



AFGHAN JIHAD AND ITS AFTER EFFECTS: A GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

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Abstract

This paper briefly investigates the Afghan Jihad; its after effects and the main affecters, actors and the events in a political and geographical context. The war in Afghanistan started was initially a Jihad but later it was not because it was an armed Jihad and the concept of Jihad (Holy war) was highly misunderstood the West and its allies. The war against the Soviet conflict in Afghanistan was termed as the "Holy Jihad" by the West and better-organized and planned resistance was started against the Soviet Union interference. Pakistan also intervened in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union and gained the support of Islamic countries, US and its allies. The insurgents have largely relied on guerrilla-style tactics in this war. Before this intervention, Afghanistan and Pakistan have a prolonged olden times of intense affairs over the terrorism, security concerns, Durand line, Pashtuns etc. In addition, India and Pakistan are also keen to affect developments in Afghanistan, both to advance their own geo-political, defense, and economic interests. Pakistan suffers and harmed innumerable as the result of Afghan War and so called 'War on Terror' after the 9/11. War was ended but drifted Pakistan to such a place form where it's drowned and more than 70,000 Pakistanis have been killed with an over \$150 billion losses to the Pakistani economy. Pakistan is still unable to solve its issues after war including social, political and economic crises.

Keywords: Islam, Jihad, Soviet Union, Afghan War, Impact.



Introduction

The concept of Jihad (Holy war) is one of the greatly misunderstood Islamic thought, and unluckily the West observes it as a simple hostility against distrust among them. Certain radical religious parties, who state their activities as Jihad, are showing Islam in a extremist and aggressive way giving a unclear image of Islam due to which the West has incorrectly understood the terrorist actions as the Islamic Jihad. Islamic perception of Jihad has completely no connection with the terrorism, radicalism or the barbarism. "Jihad can be defined as the struggle for the best and eradication of the evils. The religious struggle for the self-purification of soul is known as the utmost Jihad confirmed by the Holy Prophet Mohammed (PBUH). It is known as the Jihad-e-Akbar. According to the tradition of Holy Prophet's it is an elite effort for moral distinction, ethical precision and religious purification of humanity (Qadri, 2001)."

The war which was started in Afghanistan; was initially a Jihad but later it was not because it was an armed Jihad. The Jihad doesn't allow killing of the innocent, women, aged, children and patients. Moreover Jihad does not allow destruction of property and human acts of cruelty. Jihad is not allowed without the permission of Islamic government. And if there is no Islamic government at least there should be consensus of Ummah (Muslim Community). So there should be a Shoora or a national meeting" and if Ulama(Religious figure or Head)and religious organizations, without adopting proper legal and juristic way, start declaring Jihad on their own this would just create Fitna(Evil), disintegration and disruption (Qadri, 2001). The reason why afghan war was declared as Jihad was to gain support from religious groups and it was also against non-Muslims, i.e. communists.

The reason why Afghans started Jihad was to counter the communist regime which was taking grounds in Afghanistan. That government was initiating liberal policies which were practiced in former Soviet Union (USSR). The Islamist in Russia declared Jihad against the communist government. The preliminary Soviet operation of the 40th Army in Afghanistan started on December 24, 1979 under the Soviet chief Leonid Brezhnev (Ali, 1997). The ultimate troop departure began on May 15, 1988, and finished on February 15, 1989 under the last Soviet patron Mikhail Gorbachev. Owing to the perpetual environment of war, the war in Afghanistan had been sometimes attributed to as "Soviet Union's Vietnam War" or "the Bear Trap Russia" in order to back its followers intervened directly and a war was started (Ali, 1997). The borders of Pakistan became porous for the Afghans and Pakistanis were made to believe that it was a holy war to resist the Soviet occupation (Korejo, 2004). The mujahedeen received unofficial military aid from variety of countries including the United States, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom, Pakistan, Israel, Indonesia and China. It was not a matter of fact if weapons were supplied by Israel, as long as they were used by *Mujahedeen*(The Muslim fighters who were fighting a holy war) against the Soviets. Pakistan also allowed the mujahidin to establish military operations against the Soviet corps (Weinbaum, 1991).



The Afghan government, along with Soviet Union (SU) while its collaborator, received various aids from the Indian Government from Indira Gandhi. Russian military participation in the Afghanistan had a prolong record, which can be traced back to the most popular Tsarist territories in the supposed “Great Game” between Britain and Russia (Ali, 1997). It started in the 19th century with these happenings as the Panjdeh event, a military battle that occurred in 1885 when Russian troops detained the Afghan fields from south of River Oxus near the oasis at Panjdeh. Their keen interest in this territory sustained on via Soviet epoch, with many billions in the economic and armed forces aid which was sent to the country, Afghanistan between the years 1955 and 1978, the government of Afghan, having attained an agreement in the December 1978 which permitted them to call on the troops of Soviet, frequently requested the beginning of forces in Afghanistan in the seasons of spring and summer of 1979 (Ali, 1997). They had requested the Soviet forces to supply security and to help in the battle against the Mujahedeen insurgents. On April 14, 1979, the Government of Afghan pleaded that the USSR to deploy 15 to 20 helicopters along with its crews to the region of Afghanistan, as on the June 16, the Soviet Government took an initiative and sent a pair of war tanks (Kux, 2001). On the July 3, 1979, the Carter had signed the presidential judgment which authorized the funding for the so-called anticommunist guerrillas (who apply the policy of hit and ran away) in the Afghanistan as the counterpart of pivotal or Central Intelligence Agency plan which was called as “Operation Cyclone”, supervised by the belated Special Activities Division, that could later comprise the enormous arming of the Afghanistan’s mujahedeen. When a pro-Russian government was formed in Afghanistan, it claimed for Pashtunistan as it had the backing of the Soviet. Pakistan became alarmed as it was unable to counter Soviet from its own resources, and Russians were approaching nearer to Pakistan’s border. Afghanistan paved regional issues with the Pakistan, after Daoud pushed his hard-line Pashtunistan norms to the Pakistan (Rashid, 2002). Pakistan revenged, the Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto endorsed a concealed operation under the umbrella of M.I.’s Military Leader, Major-General Naseerullah Babar (Siddiqui, 2016).

After the dismemberment of east wing, i.e. Bangladesh, Pakistan became deserted and it needed a powerful ally to counter India as the latter had the backing of Russia. Pakistan exploited the situation by seeking help from US against Soviet invasion in Afghanistan and on the other hand it was getting an ally and that ally was USA (Syed, 1995). To counter India, Pakistan had also to initiate its nuclear pregame and for its completion she needed a huge amount and for that Afghan war became a great opportunity for Pakistan (Sattar, 2007). The nuclear program was also not criticized as Pakistan needed it to counter Soviet and it got new technology and weapons from US. The founding-father of the nuclear Programs of Pakistan and famous scientist, Sir, Dr. Abdul Qadir Khan had said that nuclear programs of Pakistan possess its strength due to the war of Afghan, which intertwined US roughly (Malik, 1990; Shaikh, 2002). He further said that the war of Afghan resulted in unrest in this region had given Pakistan an chance to accomplish the nuclear powers related programs. He said that there had been a wide peace in the Afghanistan, which would become complicated for Pakistan to achieve its nuclear arsenals program (Malik, 1990; Shaikh, 2002). When Pakistan intervened in Afghanistan, it gained the support of Islamic countries. The support was in



terms of economic aids, moral support and brotherly relation among the Muslim world. It was portrayed as an act of eradicating Islam in an Islamic country by the soviets (Syed, 1995). At that time, Pakistan had four options (Amin, 1982) which are as following.

- Adjustment with the Soviet Union and India.
- Alignment with United States of America.
- Policy of Neutrality.
- Policy of Neutrality with help from Iran and Muslim world.

Opting any of the policy was meant to decide the future of Pakistan both in terms of international scenario and in domestic ways. Opting for Soviet and India meant at that time a pie in the sky because both the countries were anti-Pakistan during the war of 1971 and both were favoring one another against Pakistan. Pakistan and India had bitter relations due to the war of 1971, and a mini cold war was being fought between the two (Ziring, 1978). The successful; nuclear program of India alarmed Pakistan. India backed the Afghans who are favoring Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.

Another fear was the “ideology factor” which was from both sides, from USSR as well as from India. India wanted Pakistan to remain silent on the issue of Kashmir where as Russia wanted Pakistan to let it favor communists in its domain, which meant a fear factor in coming time and giving Russia a blank check in the affairs of south Asia. This option was to be a warning for Iran, China, and USA as well as for the Muslim world. This option was not going to be tolerated by any of the countries which were anti-communism (Sattar, 2007).

Afghanistan-Pakistan Relations and the Policy of Neutrality

The anxious connection between Afghanistan and Pakistan is because the little attention has been given to subtleties in relations of Afghanistan-Pakistan, as well as to periods of constructive engagements from 1947 to 1978, before the start of the decades' long Afghan conflict (Rahi, 2020). Relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan pivot on the topic of Pashtun populations and the Taliban (Siddique, 2011). Pakistan and Afghanistan possessed an extended history of stressed relations paved by five persistent factors: concerns related to sovereignty, security interests, geopolitical drivers, cross-border relations, road ties and the trade. Combined, these determinants will definitely make future scenarios for steadiness in the Afghanistan and adjoining bordered territories (Threlkeld and Easterly, 2021). Pakistan had not to forget the views of its founding father, Mr. Jinnah who said that the foreign policy of Pakistan would be based on the policy of neutrality. But the Pakistan of Mr. Jinnah flowed in the Ganges River and it was the “New Pakistan” (the term used for the ‘West Pakistan’ By Bengali writers after dismemberment of East Pakistan in 1971), the Pakistan of Mr. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Pakistan was not in a position to opt for the policy of neutrality as it needed an ally if not against Soviet in Afghanistan but against India but in long run. To remain neutral and seeking help from every front against USSR was possible in short term but if India ever attacked Pakistan then the situation would be critical (Amin, 1982). This opting seems to be childish



when India was developing its nuclear armors.

The best option was to retain the policy of neutrality and build cordial relation with Iran and Muslim World. This was a dream which gone sour because the Muslim world was in a war against one another. Iran was in chaos due to Iranian/Islamic Revolution and then the long term war between Iran and Iraq (Nelson, 2018). The Arab-Israel war and backing of US to Israel was a question to be answered by Pakistan that to whom she should support. The Muslim world was to be united and then lead by a major country (Robinson, 2022).

Opting for US bloc means ending the policy of neutrality and bringing criticism at home from rest of the Muslim world. It was difficult to rely on as US betrayed Pakistan when she needed her support, i.e. war of 1965 and war of 1971 (Amin, 1982). Pakistan realized that US from start used Pakistan as a tissue paper, when it was needed it was used to wipe dirt from mouth and when the need was fulfilled it was thrown in the dustbin. USA had put embargoes on Pakistan due to its 1971 war with India and then its claim for nuclear program. But there was a shift which the government of carter was changed by Reagan. Aid of Carter was considered as “peanut” (very few) by Zia then huge aid flowed till Geneva accord (Ali, 1997).

“But during the last twenty years, the U.S. and Pakistani benefits have been gravely diverged. Combined by the accomplishment of Islamic warfare against the Soviets in the Afghanistan, The Pakistan had a perpetual support to these factions to acquire the strategic aims in India and Afghanistan.” While the history defines Pakistan as a ally or foe of the United States will most likely rely upon the strategy of Pakistan’ for its resolution in Afghanistan and the level to which it is wishing to lay down aside fear over India in support of denying insurgents sanctuary over its territory. A winning plan will approximately necessitate Pakistan combating with some of its earlier proxies.

“While the strategy of Admiral Mullen’s for commitment and accommodation remained failed to gather the desired Pakistani support, it still remains to be observed whether the government’s present mix of directness to talks with the nearly anyone in the Afghanistan, instantaneous military stress along with the borders of Afghan-Pakistani, will surely entice a better result from the leadership of Pakistan's military (Kux, 2001).” But Pakistan had to opt for the US bloc because US herself wanted an ally against Russia and for this it installed its own person in the shape of General Zia ul Haq. Pakistan got everything but all were like a dream. Everything vanished with Geneva accord. Pakistan got nothing from US except of sanctions and brought the war which was to be fought abroad in its own mother land, and it rendered new gigantic problems and evils to Pakistan which became its domestic issues and harming the image of Pakistan in the coming world. Weakening of state and society was due to afghan refugees as the borders were always porous (Grare, 2003). Refugees were never registered exactly rather they number was shown much higher than the existing one so as to get maximum number of economic aid. Increase in population resulted with less resources. Cheap labor also became available destroying the hold of previous expensive



daily wages labors.

The few after effects of the Afghan war were like crimes mafia took grounds due to unemployment of refugees and further more they were never checked or stopped from entering the cities. Law and order situation deteriorated and they became involved in crimes mafia (Grare, 2003). Kalashnikov culture flourished and promoted opium addiction in the society. Pakistan got a new image in the Global world after the war which was better known as Pakistan, a terrorist country. It was because of the *Madrasahs* (the places of religious education) which became camps for military training for Mujahedeen to prepare them for Jihad in Afghanistan (Korejo, 2004). However, Pakistan was benefitted due to large flow of Aid which was unchecked; Pakistan became able to complete its nuclear weapon and declared itself as an Islamic bomb. Its successful nuclear test reduced the fear of Indian factor. Excessive Aid finances were given to Pakistan for the settlement of refugees but they were used for making upper class more and much stronger. Temporary advantages included the strengthening of institutions which were timely (Khan, 2007). For time being, administrative and defense institutions became very strong but after end of holy war they were dashed to the ground except the institution of military. According to an official "Pakistan has suffered so much from the wars in Afghanistan as more than 70,000 Pakistanis have been killed and losses to the Pakistani economy have exceeded \$150 billion (Ahmed, 2021)." Thus, the drawbacks due to Pakistan intervention in Afghan war and later the so called 'War on Terror' after the 9/11 by US and its allies are related to domestic factors which became innumerable. War was ended but drifted Pakistan to such a place from where it's drowned and its society till the present day is unable to solve its issues including social, political and economic crises (GOP, 2014).

Geographical Significance of Afghan War on Surrounding Region

The Afghanistan and the Soviet Union are located geographically at the crossroads which link the Heartland of Eurasia with the Indian Ocean. Major Powers of the world emphasize much significance to these territories due to fulfilling their regional and the naval interests. This territory gathered the consideration of major powers because of the presence of the gas minerals and oil reserves. These world powers also emphasized over this region because of deteriorated health conditions, education plight, unsteady government, brittle transport system as well as poor governance mechanisms. During the 19th century rivalry of interests between the Russia and British Empire was named as "Great Game." Afghanistan treated as the buffer states between these two major powers and their region of interest was to increase their power in the capital Kabul's interactions in the peculiar while in the Central Asian in common (Morgan, 1973). Prior to the Afghan war, Islamic movements at all over the Muslim countries were originated in a spread form. The heads of these expeditions had the schema against their own governments but lacked of any theoretical power and framework. An organized and well planned confrontation was started against the Soviet Union intrusion in the Afghanistan. The warfare against the Soviet conflict was termed as the "Holy Jihad" by the West (Jones and Libicki, 2008).



These interests covered the geographic territories and the associations among the governments, business, international associations and civic society which focused highly on the political, economic and technological eras which governed overall changes as it is posed on the surrounding region especially on the Pakistan (Cheema, 1988). Furthermore, it shows the lived history of clash in Afghanistan among a rather geographically varied population. It assumed to construct on the existing struggles, especially those of Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission, to comprehend the roots and effect of war. Perhaps more significantly, it portrays the views and assumes of those who had suffered heavily but it have had a slight power to manipulate the leaders, events and conditions that had caused them very much damage.

During the era of 2002 to 2008, the security condition around the Afghanistan started to decrease as an rebellion formed and extended across the region. Geographically, the most rebellious activity was vested in the eastern and southern ethnic Pashtun territories of the country as the northern territories of Pakistan were exclusively used commonly by the rebellions as the most safe havens (Sheikh et al., 2012). Beyond manpower, al-Qaeda was too kept key weapons potentialities under the Luqman Khubab who was son of the former al-Qaeda radiological, biological, chemical and nuclear unit leader Abu Khabab al-Masri. During that epoch the al-Qaeda had also originated to have conceived such a unit in the Pakistan -Afghanistan area, possibly the theoretically unrefined but cash-rich, which struggles to deal in the black markets of the loose-fitting nuclear equipments (Hamm, 2005). Al-Qaeda also assumed the cells to organize material aids by means of geographic channels via Iranian regions and into the Pakistan and Afghanistan (Threlkeld and Easterly, 2021). Besides the Taliban were also using an indirect policy as they were struggling to exterminate the Afghan administration and continue to exist and oust the US and associated involvement. They were not struggling to beat the fresh Afghan government or the US troops in a significant warfares since they had rapidly understood they devoid in the capabilities in order to do so (Salt, 2018).

India and Pakistan are both keen to affect developments in Afghanistan, both to advance their own geo-political, defense, and economic interests and to prevent the other from gaining any advantage (Hanauer and Chalk, 2012). Especially after the establishments of CPEC and opening of Gwadar port with the aid of China, now a days India is very much interested in Chabahar port by assisting Iran to compete Pakistan's Gwadar port which had been completed with the aid of China. The area between these two ports is approximately 70 Kms. Kabul will definitely come out from the trade and the geographic remoteness after the execution of Chabahar port. New Delhi aspires to decrease Kabul's reliance on the Islamabad capital and it will try to diminish Pakistan's function in Afghanistan. Kabul may acquire many uses from this port for example effortless entry to international trade, import of necessary possessions, pulling of foreign companies to reach natural reserves of Iranian, Afghanistan and Indian trade towards the Central Asian States via Afghan region (Safi and Alizada, 2018).

Despite, many factors have been accumulated to make the border firm to watch A) Geography, as the region is very much big to monitor properly B) A few of the Pakistani authorities



on the official crossings of the border and besides this line, have extended aided or stopped their investigation to the difficult traffic along the cross-border C) As the Jihad against the Soviet Union in the Afghanistan, will have grasped the art of border crossing without any necessary detection by the concerned authorities on in any case the Afghan side D) At many territories along the Durand Line, dwellers from the same *Qaums* (who are called as the tribes in the popular language) abode on both sides of this line and they move front and back without any regard of this boundary. The ground of the kinetics approach is highly relied on the hypothesis that the technological advantage and masses are sufficient to press the opposition, despite “the rebels have greatly sought to showed full-on battlefield warfare’s and instead depended on guerrilla-style methods, comprising suicide attacks, kidnappings and the roadside bombings (Hussain, 2008).” Having the rough topography, lack of geographical evenness, and absence of the infrastructure, a force surge will enhance the extent of military operations which will allow for restoration efforts.

In addition, the isolation in the region was the political as well as geographical. Uzbeks had an exceptionally insignificant representation in Afghan political system. Because the Hezb-i wahdat concerned, it tried to make itself established as a full political collaborator but it was actually bound to abort due to some anti-Shia and the anti-Hazara injustices of the other parties (Dorransoro, 2007). All this was not to say, however that there was no present apprehension of Indians having desires of travelling to the Afghanistan again to indulge in the conflict there. Hence, the chief foreign fighters contingent of twenty one people to have attached the Islamic State from India had gone to the Afghanistan in the year 2017 and did not go to Iraq or Syria. It demonstrated the position of geographic closeness in their decision-making. Some of them had an vigorous role in these attacks on various targets; many were dead since, left behind widows who had not articulated sorrow in joining the group despite wanting to come back to India (Siyeche, 2022). All of these have made the situation worse in Afghanistan and its political and geographical impacts are contagious and spreading till these days.

Conclusion

The war which was started in Afghanistan; was initially a Jihad but later it was not because it was an armed Jihad and the concept of Jihad (Holy war) was highly misunderstood the West and its allies. When Pakistan intervened in Afghanistan War against Soviet Union, it gained the support of Islamic countries. A well planned and organized resistance was launched against Soviet Union intervention in Afghanistan. The war against Soviet resistance was labeled as “Holy Jihad” by the West. The insurgents have largely relied on guerrilla-style tactics, including suicide attacks, roadside bombings and kidnappings. Before this, Afghanistan and Pakistan have a long history of tense relations over terrorism, security concerns, Durand line, Pashtuns etc. In addition, India and Pakistan are also keen to affect developments in Afghanistan, both to advance their own geo-political, defense, and economic interests. Especially after the establishments of CPEC and opening of Gwadar port with the aid of China, India is now taking a keen interest in Chabahar port by aiding Iran to counter Pakistan’s Gwadar port. Pakistan suffers and harmed innumerable as the result of



Afghan War and so called 'War on Terror' after the 9/11 by US and its allies. The few after effects of the Afghan war were like deteriorated law and order situation, involvement of the refugees in crimes mafia, a new image of Pakistan in the world after the war as a 'Terrorist Country.' Additionally, the drawbacks due to Pakistan intervention in Afghan war are related to domestic factors which became innumerable. War was ended but drifted Pakistan to such a place form where it's drowned and its society till the present day is unable to solve its issues including social, political and economic crises.



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