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Școala Doctorală

PhD thesis summary:

USSR and NATO's military intervention and its impact on Afghanistan

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Introduction

Afghanistan became a geopolitical player in what became known as "The Great Game" between Tsarist Russia and the British Empire in the early nineteenth century. The fall of the Soviet Union resulted in a total conceptual reshaping of political power, as well as the means of gaining and maintaining it. The Soviet Union became the first country to establish diplomatic ties with Afghanistan in 1919. Afghanistan remained on the front lines of the Cold War when the U.S. emerged as the world's leading power.¹

Afghanistan was ruled by King Zahir Shah, the ruler of the country and the last King. Mohammad Najibullah's government stunned the world by defying mujaheddin forces attempting to overthrow the Afghan government. Afghanistan's Soviet-backed government lasted until the end of the decade when the Soviet troops withdrew in 1989.²

The years following this were the country's most disastrous and sad. This setback to Afghan ambitions and progressive efforts was caused by one irresponsible action - the invasion of Soviet troops.³

After the Saur Revolution Afghanistan was fully stabilized and secure from economic, military, social and political point of view, until the intergovernmental blunders and contradictions. This was the major key for destabilizing the government from inside, breaking down the pillars of the extreme super governance over the country.

Russian invasion of Afghanistan had a. Four following categories which were identified as the effects of the war and the fall of the Soviet Union. Domestic conflict, economic crisis, political situation, and military confrontation. An Islamic republic was declared by a transitional government backed by several rebel factions.⁴

NATO created a worldwide geopolitical doctrine against terrorism and chose to combat terrorism. Engaged in Afghanistan, reorganizing the Afghan National Security and Defense Forces. Afghanistan was a safe haven for Al Qaeda leader Usama Bin Laden and his associates after 9/11 attacks.

¹ SUZANNE MCGEE, "Why the Soviet Union Invaded Afghanistan" History, 4th of march, 2022
<https://www.history.com/news/1979-soviet-invasion-afghanistan> accession: 16th of June 2022.

² John Drinkall's report 'Afghanistan: Fall of the monarchy', 7 August 1973 the National Archives, UK.

³ Atay, ebrahem Academician candidate 2010Ad contemporary history of Afghanistan. pp30-60

⁴ Adam Augustyn, "Afghan War", Britannica, 20th of July, 1998
<https://www.britannica.com/event/Afghan-War/additional-info#history> accession date: 18th June, 2022.

Methodology

I employed qualitative literature research for this dissertation. I obtained further information with this objective in mind from official statements, treaties, officials, and some written papers. The dissertation's subject, which examines the military involvement by the USSR and NATO and its effects on Afghanistan, is best suited for the qualitative study.

The aim of all science is to discover answers to questions about the growth of an experience or reality via inquiry. For the purposes of this work, I kept in mind that the major pillars of reference should be authenticity and purity of ideas. In addition, for the study project, I gathered and translated certain data from Russian, Persian and Pashto languages.

Social scientists assume that there is a systematic manner of apprehending crucial elements to challenges that confront our social environment. Even the most hopeful researcher recognizes that he or she can only unearth what is available at the time of the investigation or during the period(s) before it.⁵ The term 'history' is of Greek origin and originally meant 'enquiry' or 'investigation'. The historical method was intended to bring particular measures taken by USSR and NATO in Afghanistan within a specified time frame, and then to evaluate them based on their outcomes.⁶

Using such a research methodology is significantly more suited and fixable - as it is a combinatorics' show off regarding the methodological balancing of the three methods that I have just presented. The decision I took was motivated by the fact that a research design should make the foundations of a study easier to understand. I took advantage of the opportunity to learn more about the importance of a study design for the overall presentation of research activities.

For instance, in his analysis of academic articles, Leedy defines research design as "a plan for a study, offering the overall method for acquiring data."⁷ Other descriptions of the study design, which are described as "a method for choosing applicants, research venues, and data collection processes to identify the research project," reveal more aspects.⁸

⁵ Jackson Ronald, Drummond Darlene K., Camara Sakile, *Qualitative Research Reports in Communication*, Vol.8, No.1, 2007, pages: 21-27, page:21.

⁶ Kochar S.K., *The Teaching of History*, New Dehli, Sterling Publishers, Pvt. Ltd., 1978, page:1.

⁷ Leedy P.D., *Practical Research: Planning and Design* (6th edition), New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 1997, page: 195.

⁸ Mcmillan James H., Schumacher Sally, *Research in Education: A Conceptual Introduction*, Scott, Foresman and Company, 2001, page: 166.

My research is primarily focused on USSR's and NATO's military intervention in Afghanistan, rather than on producing a one-size-fits-all approach to how military interventions fix and therefore do not rectify domestic situations. The ideographic study approach that I used provides voice to a more context-led analytical behavior that is individually oriented and more easily introduced in naturalistic situations.

Afghanistan's Historical Timeline

Afghanistan is located at the crossroads of Asia and Europe, and has never been conquered. The land was taken over by Genghis Khan in the 13th century, but the area was not unified as a single country until the 1700s. Islam had taken root in the area by 1870, after it had been attacked by different Arab invaders. Amir Amanullah Khan, concerned that Afghanistan has fallen behind the world, embarks on a vigorous socioeconomic reform drive. Amanullah proclaims himself king and declares Afghanistan a monarchy rather than an emirate. He implements a variety of modernization measures and strives to limit the Loya Jirga's (National Council) influence. Critics of Amanullah's actions go to the streets in 1928, and by 1929, the monarch has abdicated and left the kingdom. Afghanistan was created as a result of Britain's decision to withdraw from India in 1947, leaving India as an Islamic state and Pakistan as a primarily Hindu but secular state. In 1953, pro-Soviet Gen. Mohammed Daoud Khan becomes Prime Minister and turns to the Soviet Union for economic and military aid. Afghanistan used to be a peaceful, stable, agriculturally prosperous, and safe country before the USSR's military intervention. King Zahir Shah was Afghanistan's kingdom face the ruler of the country and the last King.⁹ Daoud Khan served as Prime Minister from 1953 to 1963 and was a royal by birth. Women were permitted to attend university and work as part of Daoud's reforms. The Afghan Communist Party emerges from the shadows. Traditionalist Islamic and ethnic leaders who oppose Khan's social advances launch an armed insurrection. The guerrilla movement Mujahadeen is founded in June to fight the Soviet-backed regime. Nur Mohammad Taraki, one of Afghanistan's founding members, is elected president, and Babrak Karmal is appointed deputy prime minister.

Afghanistan's first president, Mohammad Amin, and many of his supporters are killed after the Soviet Union invades Afghanistan on December 24, 1979. Babrak Karmal, the Deputy Prime Minister, takes over as Prime Minister; violent public demonstrations are the result of

⁹ John Drinkall's report 'Afghanistan: Fall of the monarchy', 7 August 1973 the National Archives, UK.

widespread resistance to him and the Soviets. By early 1980, the Mujahadeen insurgents had banded together against Soviet invaders and the Afghan Army, which was sponsored by the USSR. A rivalry between Taraki and another powerful communist leader leads to conflict between the two groups. Traditionalist Islamic and ethnic leaders who oppose Taraki's social advances launch an armed insurrection. The guerrilla movement Mujahadeen is founded in June to fight the Soviet-backed regime.¹⁰

Afghanistan and a political Misery

Sadly, the period that followed Afghanistan's "Golden Age" was the most sad and catastrophic in its history. "The central government that the Afghans had successfully established had been destroyed. This setback to Afghan ambitions and progressive efforts was caused by a single, dumb action. That action would start a long-lasting downward cycle of unrest, crime, and suffering. After World War II, the strategic situation in Afghanistan's east and south changed dramatically.¹¹ After agreeing to the division of its South Asian "Jewel in the Crown" into the newly independent, contentious nations of India and Pakistan, the United Kingdom exited the country. Immediate eastern neighbor of Afghanistan was no longer a colonial force, but competitive Pakistan, attempting to forge a national identity that it still needed.¹²

Invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union in 1979

The Soviet military was set up, provided with the necessary tools, and trained to wage chemical, nuclear, and high-intensity conventional combat on Europe's northern plains. In order to accomplish their operational goals during the Afghan War, the Soviet armed forces had to adapt to a new type of opponent. The research looks at the history of this procedure as well as Soviet advancements in strategy, organization, and gear. When civil strife in Afghanistan reached a delicate stage of development, Soviet forces were sent there. The internal struggle in Afghanistan continued during the Soviet military presence there (1979–1989), moving from one stage (social conflict) to others (ideological and national conflicts).

¹⁰ News Desk, "A Historical Timeline of Afghanistan", 30th August, 2021 <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/asia-jan-june11-timeline-afghanistan> accession date: 14th June 2022.

¹¹ Atay, Ebrahim Academician candidate 2010Ad contemporary history of Afghanistan. pp30-60

¹² Thomas Gouttierre 2012Ad What History Can Teach Us about Contemporary Afghanistan pp3-5

The armed opposition to Soviet forces also had to adjust to the changing environment at this time. These adjustments are directly related to the challenges the Soviet Military had in recognizing the opponent and comprehending its fighting prowess.

The majority of the opposing troops in Afghanistan fought under the Muslim flag. A brief history of how Islam spread among the various ethnic groups in Afghanistan is included in the paper. Despite Afghanistan's numerous distinctive characteristics and geographical particularities, the findings of the current study effort may be helpful in analyzing issues of a similar nature in other areas.¹³

The Secret Soviet mission to assassinate the president Of Afghanistan

According to a Human Rights Watch study from October 2001, when the United States forged military links with Pakistan in 1954, Afghanistan increasingly looked to the Soviet Union for backing as both the US and the Soviet Union battled for global hegemony.

The Soviet Union entered Afghanistan in 1979 with the goal of creating an important position in Asia with economic opportunities and access to Gulf oil. Afghanistan was a weak monarchy at the time, directed by King Zahir Shah, who was unable to bring the existing tribal community and central authority together. This division between the Afghan aristocracy and the central government and local tribal chiefs finally resulted in a monarchy revolution.

Hafizullah Amin, Afghanistan's communist president, was found unconscious in his bed. During lunch a KGB spy who had infiltrated Amin's staff as a chef poisoned the president and his ministers. Unaware of the KGB scheme, two Soviet medics labored feverishly at the palace to resuscitate Amin. His ministers were sent to a military hospital for treatment.

His chief of staff rushed him to the adjoining Defense Ministry, where he died in a hail of gunfire. Soviet soldiers had encircled the palace before the raid, seeking shelter in the deep snow. Some in Moscow viewed Amin as a dangerous ally; others feared he was trying to establish ties with the US.

The Soviet decision to depose Amin came as a shock to everyone, including Kabul's government, which had developed strong connections with Moscow since communists seized control in a violent coup in 1978. "The largest treachery was done by the Soviets," Faqir recalls. "There was a brotherly bond between us. We had no notion the Russians were going to attack

¹³ Oleg Kolakov, "Lessons learned from the Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan", 2006 <https://www.nato.int/docu/other/ru/ndc/pdf/5.pdf> accession date: 5th July 2022.

us¹⁴ the agony that began that day has continued to this day. By 1982, 2.8 million Afghans had sought refuge in Pakistan, with another 1.5 million fleeing to Iran. Through the deployment of shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles supplied by the United States, the mujahideen were able to neutralize Soviet air power.

Afghan Mujahideen

The Soviet-Afghan Friendship Treaty, which Amin signed in 1978, allowed Afghanistan to request military help and advice. In 1979, Soviet ground forces assumed control of Afghanistan, citing the treaty and seeking to strengthen an ally in Asia. The US partnered with Pakistani intelligence to recruit and train guerilla fighters known as Mujahadeen who could stand up to the Soviet army.

The mujahideen were divided politically into a few small organizations, and their military operations were disjointed throughout the conflict. The quality of their arms and battle organization progressively improved. The vast number of guns and other war equipment provided to the rebels via Pakistan by the United States and other nations, as well as sympathetic Muslims from across the world, contributed to their success.¹⁵

The Soviet military effort in Afghanistan against Afghan mujahideen militants is best remembered during the Karmal period, which lasted from 1979 to 1986. The mujahedin, Islamist militias that battled the communist government in Kabul and afterwards the Soviet Army, were financed by the US and Saudi Arabia. Millions of people fled to Pakistan and Iran as a result of the conflict.¹⁶ Soviet policymakers were concerned that Afghan President Mohammed Amin was pursuing a more "balanced approach" to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan than President Brezhnev's top Politburo members had hoped for. Growing US involvement in Afghanistan's disarray frightened Soviet policymakers since it raised the likelihood that Afghan leaders would seek assistance from the US.

¹⁴ Frud Bezhan and Petr Kubalek, "The Afghan President (To Be) Who Lived A Secret Life In A Czechoslovak Forest", Radio free Europe, 3rd November, 2019 [https://www.rferl.org/a/that-time-an-afghan-president-\(to-be\)-was-secretly-hiding-in-a-czechoslovak-forest/30250494.html](https://www.rferl.org/a/that-time-an-afghan-president-(to-be)-was-secretly-hiding-in-a-czechoslovak-forest/30250494.html) accession date: 11th June, 2022.

¹⁵ Amy Tikkanen, "Brezhnev Doctrine", 13th February, 2018 <https://www.britannica.com/event/Brezhnev-Doctrine> accession date: 14th June, 2022

¹⁶DBpedia, "Democratic Republic of Afghanistan", may, 2001 https://dbpedia.org/page/Democratic_Republic_of_Afghanistan accession: 15th June 2022.

One of the longest and most expensive covert CIA operations ever was Operation Cyclone. In 1980, funding ranged from \$20–\$30 million per year to \$630m per year in 1987. After 1989, funding continued as the mujahideen fought Mohammad Najibullah's PDPA forces in Afghanistan's civil war. Michael G. Vickers, a young CIA paramilitary officer, was the major architect of the operation.

The US provided two packages of economic aid and military sales to Pakistan in the 1980s and 1990s. The first six-year assistance package, from 1981 to 1987, cost \$3.2 billion and was split evenly between economic aid and weapons sales. Outside of the aid package, the US delivered 40 F-16 fighter jets to Pakistan for \$1.2bn between 1983 and 1987. The second six-year aid program, from 1987 to 1993, cost more than \$4bn and included \$2.28bn for economic aid.¹⁷ Over \$20 billion in US cash has been pumped into Afghanistan to train and arm Afghan rebel forces. The assistance was critical to the mujahideen's fight against the Soviets.

The Stinger missile, developed in the United States and delivered to the mujahideen in considerable quantities beginning in 1986, dealt a critical blow to the Soviet war effort. The US launched a "buy-back" operation in the 1990s to prevent unneeded missiles from slipping into the hands of anti-American terrorists. Following the US invasion of Afghanistan in late 2001, this program may have been secretly revived out of worry surviving Stingers might be deployed against US soldiers. Routing US aid through Pakistan resulted in significant fraud, as weapons were routinely sold on the black market. Karachi quickly "become one of the world's most dangerous cities".¹⁸

Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan

Soviet soldiers entered Afghanistan in December 1979, in an attempt to support the communist, pro-Soviet government. It started a tense military battle with Afghan Muslim insurgents who detested their country's communist regime and the Soviet army that backed it. The two sides fought for control of Afghanistan for the following eight years, with neither side

¹⁷ This time the amount was right. The U.S. offered \$3 billion in aid and agreed to sell an advanced aircraft package to Pakistan. Also, Indian objections were softened. Id. at 296. The U.S. offer was possible largely because the Reagan administration cared less about Pakistani nuclear violations than the Carter administration. Id.; see also Gordon, Congress Delays New Pakistan Aid Amid Nuclear Rift, N.Y. Times, Sept. 30, 1987, § 1, at 1, col. 3.

¹⁸ OER services, "The United States and the Mujahideen", June, 2005 <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/suny-hccc-worldhistory2/chapter/the-united-states-and-the-mujahideen/> accession date: 15th June, 2022.

achieving a clear triumph. Up to 15,000 Russian troops are believed to have died in the Soviet Union's military intervention in Afghanistan in 1980. Relations between the United States and Russia were also strained as a result of the conflict. US President Jimmy Carter ordered a boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympics because of the events in Afghanistan. Mikhail Gorbachev was most likely not involved in the decision-making procedures that led to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and may not have been aware of the scale of the operation at the time. The official Soviet media claimed in the early 1980s that the Afghan government had requested Soviet military help for humanitarian and noncombat purposes. Despite media suppression, news concerning battle deaths and the hardships of crippled troops began to emerge as the conflict intensified.¹⁹

Afghan independence fighters, were armed with US-supplied surface-to-air missiles, rockets, mortars, and communication technology, defeated the Soviet army in a number of battles in 1986. We see 1986 as a watershed moment in the Afghanistan war and, as a result, as the start of Gorbachev's reform drive.²⁰

Afghanistan conflict had a considerable influence on Soviet domestic politics by late 1986. As successful ambushes of Soviet convoys became a regular occurrence, the number of Soviet losses increased. The decision to leave Afghanistan revealed Soviet military inadequacy and exposed the army's vulnerability. Anti-militarism grew in strength in the Soviet countries that were not Russian.²¹

In my opinion, the role of the Afghanistan war in the dissolution of the Soviet Union fits well with views that emphasize large wars as essential determinants in empire collapse. Major conflicts between major powers reorient the internal politics of the fighting countries by weakening dominant groupings while empowering weaker ones. The Afghan war's accomplishments have been under-appreciated, if not completely disregarded.

The internal sociopolitical balance is disrupted when the formerly less powerful assert themselves, frequently irrevocably leading to empire collapse. Are such huge battles, however, feasible in a world where the main nations have nuclear weapons? If not, will large conflicts

¹⁹ Cynthia Roberts, *Glasnost in Soviet Foreign Policy: Setting the Record Straight?* Report on the USSR, 1, (#50, 1989).

²⁰ *Foreign Policy*, 72 (Fall 1988); *Washington Post*, April 17, 1988, p. A 30; November 16, 1992, p. A1; Mendelson, fn. 26–31.

²¹ Daria Fane, 'After Afghanistan: The Decline of Soviet Military Prestige', *The Washington Quarterly*, Spring 1990; A. Alexiev, 'Inside the Soviet Army—Afghanistan', Report No. 3627, The Rand Corporation, Santa Monica (1988).

no longer be a primary cause of empire collapse? Or do we need to characterize big wars in terms of their domestic political ramifications, rather than the qualities of the people involved or the breadth of the conflict?²²

NATO's military intervention in Afghanistan

Afghanistan and 9/11

In my opinion, NATO interfered in the situation of Afghanistan to combat terrorism. They fought hard there, and they understand that the major supplies of terrorists are coming from Pakistan. The idea of an attack on the heart of the Western world and its moral legacy from the Cold War era kindled the global war on terror, which has become the most salient geopolitical ideology in the post-Cold War era. The US added Pakistan to its list of countries that support terrorism in 2018 for this reason. NATO experienced a significant transition on September 12, 2001, moving from a mostly passive worldwide enactment as a defensive alliance to a more humble, aggressive attitude that would dominate its global strategic posture for years to come.

Invoking Article 5 requires the North Atlantic Council to convene in emergency session. Such a choice would have predicted nuclear Armageddon only 15 years prior. The act of invoking Article 5 is the most obvious proof yet that the globe is once more a very large and extremely dangerous place. The historically tiny and local security that has driven most of Europe's isolationism suddenly looks to be just that local. Overnight, the possibility of strategic terrorists with fanatical ideologies and perhaps even WMDs becomes dreadfully imminent. After the British burned down the White House and a large portion of official Washington in 1814 as a result of the American-British war of 1812, Al Qaeda insults the United States with the first deadly strike in Continental North America since that conflict. Europeans do not engage in war while Americans do.²³

Europeans appear to believe collectively in the assertion made by the French daily (*le Monde*) in its editorial on September 12 that "we are Americans today". The European Union

²² Boris Pyadyshev, 'Afghanistan in the Summer of 1990 and After,' *International Affairs* (November, 1990), p. 80; Dina Spechler and Martin Spechler, 'The Economic Burden of the Soviet Empire: Estimates and Re-estimates,' in Rajan Menon and Daniel Nelson (eds.), *Limits to Soviet Power*, p. 80. (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1989). However, we do not find enough data to show that the war's economic impact was significant.

²³ Lindley-French Julien, *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization: The Enduring Alliance*, Routledge, 2015, pages: 15-16.

declares that "the fight against terrorism will, more than ever, be a priority objective of the European Union". All the resentments and conflicts between Americans and Europeans that had left NATO so damaged appear to have vanished.²⁴

NATO had a crucial role to play in directing security and stability operations, in tandem with but apart from Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), the US counterterrorism campaign, while being minor to US policy. Only on December 31, 2014, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) complete its challenging and perilous mission. It is a mission that lasts twice as long as World War II and is genuinely involved in the field of international security.²⁵

In way of expressing my own perspective, I would say that the 21-year Afghan War was the only protracted conflict involving the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The United States appropriated \$132 billion for Afghanistan's reconstruction of the Afghan National Army (ANA), Afghan National Police (ANP), and National Directorate of Security (NDS). This was a huge stride for a country like Afghanistan since it was the country that wrecked everything following the USSR's collapse and after its internal strife.

Over 50 countries eventually joined the alliance headed by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Barack Obama, the president of the United States, authorized a "surge" in forces in 2009, and they peaked at 140,000 in 2011. In less than a year, President Donald Trump has sent 3,500 more American forces there. There was no place for a traditional battle in Afghanistan, which was one of the most compelling explanations for the situation there. General Scott Miller, the U.S. commander in charge of American and coalition forces, stated as much in an interview with NBC in October. However, opinions differ on how quickly and under what circumstances the United States withdraw from the conflict.²⁶

NATO was able to significantly contribute to the anti-terrorist coalition and to global stabilization through such activities, according to Robertson, as well as by preventing the Balkas from turning into a "black hole" for terrorists, similar to how Afghanistan had done so, and by preventing the Balkas from becoming a "safe haven" for violent extremists.²⁷

²⁴ Lindley-French Julien, *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization: The Enduring Alliance*, Routledge, 2015, pages: 22-23.

²⁵ Lindley-French Julien, *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization: The Enduring Alliance*, Routledge, 2015, pages: 26-27.

²⁶ Wadham's Nick, Coalition troops in Afghanistan –extracted from: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-08-11/as-u-s-troops-depart-what-future-for-afghanistan-quicktake> accession date: 27th of June 2022.

²⁷ Carpenter Ted Galen, *Beyond NATO: Staying Out of Europe's Wars*, Washington, DC, CATO Institute, 2003

The ANA Trust Fund (ANA) was supporting more than \$ 2.3 billion as of May 28, 2018 and the government was anticipated to provide at least \$500 million annually. The Ministry of the Interior's capability was increased through the usage of LOTFA, which was also used to pay salaries to the police and judiciary officials. American and Afghan officials negotiate a bilateral ASFF that provided money for the Afghan security forces' equipment and command. NATO allies and partners started making contributions to the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) by 2020 in December 2015. This promise was made by the heads of state and government during the NATO summit in Warsaw in July 2016. The Afghan military's whole role was on the list of NATO responses from 2002 to 2014. Since the Afghan security forces had almost no training prior to 2014, all of Afghanistan's duties were entrusted to them.²⁸

Implementing an Exit Strategy (2011-2014)

NATO's involvement in Afghanistan after 2014 will mostly consist of military guidance, instruction, and support. The Lisbon Summit established a deadline for the changeover to Afghan self-governance. No one wanted to remain in Afghanistan permanently, thus NATO's strategy has always been one of transition. It wasn't until 2010 that it was mandated as the strategy to be followed after the surge campaign.

The withdrawal of NATO troops from Afghanistan has really been based on the calendar, rather than the conditions for their departure, as was originally intended. As of the middle of 2013, when the ANSF began to assume control of all areas of Afghanistan, NATO entered a phase of major support functions. In parallel, ISAF started to change, becoming mostly a classroom-based mission for the training and guidance of Afghan security personnel after 2014.²⁹ NATO's withdrawal strategy from Afghanistan is effectively a type of apprenticeship for the Afghan government. Along with providing training and advice, NATO/responsibility ISAF's involves accompanying Afghan soldiers in the field. This is meant to boost the Afghan troops' combat abilities and sense of self-worth, empowering them to eventually work freely. The formation of an "Enduring Partnership" has occurred concurrently with the departure from Afghanistan, providing a smooth transition period based on both practical and political collaboration.

²⁸ NATO and Afghanistan, retrieved from: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_8189.htm accession date: 28th June, 2022.

²⁹ NATO, Chicago Summit Declaration on Afghanistan, Issued by the Heads of State and Government of Afghanistan and Nations Contributing to the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), May 21,

A number of terrorist organizations in Afghanistan and the surrounding area have been armed, supported, and trained by other regional nations. These organizations have substantial financial and human resources in Afghanistan, Kashmir, Iraq, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Syria, and Lebanon, and Pakistan, Iran, and occasionally the United States are expected to help them form and grow. The rise of ISIL along the Afghan-Pakistan border was thought to be Pakistan's advantage, but now appears to have been thwarted. The fundamental cause of the government's failure was the existence of these terrorist organizations in Pakistan and Afghanistan. It's possible that Iran had a vested interest in the regimes of the Taliban in Afghanistan and Saddam in Iraq falling. There has been a shift in global perception of Iran, which may finally center on Western interests.³⁰

The collapse of Afghanistan and the Taliban Recapture

The first direct peace negotiations between the Taliban and the Afghan government started in September 2020. In exchange for Taliban assurances on counterterrorism, the United States committed to withdraw combat soldiers by May 2021. A turning point in the more than 40 years of strife that began with a communist takeover in 1978 may be reached by these talks.

US President Joseph Biden has announced that the US will withdraw troops from Afghanistan by September 11, 2021. This would put a stop to the protracted drawdown that President Barack Obama started when he declared a temporary military and civilian surge in December 2009. Despite the surge, the country's security situation deteriorated, and the Taliban gained confidence.

The Doha Agreement for Bringing Peace to Afghanistan was signed in February 2020 as a result of official discussions between the Taliban and US. In exchange for the departure of all NATO soldiers from Afghanistan, the Taliban committed to stop al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups from functioning there. The Taliban seized over 100 of Afghanistan's 400 districts in May and June 2021, according to one account.³¹

On August 6, the Taliban took control of their first province capital, which expedited the demise of the Afghan government and its security forces. The Taliban reached Kabul within a week and took it on August 15, 2021. The following day, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani departed the nation and is still there as of February 2022. His seven-year term was marked by

³⁰ Nishank Motwani, *Afghanistan and the regional insecurity contagion*, 2017, New Delhi, India Press, page: .219.

³¹ Dan De Luce, Mushtaq Yusufzai, and Saphora Smith, "Even the Taliban are surprised at how fast they're advancing in Afghanistan," NBC News, June 25, 2021.

election problems, factional strife, systemic corruption, and the progressive degeneration of Afghan troops.

On August 15, 2021, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan came to an end. President Ashraf Ghani fled the country's capital that afternoon by helicopter to the neighboring country of Uzbekistan. With Ghani gone, the Taliban offensive—which had already taken control of other provincial capitals in recent weeks simply marched into Kabul. Within a few hours, the rebels were relaxing at Ghani's desk.

Why did the Afghan republic fall so suddenly and thoroughly, prompting tens of thousands of terrified people to flee to the airport in Kabul in search of safety from the Taliban's oppressive rule and possible retaliation?

According to conventional belief, the U.S.-supported republic was overthrown because its society and administration were utterly corrupt and its principles were incompatible with democracy. In other words, Afghanistan was an imperial graveyard that was unruly and would always be a hopeless cause for outsiders.

In my opinion, The United States and its allies' policy decisions in Afghanistan over the last 20 years are primarily to blame. In its endeavors to construct states, the international community committed several blunders that may have been avoided. Using a broad brush to describe Afghan culture simply serves to obscure errors committed by people in positions of authority, both in Washington and Kabul. The international community and the United States are likely to make the same mistakes elsewhere unless there is introspection about what went wrong.

Afghanistan has been mired in a cycle of state failure for the past four decades. Over the course of that time, five regimes have been deposed and replaced by successive administrations, each of which shared the centralized political institutions that have distinguished the contemporary Afghan state. As a result, the Taliban are in charge of one of the most centralized nations in the world once more. If the previous forty years have taught us anything, it is that the Taliban's current rule will be brutal and short-lived unless some authority is devolved away from the capital.³²

³² According to Democracy journal, “the collapse of Afghanistan”, from: <https://www.journalofdemocracy.org/articles/the-collapse-of-afghanistan/> accession time: 4th July 2022. 12:58 p.m.

Conclusion

Afghanistan is a geostrategic hub connecting Iran, the former Soviet Union, and China. The main issues that NATO creates are: the US approach to the strategy and policy against the USSR; while both countries were in Afghanistan, they assisted and supported jihadist groups in an effort to subjugate the USSR's interests. They were employing the same strategy that the US used to drain the USSR. Russia currently supports the Taliban element and, in certain areas, even ISIS. Moscow remains keen to withdraw all of its personnel from Afghanistan while still leaving the country safe to handle domestic and international security concerns.

Soviet commanders knew that the future of Afghanistan would be determined in the years after their withdrawal. Moscow provided the Afghans with major financial support between 1989 and 1991. To stabilize Afghanistan in 1979, the Soviet Politburo formed independent coalitions of ethnic tribes. The Taliban later arose from inside these organizations.

The Taliban were a group of terrorists who were taught violent jihad at Pakistani madrasas. The Soviets were forced to scale back their policy objectives from their initial lofty aspirations to disengagement. With a lack of political and military commitment to continue the Afghanistan war, Washington is again faced with a similar conundrum.

The Taliban regime in Afghanistan had fallen on December 9th, 2001, and had spread about hope of renewal, of stability, and of appropriating some sort of security provisions. A crucial American demand codified in the 2020 peace accord; the Taliban have vowed to stop using Afghanistan as a center for operations on other nations. Military leaders in America, though, are concerned that an extremist organization like al-Qaida would be capable of regenerating in Afghanistan. An affiliate of the Islamic State organization has carried out a spate of atrocities against Shiite Muslims in Afghanistan. It is unclear if an administration led by the Taliban would be able to put an end to IS. The two organizations have engaged in conflict for territory, and it's unclear if the Taliban could end IS' attacks.

The Taliban say they want to unite with other groups to build an "inclusive, Islamic administration". They have vowed to uphold Islamic law, but they have also urged women to serve in administration and promised to provide a safe atmosphere. Afghans are worried about the collapse of security following the release of thousands of detainees and the disintegration of security forces.

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