, officers known to have differed with Daoud, although without PDPA ties or with only tenuous connections to the communists, might have moved hastily to prevent their own downfall. On April 27, 1978, the coup began with troop movements at the military base at Kabul International Airport. It developed slowly over the next 24 hours as the rebels battled units loyal to Daoud in and around the capital. Daoud and most of his family were shot in the Presidential Palace on April 28.

Two hundred and thirty-one years of rule by Ahmad Shah and his descendants had ended, but it was less clear what kind of regime had succeeded them. It was several days before it was known to outsiders whether the coup of April 27–28, 1978, was a move by the military, the PDPA, or some combination of the two.

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The indispensable book for exploration of Afghan history is Louis Dupree's monumental work, *Afghanistan*, which includes a wealth of information from the point of view of a scholar (historian, anthropologist, and archaeologist) who has spent many years in the country. The foremost British historian of Afghanistan, W. Kerr Fraser-Tytler, has also written from the perspective of years spent in the region, and his book, *Afghanistan: A Study of Political Developments in Central and Southern Asia*, has valuable insights into all periods of Afghan history but especially into the nineteenth century. Arnold Charles Fletcher's *Afghanistan: Highway of Conquest* provides useful insights as well and is written in a pleasant, narrative style but without the scholarly references of Dupree. In the twentieth century there are more detailed studies of specific subperiods. Leon B. Poullada's *Reform and Rebellion in Afghanistan, 1919–1929* is a fascinating and well-written scholarly study of the reign of King Amanullah. It includes insights applicable to other periods of Afghan history as well. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)