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# Impact of Bolshevik Russian Peasant Programme on Peasants' Movement in NWFP: From Ghalla Dher to Shumali (North) Hashtnagar

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## Introduction

This paper attempts to provide a brief background to peasant movements' programmes in Russia and in NWFP (currently, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), Pakistan. Briefly describing and comparing Russian peasant programmes of both factions of Russian Social Democratic Labour Party i.e. Menshevik (minority) and Bolshevik (majority), it assesses development of Bolshevik Russian peasant programme in Russia. Following a brief discussion of British land settlement policy in NWFP, India that resulted into creation of a class of landed aristocracy in NWFP, subsequently leading to antagonism between poor peasants, sharecroppers, tenants and the landlords, it introduces local peasant struggles. It charts first peasant programme that appeared in Ghalla Dher in 1938 and also peasants of Shumali Hashtnagar in 1948-78, NWFP. Comparing these peasants' programmes, it identifies impact of the Bolshevik peasant programme on peasant movements in Ghalla Dher and Shumali Hashtnagar.

## Peasant Movements' Programmes in Russia in the Twentieth Century

In Russia, the peasant reform of 1861 had been the first of its kind promulgated during reign of Alexander II.[1] Many factors contributed in

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1 Gorshkov, B., *A Life under Russian Serfdom: Memoirs of Savva Dmitrievich Purlevskii, 1800-1868*. Central European University Press, New York 2005, p 23.

persuading Russian ruling classes to introduce reforms from above to emancipate peasants.[2] These included: lower agricultural production,[3] as well as peasant rebellions in Russia led by Ivan Bolotnikov (1606-07), Stepan Razin (1667-71), and Yemelyan Pugachev (1773-75).[4] The so called 'Emancipation Manifesto'[5] proclaimed emancipation of peasants on private estates barring state-owned and domestic (households) serfs. The Emancipation Manifesto abolished serfdom[6] i.e., landowners could no longer buy, sell; grant as gifts, exchange or mortgage serfs.[7] It made peasant legal entity with right to own real estate, to seek employment outside, engage in commerce and industry, conclude contracts with private persons or institutions and cast vote in local election in Russia.[8]

Though, peasants partially acquired personal freedom, however, reforms made peasants less well-off economically than they had been before 1861. For instance, it freed more than twenty millions peasants with lands from the authority of their landlords.[9] Peasants generally received about one-third of the land; landlords retained the best land including most of the wood land, irrigation channels, and pasture. Peasants had to pay redemption money[10] considerably exceeding market price, to own their share of land.[11] They borrowed money to purchase land and incurred heavy debt.[12] Russian landowners used to collect quitrents,[13] labour rents[14] and tribute (tax, as a

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2 Kort, M., *A Brief History of Russia.* Boston University, 2008, p 97; Gleason, A., *Blackwell Companions to World History-A Companion to Russian History*. Blackwell Publishing Limited, UK 2009, p 119.

3 Leonard, C., *Agrarian Reforms in Russia: The Road from Serfdom*. Cambridge University Press, New York 2011, p 32; Kort, 2008, p 96; Duke, P., *History of Russia, Medieval Modern and Contemporary*. McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York 1974, pp 136-140; Podkolzin, A., *A Short Economic History of the USSR.* Progress Publishers, Moscow 1968, p 128.

4 Podkolzin, 1968, p 19, Kort, 2008, pp 42-43.

5 Moss, W., *History of Russia, since 1855.* Vol. II, Second Edition, Wimbledon Publishing Company, London 2005, pp 26-27; Stearns, P., *World History in Documents: A Comparative Reader*. Second Edition, New York University Press, 2008, pp 254-255.

6 Blinnikov M., *Geography of Russia and Its Neighbours.* The Guildford Press, New York 2011, p 74.

7 Thackeray, F., *Events That Changed Russia Since 1855.* Greenwood Press, USA 2007, p 4.

8 Podkolzin, 1968, pp 28-29.

9 Smith, G., *Soviet Politics Continuity And Contradiction.* Macmillan Education Ltd, London 1988, p 19.

10 Figes, O., *A people's Tragedy-A History of the Russian Revolution*. Cambridge University Press, 1995-96, p 64.

11 Auty, R., D. Obolensky., *Companion to Russian Studies I-An Introduction to Russian History.* Cambridge University Press, Sidney 1976, p 223.

12 Kort, 2008, pp 98-99, Lenin, V.I., *Collected Works.* Vol. 18, April 1912- March 1913, Foreign Publishing House, Moscow 1963, p 610.

13 Rent paid by a freeholder to landlord to be released from liability to perform services.

14 Peasants used to work several days a week for landowners and rest on his own allotment-holding.

mark of respect to landowners)[15] from peasants. Moreover, landowners were still authorized to maintain order, pass judgment and administer punishment on their estates.[16] Many peasants still remained poverty-stricken, downtrodden, ignorant subjects to feudal landowners in court, in organs of administration, in schools and in the *Zemstvo* (local and regional self-governing body).[17]

The plight of the Russian peasants influenced many revolutionaries and progressive Russians to raise voice in support and emancipation of peasants. Russian peasant movement grew and gathered strength rapidly following 1861 reforms. Peasant programme of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP), founded in 1898, stepping ahead advocated: confiscation and nationalization of landed estates; return of *otrezky* (cut-off lands, taken away from peasant allotments by the terms of emancipation of 1861); abolition of collective responsibility for tax payment; suspension of all laws preventing peasants to exercise their will in terms of buying and selling allotments,[18] and establishment of peasant committees in Russia.[19]

By 1903 the RSLDP split into two factions i.e. the RSLDP (Bolsheviks) and the RSLDP (Mensheviks). An abortive attempt was made to reunify two rival factions at the Fourth (Unity) Congress held in Stockholm in 1906.[20] The main contesting points included: peasant programme, attitude towards State Duma, issue of armed struggle and attitude to bourgeois parties' etc.[21] Peasant programme of the Mensheviks advocated: municipalisation of landed estates i.e. taking away large private estates (leased or purchased) from landlords and handing over, not to individual peasants as their property, but to organs of popularly elected local and regional self-governing bodies (Zemstvos) which could make redemption payment to landlords.[22] However, small peasants' holdings and allotment land (communal or homestead) will be inalienable property of peasants.[23] Thus self-governing bodies may distribute municipalized land among peasants.[24] The body will determine rates, normalize rents, wages and resolve land disputes keeping in view local conditions. Moreover, the body will pay rent to state at locally

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15 Harding, N., *Lenin's Political Thought-Theory and Practice in the Democratic Revolution.* Vol. I., MacMillan Press Ltd, London 1977, p 89.

16 Podkolzin, 1968, p 30.

17 Leatherbarrow, W., D. Offord, *A History of Russian Thought*. Cambridge University Press, 2010, p 24.

18 Kingston, E., *Lenin and the Problem of Marxist Peasant Revolution*. New York Oxford University Press, NY 1983, p 47.

19 Lenin, *Collected Works*, 1965, Vol. 10, November 1905-June 1906, p 193.

20 Atkinson, D., *The End of the Russian Land Commune* (1905-1930). Stanford University Press, California 1983, p 135.

21 Lenin, *Collected Works*, 1965, Vol. 10, pp 279-299.

22 Harding, 1977, p 252.

23 Atkinson, 1983, p 135.

24 Watson, S., *The Decline of Imperial Russia* (1855-1914). Methuen & Company, Butler & Tanner Ltd, Great Britain 1952, p 278.

established rules.[25] However, Menshevik peasant programme advocated partial land compensation as peasants did not accept any attempt to nationalize all land.

Whereas, Bolsheviks rejected Menshevik peasant programme on the basis of offering partial compensation for land to landlord. They also opposed compulsory preservation of large, highly cultivated estates on the discretion of local bodies.[26] The Bolsheviks believed that only by taking away land from feudal landlords; they might be able to diminish their power and influence and to permanently end this cruel and tyrannical system.[27] In their view nationalization of land shall bring a sea-change, unleash revolutionary fervor amongst masses and unite them under banner of a single organization. This policy of nationalizing land will act as a catalyst in rooting out remnants of feudalism in its entirety.[28] For Bolsheviks state was to own land instead of individuals or local body. It shall possess right to determine rates of land lease and to set up rules and regulations for custody and cultivation of land. The Bolshevik state was to refer land distribution matters to local or regional institutions for fair distribution amongst peasants according to state rules.[29] Moreover, the Bolshevik state was to provide land on reasonable rent in cash, not to hire labour service, rather to encourage peasants to spend available capital to purchase modern agricultural machinery. Nationalization and free availability of land on rent shall raise productivity through improved techniques and modern machinery.[30]

To Bolsheviks, land nationalization has been a radical anti-feudal measure that converted private land into state property.[31] It meant a complete end to private ownership of land, transformation of enslaved peasants into free, independent peasants[32] and state control over land bringing a complete end to feudalism. This would only be possible under practical struggle of peasants supervised by working class[33] to defeat autocracy by force in countryside.[34] For the Bolsheviks, peasants were not permanent supporters or allies, instead agriculture workers (seasonal or permanently hired worker in the agriculture field) could become permanent allies, since following revolutionary democratic reforms, an inevitable enmity would have arisen between peasants and agriculture workers

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25 Atkinson, 1983, pp 135-136.
26 Lenin, *Collected Works*, 1962, Vol. 13, June 1907-April 1908, pp 282-83; Atkinson, 1983, p 136.
27 Harding, 1977, p 255.
28 Lenin, *Collected Works*, 1962, Vol. 13, p 328.
29 Ibid., p 337.
30 Harding, 1977, p 255.
31 Ibid., p. 255.
32 Lenin, *Collected Works*, 1962, Vol. 13, p 279.
33 Kingston, 1983, p 47.
34 Lenin, *Collected Works*, 1962, Vol. 13, pp 424-25.

resulting into a new class struggle. The urban working class could side with the agriculture workers and struggle for socialism rather than land.[35]

RSLDP (Bolsheviks) held its Second Congress in July-August, 1903.[36] It comprised forty three delegates, representing 26 organizations. Each committee was entitled to send two delegates, but some could send only one. The 43 delegates commended 52 votes between them,[37] adopted following peasant programme:

1. Abolition of land redemption payments, quit-rents and all unpaid services imposed on the peasantry as a taxable estate
2. To annul collective liability and all laws restricting peasants in free disposal of allotted land
3. Returning peasants all money taken away from them as redemption payments and quit-rents in the past and to invalidate unjust contracts[38]
4. To form peasant committees to eradicate remnant of serf-owning system such as servitude, uncompleted allotment of land, its demarcation and so on[39]
5. To empower courts to reduce exorbitant rents and to declare null and void all contracts entailing peasant bondage[40]
6. Confiscation of land of monasteries and church property as well as crown estates and imposition of a special land tax on members of big landed estates in receipt of land redemption loans (it is remarkable to mention that in case of privately owned estates, the peasant programme proposed confiscation of the otrezki only)

R.S.D.L.P. (Bolshevik) held its First Conference in April, 1905.[41] It comprised 24 delegates representing 20 Bolshevik Committees including all large organizations of the party, adopted revised peasant programme[42]:

1. Forming revolutionary peasant committees[43] to immediately abolish all traces of power and privilege of landlord, actually disposing of confiscated lands, till establishment of new land tenure system by the National Constituent Assembly.

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35 Kingston, 1983, pp 81- 91.

36 Lenin, *Collected Works*, 1964, Vol. 06, January 1902-August 1903, pp. 107-150 at p 112; *Draft of the Party Program.* Iskra: Issue No. 21, June 01, 1902, p 2.

37 Commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B)., *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks).* International Publishers, New York 1939, p 41.

38 Kingston, 1983, p 69.

39 Lenin, *Collected Works*, 1964, Vol. 6, p 128.

40 Ibid., p. 112.

41 Lenin, *Collected Works*, 1965, Vol. 10, p 194; Lenin, V.I., *Two Tactics of Social Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*, Central Committee, Geneva June-July 1905, pp 38-40

42 Commission of the C.P.S.U. (B), 1939, pp 63-71.

43 Lenin, *Collected Works*, 1965, Vol. 8, January-July, 1905, pp 321-403.

2. To confiscate all land without compensation[44] and redistributing amongst peasants[45] (Redemption dues and otrezki were replaced with confiscation without compensation of private landownership).
3. To abolish all taxes and services exacted from peasants.
4. Authorizing courts, elected by people, to reduce exorbitant rents and annulment of all contracts entailing elements of bondage.
5. To repeal all laws restricting peasants in disposing their land off.
6. To organize the agriculture workers separately.[46]

R.S.D.L.P (Bolshevik) Fourth (Unity) Congress in April, 1906 at Stockholm[47] was attended by 111 delegates representing 57 local organizations of the party, adopted a new programme with one addition:[48]

1. To nationalize all land, transferring its ownership to the State.

R.S.D.L.P. (Bolshevik) adopted its new and revised peasant programme at its Seventh (April) All-Russian Conference on April 24-29, 1917:[49]

1. Complete confiscation and nationalization of all landed estates in Russia (also crown lands, church lands etc.) immediately, and transfer right of ownership to state vesting right to administer land in local democratic institutions, organized in the Soviets' of Peasants' Deputies, elected in a really democratic way and entirely independent of landowners' and officials' influence
2. To advise peasants of taking over land in an organized way, not allowing slightest damage to property and adopt measures to increase production
3. To support initiatives taken by peasants committees in handing over livestock and agricultural implements of landowners to peasants organized in committees to be used in a socially regulated manner for cultivation of all land
4. To organize agriculture workers into separate unions forthwith
5. To advise agriculture workers and semi-workers to strive for converting every landed estate into a fair-sized model farm to be run on public lines by the Soviets of Agricultural Workers Deputies under the direction of agricultural experts applying modern techniques.

Even after the Emancipation of 1861, the Russian allotment-holding peasants kept on working on lands of feudal utilizing their own implements

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44 Lenin, *Collected Works*, 1965, Vol. 9, June-November, 1905, p 234.
45 Lenin, 1965, Vol. 8, pp 402-596.
46 Ibid., p 231, 235-402.
47 Lenin, *Collected Works*, 1965, Vol. 10, pp 277-288.
48 Commission of the C.P.S.U. (B), 1939, pp 85-86.
49 Lenin, *Collected Works*, 1964, Vol. 24, April-June 1917, p 23; Pravda: Issue No. 26, April 07, 1917; Pravda: Issue No. 45, May 13 (April 30), 1917; Commission of the C.P.S.U. (B), 1939, pp. 185-189.

and draught animals, hoping that somebody will grant them possession of their allotted land (*otrezki*). The Emancipation edict had only turned unpaid forced labour (*barshchina*) into labour rendered in payment of land rented (*otrabotka*) from landlord with a hope of acquiring it.[50] Peasants were still not allowed to buy, sell or mortgage land. In the context of these objective conditions, the R.S.D.L.P (Bolshevik) laid down its radical peasant programme to win over sympathies of peasants. Its peasant programme underwent many modifications during 1903, 1905, 1906 and 1917 due to changed realities on the ground. R.S.D.L.P (Bolshevik), exponent of traditional Marxism, believed in essential destruction of peasants during transition from feudal to capitalist relations in agriculture. It urged to accomplish fundamental objective of democratic revolution i.e. destruction of Russian landlordism by making alliance of poor peasantry with working class. Moreover, it proposed organization of peasants into revolutionary peasant committees for bringing democratic reforms i.e. redistribution of land amongst peasants.

Meanwhile, Russian peasants' attacks and burning landlords' estates, their call for redistributing landlords' estates, and setting up a constituent assembly through adult franchise, dawned on the Bolsheviks that peasants wanted to secure land and freedom by any means. Though, Bolsheviks were less popular amongst peasants than Mensheviks, they presented a revised peasant programme convincing poor peasants that their objectives were attainable only by remaining under supervision of working class. Moreover, the Bolsheviks believed that confiscation and nationalization of all landed estates shall eliminate substantial social base of autocracy as well as promote fully capitalist relations in agriculture. The state, being the sole landlord, shall provide land at moderate rent for bringing up improvement with advanced technology and agricultural techniques. To Bolsheviks, this could accelerate capitalist development on one hand and class struggle on the other between rural bourgeois and agriculture workers. The Bolsheviks considered advance to socialism could only be accomplished by organizing separate unions of agriculture workers under the leadership of working class.

## Peasant Movement in Ghalla Dher, Mardan

Ghalla Dher is a small, one of the oldest villages in the heart of Pakhtun land, situated six miles away from Mardan, NWFP. In 1938, population of Ghalla Dher was about two thousands[51] while elsewhere it has mentioned as three thousands and nine hundreds[52]. However, an average population of

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[50] A condition of personal dependence and bondage attached to labour service as primitive rent for land. This labour rent appeared as a direct relation of landlord and servitude to make peasants enslaved depriving them of even personal freedom.

[51] Khan, W., *Da Azadai Tehreek.* Peshawar City June 1988, p 163.

[52] Nagina, R., *Surkhposh Kisan Ya Tehreek-e-Ghalladher.* May 09, 1939, p 1.

Ghalla Dher could have been from four to five thousands. Poor pakhtun peasants, sharecropper or tenants of Nawab Hameedullah Khan of Toru were resided in seven[53] to eight hundred[54] mostly *kacha*, mud houses. There had been a few *pakka*, brick houses too. Some small villages such as Rashakai in the west, Khatko Killy in the east and Bago Banda, Bara Banda, Chauki and Khwo Killy etc.,[55] were also situated around Ghalla Dher.

The British policy of land revenue settlement created a landlord class in NWFP sowing seeds of hatred amongst poor peasants. Although purpose of the settlement had been to assign revenue tax liability, it conferred private property rights in land upon various classes of landholders. Individual private property rights, therefore, were introduced in the favour of the landholders, and then modified to protect the same class. Land settlement in NWFP elevated landholders but marginalized all other rural classes. Agricultural tenants, labourers, and non-cultivating service castes of various types traditionally enjoying claims over agricultural produce of land alongside landholders became dispossessed.[56] The people of Ghalla Dher were all peasants of the Nawab of Toru who had persuaded the British rulers to grant him ownership of almost the entire land of village. He managed affairs of his lands at Ghalla Dher with help of his agents (Malik or Lambardar or Headman).[57]

The Nawab used to collect heavy rents, baigar (work without any wage such as domestic cleanliness, taking the Nawab's family from one place to another, and keeping watch at night etc), monthly 50 paisa rent for each *Kota* (rented house), 20 to 30 rupees fine to Nazir (the supervisor) of Nawab for nothing, fines in case of disputes and quarrels among peasants and all sorts of illegal exactions from peasants with the help of his agents. With the British law and patronage behind him, it amounted to a systematic and naked exploitation of poor peasants.[58] Nawab Hamidullah Khan, usually exercised his judicial powers, as the British had conferred upon him the authority of an Honorary Magistrate who could sentence a person to seven years imprisonment,[59] impose fines, confiscate their lands, demolish their houses, charge them in both civil and criminal cases, imprison peasants in his private

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53 Talwar, B., *The Talwars of the Pathan Land and Subhash Chandra Bose' Great Escape.* Peoples Publishing House, Rani Jhansi Road, New Dehli March 1976, pp 6-7.

54 Khan, June 1988, p 163.

55 Ali, I., *Ghalla Dher Kisan Movement-An Appraisal*. Pakistan Study Centre, University of Peshawar, Sessions 2004-2006, Unpublished MA Dissertation, p 1.

56 Government of Punjab, *Gazetteer of the Peshawar District* 1897-98. Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 1989, p 9.

57 Personal interview with Jamal Khan (age 96) of Ghalla Dher, Mardan on July 12, 2007. He had been a red shirt peasant associated with Khudai Khidmatgar Movement and remained active participant in Ghalla Dher peasant movement and also a detainee amongst others in Haripur prison under section 145 of FIR lodged on 30th August 1938.

58 Talwar, 1976, pp 49-50.

59 Khan, June 1988, p 165.

cells' and even mete out physical punishment to peasants[60] (lashes etc).[61] Thus hatred grew up and assumed the shape of a spontaneous Peasant Movement (Kisan Tehreek) opposing the 'eviction policy of peasants' at Ghalla Dher, Mardan in the August, 1938.

The poor peasants of the Ghalla Dher were also enrolled as members in the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement (Servant of God, formed in 1929, henceforth, KKM)[62] and participated in freedom movement since 1929-30 despite their economic hardships,[63] There were variety of reasons for joining included concerns about their own economic exploitation such as high rents, taxes, evictions by Khans and support of KKM to oppressed, starving and under-clothed peasants.[64] Peasants considered KKM movement solely a movement for betterment of landless and poor peasants due to the fact that they formulated the majority of its membership.[65]

Meanwhile, the Congress Socialist Party[66] (offshoot of the Indian National Congress, formed in 1934) began more vocally supporting Ghalla Dher peasant movement than Indian National Congress (INC). The INC aimed at bringing reforms in land tenure system, reducing land rent, and debts to relief small peasantry and agriculture tenants, [67] and organizing peasants into peasant unions within the domain of Congress principles.[68] However, it urged peasants to pay land rents to their landlords and settle their land dispute through amicable means.[69] Whereas, the Congress Socialist Party advocated its peasant programme: eliminating landlords' estates without compensation, to redistribute land to peasants, to encourage and promote co-operative and collective farming by state, and to liquidate

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60 Ibid., pp 170-71, Nagina, 1939, p 24.

61 Nagina, 1939, p 7.

62 Red Shirt movement (anti-British imperialist movement followed the philosophy of non-violence).

63 Nagina, 1939, p 2.

64 Tendulkar, D.G, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan-faith is a battle.* Popular Prakashan, Bombay 1967, pp 59-63.

65 Personal Interview with Akbar Ji (age 68) of Jamal Uddin Afghani Road, University Town, Peshawar, on December 12, 2006. He worked as the Secretary to National Awami Party (NAP) in 1965.

66 The Congress Socialist Party was formed in May 17, 1934 at Anjumen-i-Islamia Hall, Patna of India under the Chairmanship of Acharya Narendra Dev in the inaugural session of Congress Socialist Party. It was attended by over hundred prominent delegates from all parts of India.

67 Dove, M., "Election Manifesto of the All India Congress Committee of the Indian National Congress, 22-23 August 1936" in: *Forfeited Future-The Conflict Over Congress Ministries in British India 1933-1937*. Chanakya Publications, Dehli 1987, p 447; Shah, W., *Ethnicity, Islam, and Nationalism (Muslim Politics in North West Frontier Province 1937-1947).* Oxford University Press, 1999, pp 55-62.

68 Sitaramayya, P., *The History of the Indian National Congress-1935-1947*. Vol. II, Padma Publications Ltd, Bombay 1947, p 82; *Labour Monthly*: March 1938, No. 3, The Labour Publishing Company Ltd, London.

69 Sukhan, R., *Tehreek-e-Azadi.* First Edition, Popular Front Literature Society, Bradlaugh Hall, Lahore 1939, p 141.

debts owned by peasants. Moreover, its local leaders agreed to support the 'just cause' of peasants. These included: Maulana Abdur Rahim Popalzai, Mian Akbar Shah,[70] Mian Mukkaram Shah, Acharj Ram Ghumandi, Lal Din, Ram Saran Nagina, Bhagat Ram and Dr. Waris Khan and others. It urged to organize the red shirt peasants into peasant committees.[71]

These politically conscious peasants, sharecropper or tenants began protesting over higher revenue that they already had to pay; they refused to pay fines and land rent at the moment.[72] In June 1938, the Nawab obtained eviction orders against peasants of Ghalla Dher from the civil court Mardan but failed in the execution of those orders. The peasants resisted evictions; and even after being evicted they returned and cultivated some of the resumed lands. Meanwhile, local peasant leader Sahib Shah convened a meeting attended by most of the poor peasants of Ghalla Dher to resolve that they would resist evictions at any cost. Peasant leadership met authorities of the then government of KKM/INC and presented peasant programme listed below:[73]

1. To ban baigar completely;
2. To withdraw *Tora (*a kind of tax of Rs. 10 levied on both the bride and the bridegroom, on the occasion of the marriage);
3. To forbid eviction policy of Nawab;
4. To abolish *Malba* (tax collected for the donkeys, horses, and other livestock of the Nawab);
5. Restriction on illegal fines and physical harassment of peasants completely,
6. Recognition of peasant ownership of trees grown by them
7. To pay compensation to peasants of their destroyed houses and to return of evicted houses occupied by the Nawab.

The negotiations failed to produce positive results.[74] However, impact of the Ghalla Dher peasant movement was widespread. It had influenced adjoining areas and some others areas of NWFP such as Rashaki, district Mardan and North Hashtnagar. Peasants of North Hashtnagar raised voice for their rights in a manner similar to Ghalla Dheris.[75]

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[70] He migrated to Afghanistan and then to Russia via Russian Controlled Turkistan, studied at the University of Toilers of the East, Moscow and exposed to progressive ideas there. He became a member of Communist Party of India (established in 1920) at Tashkent, returned and joined Khudai Khidmatgar movement.

[71] Popalzai, J., *Suba Sarhad Ki Inqilabi Tehreekein Aor Maulana Abdur Rahim Popalzai.* Fiction House, Lahore 1991, pp 194-195.

[72] The Tribune: February 10, 1938, Directorate of Achieves., *Record of Special Branch*, S. No. 9, Bundle No. 1, List No. I, Government of N.W.F.P., p 19.

[73] Khan, 1988, pp 170-171.

[74] Nagina, 1939, p 22.

[75] Personal interview with Khan.

## Comparing Bolshevik Peasant Programme with Programme in Ghalla Dher

Following similarities and differences have been identified in peasant programmes:

Peasants' programmes, both of Russia and Ghalla Dher peasant movements' have certain similarities and differences. R.S.D.L.P (Bolshevik) evolved a more advanced peasant programme keeping in view the need of peasants and realities of entire Russia. On the other hand, peasant programme of Ghalla Dher peasant movement was only of local, less advanced and limited in nature having minimum effects on surrounding areas. It was only a reaction against excesses of local landlords hence its influence remained limited and local. However, it set up a precedent and paved way for future peasant movements. Initially, in 1903, Bolshevik peasant programme advocated: abolition of exorbitant land rents, quit rents, tribute and unpaid forced labour. It advocated lifting of all restrictions on free disposal of land, and return of all money taken from peasants as redemption payment for land. Similarly, Ghalla Dher peasant programme advocated: abolition of baigar (unpaid forced labour), illicit and excessive taxes such as tora, malba taken from peasants. Moreover, Ghalla Dher peasant programme advocated ending all restrictions on peasants for making use of tress planted by them on landlords' land, compensation for peasants' houses destroyed by landlords, return of confiscated houses to peasants and fifty percent reduction in rate of taxes levied by landlords.

However, there are certain stark differences between the Bolshevik and Ghalla Dher peasant programmes. The Bolsheviks setup revolutionary peasant committees to end all remnants of feudalism. It advocated for empowering courts to reduce land rents and withdrawal of all unjust agreements binding peasants. Later it advocated nationalization of all land, its distribution through democratically elected local bodies, under state land rent mechanism and also setting up of separate organizations of agriculture workers in 1905, 1906 and 1917 respectively. Though Ghalla Dher peasant programme also setup peasant committees, however, they remained ineffective under dominant influence of non-violent KKM. These committees did nothing but held meetings and passed resolutions. Moreover, Ghalla Dher peasant programme did nothing to empower courts to reduce taxes or for confiscation or nationalization of all land.

## Peasant Movement in Shumali (North) Hashtnagar in 1970-78

Hashtnagar, meaning eight villages, comprises a large portion in Tehsil Charsadda, district Peshawar, NWFP (formerly district Peshawar included Peshawar Tehsil, Hashtnagar Tehsil and Mardan Tehsil). A strip of country that extends 10 miles eastward from the Swat River, and stretches from hills

on the north to the Kabul River on the south including eight villages such as Prang, Charsadda, Razar, Uthmanzai, Umerzai, Turangzai, Sherpao and Tangi (presently Tangi is a Tehsil of district Charsadda).[76] These villages have further expanded into various sub localities over the passage of time. The first seven villages together form the area of the South Hashtnagar while the area of Tangi including its *Maira* (high plain) is called North Hashtnagar. The total land of North Hashtnagar is 86266 acre, 7 kanal and 4 marlas in area consisting twenty five circles and fifty three villages (mauzas).[77] The total land for arable cultivation is 67621 acre, 7 kanal and 10 marlas in which 50768 acre, 3 kanal and 7 marlas land is irrigated while 16853 acre, 4 kanal and 3 marlas is un-irrigated.[78]

The area of North Hashtnagar is about twelve to fourteen miles long and eight to ten mile wide. It is a well irrigated and fertile area growing major crops such as Sugarcane, Virginia Tobacco, Corn and Sugar Beet. Wheat is mostly grown in its un-irrigated areas. It is a densely populated area and notable villages are Tangi, Harichand, Dhaki, Mandani, Behram Dheri and Shakoor etc.[79] North Hashtnagar is divided into two sections: Proper Tangi and Tangi *Maira*. Both of these areas are separated from one another by a large Lower Swat irrigation canal.[80] The total area of Tangi Maira is about 65423 acre, 5 Kanal and 6 marlas that is irrigated by upper Swat canal while lower Swat canal irrigates Tangi Proper which is about 9420 acre, 5 Kanal and 12 marlas in area. The rest of the area of North Hashtnagar is Sholgira that is measured about 11423 acre, 4 Kanal and 6 marlas.[81]

North Hashtnagar occupies northern corner of district Peshawar beyond which lies the tribal territory. Towards North east lies Malakand Agency and towards North West are tribal territories of the UthmanKhel, Safi and Mohmand. District Dir lies short of tribal areas and to the West is Afghanistan.[82]

The Proper Tangi lies 29 miles north of Peshawar and it is divided into two sections (*Kandis*), called Barazai and Nasratzai. There is a police station of the first class. The inhabitants are mostly Mohammadzai Pathan. There lived big (six to eight) and small land owners (twenty to thirty) who acquired landownership as well as *Panjotra* (5 % of the land tax) from the British in lieu of services to them like collecting *Abiana* (water tax) and *Malia* (land

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76 Khan, M., *Weekly Sanobar* (an organ of Mazdoor Kisan Party). Shaheen Barqi Press, Peshawar October 23, 1970, p 11.

77 Office of the Tehsildar., *List of Circles, Mauzas and Total Area of North Hashtnagar*. Tangi, district Charsadda, (1926-27), the record was collected on June 18, 2012.

78 Ibid.

79 Weekly Sanobar, October 23, 1970, p 11.

80 Imperial Gazetteer of India., *North-West Frontier Province*. Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2002, p 162.

81 Personal Interview with Syed Fazal Dayan (age 52), Qanungo (supervisor of patwaries) at Tehsil Tangi on June 18, 2012.

82 Weekly Sanobar, October 23, 1970, p 11.

tax) both in proper Tangi as well as in *Maira* Tangi. These included: Khan Behadur Mir Alam Khan[83] (owning jareeb 18000 equivalent to 9000 acres), Faqir Khan[84] (jareeb 4000=2000 acres) of Barazai and Mohammad Ali Khan[85] (jareeb 30000=15000 acres), Abdul Akbar Khan[86] (jareeb 16000=8000 acres), Ghulam Ahmad Jan Khan[87] (jareeb 4000=2000 acres) of Nasratzai and some others. Each land owner has sixty to hundreds mud-covered houses for his servants who live without paying any rent, known as Faqirano or Hamsaya Koruna or Faqir Nama. These hamsayas comprised mostly peasants (50 %) and other included professionals such as chamyar (cobbler), lohar (ironsmith), nai (barber)[88] shopkeepers, merchants and others. They used to provide unpaid services to their landowners.

*Maira* Tangi, the property of Khans, comprised Mahaals (subsection of Tehsil) such as Mahaal Shakoor of Mohammad Ali Khan (including villages like Shakoor, Mandani, Behram Dheri etc.), Mahaal Gandheri of Faqir Khan and Amjid Khan (Janiko, Gandheri etc.), Mahaal Chel of Saifullah Khan and Tori Khan (Chel, Sur Qamar etc), Mahaal Hisara Payan of Iqbal Khan (Hisara etc.), Mahaal Rai of Abdul Akbar Khan (Rai, Daud Khan Killy etc.), Mahaal Shodag (Shodag etc.), and Mahaal Dobande (Dobande etc.).[89] However, small landowners had also acquired land in different areas of North Hashtnagar such as Muslim Khan (450 acres in Shakoor and Gandheri), Khan Shireen Khan (300 acres in Gandheri), Jamil Khan (300 acres in Mandani), Aurangzeb Khan (250 acres in Pirano killy), Niaz Mohammad Khan (250 acres in Gandheri), Abdus Samad Khan (150 acres in Harichand), Yar Mohammad Khan (65 acres in Doab), and Siddiqullah (49 acres in Janiko) and so on.[90]

The class structure in North Hashtnagar included: 5% of big land owners which occupied almost thousands of acres of land from total area. Besides, non-owners comprised 95% including lease-holding peasants who were 10%, middle peasants 40% and poor peasants were 50% in peasantry class structure of North Hashtnagar. However, farm or agriculture workers

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83 He was appointed as a Numbardar for Barazai, Tangi, on September 20, 1942. Register Dakhil-wa- Kharij Numberdaran Bamujib Ahkam-e-Sahib Barai Dehat, Tehsil Tangi, District Charsadda, 1926-27.

84 Ibid.

85 He was appointed as a Numbardar for Nasratzai, Tangi, on May 09, 1932. Register Dakhil-wa-Kharij, 1926-27.

86 He was appointed as a Numbardar for Nasratzai, Tangi, on February 26, 1959. Register Dakhil-wa-Kharij, 1926-27.

87 He was appointed as a Numbardar for Nasratzai, Tangi, on September 15, 1948. Register Dakhil-wa-Kharij, 1926-27.

88 Personal interview with Mohammad Amin (age 70), a small landowner of Tangi Nasratzai, on May 31, 2012.

89 Personal interview with Noor-ul-Zafar (age 78) on June 01, 2012. He served as a Patwari at Nasratzai, Tangi Charsadda, during 1965 to 1993.

90 Personal interview with Amin; personal interview with Siddiqullah (age 54), President of Association of Small Landowners, Tangi, Charsadda on July 02, 2012.

(rural proletariat) consisted of half of the 95% of the non-owners and there was no factory in the area at the beginning of the peasant movement in North Hashtnagar.[91]

In North Hashtnagar of Tehsil Charsadda, the British chose Mohammadzai tribe to be worthy of their favour and granted them large estates. Poor helpless peasants of Mohmand, Shahdad Khel subsection of UtmanKhel, Mohammadzai tribes[92] and some other small groups such as Behram Dheriwal, Ghandheriwal, Khattak and Gigiani[93] soon fell victims to their oppression just as peasants of Tehsil Mardan had fallen victim to oppression of Nawab of Toru. These oppressions included: baigar (unpaid forced labour), presenting two chickens to Khan before sowing and after reaping harvest, women of peasants paid baigar at residence of Khan, *Tip* (forced extraction of 5 % from wheat and 10% from maize crop in kind), *Babat-e-Barnaqi* {a share taken from wheat crop, maize crop and *gur* (raw sugar) without any reason}, *Ser Mani* (taken as share of 1/40$^{th}$ from every 40 kg of wheat), *Tora* (a matrimonial tax taken on the occasion of marriage in peasant family), *Qula* (a kind of share from heap of wheat), *Pashgi* {an advance payment to Khan as a security at time of agreement between peasant and Khan for land given on lease or *Nisf-e-Batai* (half and half in share of crop)}, a lamb presented to Khan at occasion of marriage in Khan's family, trees standing on land were property of Khan,[94] wearing of clean and neat cloths were not allowed to peasants, beating, harassments, and eviction of peasants from the land and so on.[95]

The seeds of peasant movement had already been sown in North Hashtnagar. For instance, in 1948 a landlord-peasant dispute occurred at Tangi, North Hashtnagar, on issue of peasants' eviction and increased land lease rent. Ziarat Gul of Hatian[96] and Abdul Sattar[97] of Khadi Killi, Tahkt Bai, of Mardan reached there and formed *Ittehad-i-Mohmand Jirga* (United Mohmand Association) or a Peasant Committee under presidency of Ziarat Gul. They preceded peasant struggle by arranging processions against the peasants' eviction from their lands. During 1948 they convened several meetings at North Hashtnagar and Mardan districts in connection with

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91 Nashar-wa-Ishaat Committee., *Circular of Mazdoor Kisan Party*. Issue No. 54, MKP, Lahore July 15, 1974, p 3.

92 Personal interview with Amin.

93 Personal interview with Sher Ali Khan (age 72) of Gandheri on June 12, 2012. He served as an Ex Girdawar at Charsadda, during 1975 to 2010.

94 Personal interview with Mohammad-ul-Allah (age 90) on June 14, 2012. He worked as a Central President of Peasant Committee during 1970 to 1978 at Khalil Killey, Zeyum, Tangi Maira, Charsadda.

95 Circular, July 15, 1974, p 8.

96 Directorate of Archives., *Special Branch Record, Police Department.* Serial No. 192, File No. AZ-4, Bundle No. 12, Vol. III, List III, NWFP 1948, p 109.

97 Personal interview with Dr. Iqbal Safi (age 79) on June 27, 2012. He is son of peasant leader Ziarat Gul of Mardan who played leading role in the commencement of peasant movement in Hashtnagar.

peasant reforms, to raise a strong voice against Khan and to improve lot of peasants. Later on, peasant leaders joined National Awami Party (NAP) in 1957 as a front organization in connection with peasant reforms. But despite their efforts, it did not yet take form of a political movement due to following reasons.[98] Demands of peasant committees in NAP were low and of reformist nature in early life of peasant struggle such as:

1. Exemption from land tax (*malia*) on small land holdings up to twelve and a half acres,[99]
2. Installation of water meters on irrigation culverts.
3. Provision of agricultural implements and fertilizers on subsidized rates etc.[100]

During course of struggle, a convention of peasants was convened by Maulana Abdul Hameed Khan Bhashani of NAP {a Maoist peasant leader from East Pakistan and leader of Krishik Smkiti (peasant committee)} at Khanewal (Punjab) on April 27-28, 1963,[101] and decided to form Peasant Committees all over the West Pakistan both at Tehsil and district levels,[102] When the Peasant Committees were formed in 1963 at Khanewal, Major (R) Mohammad Ishaq was elected as its Convener,[103] It aimed to resolve problems of lease-holding peasants, agriculture workers, landless peasants and small landowners through constitutional means.[104] This dedicated efforts to organize and inspire many old and new revolutionary workers to jump into the arena of active politics once again. These included: Ziarat Gul, Mian Shaheen Shah, Abdul Sattar, Sher Ali Bacha[105] many others who formed Sarhad (Kisan) Peasant Committee. Whereas, Mohammad Afzal Bangash, advocate, played important role in fighting to protect legal rights of peasants. These workers worked consciously, secretly and untiringly in North Hashtnagar for five continuous years in order to organize peasants in form of Peasant Committees.[106]

In autumn of 1963-64 Major (R) Ishaq Mohammad, Afzal Bangash, Abdus Sattar, Kaptan Sarfraz and Ziarat Gul visited North Hashtnagar to

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98 Circular, July 15, 1974, No.54, pp 1-2; Weekly Sanobar, October 29, 1970, p 1.

99 Abdur, M., *Sarhad ke Kisan , Unke Masail Aor Inka Hal.* Office of Sarhad Kisan Committee, Golden Cinema, Ganj Bazar, Mardan and Maktaba-e-Afkare Nou, Asamai Gate, Peshawar 1974, pp 23-24.

100 Ibid., pp 23-24.

101 Workers Group., *Mazdoor Kisan Party Mein Nazriayti Ikhtilaf.* Punjab Mazdoor Kisan Party, Lahore 1977, p 10; Weekly Sanobar, October 23, 1970, p 11.

102 Ishaq. M., Convener of Peasant Committee West Pakistan, *Kisan Committee Ke Tanzeem Masail.* Peasant Committee of West Pakistan Publisher, Central Office, Lahore Cooperative Press, Lahore 1964, p 2.

103 Circular, ND, Issue No. 65, p 1.

104 Ishaq, 1964, p. 12.

105 Circular, ND, Issue No. 90, p 1.

106 Ibid., p 1, Ishaq, 1964, p 2.

form peasant committees.[107] The first Peasant Committee was formed[108] in 1963 at Chel Mahaal, in the *Yaar Jaan Kalli* of Harichand, North Hashtnagar and some others with designations.[109] However, a network of peasant committees following the principle of democratic centralism rapidly flourished and evolved in North Hashtnagar till the formation of MKP in 1968. A five to seven member village peasant committee served as basic unit of organization then central committee that comprised three to six village peasant committees. These central committees worked under Tehsil committee which in turn worked under District committee. These, in turn, worked under the final authority of Provincial Committee.[110]

The ideological learning and study circles had been provided by different comrades at different peasant committees such as Ziarat Gul of Mardan, and Kaptaan Sarfraz of Amirabad at house of Wahab Siddeen of *Yaar Jaan Kalli*[111] and Fareedullah, Advocate of Kheshgi (Nowshera), Shahjehan, Advocate of Mardan practicing in Swat and Sayyadullah at *Spalmai*, Singapur, *Behram Khan Dheri* and other.[112] Variety of subjects and topics in study circles were debated and discussed such as demands of Sarhad peasant committee, ways and means of peasant committee, do justice with poor peasants', class conflict, peoples' democracy[113] and methods to achieve goal and some others. Later on, members of peasant committees were introduced to political leaders such as Sher Ali Bacha of Mardan, Ghulam Nabi Kalu of Faislabad (Punjab), Major Ishaq of Faisalabad (Punjab), and Mohammad Afzal Bangash of Kohat.[114] The peasant leadership took inspiration from Marxism, Bolshevism of Russia and

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[107] Weekly Sanobar, October 23, 1970, p 11; Khan, K., M. Azmir, *Pashtun Mubariza.* Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party publications, Karachi ND, p 45.

[108] Personal interview with Mohammad Ali (age 46) on December 14, 2008. He is son of Kaptaan Sarfraz of Umarzai, district Charsadda,. Kaptan Sarfraz was a local peasant leader who played an important role in the initiation of peasant movement at Hashtnagar.

[109] Personal interview with Master Amber (age 80) on February 12, 2006. He had been a local peasant leader of Sur Kamar, North Hashnagar. Personal interview with Master Sultan (age 73) on June 12, 2006. He worked as a local peasant leader of Harichand, North Hashnagar. Personal interview with Ahmad Gul (age 55) on June 17, 2006. He was a relative of Shareef Khan-martyred of the Nasapi battle fought against the Khan on July 3, 1971.

[110] Personal interview with Mohammad.

[111] Personal interview with Amber.

[112] Personal interview with Master Nisar (age 60) and Master Tahir (age 55) of Nadir Mian Kalli, Harichand on February 13, 2006. They worked as members of Sarhad Student Organization, an affiliate to Kisan Committee in North Hashtnagar.

[113] It was a Maoist line concluding that the revolutionary struggle in underdeveloped countries has two stages, an initial anti-imperialist and anti-feudal stage to overthrow the combined rule of pre-capitalist classes and imperial capital, followed by a stage of socialist revolution. The first stage, called New Democracy or People' Democracy by Mao which involves an alliance of the proletariat, the peasantry, and the local bourgeoisie or at least elements of the latter that have strong contradictions with imperial capital. *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought*, edited by Bottomore, Blackwell Publisher Limited, Basil 1983, p 315.

[114] Ibid.

Maoism of China.[115] Though, MKP had a stronghold in North Hashtnagar, however, it had also some similar organizations in South Hashtnagar of Tehsil Charsadda, Warsak of Peshawar, Takht Bhai, Lund Khwar in district Mardan and Skhakot in Malakand Agency.[116]

Sarhad Peasant committee was a nonpolitical class based organization comprising lease-holding relatively rich peasants, agriculture workers, rural artisans, small landowners and rural shopkeepers. Broadly, it advocated following peasant programme in North Hashtnagar:[117]

1. To organize peasants into peasant committees raising their awareness about their social, political rights and liberties and emancipating peasants from political, social and economic slavery of landlords.
2. To provide basic human rights to peasants, to amicably resolve intra peasant disputes, to bring an end to outdated customs and traditions and other evils of feudal system. To create class consciousness amongst peasants and basic institutions of Peoples' Democracy based upon the principal of self-determination such as peoples courts etc.
3. To work collectively to form communes, to bring an end to forced evictions of peasants from lands and houses by organizing armed resistance, levy of fines. To increase wage of agriculture workers and share of peasant, to bring a qualitative change in their lives.[118]
4. To end feudal relations in rural areas through agrarian reforms[119]such as raising agricultural productivity by providing good seeds, cheap fertilizers, advanced machines with improved techniques and to sell and buy land.
5. To allow maximum limit for landownership i.e. 50 acres of irrigated[120] and 100 acres of arid land,[121] and distribution of remaining land amongst landless poor peasants and agriculture workers[122] limiting 25 jareeb of land per family, to win over the backing of small land owners and to amicably resolve intra peasant land disputes and also dispute between small land owner and peasants[123], and every lease-holding peasant, who received land as a result of peasant struggle against feudalism, had to grant one jareeb (0.5 acres) of land to agriculture worker.

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115 Personal interview with Inayatullah Khan Yasir (age 62) of Kala Killy, Swat on February 07, 2013. He worked as a Deputy Joint Secretary of MKP during 1978 to 1986.

116 Personal interview with Amber.

117 Abdur, 1974, pp 21-24; Zaighum, H. S., *Khabarnama*. Issue No. 39, Begum Road, Central Office of MKP, Lahore ND, p 1; Weekly Sanobar, October 29, 1970, p 1.

118 Bacha, S., *Zamung Da Tehreek Ao Zarori Karoona*. Shaheen Barqi Press, MKP, NWFP, Peshawar 1973, pp 3-4.

119 Ibid., pp 3-4.

120 Maseeh, W., *Manifesto of MazorKisan Party*. MKP, Karachi August 1970, p 62.

121 Abdur, 1974, pp 23-24; Weekly Sanobar, No. 24, December 12, 1970, p 9.

122 Maseeh, 1970, p 62; Bacha, 1973, pp 3-4.

123 Fareedullah, *Dushman Pehchano-Dost Pehchano*. Mazdoor Kisan Party, NWFP ND, pp 4-11.

6. To sale state lands to landless peasants on installments and to install water meters on irrigation culverts to avoid male-distribution of water.
7. To stop highhandedness and exploitation of landlords' henchmen and *Nazirs* and to organize collective strength of peasant, small landowners and agriculture workers into peasant committees.
8. To acquire state land for Mosques, schools, homes, hospitals, graveyards, etc.
9. To stop unpaid forced labour (*baigar*) and fines. No peasant shall go to offer salaam and present chicken, eggs and other dairy product to Khan and peasants shall settle their disputes amongst themselves,[124]
10. Exemption from land tax (*malia*) on small land holdings up to twelve and a half acres,[125]

## Comparing Bolshevik Peasant Programme with That of North Hashtnagar

Following similarities and differences have been identified in two peasant programmes:

The Bolshevik peasant programme emphasized complete ending to private landownership and emancipating peasants from all political restrictions.[126] Initially, it aimed at providing freedom to peasants from oppressions and exploitation of landlords; reduce land rents, return of all money to peasants paid by them for land during Emancipation Reforms in 1861, and annulment of all unjust agreements between landlords and peasants in 1903.[127] Whereas, programme of the Sarhad peasant committee, North Hashtnagar advocated acquisition of basic human rights, formation of peasant organizations, to achieve political, social and economic rights and liberating peasants from clutches of feudal lords.[128] Peasant committee, North Hashtnagar struggled: to stop forced eviction of peasants from lands and houses, by organizing armed resistance; to oppose levying unjust fines; and to enhance peasants share in yield and wage of agriculture workers.[129] Moreover, it made mandatory upon those land holding peasants, who received land as a result of peasant struggle against feudalism, to grant one jareeb (0.5 acres) of land to agriculture worker. It revealed its intent to land reforms by limiting influence of landlords' i.e. abolishing remnants of feudalism.

Later Russian working class led by Bolshevik, advocated in 1905 strategic and revolutionary peasant programme confiscating all feudal land

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[124] Circular, ND, Issue No. 81, p. 15; Circular, May 1976, Issue No. 73, p 7.
[125] Abdur, 1974, pp 23-24.
[126] Lenin, *Collected Works*, 1965, Vol. 8, p 235.
[127] Lenin, *Collected Works*, 1964, Vol. 6, p 112.
[128] Zaighum, No. 39, p 1.
[129] Bacha, 1973, pp 3-4.

without compensation[130] and its distribution amongst peasants.[131] Hence, it emphasized taking land away from private landowners and to nationalize it. Conversely, peasant programme of Sarhad peasant committee fixed maximum limit of land ownership i.e. 100 jareeb (50 acres) of irrigated and 200 jareeb (100 acres) of arid land. It also urged distribution of land above ceiling fixed amongst landless peasants not exceeding 25 jareebs per family. This movement pursued local, limited and reformist objectives aimed at curtailing dominant influence of feudal lords.

The Bolshevik peasant programme urged setting up revolutionary peasant committees taking lands away from feudal lords and bringing about revolutionary and democratic reforms by working class in alliance with peasantry.[132] Whereas, Sarhad peasant committee, North Hashtnagar advocated setting up peasant committee and urged to stop forced eviction of peasants from lands by organizing armed resistance.[133] It also urged amicable resolution of intra peasant land disputes and also disputes between small land owners and peasants to win support of these small landowners against feudal lords.[134] By 1906 and 1917, Bolshevik peasant programme evolved urging confiscation of feudal land and granting it to state cooperatives or local bodies under state land rent mechanism. However, Sarhad peasant committee aimed at stopping forced peasants' eviction and to bring an end to remnants of feudal customs. It urged provision of land to landless in order to unite various strata of peasants and to weaken bigger private landowners. Its peasant programme permitted holding of 25 jareeb land per family, hence, promoted democracy and agrarian capitalism.

The Bolsheviks emphasized using active propaganda amongst urban working class as its support was considered necessary for success of their peasant programme.[135] It urged to organize agriculture workers on the pattern of urban working class and to unite[136] them as an independent class organization enabling them to struggle to abolish feudalism under leadership of urban working class.[137] Conversely, Sarhad peasant committee, North Hashtnagar comprised lease-holding peasants' relatively rich peasants, small land owners and agriculture workers[138] did not include urban working class in this struggle.[139] Though, agricultural workers remained in the forefront of

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130 Lenin, *Collected Works*, 1965, Vol. 9, p 234.
131 Lenin, 1965, Vol. 8, pp 402-596.
132 Lenin, 1965, Vol. 9, June-July, 1905, pp 405-406, 90; Vperyod: Issue No. 11 of March 23 (10), 12 of March 29 (16), 1905.
133 Weekly Sanobar, October 23, 1970, p. 11.
134 Fareedullah, ND, pp. 4-11.
135 Lenin, *Collected Works*, 1965, "Social Democracy's Attitude Towards Peasant Movement", Vol. 9, pp 230-239 at p 237.
136 Lenin, V.I., *The Land Question and the Fight for Freedom*. Progress Publishers, Moscow 1965, pp 60-67.
137 Lenin, *Collected Works*, 1965, Vol. 8, pp 231, 235- 402.
138 Workers Group, 1977, pp 10-11; Lenin, *Collected Works*, 1965, Vol. 9, p 237.
139 Circular, July 15, 1974, Issue No. 54, pp 6-7.

peasant struggle, however, the leadership failed in uniting them into an independent single class organization.[140] Fruits of peasant struggle were reaped by lease-holding rich peasants alone, giving rise to contradictions between them and agriculture workers.[141] Temporary gains of peasant movement in North Hashtnagar in terms of control over land dampened their spirit of struggle, especially of rich peasants. They became free from landlords' influence, having no fear of eviction with more land in hand and lesser land rent to pay. Since, it benefited them alone, they began acting like small landowners; started hoarding agricultural produce and capital in banks; bought lands, tractors, and trucks. Some peasants entered in trade of farm produce such as gur (raw sugar) and fertilizers. Consumer goods such as bicycles, transistor radios, and electric fans became part of rural household. In short, increased money-commodity relations through mechanization of rural farming and increased contact with market for seeds and fertilizers as well as consumer goods paved way for agrarian capitalism.

The Bolshevik peasant programme advocated collective empowerment of peasants and cancellation of all feudal era discriminatory laws preventing peasants from land acquisition. Moreover, it strived for right to: freedom of speech; to form associations, forfeiture of church and royal lands[142] and impose heavy taxes on big landlords'.[143] Sarhad peasant committee, North Hashtnagar advocated sale of state lands to landless peasants on installments. It also advocated assessment of water tax on the basis of income tax paid by landowners having more than 25 jareeb (12.5 acres) land. It also urged setting up mechanism to measure proper amount of irrigation water given to each landowner and to waiver of water tax on 12 and half acres of land.[144] The programme of Sarhad peasant committee in North Hashtnagar was also to struggle for right to hold public meetings and form political associations.[145] Moreover, it also demanded grant of state land for mosques, schools, hospitals, and graveyards.

The Bolshevik peasant programme favoured empowerment of courts[146] bringing end to cruel practices of landlords upon bonded peasants and unjust rates of land rents.[147] Similarly, program of Sarhad peasant committee, North Hashtnagar attempted bringing end to the excesses carried out by feudal lords and their supervisors (*Nazirs*), stoppage of unpaid forced labour, and practice of giving feudal lords chicken and eggs as gifts. It also worked for enabling peasants to solve their intra peasant problems among themselves. Even, Sarhad peasant committee, North Hashtnagar established

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140 Ibid., p 2.
141 Ibid., p 11.
142 Lenin, *Collected Works*, 1964, Vol. 6, p 112.
143 Ibid., p 112.
144 Maseeh, 1970, p 62.
145 Workers Group, 1977, p. 45; Circular, July 15, 1974, Issue No. 54, p 6.
146 Lenin, *Collected Works*, 1964, Vol. 6, p 112.
147 Ibid., p 112.

people's courts in some of the areas such as in Malakand Agency[148] under Supreme Peasant Judge, an elder Syed Nazeef Kaka. These courts not only solved intra peasant disputes but also between peasants and small landowners as well as regulated rates of land rent.[149]

## Conclusion

Bolshevik Russian peasant programme of R.S.D.L.P., had a great impact upon programme of peasant movements in NWFP. Numerous national progressive young men from NWFP who had studied at the University of Toilers, Moscow, in 1920s and inspired by the Russian Bolshevism subsequently joined the spontaneous peasant movement of Ghalla Dher, in 1938. They collaborated with local peasant leaders and shaped list of peasant demands. The peasant movements and their leaders were much influenced by local political movements such as the KKM and the Congress Socialist Party. Their struggle has been peaceful and political in nature. Hence, the impact of these peasant movements remained limited. They advocated forbidding forced eviction, withdrawal of heavy taxes, fines and practices such as Tora and Malba taxes etc. However, impact of the Bolshevism was more explicit and profound on peasant movement launched in the North Hashtnagar in 1970s. The movement had been more organized, leadership deeply influenced by Bolshevik Marxist ideology successfully evolved more advanced peasant programme than Ghalla Dher.

Firstly, they succeeded in setting up a network of peasant committees in rural areas of North Hashtnagar and followed the principle of democratic centralism. Secondly, impact of the Bolshevism laid deep imprints on peasant movement in North Hashtnagar where the movement strived to achieve freedom of peasants from oppression and exploitation of landlords'. It reduced land rents, enhanced peasants' share in yield and stopped forced eviction of peasants from lands and houses through armed resistance, opposed levying of unjust fines, and enhanced wages of agriculture workers. It also succeeded in getting socio-political and economic rights of peasants such as right to get education, holding public meetings, contest election, cast votes and right to sell and purchase land.

Thirdly, Sarhad peasant committee strengthened alliance of lease-holding peasants, sharecroppers and agriculture workers, since basic conflict existed between big landlords and lease-holding peasants on the one hand and between big landowners and sharecroppers as well as agriculture workers on the other. Fourthly, lack of urban workers and limited number of agriculture workers in North Hashtnagar drove peasants to form an alliance with small landowners too. It aimed at neutralizing small landowners

[148] Zaighum, Issue No. 37, pp 2-7.
[149] Ibid., No. 39, p 1.

preventing their siding with landlords. Sarhad peasant committee declared all those small landowners allies who were not involved in forced eviction of peasants, avoided unpaid forced labour, unjust taxes and paid proper amount of land rent and share in the yield to peasants. Thus, isolated big landowners and attempted to enforce land reforms. This political strategy and tactics it seems has been Bolshevik. Since Bolshevik made an alliance of urban and rural proletariat and neutralized the peasantry to demolish autocracy in Russia.

Finally, most striking impact of Bolshevism on peasant movement in North Hashtnagar has been that it brought feudal lords and their system to its knees forcing them to accept some of peasants' demands. Although the movement failed in rooting out feudal landlordism in its entirety, however, it unified peasants into a force to be reckoned with. Landlords were forced to make conciliatory agreements with peasants in terms of land sale deeds and as a result lost power and influence considerably. Material gains by peasants as a result of their struggle improved their financial conditions enabling them to provide better health care and education to their offspring. Numerous of them earned professional qualifications in medicine and engineering. Increased money-commodity relation also led to agrarian capitalism in terms of mechanized farming and use of fertilizers, better seeds and pesticides. Also more democratic relationship in the rural areas emerged.

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# Preconditions and Prospects of Peace in Afghanistan

***Ishtiaq Ahmad****

The stalemate in the Afghan war and the scheduled withdrawal of NATO troops from Afghanistan by the end of 2014 necessitate political resolution of the Afghan conflict through reintegration and reconciliation of the forces of insurgency. It is a tall order. For while the US-led coalition's motivations for peace may be quite obvious, they are relatively unclear in the case of Taliban-led insurgents. The security transition currently under way in Afghanistan, indeed, offers credible opportunities for a viable peace settlement in the war-torn country, but some crucial questions remain unanswered. For instance, what are the possible incentives and disincentives that may persuade or compel the Taliban towards political compromise before the end of 2014, especially after combat responsibility shifts to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) in 2013? What are the pre-requisites of a peace-making process that should last well beyond 2014? And how far can the recent international summitry process guarantee a long-term international commitment in Afghanistan—the absence of which after the end of anti-Soviet jihad in the 1980s had created the context for a violent Afghan conflict, along with equally, or even more, violent consequences for the region and the world? An attempt is made in the following pages to answer these questions without, of course, overlooking the peculiar intricacies of the Afghan conflict.

The scope of this article is confined mostly to the challenge of peace making in Afghanistan, especially its preconditions and prospects, while some crucial issues of Afghan peace building are narrated briefly in the end. The discussion begins by mentioning the key motivations behind NATO's military exit from Afghanistan and recent moves by the Afghan Government and the Obama Administration to reconcile Taliban, as well as Taliban's response to these moves. Subsequent discussion narrates the preconditions and prospects of peace in Afghanistan, including the need for reassessing previous thinking on the Afghan conflict and recognising current signs of hope for its resolution. The article charts out a workable course for

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politically resolving the Afghan conflict, while incorporating concerns and interests of regional actors, and concludes by emphasising the value of long-term international engagement to stabilise Afghanistan.

## Security Transition

After well over a decade, the war in Afghanistan has been in a stalemate for the past few years. Its most important outcome is the decimation of al-Qaeda and its core leadership, including Osama bin Laden. Within the Afghan theatre, the surge of US and NATO troops since 2009 has produced only tactical successes, and gains made under the Counter-Insurgency (COIN) strategy of 'defeat, hold, build and transfer' also have precarious foundations.[1] Controversial night raids by US Special Forces in the past and other incidents of targeted killing of Afghan civilians more recently have fuelled Afghan hostility towards foreign forces.[2] Taliban-led insurgents have responded to the US-led coalition's shift in military strategy not to fight in the countryside by appropriately changing their war tactics—with greater resort to roadside bombings, targeted killings, intimidation and infiltration of security forces.[3] The infiltration of Taliban loyalists in ANSF and consequent increase in the killing of foreign troops by Afghan soldiers is the newest element in Taliban insurgency.[4] That the war in Afghanistan is not winnable through military means alone is, therefore, an important factor behind NATO's plan to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan before 2015, which was unveiled first at its Lisbon summit in November 2009. War weariness, unaffordable human and financial cost of the war and growing anti-war public opinion in the US and other troop contributing nations are underlying factors in this regard.

The NATO summit at Chicago in May 2012 gave the final shape to NATO's exit strategy by announcing an "irreversible" three-stage security transition plan. Under the plan, ANSF were to assume full responsibility for combat operations in mid-2013, NATO would withdraw all of its combat troops from Afghanistan by the end of 2014, and the Afghan government would receive around $4.1 billion in security assistance from the US and its NATO allies, in addition to non-combat military support for a decade

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1 See Balint Szlanko, "A year later, "Afghanistan surge shows no gains in southeast," *World Politics Review*, June 7, 2012; Jonathan Rue, "Auditing the US surge in Afghanistan," *The Guardian*, September 24, 2012.

2 Erica Gastion, "Karzai's civilian casualties ultimatum," *Foreign Policy*, June 2, 2012.

3 Shanthie M D'Souza, "Transition in Afghanistan: winning the war of perceptions, *ISAS Working Paper*, No. 161 (October 30, 2012), p 4.

4 Attacks by Afghan Army on Foreign Troops Rise," *Aljazeera*, 1 September 2012, http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2012/09/20129111330301854.html. Accessed on April 13, 2013.

beyond 2014.[5] **As of summer 2013,** the Obama Administration had not disclosed the finally tally of US military advisors and trainers to be stationed in Afghanistan after 2014. However, earlier accounts suggested that, besides 2,000 NATO military advisers and trainers, around 15-000 to 20,000 US combat 'enablers'[6] and an expanded force of US drones, could be stationed in Afghanistan after 2014 under the US-Afghan Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA). The agreement, which was signed days before the Chicago summit, describes Afghanistan as a 'major non-NATO ally' of the US. An international donors' conference held in Tokyo in July 2012 announced to provide Afghanistan with $16 billion development assistance through 2015.[7]

NATO's exit strategy meets three preliminary preconditions of an Afghan endgame premised on relative stability. First, it entails a commitment the Afghans have long sought from the international community that it will not abandon them as before, following the Soviet exit from Afghanistan over two decades ago. The pledges made in Chicago and Tokyo guarantee such commitment. At some stage, foreign troops had to militarily disengage from the war and hand over security responsibility to their Afghan counterparts. The exit strategy meets this precondition as well. Finally, resolution of Afghan conflict through political means requires that international combat troops should quit military operations and leave Afghanistan. The US-led coalition is now committed to the withdrawal option, which means that Taliban-led insurgents will find it increasingly difficult to use the presence of foreign troops on Afghan soil as a pretext to fight and oppose dialogue.[8]

However, Afghanistan's security transition under the NATO exit plan will remain uncertain as long as there is no corresponding political strategy to seek an internationally sponsored, regionally facilitated and Afghan led resolution of the conflict in Afghanistan. It is doubtful whether the quantitatively strong but qualitatively poor Afghan army and police of over

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[5] 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, 2012, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_87595.htm. Accessed on March 2, 2013.

[6] Kenneth Katzman, *Afghanistan: post-Taliban governance, security, and U.S. policy*, CRS Report for Congress (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, September 21, 2012), p 27.

[7] "Donors offer $16 billion Afghan aid at Tokyo conference, *Reuters*, July 8, 2012.

[8] For detailed analysis of the Chicago summit conclusions, see Ishtiaq Ahmad, "Promise and peril of NATO's military exit from Afghanistan," *Politics in Spires*, May 30, 2012, http://politicsinspires.org/2012/05/promise-and-peril-of-nato's-'irreversible'-exit-from-afghanistan/. Accessed on April 10, 2013.

352,000 personnel[9] will be able to muster the required military resolve to fight Taliban-led insurgents in their strongholds of southern and eastern Afghanistan after assuming full responsibility of security operation in mid-2013—what to speak of the period beyond 2014. ANSF's current ethnically disproportionate composition, reflective of Pashtun marginalization especially in Afghan National Army's officer ranks,[10] could lead to widespread desertions. After the withdrawal deadline of 2014, the presence of US and NATO forces in a non-combat role and US drone capability, besides ANSF and forces loyal to warlords cultivated by the US over the years, could be a significant hedge against the resurgence of the intra-Afghan warfare, with regional states supporting their respective factions in a proxy war. Still in the absence of a viable conflict resolution process in the run up to NATO's exit in 2014, it is difficult to foresee how far the outside world will remain committed to the security and development of Afghanistan for a decade beyond this deadline.

## Reconciliation Process

Such uncertainties about the future of Afghan peace on the eve of NATO withdrawal have led to recent efforts by the Obama Administration and the Afghan Government to seek Pakistan's help in reconciling the Taliban. While these efforts do not seem to constitute a viable conflict resolution process in Afghanistan, they do form the basis of a preliminary negotiating framework for the purpose. The United States has "set up working groups with Pakistan to identify which Taliban leaders would be open to reconciliation and to ensure those holed up on Pakistani territory

[9] Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF): Training and Development – Published by North Atlantic Treaty Organization, http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_topics/20120516_media_backgrounder_ANSF_en.pdf. Accessed on April 13, 2013.

[10] See Anthony H. Cordesman, "Afghan National Security Forces: what it will take to implement the ISAF strategy, and security lead transition: the assessment process, metrics, and efforts to build capacity," Statement before the US House of Representative's Armed Services Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, July 24, 2012, http://csis.org/files/publication/101115_Cordesman_AfghanNationalSecurityForces_Web.pdf. Accessed on April 11, 2013. Also see Thomas Johnson & Mathew DuPee, "The transition to nowhere: the limits of 'Afghanisation," *Foreign Policy*, March 22, 2011; and Antonio Giustozzi, "Afghanistan's National Army: The Ambiguous Prospects of Afghanistan," *Terrorism Monito*r, Vol. 6, No. 9, 1 May 2008. Giustozzi estimated 70 percent of Afghan battalion commanders in Afghan National Army as Tajik, a legacy of the role the Tajik-dominated Northern Alliance played in the fall of the Taliban in 2001. Having one ethnic group dominate the leadership positions in an ethno-linguistically fragmented society, argue Johnson and DuPee, has helped discourage certain other groups, especially southern Pashtuns, from joining the ANA, though there are a host of reasons explaining the imbalanced recruitment to ANSF.

would be able to travel to the site of talks."[11] Afghanistan and Pakistan have also revived a Joint Peace Commission which was established in January 2011 for the purpose of reconciling Taliban but subsequently became dormant due to the assassination of Burhanuddin Rabbani in September 2011. In November 2012, Salahuddin Rabbani, the son of late Afghan president and head of Afghan High Peace Council (HPC) visisted Islamabad and secured the release of a dozen important Taliban leaders from Pakistani prisons.[12] On the occasion, Pakistan also agreed to a peace plan drafted by the HPC, called Peace Process Road Map to 2015, which gives it a central role in the Afghan reconciliation process. hese US and Afghan moves for reconciling the Taliban with Pakistan's help, indeed, represent a noticeable step in the Afghan peace making, but formidable challenges remain.

The Afghan Government and the Obama Administration did attempt to reconcile the Taliban before, but the haphazard moves they made for the purpose in the past few years became hostage to a host of impeding factors—including US military's preference to wage war, Pakistan's fear of being left out of the peace process, Afghan hardliners' role as spoilers of peace and Taliban's unwillingness for peace. Yet, even while the Afghan and US peace bids during the time did not succeed, their relative consistency creates a valid context for the current peace making efforts. Their successful outcome rests considerably on the negation of the same factors that impeded the reconciliation process in the recent past, which is worth reviewing briefly.

The increase in Taliban-led insurgency in 2006 beyond was a major reason why the Afghan Government attempted to reconcile the Taliban leadership. For the purpose, Afghanistan and Pakistan held a joint Jirga in August 2007, which brought together in Kabul some 700 participants from both countries, including religious scholars and tribal elders.[13] However, the subsequent climate of distrust between the two sides scuttled the Jirga process. In 2009, President Hamid Karzai invited Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar to participate in the Afghan presidential elections,[14] an offer that did not receive due response from the Taliban leader. The same year, Afghan government officials met with representatives of Afghan insurgent groups in Saudi Arabia, including some moderate Taliban leaders.

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[11] "New Pakistan outreach could aid Afghan peace deal," *Associated Pres*s, October 27, 2012. Since the start of 2012, Pakistani civilian leaders and officials have also launched an extensive outreach campaign to cultivate support among non-Pashtun Afghan leaders, which may help assuage their traditional mistrust of the country and, therefore, reinforce its role as a facilitator in the process to reconcile the Taliban and other insurgents groups.

[12] Rod Nordland, "More Taliban prisoners may be released," *The New York Times*, November 17, 2012.

[13] See "Text of Pak-Afghan Peace Jirga Declaration," *Daily Times*, August 13, 2007.

[14] "Karzai invites Taliban to talk despite city attack," *Associated Press*, August 11, 2009.

These talks, which were informally sanctioned by the UN,[15] could not translate into a meaningful peace process—as Pakistan arrested Taliban military chief Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, fearing he might be part of the Afghan government's bid to bypass it in the peace process.[16] Once the London Conference in January 2010 formally announced to initiate the Afghan reconciliation process, the Karzai regime began laying down the institutional foundations for the purpose. In June 2010, it launched the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme (APRP). The plan secured its mandate from the Afghan Council of Peace Jirga, which had earlier met in Kabul and included 1,600 broadly representative delegates from across Afghanistan. The APRP covers all members of the armed opposition who are willing to renounce violence, dissociate from al-Qaeda, accept Afghanistan's constitution and contribute to its nation-building process. It has twin objectives of reintegration and reconciliation—the former aiming to bring the foot soldiers of insurgency back to mainstream Afghan society, with incentives of jobs, income and security; and the latter geared towards reconciling the leaders of insurgency, with offers of amnesty, political participation, and immunity from international prosecution.[17]

In September 2010, for the purpose of reconciling insurgent leaders, the Afghan Government established the 70-member HPC under the leadership of President Rabbani.[18] In January 2011, an HPC delegation led by President Rabbani visited Islamabad, and the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan agreed to establish a Joint Peace Commission of their diplomatic, military and intelligence officials, with a mandate to facilitate the Afghan reconciliation process through direct talks with hard-line Afghan insurgent leaders.[19] Subsequently, Pakistani civilian and security leadership interacted with its Afghan counterpart, both bilaterally and within the framework of the Turkish-led tripartite peace process.[20] However, all of these interactions between Afghan and Pakistani authorities, and their respective peace initiatives, failed to produce any tangible outcome in terms of reconciling the Taliban.

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[15] "Former UN envoy Kai Eide explains why he held talks with the Taliban," *BBC News Online*, March 19, 2010, http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/news/2010/03/100318_kai_eide.shtml. Accessed April 11, 2013.

[16] "Afghan officials say Pakistan's arrest of Taliban leader threatens peace talks, *The Washington Post*, April 10, 2010. Also see Ishtiaq Ahmad, "The US Af-Pak strategy: challenges and opportunities for Pakistan. *Asian Affairs* Vol. 29, No. 3 (Fall 2010) p. 207.

[17] Tazreena Sajjad, *Peace at all costs? Reintegration and reconciliation in Afghanistan* (Kabul: Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit, 2010), p 10.

[18] "Karzai sets up council for peace talks with Taliban", *BBC News Online*, September 4, 2010, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-11188294. Accessed on April 7, 2013.

[19] Syed, Baqir Saffad, "Pakistan gets a role in Afghan peace talks," *Dawn*, January 28, 2011.

[20] "Global Insider: Turkey-Afghanistan-Pakistan Trilateral Forum," *World Politics Review*, April 25, 2011.

Following the 2010 London Conference, the US also began pursuing the reconciliation path in Afghanistan, alongside the military effort. Besides limiting the goal of Afghan war to defeating al-Qaeda and its hard-core allies, the Obama Administration's Af-Pak strategy announced in March 2009 had included the option of reconciling Taliban-led insurgents, provided they meet the same conditions as the Afghan Government later set in the APRP: renounce violence, dissociate from al-Qaeda and accept the Afghan Constitution.[21] Obama Administration officials, particularly US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, subsequently built the discourse that peace would eventually be "made with the enemy." In a February 2011 speech at the Asia Society in New York, she described pursuing conditional reconciliation with the Taliban as an important US goal in Afghanistan. It was a major shift in the US Afghan policy. The three conditions were still going to be the "red lines," now they were no longer preconditions but to be treated as "necessary outcomes of any negotiation"[22] or steps that could be taken at the end of the negotiations as part of a formal peace agreement.[23] However, even while the US civilian leadership preferred the peace path, the US military still favoured the military course—a factor that produced visible tension in the American policy in Afghanistan.[24] Yet the US State Department went ahead, with US officials meeting with Mullah Omar's envoy Tayyab Agha in Germany and Qatar mostly during 2011.[25] These talks showed Taliban's willingness to directly engage the US.[26] The US-Taliban dialogue was supported by the HPC,[27] and complemented by concrete US-sponsored steps, such as separating Taliban from al-Qaeda in the UN Security Council's list of Most Wanted Terrorists in June 2011.[28]

However, contrary to relative clarity about Afghan and US reconciliatory moves, the response of the Taliban was mostly rhetorical and declaratory in nature. In his message on the occasion of the Muslim festival

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[21] For detailed description of the US Af-Pak strategy, see Ahmed, op cit, pp. 191-209.

[22] Steve Cole, "US-Taliban talks," *The New Yorker*, February 28, 2011.

[23] Richard Weitz, "Global Insights: Negotiating with the Taliban," *World Politics Review*, February 14, 2012.

[24] Maleeha Lodhi, "A shift in US focus?" *The News*, January 4, 2012.

[25] Anne Gearan & Kathy Gannon, "US-Taliban talks were making headway," *Associated Press*, 29 August 2010.

[26] Citing interviews with former Taliban officials such as Mullah Abdul Salam Zaeef in Kabul, Cole (op cit) argued that senior Taliban leaders living in exile in Pakistan wanted the United States to leave Afghanistan but, at the same time, they preferred to talk with the Americans directly about the country's future, both to escape Pakistani security establishment's manipulation and because they regarded Karzai as a weak puppet.

[27] Lodhi, op cit.

[28] Louis Charbonneau, "U.N. council splits U.N. Taliban, Qaeda sanctions list," *Reuters*, June 17, 2012.

of *Eid-al-Fitr* in September 2011,[29] the Taliban leader talked about the establishment of "a real Islamic regime, which is acceptable to all people of the country" and "will be not to be aimed at monopolizing power." While pledging to prevent the recurrence of civil war in Afghanistan, Mullah Omar urged his cadres to "protect civilians." Subsequent statements by the Taliban movement issued between December 2011 and February 2012[30] justified its leadership's decision to open a liaison office in Qatar so that peace could move forward, as well as its recognition of Qatar's neutrality, despite visible closeness of the Gulf Sheikhdom with the US. More importantly, these statements revealed Taliban leadership's inclination to talk about specifics rather than generalities, particularly the offer of a prisoners' swap: five Taliban prisoners holed up Guantanamo Bay in exchange for a US soldier in Taliban custody. In March 2012, however, the Taliban unilaterally walked out of talks, alleging that new US proposals negated the previously agreed framework for talks. At the time, the Obama Administration faced legal problems over the issue of Taliban prisoners' release from Guantanamo Bay, which was reported to be the main reason why the Taliban leadership quit these talks unilaterally. That neither the Karzai regime nor the Pakistani government was made part of these talks could be another reason for their collapse. For while Taliban's readiness for peace is an absolutely essential variable for peace making, its manifestation on the ground is not possible without all of Afghanistan's internal and external stakeholders playing their respective complementary roles in the peace process—especially one that is led by the Afghans, facilitated by Pakistan and guaranteed by the United States.

## Revised Approach

Reconciling the Taliban-led insurgents is a hard but inescapable choice—the need for which might not have arisen in the first place if the long and extensive war effort in Afghanistan had succeeded in achieving its strategic and political goals. The current challenge in Afghanistan is not why to make peace but how to realise it. Peace is needed because of the uncertainties pertaining to Afghanistan's security transition from NATO to ANSF until and after 2014, and the manifold implications of the Afghan

[29] "Message of Felicitation of the Esteemed Amir-ul-Momineen on the Occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr," 5 September 2011, http://shahamat-english.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=10604:message-of-felicitation-of-the-esteemed-amir-ul-momineen-on-the-occasion-of-eid-ul-fitre&catid=4:statements&Itemid=4. Accessed on January 10, 2012.

[30] "Afghan Taliban back Western proposal for Qatar office," *BBC News Online*, January 3, 2012. All of the statements issued by the Taliban until and after the collapse of direct talks with the US are available on their official site http://shahamat-english.com, which was operational as of December 2012.

war. While the US and its Western allies have their own reasons for ending the military campaign in Afghanistan, the severity of human and material cost of the war for Afghanistan and Pakistan leaves them with no other choice. For renewed civil war in Afghanistan will only bring the situation back to square one and lead to an even more unaffordable eventuality. If how to realise peace in Afghanistan is the real challenge, then there is certainly need for reassessing previous thinking on the Afghan conflict—on the basis of which the Afghan war began after the events of 9/11 and has subsequently been waged.

The quest for meaningful Afghan reconciliation will remain uncertain as long as mistakes made in the past are not recognised, the Taliban movement and its motivations are not reassessed, and Pakistan's previous and prospective role in Afghanistan is not reviewed. Three observations are worth mentioning in terms of the past narrative of the Afghan conflict—premised on the use of military means alone for resolving the conflict and the portrayal of Taliban and Pakistan's support to them as its main causes. First, the current war was avoidable in the first place. The issue of the presence of al-Qaeda and particularly Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan could have been tackled without going to war. Recent studies[31] confirm that Taliban and al-Qaeda had inherent differences in ideology and objectives. As compared to half a trillion dollars the US alone has spent on Afghan war, only peanuts were required, in addition to tightening the scope of already enforced two sets of UN Security Council sanctions on Afghanistan, to squeeze the Taliban regime for bringing to task Osama bin Laden and other alleged al-Qaeda perpetrators of 9/11. Even if there was no way to prevent Kabul falling into the hands of the Afghan minority grouping of the Northern Alliance after the war began in October 2001, the failure to pursue reconciliation process in the initial years of the war during which Taliban-led insurgency had not gained momentum was another major mistake.[32]

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[31] For a comprehensive account in this regard, see Alex Strick van Linschoten & Felix Kuehn, *An Enemy We Created: The Myth of the Taliban/Al-Qaeda Merger in Afghanistan, 1970-2010* (London: Hirst & Co, 2012). The authors—who did most of their research in Kandharar based on extensive interviews with Taliban leaders—challenge the widely held belief that the Taliban and al-Qaeda are synonymous, that their ideology and objectives are closely intertwined, and that they have made common cause against the West for decades. The Taliban for being a local movement and driven by domestic power ambition are distinguished from al-Qaeda as an international jihadist entity motivated by global pan-Islamism goal. The relationship between Mulla Omar and bin Laden, the authors argue, was awkward and fractious—and, therefore, it was possible to pull the Taliban back from the brink in 2001.

[32] Even Lakhdar Brahimi, one of the architects of the Bonn process in 2001–02, later admitted that the Taliban should have been at the table, and an attempt made to forge a more inclusive settlement. See "Lakhdar Brahimi: We have not much helped Afghanistan," *The Nation*, March 11, 2009. Also see "Written evidence submitted by BBC correspondent David Loyn the UK's House of Commons' Select Committee on International

Second, there is need to reassess the Taliban movement, which, like al-Qaeda, is essentially a legacy of US-sponsored jihad against the Soviets. Neither Taliban might have risen to terrorise the Afghans nor al-Qaeda might have born to terrorise the world, had Afghanistan not been abandoned by the US and its allies after that jihad. Pakistan no doubt had a major hand in creating and sustaining the Taliban movement in the 1990s, but the intra-Afghan warfare following the Soviet withdrawal cannot be overlooked as a major contextualising factor for its emergence. While relative disarmament and fairer taxation during Taliban's rise and initial days is a debatable issue, their regime's success during the time to bring poppy cultivation down considerably and conduct quite cleverly on projects such as the gas pipeline from Turkmenistan is a subject of least controversy.[33] Yet it is hard to ignore what the Taliban did once they established a firm grip over power in Kabul and much of the country under their control. The Afghan people, including minorities and dissidents from within Pashtun majority, experienced an unprecedented reign of terror at the hands of their regime. However, in the post-2001 period, one of the main causes of the Taliban-led insurgency against US-led coalition is believed to be Pashtun marginalisation in Afghanistan's security, political and economic structure[34]—even though Taliban may not qualify as the sole representative of Afghan Pashtun aspirations.

Third, Pakistan's role in Afghanistan and its security predicament from successive wars in Afghanistan also deserve a critical rethinking. While the US disengaged from the region after the end of the Afghan jihad against the Soviets, Pakistan continued its jihadi engagement, with devastating consequences for itself and the region. While the post-Soviet anarchic Afghan context paved the way for the country's subsequent support to the Taliban must also be seen within this context—a major reason for the purpose was its security establishment's India-centric policy of 'strategic depth' to dominate Afghanistan in the 1990s. Likewise, the issue of Taliban safe havens in Pakistan's tribal regions fuelling Afghan insurgency is rooted

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Development, July 2012, http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmintdev/403/403we09.htm. Accessed on August 13, 2012. In his words, until 2006 neither the Kabul government nor most of those involved in the US-led international effort to stabilize the country believed that there was any need to engage with the Taliban.

[33] For details, see Graham Farrel & John Thorne, "Where have all the flowers gone? Evaluation of the Taliban crackdown against poppy cultivation in Afghanistan," *International Journal of Drug Policy*, Vol. 16 (2005), pp. 81-91. For Taliban's conduct vis-à-vis the Turkmensitan-Afghanistan-Pakistan gas pipeline project, see Ishtiaq Ahmad, "US-Taliban relations: friend turns fiend as pipeline politics fails," *Tehelka*, October 3, 2001.

[34] Shehzad H. Qazi, "Toward a sustainable peace in Afghanistan: part I," World Politics Review, May 22, 2012, http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/11973/toward-a-sustainable-peace-in-afghanistan-part-i. Accessed on November 1, 2012. For detailed analysis, see Ishtiaq Ahmad, "Why NATO is failing in Afghanistan," *IPRI Journal*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (Winter 2008), pp. 53-69.

in the era of anti-Soviet jihad and subsequent anarchy. It cannot as well be divorced from intricacies of the border region and cultural peculiarities of its Pashtun population,[35] notwithstanding its salience as being the main irritant in Pakistan's relations with the US and Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban regime in late 2001. Another transformative reality of the recent times that needs to be duly acknowledged is the recent conceptual shift in Pakistan's 'strategic depth' policy.[36] This adventurist approach has cost the country dearly, especially in the domains of internal security, regional relations and international standing. Visible progress in India-Pakistan trade and travel,[37] Pakistan's renewed cooperation with the US and Afghanistan to facilitate Afghan reconciliation and its extensive outreach reach campaign to cultivate support among non-Pashtun Afghan leaders[38] are but some of the tangible indicators of the recent shift away from the 'strategic depth' policy framework.

## Cautious Optimism

However, a more important issue than rethinking the recent past approaches towards understanding the Afghan conflict and its causes is whether a meaningful attempt to politically resolve it has been in the offing or not. As discussed before, preliminary moves to realise Afghan reconciliation have already been made. The UN Security Council's decision in June 2011 to split a sanctions blacklist for the Taliban and al-Qaeda has been a major step to encourage the Taliban towards reconciliation.[39] The Taliban have shown willingness for the purpose, but only in the form of holding limited direct talks with the US. Moreover, al-Qaeda' position in both Afghanistan and Pakistan has significantly weakened, especially after Osama bin Laden's death, thereby making one of the pre-conditions of making peace with the enemy—namely, Taliban's disassociation with al-

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[35] Claude Rakisits, "The end game in Afghanistan: Pakistan's critical role," *Future Directions International* (2012), pp. 1-8, http://www.futuredirections.org.au/publications/associate-papers/529-the-end-game-in-afghanistan-pakistans-critical-role.html. Accessed on November 19, 2012. The author narrates such intricacies of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region in a recent historical context, while highlighting the pivotal role Pakistan can play for Afghan reconciliation.

[36] This shift is noticed in several recent publications. See, for instance, Shehzad H Qazi, "Pakistan's Afghanistan Plan: Strategic Depth 2.0," *World Politics Review*, November 3, 2012), 3p; The Jinnah Institute, *Pakistan, the United States and the Endgame in Afghanistan: Perceptions of Pakistan's Foreign Policy Elite* (Islamabad: The Jinnah Institute, co-published with Washington-based US Institute of Peace, July 2011), 5p.

[37] Iftekhar A. Chawdhury, "India-Pakistan Ties: Do signs of warming indicate climate change," *ISAS Brief*, No. 125 (September 13, 2012), 4p.

[38] "New Pakistan outreach could aid Afghan peace deal," op cit.

[39] "UN splits Taliban and al-Qaeda on sanctions blacklist," *BBC News Online*, June 18, 2001, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-13812834. Accessed on November 3, 2012.

Qaeda—significantly immaterial. More importantly, for Taliban and other Afghan insurgents, the key precondition of the withdrawal of foreign troops is being met.

The notion of Taliban save havens in Pakistan may also become equally meaningless, if the peace process moves forward—even if the issue of Haqqani Network, now listed by the UN as a terrorist organisation, remains a major irritant in US-Pakistan relations. Already a role reversal is visible over Afghan Taliban leaders' participation in talks with the US. The previous US allegation of Pakistan providing safe havens to Taliban for the insurgency in Afghanistan now contrasts with the US approach of persuading Pakistan to facilitate Taliban leaders' safe passage for talks with the Afghan Government. Another argument finding salience in recent literature on Afghan conflict resolution points to Pakistan's motivation for having a broad-based government in Kabul that is dominated by the Pashtun but not led by Taliban.[40] Such transformation in Pakistan's Afghan policy makes sense, given the horrific experience it has undergone at the hands of its own Taliban movement. Afghan Taliban's recapture of political power may, in turn, fuel the extremist ambitions of Pakistani Taliban—an eventuality that, realistically speaking, should be unaffordable for Pakistan.

The Afghan Government wants to be in the driving seat of the reconciliation process, as clear from its adoption of an institutionalised approach on the issue since 2010. However, the success of its Peace and Reintegration Programme effectively hinges on the HPC's ability to reach out to Taliban and other insurgent leaders. The preliminary moves for the purpose have already been made with the help of Pakistan, which has stated categorically its support for an "Afghan-led and Afghan-owned" peace process.[41] For instance, at the third round of the British-sponsored tripartite talks on Afghanistan in February in February 2013 in the United Kingdom, President Karzai and his Pakistani counterpart, Asif Ali Zardari jointly pledged to adopt "necessary measures" to secure a peace deal with the Taliban "within the next six months." They also called upon Taliban to open an office in Qatar as a point of contact for peace talks with the HPC,[42] which is in line with its peace plan, Roadmap 2015.

Moreover, since the summer of 2012, the breakdown in US-Pakistan relations of the previous year and a half has given way to their resumption

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[40] For instance, see Ahmed Rashid, *Pakistan on the Brink: The Future of Pakistan, Afghanistan and the West* (New York: Penguin Books, 2012 and Jonathan Steele, *Ghosts of Afghanistan: The Haunted Battleground* (London: Portobello Books, 2012. Also see Qazi, "Pakistan's Afghanistan Plan", op cit; and The Jinnah Institute, op cit.

[41] See Transcripts of Pakistani Foreign Minister Hina Rabbani Khar's address, titled 'Pakistan in a Changing Regional and Global Environment,' at Chatham House, February 22, 2012, www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/.../220212khar.pdf. Accessed on November 3, 2012.

[42] Adil Shahzeb, "Afghan endgame: big deal," *The Friday Times*, February 15-21, 2013.

on terms acceptable to both. If and when the process to reconcile the Taliban-led insurgents resumes—with Afghanistan as the lead player, and Pakistan and the United States performing their respective roles as a facilitator and a guarantor—the challenge will then be to sort out the substantive issues of renunciation of violence by all sides and reincorporating Taliban in Afghanistan's political, security and economic structure.

Most Afghans want peace, and are hunted by the war fatigue. The reality and repercussion of a long war as well as a November 2012 public opinion survey by The Asia Foundation[43] suggest so. If the war's longevity and accompanying costs have led to a change of course for the US-led coalition, the same factors should presumably persuade the Taliban-led insurgents for making peace. For the end of hostility provides them an opportunity to govern their country again, if not alone but through sharing power with other Afghans. Taliban's motivations for peace are is a focal subject in current scholarship on Afghanistan. For instance, a 2011 report by The Century Foundation co-authored by Brahimi and Pickering, covering a diverse range of insurgent opinion, mentions several factors that could persuade Afghan insurgents towards political compromise. It noted "signs of realisation among the Taliban that their progress in recent years has provoked sufficient counter-force to contain them. Taliban have encountered increasing resistance from the population in areas beyond their most dedicated base when they have sought to impose the stern morality code of the emirate days."[44] Ahmed Rashid argues in *Pakistan on the Brink* that Taliban do not share al-Qaeda's global agenda, and have "mellowed on the issues of girls' education, the media, and health services for women".[45] A 2010 Fatwa by Mullah Omar banned the destruction of schools, contrary to Taliban's previous policy. "They have reportedly no objection to the opening of new schools as long as curriculum and instructors are of their choice.[46]

Moreover, as previously discussed, the phased withdrawal of US and NATO forces from Afghanistan meets a primary precondition set by Taliban and other Afghan insurgent groups for entering peace talks with the Afghan government. Further erosion of al-Qaeda's role in Afghanistan after the

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[43] Asia Foundation, *Afghanistan in 2012: A Survey of the Afghan People* (Kabul: The Asia Foundation, 2012), 272p, http://asiafoundation.org/resources/pdfs/Surveybook2012web1.pdf. Accessed on November 25, 2012.

[44] Lakhdar Brahimi & Thomas. R. Pickering, *Afghanistan: Negotiating peace* (New York: The Century Foundation, 2011), pp. 2-4.

[45] Rashid, op cit, p. 117.

[46] For details, see Antonio Giustozzi & Claudio Franco, *The Battle for the schools: The Taleban and state education*," Report by Afghanistan Analysts Network (Kabul: AAN, December 2011) 28p, http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/2011TalebanEducation.pdf. Accessed on November 11, 2012.

demise of Osama bin Laden creates a possibility whereby leaders of Afghan insurgency, particularly Mullah Umar, could be persuaded to publicly dissociate from al-Qaeda and, thus, meet a major precondition set by the Afghan government for joining the reconciliation process. Linschoten and Kuehn point out that a "break with al-Qaeda is something for which there would be support within the senior leadership, but how this is processed and instrumentalized will demonstrate how likely a possibility it would be."[47] However, recently reported interviews with senior Taliban leaders seem to suggest the possibility of Taliban formally dissociating from al-Qaeda once a general ceasefire and political agreement are decided. These interviews, published in July 2012 by London-based Royal United Service Institute in a report, titled 'Taliban Perspectives on Reconciliation', suggest that Taliban will "be open to negotiating a ceasefire as part of a general settlement, and also as a bridge between confidence-building measures and the core issue of the distribution of political power in Afghanistan."[48] Finally, as clear from the preliminary talks between Taliban and US officials, the Taliban leadership is willing to discuss the specifics of peace settlement rather than merely sticking to generalities such as the withdrawal of foreign troops or the illegitimacy of the Karzai regime.[49]

## Future Viability

However, just as the rush to war well over a decade ago was a mistake, the euphoria for peace based on erroneous interpretation of Taliban motivations will be a blunder. By pursuing dialogue, the Taliban may only be buying time, awaiting the withdrawal of foreign forces and then settling scores with Kabul's present rulers. This possibility cannot be precluded, given Taliban's past track record as rulers. After all, there is never a guarantee that radical religious movements, upon entering the corridors of power, will abide by the commitments they make during the peace process.[50] Another long war, which the Taliban have not lost, may have fuelled their

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[47] Linschoten & Kuehn, op cit, p 347.

[48] For details, see Michael Semple, et al, *Taliban perspectives on reconciliation* (London: RUSI, September 2012), 15p.

[49] For further analysis of Taliban's motivations for peace, see Weitz, op cit; International Crisis Group, *Talking about talks: Towards a Political Future Settlement in Afghanistan*, Asia Report No 221 (Kabul: ICG, March 26, 2012), 45p; and Talatbek Masadykov, et al, *Negotiating with the Taliban: Towards a solution for the Afghans*, Working Paper No. 66 (London: Crisis States Research Center, London School of Economics, January 2010), 22p.

[50] Pakistan and Saudi Arabia learned a hard lesson during the Taliban regime. Their influence eroded significantly as soon as the Taliban consolidated power in Kabul. Taliban's decision to host and harbor al-Qaeda was without any consultation with Riyadh. Their leadership looked the other way when Pakistan pleaded for the preservation of the ancient Buddha statues in Bamyian. For details, see Riaz Muhammad Khan, *Afghanistan and Pakistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 83-98.

jihadi resolve and extremist mindset even further. Given the unpredictability of Taliban's motivations, specific incentives and disincentives will be needed to respectively persuade them towards a peaceful settlement grounded in power-sharing and to dissuade them from renewing the deadly ambitions against opponents and dissidents inside Afghanistan. The war-torn country has made significant strides in the political domain and human rights spheres, which have to be preserved in any peace process. The Afghan Constitution prohibits discrimination between citizens 'whether man or woman.' Consequently, Afghan women have a visible presence in parliament, cabinet, civil administration and media. As pillars of civil society activism, they have played a crucial role in expanding female education across the country.[51]

Reversing the gains Afghanistan has made since the demise of the Taliban regime in 2001, whatever their scope, is not an option. Understandably so, there is widespread fear among the Afghans, especially among women and minority groups, that these gains may be sacrificed, as the US and NATO, motivated by their own pragmatic constrains, rush to reconcile the Taliban. In order to overcome this fear, civil society and minority groups have to be duly represented in peace talks. For Taliban to re-enter the political process, the current Afghan Constitution may not require major modifications. It already describes Afghanistan as an Islamic Republic, and the country's current legal system is also by and large at par with Islamic values. Some aspects of Afghanistan's present legal structure are not in tune with universal norms. Yet evolving a new constitutional setup and the justice system, one that incorporates Taliban aspirations, remains perhaps the biggest challenge of the peace process. As for determining who rules and makes decisions through electoral politics, there may not be much of a problem. Taliban leaders can certainly not hope to revive the same Sharia order they once imposed on the Afghans, and may not have much of a choice but to reshape their political religious in accordance with the radically changed Afghan political realities underpinned by the emergence of new political and business elites in the last over a decade.[52]

The limited US military presence in Afghanistan with drone capability beyond 2014, under its strategic pact with the Afghan government, will be an important deterrent to the revival of Taliban's reign of terror. Perhaps the UN as a neutral actor can take the lead in the peace process,[53] once a

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[51] For Afghanistan's prominent gains in political and social spheres since the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001, see Ishtiaq Ahmad, "Afghanistan's gains are too precious to compromise," *Politics in Spires*, February 21, 2012, http://politicsinspires.org/2012/02/afghanistan's-human-rights-gains-are-too-precious-to-compromise/. Accessed on April 11, 2013.

[52] These issues are discussed in detail in International Crisis Group (ICG)'s report, op cit.

[53] Ibid. The ICG report states (p.38) that the "UN is the only international organisation capable of drawing together the necessary political support and re- sources for what will undoubtedly be a lengthy and complex negotiating process. As NATO prepares to draw

comprehensive ceasefire is mutually agreed between the two contenders of Afghan war. But such issues can only come on the table, once the US-led coalition and Taliban-led insurgents agree to cessation of violence. For the purpose, the US-led coalition, with Afghanistan playing the lead role and Pakistan offering its supportive role, can move beyond issues such as prisoners' swap, which is possible in the near future, to first agree on time- and space-bound limited ceasefires, then widening the scope of these ceasefires[54] across the insurgency-ridden areas of Afghanistan. This will pave the way for resolving the larger issue of making Afghanistan's political, security and economic structure truly reflective of its multi-ethnic composition.

It is but natural that those who have dominated the post-Taliban order may most likely resist Taliban's inclusion in the governing structure or, in other words, the Pashtuns being awarded the due share in political power and security structure that is proportional to their population. The Tajiks dominate the army, especially its officer ranks, a position they will resist to maintain. Even the morality of their opposition to peace with Taliban is questionable—since many of the rulers of post-Taliban era, warlords such as Muhammad Fahim and Rashid Dostum, have no less Afghan blood on their hands. Other spoilers of peace may emerge from amongst the Taliban ranks. However, unlike Pakistani Taliban, the Afghan Taliban movement has by and large remained intact. The Hizb-e-Islami of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar already has significant presence in Afghan parliament, and Hekmatyar himself has made several peace overtures towards the Karzai regime.[55] This leaves the Haqqani Network to emerge as a potential spoiler of the Afghan peace process. But its ability for doing so will be significantly constrained if the Afghan Taliban join the peace process and Pakistan becomes its key facilitator. This is because of Haqqanis' stated subservience to Taliban movement and their linkage with Pakistani security establishment.

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down its forces, coalition partners must begin to incorporate the UN more in the overall dialogue around transition, but beyond this basic step it is clear that a UN-mandated mediation team is the only realistic and sustainable way for- ward in terms of a negotiating process."

[54] Rashid, op cit, also argues (p.208-9) that peace making with the Taliban "must include in the beginning "confidence-building measures, to reduce the unacceptably high levels of violence emanating from the conflict". The CMBs, such as a Taliban halt in political assassinations in exchange for the US abandoning night raids, and mutually-agreed ceasefires bound by space and time, can lead to "longer-lasting measures" that actually bring violence down on a permanent basis."

[55] See Yasir Rehman," Hizb-e Islami backs Afghan-led reconciliation process," *Central Asia Online*, January 13, 2012, http://centralasiaonline.com/en_GB/articles/caii/features/main/ 2012/01/13/ feature-01. Accessed on November 5, 2012.

Moreover, after being designated as a terrorist organization, pressure may overtime mount on its leadership to join the Afghan peace process.[56]

The Afghan conflict has over the last three decades regionalised to an extent that possibility of its resolution cannot be visualised in isolation from the interests and motivations of Afghanistan's immediate and proximate neighbours—including Pakistan, India, Iran, China, Russia, and the three Central Asian republics of Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.[57] Pakistan sought 'strategic depth' in Afghanistan due to its India-centric regional security approach. A shift in this approach is visible now in the form of its support for the 'Afghan-led, Afghan-owned' peace process. Since the start of 2011, Pakistan's peace process with India has also made headways, especially in bilateral trade and travel, **and it is expected to gain momentum under the Pakistan Muslim League led regime of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.** It is possible that, as their peace dialogue makes further progress, India and Pakistan may as well start to perceive mutual benefit in the establishment of a broad-based Afghan regime with due Taliban representation.

Since the demise of Taliban regime in late 2001, India has invested significantly in developing the Afghan infrastructure. Like China, India has geo-economic ambitions in Afghanistan and Central Asia, which can only be realised if Afghanistan is at peace and Pakistan is willing to act as a transit corridor for Afghan mineral resources and Central Asian natural gas. Russia, China and the Central Asian republics have had long-standing concerns regarding the export of extremism from Afghanistan. They will support any peace process in Afghanistan if its eventual outcome in the form of a broad-based Afghan regime, offering them fool-proof guarantees that Afghan soil will not be used for exporting extremism in the neighbourhood. Iran and Pakistan did compete for influence in Afghanistan in the 1990s, as Pakistan supported the Taliban and Iran backed the Northern Alliance. Iran has no reason to opt for the same approach, if Pakistan's pursuit in Afghanistan is limited to the end of Pashtun marginalisation in the Afghan security, political and economic structure—largely as a means to satisfy its own restive Pashtun population bordering Afghanistan. Even otherwise, the two

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[56] Already, in November 2012, a top commander of the Haqqani Network reportedly signaled its intension to "take part in peace talks with the United States but only under the direction of their Afghan Taliban leaders." See "Afghan reconciliation: Haqqanis may join US talks under Taliban tutelage," *The Express Tribune*, November 14, 2012.

[57] The importance of a regional framework for Afghan conflict resolution is extensively debated in recent scholarship on Afghanistan. See, for instance, Center for Security Studies, *Afghanistan: Withdrawal and a Regional Solution*, CSS Analysis in Security Policy No 109 (ETH Zurich: CSS, March 2012), 4p; and Sandra Destradi, et al, "The ISAF Withdrawal from Afghanistan: Perceptions and Reactions of Regional Powers," GIGA Focus, No 5 (2012).

countries are part of a mutually beneficial gas pipeline treaty.[58] After President Obama's re-election, the possibility of US nuclear row with Iran taking a militaristic turn, thereby disrupting the Afghan peace process, is also relatively remote.

Finally the crucial role that a long-term international commitment can play is hardly debatable, especially if we keep in mind the implications of the abandonment of Afghanistan after the Soviet defeat over two decades ago. There are pragmatic reasons why the US and its NATO allies want to extricate themselves from the Afghan war, which cannot be won militarily and sustained financially. But there are also pragmatic reasons for not repeating the mistake they made by handing over post-Soviet Afghanistan to the forces of jihad. The Afghans and other nations of the region should not be left alone again to deal with the complex mess created by yet another international war in the region. The US and its allies cannot think they can easily walk away from Afghanistan without facing another blowback of the renewed civil war, and the re-emergence of the region as a source of global jihad. It is in the realistic, if not moralistic, interest of the world community to join hands with Afghan forces and regional actors to achieve stable peace in Afghanistan.

To conclude, prevailing concerns about Afghanistan's security transition aside, for its political transition to progress smoothly the period in in the run up to April 2014 presidential elections, will be crucial. Pakistan can play an important role for the purpose, by bringing Afghan Taliban leaders to the negotiating table. The country does have meaningful clout over them, if not complete sway. For it has hosted them for so long and under so much outside pressure. More importantly, as clear from the preceding discussion, Pakistan perceives real risk of the worsening of its current security quagmire at the hands of local Taliban in the case of Afghanistan's security and political transition without reconciliation beyond 2014. Consequently, Afghan-Pakistani reconciliation approaches will have to build upon the existing level of convergence, and be compatible with the interests of other regional countries and international actors involved in Afghanistan, to achieve meaningful progress in the Afghan peace process. However, even if an inclusive Afghan political settlement is realised with Pakistan's help ahead of 2014, its viability will still rest considerably on how far the US-led coalition is committed afterwards to securing and stabilizing Afghanistan. Any leeway in such commitment could lead up to the war-ravaged nation once again descending into chaos, with corresponding ripple effects in the region and beyond.

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[58] Ibid. Also see Shahid Javed Burki, "Rescuing Afghanistan: Let the region take charge," *ISAS Brief*, No 151 (January 22, 2010); and Stina Torjesen, "Afghanistan and the regional powers: History not repeating itself? *NOREF Policy Brief* (October 2012).

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# Exploring the Prospects of Pakistan's Trade in ECO Bloc & Identification of Tradable Products

***Jahangir Achakzai****

## Abstract

The member countries belonging to the ECO- economic bloc are characterized by having centuries old trade relations. However, these relations did not portray a remarkable improvement due to different economic and political reasons. Despite these economic and political breakdowns trade among them continued without much interruption. The region has a large trade potential and the Intra-regional trade can be increased over not a very long period. The trade potential exists both in terms of "trade diversion" from traditional sources towards ECO by removing the constraints and in terms of "trade creation" and "trade expansion" by easing import restrictions. By harmonizing regional development strategies, reducing Tariffs and non-tariff barriers and improving the infrastructure the ECO can prove a successful economic bloc in the region.

## Introduction

The paper is a sequel to previous paper appearing in Pakistan Development Review (PDR)[1], where a gravity model of trade was applied to estimate the magnitude of potential trade flows between Pakistan and the nine Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) member countries. The result shows that the ECO bloc has great potential for the member countries. However, a dismal picture is presented by the available information regarding the share of the member countries in intra-regional trade which has never exceeded 6.0 percent of their total trade share with countries of the world. This low level of trade is not indicative of a paucity of opportunities,

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[1] "Intra-ECO Trade: A Potential Region for Pakistan's future Trade" The Pakistan Development Review PDR. Autumn 2006Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, Islamabad.

but rather a reflection of several trade-inhibiting factors, which must be overcome before the members have a chance of expanding their trade with each other to a meaningful level. The present paper is an effort to explore the future prospects of intra-regional trade among the countries of ECO bloc.

## Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)

The idea of regionalism is not new in this part of the world. The founder members of ECO bloc (Pakistan, Iran & Turkey) have been working successfully under the umbrella of Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD) since 1964. Although the performance of RCD has not been so impressive in comparison to EU and ASEAN etc. yet, the joining of seven new members namely; Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in the year 1992 made it an important regional bloc in the area. Since then, there has been efforts to enhance cooperation among the member countries in all fields specially trade liberalization. The signing of ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA) by the member countries of ECO in the year 2003 is a step towards that end. Under the agreement the member countries agreed to slash tariff rate to maximum of 15% in the next eight years to come.

## Trade Potential

ECO has a large trade potential and Pakistan's trade with countries of the region can be increased over not a very long period. The table gives the estimated future trade among Pakistan and nine ECO states[2].In the table except for Afghanistan and Turkey where the trade potential is fully exhausted the remaining seven countries are trading with less than 20% of their potential, even country like Iran which shares common border with Pakistan is trading with only 10% of her potential. The trade potential exists not only in terms of "trade diversion" from traditional sources towards ECO by removing the constraints but also in terms of "trade creation" by easing import restrictions. The trade potential may only be realized if these import duties are reduced extensively on the items that are the main exports of the ECO member states.

[2] The trade potential was estimated by the paper mentioned in the first para of introduction, where the gravity model of trade was applied to predict the future trend of Intra-ECO trade.

Table 1: Pakistan's predicted trade with the countries of the ECO

(Mill $)

| Trading Country | Current Exports | Predicted Exports | Current: Predicted Ratio (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Turkey | 110 | 98 | 112 |
| Afghanistan | 222 | 229 | 97 |
| Azerbaijan | 2 | 9 | 22 |
| Turkmenistan | 2 | 15 | 13 |
| Kazakhstan | 11 | 92 | 12 |
| Iran | 41 | 396 | 10 |
| Uzbekistan | 8 | 75 | 10 |
| Kyrgyz Republic | 1 | 13 | 8 |
| Tajikistan | 1 | 17 | 3 |

While lowering of import duties and quantitative restrictions would promote trade, they may have serious implications for infant industries unless effective measures are instituted against dumping. The present anti-dumping laws are quite ineffective because data required to prove dumping, as required by law, simply do not exist. Moreover, sufficient protection or subsidies for infant industries may have to be provided if Industrialization is not to be sacrificed for realizing higher trade levels.

## Identification of Tradable Products

At the request of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Secretariat, a study[3] was conducted with a view to identifying product groups with relevant intra-regional trade potential. The methodology adopted by the International Trade Centre (ITC) while conducting the study mainly dealt with the analysis of trade flows to identify products with a potential for increasing intra-regional trade. The approach primarily consisted of identifying complementary products and establishing whether a country has the ability to supply the potential demand from a third country.

Complementary products are defined as[4]. The Indicative Trade Potential indicator is[5]

Formally Indicative Trade Potential = Supply capacity of country-i less Market absorption of country-j.

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[3] "ECO –Statistical indicators for sub-regional trade potential" by International Trade Centre (ITC), Geneva, Switzerland

[4] Products, that a country of the sub-region (says Pakistan) successfully exports to other countries of the world, while, another country of the sub-region (say Iran) also has a considerable import demand for it.

[5] The difference between the quantity of the product a market can absorb and the quantity an exporting country can supply.

Example: According to 2003 trade figures, Pakistan's exports of rice to the world reached an average of US$ 633 m. per year, of which US$ 46 m. was exported to Iran. Iran's imports from the world were approximately US$ 272 m. As a result, the indicative trade potential between the two countries is estimated to be US$ 272 m.

| Item | Present Trade | Indicative trade potential | Supply capacity of Pakistan (exports to the world) | Market absorption of Iran (imports from the world) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rice | US$ 46 m. | US$ 272 m. | US$ 633 m. | US$ 272 m. |

The untapped trade potential between two countries is the difference between the present level of trade and the indicative trade potential which is equal to US$ 226 m. (US$ 272m. less US$ 46m.).

According to the study, the indicative trade potential is, as its name implies, indicative and may not be taken as a proof of complementarity between countries.

In the case where there exist a significant trade potential and presently no regional trade takes place, other aspects may be looked into. They include export competitiveness, consumer demand, transportation charges, trade barriers, and recent economic events (e.g. the impact of a regional financial crisis or political events).

The findings of the study pinpoints that Intra-regional trade grew by 17% between 1994 and 1997 while, extra-regional trade grew by 41% during the same period. Against this backdrop of low intra-regional trade growth, the trade flow analysis seeks out those products and regional markets with the greatest trade potential.

The Intra-regional trade in the ECO region has lost some of its importance, owing to modest export growth. In particular, the share of intra-regional exports in total exports fell from 7.7% to 6.4% between 1994 and 1997. In value terms, intra-regional exports have increased by 5.4% annually, compared to 12.2% with the rest of the world.

## Indicative Trade Potential

Using a methodology developed by the International Trade Centre, the indicative trade potential for the sub-region was estimated to be approximately US$ 16 billion. With intra-regional trade at US$4.8 billion in 1997, it appears that intra-regional trade is at less than one third of its potential.

The results suggested that the agricultural and processed food sectors displayed the highest levels of trade potential, followed by the mineral,

chemical, textile and clothing, metallurgy, machinery and mechanical appliances sectors.

The textile and clothing sector, cotton and woven fabrics ranked highest in terms of trade potential. In the metallurgy sector, iron or steel were considered to display significant potential for greater intra-regional trade. In the chemicals industry, cyclic hydrocarbons and medicaments showed the highest levels of trade potential.

## Pak-ECO Tradable Products

Products potentially tradable between Pakistan and ECO member Countries may be identified in three ways.

First, a product exported by Pakistan or ECO countries at least in one year in substantial quantity may be taken as potentially tradable product.

Second, products being exported by either Pakistan or ECO countries to rest of the world while the same products are being imported in other Countries of the region may be taken as potentially tradable goods.

Third, the Chambers of Commerce and Industries may identify the potentially traded products.

The following products have been identified as Pakistan's top fifteen potential exports to and imports from ECO countries.

Top fifteen potential exports from Pakistan to ECO countries.

1. Rice,
2. Cotton yarn,
3. Cotton fabrics,
4. Cereals & cereals preparations,
5. Miscellaneous manufacture articles,
6. Synthetic fabrics,
7. Animal & vegetable fats,
8. Apparel of material other than textile,
9. Petroleum & petroleum products,
10. Tarpaulins, Sails & tents
11. Clothing of textile fabrics
12. Carpet and rugs
13. Leather
14. Fruits and vegetables
15. Live animals chiefly for food

Top fifteen potential imports from ECO countries to Pakistan.

1. Petroleum & Petroleum Products
2. Raw Cotton
3. Machinery
4. Fruits, Vegetable Preparation
5. Chemical elements & compounds

6. Wheat and muslin Un-milled
7. Cork and wood manufactured
8. Chemical materials
9. Tires and Tubes of rubber
10. Iron and steel
11. Fertilizers manufactured
12. Miscellaneous manufacture articles
13. Ores and concentrates of iron
14. Chemical compounds
15. Manufactures of Non- ferrous metals

## Politico–Economic Constraints on Trade Expansion

While the rationale for expansion of trade among the ECO member countries is obvious, ground realities leave much to be desired. The intra-regional trade in the ECO bloc has never exceeded 6 percent. This seemingly insignificant level of trade is not indicative of a paucity of potential, but rather a reflection of several trade-inhibiting factors that include; Non-availability of exportable surpluses, Inefficiency in Production Processes, Financial Constraint, Tariffs & Non- tariff barriers, Communication Gap, Customs procedures & transportation facilities etc.

Besides the above mentioned economic factors, there are number of political issues not allowing the inherent potential of regional trade to be exhausted in ECO bloc. In the case of Iran, Pakistan and Turkey, the relationships between them has been under heavy pressure due to political and, to some extent, religious differences which are continuously overplayed and politicized by the political elites of these countries. Turkey and Iran have deep differences over the issues of Islamic parties in Turkey and the situation in Israel and the occupied territories. To add to this list, there are the issues of Nagorno Karabakh, Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Iran and Pakistan have fundamental differences over the issue of war in Afghanistan. Iran has more than once protested to Pakistan for meddling in Afghan affairs in a way that its implications affect the foreign policy of regional powers.

Similarly, Iran's relations with Turkey have been strained as a result of the Kurdish problem. Ankara has charged the Tehran government with giving sanctuary and aid to Kurdish insurgents.

The Iranian leadership envisions their country in the near future as the key player, economically and even politically and culturally, in the ECO region. Iran holds out to the landlocked states access to extensive port facilities on the Persian Gulf. The Iranians are also quick to point out that their trade offers the most secure and safe routes. By contrast, Afghanistan roads are characterized as unsafe, and Pakistan's port of Karachi, although

the closest route to much of Central Asia, depends on Afghan roads–in the absence of rail lines.

## Prospects for Pak-Eco Economic Cooperation

### Prospects for Pak-ECO Trade

Prospects for Pakistan's trade with ECO member countries depend on the production pattern and development policies of the country. It seems that agriculture and agro-based industry would have a great priority[6]. Similarly the small industry, processing industries and light engineering industry would continue to get attention. Pakistan's comparative advantage lies in exporting rice, cotton, cotton yarn, cotton fabrics, leather, leather products, Cereals & cereals preparations, Tarpaulins, Sails & tents etc.[7] The share of non-traditional goods must increase in order to realize growth in trade with ECO countries. Pakistan has many advantages in her trade with ECO countries. Well established traditions of trade, well developed means of communication and transport, geographical contiguity and religious and cultural bonds all place Pakistan in a position of advantage vis-à-vis other countries, and provide her with a readymade basis for greater economic cooperation. Need for greater information about the quality and availability of particular products and general trade prospects has been strongly felt in Pakistan. There is lack of information about consumer demand and the way new products can be introduced in ECO region. Pakistan has encountered difficulties in marketing some of its new products.

Similarly, the future pattern of imports in Pakistan would depend on the stages of development and the prospects of growth in the country. In fact, the type of commodities to be imported depends on the production pattern in the country. At present Pakistan is heavily dependent on the capital goods, Industrial raw material and some consumer goods. The heavy engineering base is being strengthened but the demand for imports would increase. Same is the case with the intermediate goods. In the next decade, therefore, emphasis would continue to be on the import of development goods and intermediate items. The import would also depend on the pattern of development in various sectors. If emphasis is to be placed on agriculture including water resource, imports would be different; similarly greater emphasis on rural road, rural electrification, and development of industries under private enterprises would change the dimension of import. The encouragement to the rural industries and small-scale enterprises would give

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[6] "ECO –Statistical indicators for sub-regional trade potential" by International Trade Centre (ITC), Geneva, Switzerland

[7] Export Promotion Bureau 'Review on Pakistan's Exports' (Various issues) Government of Pakistan Karachi.

different shape to the patterns of imports. The import would further be dependent on the credit facilities made available. Pakistan is keen to obtain capital equipments and various essential commodities under state loan or under supplier's credit. Future economic relation would indicate the level of import and the type of product to be obtained from loan and credits.

As observed earlier, Pakistan has bright prospects of expanding its exports to ECO countries. Similarly, the members countries of ECO can, and need to, export more to Pakistan. Some specific areas of trade expansion are discussed here:

The exports of Pakistani cotton yarn, thread and fabrics can be expanded to the countries of the region. Pakistan can also meet their requirements of rice, cereals, animal & vegetable fats, fruits (especially oranges, bananas and mangoes), and fine quality cotton cloth. There are many other items, which can carve out for themselves a sizeable market in ECO counties.

Similarly, the member countries of ECO have a vast variety of goods to offer to Pakistan, viz. petroleum & petroleum products, machinery, chemical materials, iron & steel, fertilizers manufactured, tires and tubes of robber, chemical compounds etc. and the list is constantly becoming longer. This, however, does not mean that there are no new commodities to explore. There are many more items (such as mineral and agricultural products), which figure in the import bill, and though their individual contributions may be small, it would be rewarding to explore the possibility of trade expansion in some or all of them.

Above are indicated some of the directions in which trade may be expanded. Many more avenues are likely to open up as we get going. But trade expansion is not just a function of goodwill and of efficient trade mechanism. Such a mechanism will have to be evolved and kept flexible enough to adjust to the needs of a growing trade. Mutual concessions and special treatment of each other's goods are time honored and reliable aids to the free and bigger flow of goods. A well-formulated trade policy with a sequence of well-timed measure a1med at the expansion of trade between the member countries is the need of the time.

We have discussed some of the areas in which trade can be expanded among the member countries. We have seen that there exist a vast potential for co-operation among the countries. We have also enumerated the reasons why these countries are ideally situated for closer co-operation in the field of trade expansion with one another and have referred to the fact that there exists a ready-made basis for such co-operation. While the reasons point to necessity of greater and closer Pak-ECO economic co-operation, the existence of a ready-made basis spotlights the facility. Policy and practice must be so mobilized as to meet the necessity and avail the opportunity.

The list of areas of Pak-ECO co-operation to their mutual benefit is large, and will grow larger with time. Many opportunities exist and many

more can be created. Whether these will be capitalized or not, will depend on the will and vision of the planners in the countries of the ECO region.

## Pak-ECO Future Economic Cooperation

There is a possibility of greater economic cooperation between Pakistan and ECO member countries in the following fields.

In effort for rapid development Pakistan would need credit to bridge the gap between its savings and development needs. There are many sources from which funds can be obtained, but still the requirements are large. The country needs credit on easy terms – in the form of soft loans for many of its enterprises. These may be in the Industrial sector, water and power, heavy engineering, communication etc. The additional funds from Iran could be a great help. In fact one of the contentions of Pakistan all along has been to obtain complete plants on convenient terms.

Joint ventures between Pakistan and ECO countries can increase. The joint ventures can be very significant in establishing small units. These units to be established with small capital would go a long way in creating a middle entrepreneurial class. Small units with the help of these countries can be established for manufacturing tractors, steel, sugar, transport equipment and consumer goods.

The direction in which the economy of Pakistan is moving indicates that greater emphasis would be given to agriculture, livestock and rural development. These are the areas in which ECO countries can help. By associating in the planning process at the district level the countries can play a vital role in the development of the rural sector. The main fields, which need attention, are the drinking water supply, rural road programs, rural educations, rural electrification, social energy, rural housing, the establishment of rural industries etc. The experience of ECO countries in these fields can be very valuable. Similarly the agro-based industries are an important field in which the experience of ECO member countries can be utilized. These industries can be in food processing, meat, vegetable processing, etc. More important and significant would be the provision of experts and training facilities in various fields.

## Conclusions

There have been attempts at trade expansion among the groups of developing countries to stimulate the rate of economic development. But most of these efforts however met with only limited success, or failure. Here an attempt is made to bring to light some of the areas in which trade can be expanded among the member states of ECO bloc. Many more avenues are likely to open up as we get going. But trade expansion is not just a function of goodwill and of efficient trade mechanism. Such a mechanism will have

to be evolved and kept flexible enough to adjust to the needs of a growing trade. Mutual concessions and special treatment of each other's goods are time honored and reliable aids to the free and bigger flow of goods. A well-formulated trade policy with a sequence of well-timed measure a1med at the expansion of trade between the member countries is the need of the time. The fact remains that the realization of goals and objectives would require huge finance and continued international support. ECO has used its growing relations with international organizations to strengthen the activities and to stimulate further progress.

The list of areas of co-operation among the ECO member countries to their mutual benefit is large, and will grow larger with time. Many opportunities exist and many more can be created. Whether these will be capitalized or not, will depend on the will and vision of the planners in the countries of the ECO region.

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# China's Policy Towards Central Asia Since 1991: An Overview

***Shabir Ahmad Khan**** 
***& Nadeem Akhtar*****

## Introduction

Breakup of the Soviet Union was one of the major events in the twentieth century that led to the creation of five independent states in Central Asia in 1991. The region has played significant role throughout history. In the modern times, Brzezinski's theory clearly points towards its geostrategic importance, which states, "control of Eurasian landmass is the key to global domination and control of Central Asia is the key to the control of the Eurasian land mass."[1] Owing to this fact, the new geographic design forced the regional as well as international players to reorient their policies towards Central Asia. In addition to the strategic location, the vast hydrocarbon reserve has initiated "The New Great Game," as described by Peter Hopkirk.[2] China, being a neighbour, responded to the situation and this region obtained a major focus in its foreign policy. China's 'Go West' policy naturally demands more attention towards close and cordial relations with Central Asian Republics. The internal policy of bringing and maintaining stability in Sinkiang is one of the primary determinants and reflection of China's external policy towards Central Asia. This article is a descriptive study carried out through the review of the available literature and an attempt has been made to present an analysis of the major determinants of China's policy towards Central Asia, which are border issues, restive western province of China, US presence in the region, trade and economic concerns, energy security and Russian factor.

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1 Prem Kumari Pant, "SCO is a partnership not a military alliance, *"The Mirror*, vol. 42, No. 10 (8th June 2012):1

2 Peter Hopkirk, *The Great Game: The Struggle for Empire in Central Asia* (New York: Kodansha International, 1992)

## Abstract

China considers post-Soviet Central Asia as its backyard and focused on the region for having smooth political and economic relations. Shanghai Five was instrumental in resolving the border issues between China and Central Asia. The important factors in China's policy towards the region are to bring peace and prosperity to its restive western region of Xinjiang, Central Asia's hydrocarbon resources vis-à-vis China's growing energy demand, US presence in the region and trade and economic issues.

**Key Words** China, Central Asia, Xinjiang, Russia, Economics, Energy Resources

## Long Term Relations and Border Issues

China was among the first countries to recognize the Central Asian Republics (CARs) as early as December 1991 to January 1992. Embassies were established in these states soon and exchange of high level visits took place. The Shanghai Five was instrumental in achieving its aim of resolving border issues between China and Central Asian States and establishing ground for friendly relations and closer economic and political cooperation between China, Russia and Central Asia. Stability in Xinjiang remains at the core of China's policy towards Central Asia for which the peaceful borders with neighbouring Central Asia was the pre requisite.

China had claims that the Tzarist Russia had annexed thousands of square miles of Chinese territory in the agreements it calls as "unequal Treaties". In this context, after the disintegration of Soviet Union, talks were initiated in early 1990s for the resolution of border issues with Central Asian Republics. With Kazakhstan, the first boundary agreement was reached in 1994 and two supplementary agreements were signed in 1997 and 1998, hence, resolving the 1700km long border. Similar negotiation with Kyrgyzstan led to the inking of agreement in 1996. Talks with Tajikistan were delayed due to civil war but finally the border dispute was resolved through the agreement of 2002.This treaty resolved a hundred and thirty year old border issue. A noteworthy aspect of China's policy towards Central Asia after 1991 is that it wants cordial relations on long term basis. In order to establish long term cordial relations with Central Asian Republics, China went up to the extent that it withdrew from its former claim of thousands of kilometre along the border with Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, China got only 3.5%, 22% and 32% of its former claim from Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan respectively, in the aforementioned border agreements. This provides us enough evidence to conclude that China is ready to make concessions for maintaining favourable relations and peaceful

border with these neighbours.[3] It also reflects that China has long term energy, trade and economic stakes in Central Asia which require some concessions, being made from economically strong and stable neighbour.

## China's 'Go West' Policy

There are some, internal as well as external, security concerns vis-a-vis Central Asia and Xinjiang which are having a profound influence on the formulation of China's foreign policy towards Central Asia. One of the crucial elements that China aims to address in its 'Go West' policy is economic disparity in western region, which in turn has sparked ethnic and religious nationalism in parts of western provinces i.e., Xinjiang. The construction and development of two important regions i.e., Kashgar and Hoergosi as special economic zones in western China (Xinjiang) illustrates the essence of China's 'Go West' policy. The prosperity and economic development would consequently bring peace and stability to Xinjiang which is a pre-requisite for increased trade and energy transportation in the western direction.

The unstable situation that prevailed in Xinjiang during the 1990s played a significant role as a determinant of China's policy towards Central Asia.[4] The ethnic Uighur community of Sinkiang province of China are making efforts for independence. There are approximately three hundred thousand ethnic Uighur in the three neighbouring Central Asian countries. The Uighur of Xinjiang have strong relations with those residing in Central Asia. The Uighur of Xinjiang were cherishing the idea of the establishment of an independent 'East Turkistan' and could have support from their co-ethnic inhabitants of Central Asia. China became extremely concerned about this secessionist movement and took measures to counter such efforts. This element became a visible determinant of Chinese policy towards Central Asia and it was thought that the establishment of friendly relations with the leadership of the CARs can play an instrumental role in minimizing the support for Uighurs of Sinkiang.[5]

During the Soviet era, Islamic teachings and practices remained under extreme oppression. The region, once a seat of Islamic learning, lost its valuable heritage. After independence, the leadership that these states got was the continuation of the Soviet legacy. Against this backdrop, and due to domino effect of the neighbouring Islamic countries, religious nationalism cropped up. After independence the general masses did not observe any

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[3] Sudha Ramachandran, *China plays long game on border disputes* (Accessed on 12 Feb., 2012); available from Asia Timeshttp://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/MA27Ad02.html.

[4] Abanti Bhattacharya, "Conceptualizing Uyghur Separatism in Chinese Nationalism" *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (Jul-Sep 2003):362.

[5] Ramkant Dwivedi, "China's CA Policy in Recent Times," *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No. 4 (2006): 141.

visible positive changes on the political as well as economic fronts, hence leading to frustration and the inclination to non-state actors. The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and Hizb-ut-Tahrir (HT) are notable in this regard. They worked for overthrowing the ruling elite and establishing an Islamic Caliphate. In addition to Central Asia, The Uighur Autonomous Region of China was considered as an integral part of this Caliphate.[6] On the other hand the ethnic Uighur, who are Muslims by religion,[7] were also having separatist ideology. These circumstances made China highly vary of the development in its western region as well as its western neighbouring areas and paid attention to it in policy formulation towards Central Asia. The relatively underdevelopment of western China also contributed to the instability in western parts of China. In fact, China's 'Go West' policy is to address this issue and bring the western region economically at par with the eastern China. Thus the stability in western parts would serve dual purpose for China; firstly it will provide a safe and secure platform for furthering economic and energy interests in Central Asia and secondly stable and prosperous Xinjiang would further bind it to the rest of China.

## US Presence

After 9/11 the US started 'War on Terror' and attacked Afghanistan. The above-mentioned threat perceptions in China forced her to support the US-led 'Operation Enduring Freedom' in Afghanistan. With the passage of time the Chinese support started eroding and the policy analysts became increasingly suspicious about the prolongation of the duration of the operation, as well as the real objectives of the US presence in the region. It has been mentioned by M. Ashimbayev, and M. Laumlin that an important factor determining China's foreign activity in Central Asia is the aspiration to counter the unipolar system and the leading position of USA in the region.[8] The United States established military bases in Central Asian States and increased its involvement in the political and economic spheres. The US military base at Manas in Kyrgyzstan is just 100 kilometres from the Chinese border. The phenomenon of 'containment of China' is a prominent feature of the international affairs. Prolongation of the stay of the United States in Central Asia is perceived by China as a step towards its encirclement. China is using the instrument of unilateral as well as multilateral forums to neutralize the influence of the United States and the West on Central Asia. The bullying conduct of USA has driven China and Russia towards closer collaboration. The joint statement from the forum of

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6 Ibid. p. 142.

7 Bhattacharya,"Conceptualizing Uyghur ": 361.

8 M. Ashimbayev, M. Laumlin, Ye. Tukumov and others, ed., "New Challenges and New Geopolitics in Central Asia: After September 11" (Almaty: Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2003), p: 108.

Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Astana, 2005 for the evacuation of US military bases in Central Asian Republics substantiates such efforts on the part of China. The SCO's agenda seems to be infused with Chinese and Russian suspicion of U.S. designs in Eurasia and their desire to reduce US influence in Central Asia. Both Russia and China consider the region of Central Asia their backyard and therefore their sphere of influence exclusively. Both China and Russia are in collaboration to counter US influence in the region and gain the support of Central Asian Republics in this context.

## Energy Security

### Growing Energy Needs

China is one of the fastest growing economies of the world and has maintained double digit growth rate for the last three decades. Maintenance of economic growth at such a level is not possible with consistent supply of energy. China's energy requirement is growing with a high pace and its daily oil consumption has already reached 4.1 million barrels. International Energy Agency has forecasted that in the next two decades the combined consumption of energy of China and India would be more than half of the energy requirement of the whole world i.e., sixty percent oil, twenty percent gas and eighty percent coal of the world demand.[9]

A comparison of China and Japan clarifies the picture. Energy requirement of China is estimated to rise rapidly. Institute of Energy Economics, Japan (IEEJ) has projected energy demand of the two countries from 2007 to 2035. Oil requirement of Japan is estimated to decrease from 514 to 508 million tons between 2007 and 2020 and further decreasing to 493 million tons till 2035. In contrast to it, the requirement of China is projected to witness a rise from 1756 to 2539 million tons between 2007 and 2020 and further increasing to 3451 million tons in 2035. It is also projected that China will constitute about thirty percent increase in the energy demand in the above mentioned period.[10] Currently China is meeting its requirement of oil and gas by importing 51.8% and 11% respectively. Keeping in view the Chinese growing energy needs, the oil and gas rich Central Asian Republics (Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan) are readily available options in the neighbourhood.

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[9] Mikkal E. Herberg, "Pipeline Politics in Asia: Energy Nationalism and Energy Markets" in "Pipeline Politics in Asia: The Intersection of Demand, Energy Markets, and Supply Routes," *The National Bureau of Asian Research* special report No. 23, September 2010: 3.

[10] ShoichiItoh, "The Geopolitics of Northeast Asia's Pipeline Development" in "Pipeline Politics in Asia: The Intersection of Demand, Energy Markets, and Supply Routes," *The National Bureau of Asian Research***,** special report No. 23, September 2010: 20.

**Diversification of Sources**

China is mostly dependent on its energy imports on Gulf region and it is using maritime transportation routes passing through the Indian Ocean, Strait of Malacca and Strait of Taiwan. Keeping in view the growing imports, the transportation of oil through the Malacca Strait is expected to increase from 11 million barrels to 22 million barrels per day. This transportation route is extremely vulnerable and blockade of energy imports can lead to the economic death of China. It is not having favourable relations with Taiwan and furthermore, presence of US military presence throughout this route is another factor adding to the lack of security of Chinese energy imports. China is cognizant of the situation and has started working on alternatives. Hence, the process of energy sources diversification has been initiated. Central Asia is one of the options, since it is having the third largest reserves of hydrocarbons after Gulf and Siberia. The estimated oil reserves are 250 billion barrels, with the possibility of 200 billion barrels additional reserves. Natural gas reserves are estimated at 328 trillion cubic feet.[11]China is developing close links in order to get a secure source of energy, especially avoiding water route and utilising land communication.

In this regard, China signed an agreement with Kazakhstan for the construction of Kazakhstan-China oil pipeline. The agreement was inked in 1997 and the pipeline became operational in 2006.[12] This pipeline takes oil from Atyrau in Kazakhstan to Alashankou in Xinjiang province of China. The total length of the pipeline is 2,228 kilometres and it will transport 20 million tonnes of oil annually to China.[13] Similarly the Turkmenistan-China Gas pipeline project was conceived. The agreement for this project was signed on 3 April 2006.[14] This pipeline starts in Turkmenistan and passes through Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and finally enters Xinjiang. The leaders of the three counties visited Turkmenistan for the inauguration of the Turkmenistan-China Gas Pipeline on December 14, 2009.[15] Total length of the pipeline is about 1,833 kilometres. It will supply gas up to 40 billion cubic meters annually at its peak capacity, 30 billion from Turkmenistan and the remaining from Kazakhstan.[16] This is about fifty percent of the total gas

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[11] John Daly**,** *Central Asia's Energy Chessboard* (Accessed on 12 Feb., 2012); available from http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/3067/central-asias-energy-chessboard.

[12] "Kazakhstan expands China oil pipeline link," *Reuter*, Jul 1, 2009.

[13] *Kazakstan-China oil Pipeline*, (Accessed on 12 Feb., 2012); available from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kazakhstan%E2%80%93China_oil_pipeline.

[14] Daniel Kimmage, *Central Asia: Turkmenistan-China Pipeline Project Has Far-Reaching Implications* (Accessed on 12 Feb., 2012); available from http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1067535.html.

[15] Marat Gurt, *China extends influence into C.Asia with pipeline* (Accessed on 12 Feb., 2012); available from http://uk.reuters.com/article/2009/12/14/china-pipeline-idUKSGE5BD0BQ20091214?sp=true.

[16] Raushan Nurshayeva and Shamil Zhumatov, *China's Hu boosts energy ties with Central Asia* (Accessed on 12 Feb., 2012); available

production of China in 2007. Yet another pipeline has become operational from Kazakhstan to China recently. Oil and gas supply from Central Asia would contribute significantly towards meeting the energy requirement of China. Moreover, it will also make supply increasingly secure, since it passes through land route where the US military is not present like the sea routes.

## Russian Factor

Russia factor is also playing a role in the determination of Central Asian policy of China. China recognises the importance of Russia's historical, military and economic presence in Central Asia and without Russian nod it could have been difficult for smooth walk over in the energy and trade sector of Central Asia.[17] China was prudent enough to move towards Russia first and then got improved its relations with neighbouring Central Asia. It seems that Russia has also selected China vis a vis USA to side with and share the riches of Central Asia. Russia is having upper hand in Central Asia due to its historical legacy, has invested for almost a century in Central Asia, and still considers it as her backyard. Russia is having monopoly over the routes of communication and all the gas and oil pipelines pass through the Russian territory. Likewise, it is still the largest trading partner of the Central Asian Republics. Keeping in view these realities China may come in confrontation sometime in the future but currently there is a complete convergence of interests between China and Russia regarding Central Asian energy resources, and geopolitics. At present this phenomenon of confrontation is not clearly evident due to the combined threat perception for both China and Russia[18] in the form of US presence in the area.[19] Thorough analysis of the situation shows that signs of this competition are present.

The two countries have seen many ups and downs in their relations. After the independence of China and during the era of Communism, they enjoyed good relations but could not maintain it for long and in 1960s border dispute further deteriorated their relations. After the disintegration of the USSR, improvement was witnessed in their relations.[20] On the International level cooperation is visible in the stand of Russia and China regarding the global crises. Even in the United Nations Security Council the two countries

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fromhttp://uk.reuters.com/article/2009/12/12/china-kazakhstan-idUKGEE5BB01D20091212?sp=true.

[17] Stephen Page, "The Creation of a Sphere of Influence: Russia and Central Asia" *International Journal*, Vol. 49, No. 4, (Autumn 1994): 806.

[18] Bhagaban Behera, Central Asia-China Relations Since 1991, (Delhi: Vista International Publishing House, 2006):167-8

[19] Martha Brill Olcott, "Central Asia's Catapult to Independence" *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1992):123.

[20] *Sino-Soviet Relations* (Accessed on 12 Feb., 2012); available from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sino-Soviet_relations

mostly support each other, for instance, both of them voted against the West on independence of Kosovo as well as sanctions against Iran. Similarly they are against the phenomenon of uni-polar world and the sole monopoly of the United States on the global level. The active participation in the regional organizations and even showing willingness to cooperate militarily shows that they share common perception about the hegemonic approach of the US. In 2007 the military forces of the two countries carried out combined exercises due to which an impression created about their strategic alliance. But analysts opine that such closeness is the direct result of the military presence of the Unites States in the region. In fact, the interest of both Moscow and Beijing in Central Asia is the same. China needs Central Asian energy and Russia is trying to maintain its monopoly over the energy transportation routes. Hence, the visible alliance is not a long term phenomenon and underneath the calm surface is the growing competition between them as far as Central Asia is concerned; a region considered by both as their backyard. Fyodor Lukyanov, editor in chief of the journal "Russia in Global Affairs" states about Sino-Russian relations vis-a-vis Central Asia, "I wouldn't say it is a conflict; that is too strong a word, we will see a soft competition that could heat up as China becomes more successful. Russia doesn't want to be China's junior partner in this region."[21]

Russia has taken some practical steps which reflect the presence of the competition. Russia was buying oil and gas from the Central Asian States at very low prices compared to those prevailing in the international market. For instance, it was paying seventy to hundred and fifty dollars for 1000 cubic meters and was selling it in the European market at a huge profit, because the Central Asian Republics (CARs) are landlocked and are dependent upon the Russian pipeline system. In 2009 Russia agreed to purchase gas from Central Asia at prices comparable to that of the international market. Although the rate was not announced, it was speculated to be between 350 to 400 US dollars/1000 cubic metres. It is believed that this change in attitude on the part of Russia is because of Chinese presence in the Central Asian energy market and its investment in providing alternative transportation routes for Central Asian hydrocarbon resources.[22]

China is certainly concerned about the military presence of the United States in Central Asia but geopolitics is not the single primary element for shaping the policy of China towards Central Asia. China's growing energy demand and the availability of oil and gas in Central Asia is also one of the

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[21] Fyodor Lukyanov, *Sino-Russian relations* (Accessed on 8 Feb., 2012); available from http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/person/Fyodor_Lukyanov

[22] Brian Whitmore, *Central Asia: Behind The Hype, Russia And China Vie For Region's Energy Resources*,(Accessed on 12 Feb., 2012); available from http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1079674.html

prime determinants of China's policy towards the region which is being discussed below.[23]

## Trade and Economic Interests

The fast pace of Chinese economic growth, on the one hand require energy security and on the other hand needs market as well. China is into a long term game in Central Asia and China's economic, energy and security concerns complement each other because for smooth energy and trade transactions, peace and stability in Xinjiang, on the borders and in Central Asia is a pre-requisite. In the long term, relations are dependent upon the development of infrastructure in Central Asia. China is investing in the development of highways, railways and air communication as well as pipelines. One such project is the construction of highway between Xinjiang and Lake Issykul in Kyrgyzstan. China National Petroleum Corporation is providing support to Uzbekistan in oil and gas exploration. In addition to the Turkmenistan-China gas pipeline, China has recently completed work on another gas pipeline from Kazakhstan to Xinjiang, which is currently operational. China is not only constructing pipeline for transportation of hydrocarbons but is working on other options as well. Horizon Petroleum and Gas Inc. (HPGI) has been established specifically to construct railway lines. Twenty-one new projects are in the pipeline and eight of them are specifically for the transportation of oil and gas. Besides, China-Kyrgyz-Uzbek rail road is also part of the overall development programme of the means of communication. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are rich in water resources therefore; China is providing support to develop the hydro-electricity system. China is investing in the Central Asian mining resources too.

China is replacing Russia in many sectors and is becoming the main source of trade and investment in Central Asia. China National Petroleum Corporation bought fifty percent shares in Petro-Kazakhstan: the largest oil company of Kazakhstan. Gazprom, the Russian energy giant was also its competitor. Similarly State Development Bank of China invested four billion dollar in the gas sector in Turkmenistan. The fourth largest reserves of gas are in Turkmenistan and China is the largest purchaser of Turkmen gas than any other country in the world. Kazakhstan is a leading oil exporting country and China is buying one fourth of its oil. Likewise China has signed an agreement with Turkmenistan to purchase 30 billion cubic meter of gas per year for the next thirty years.[24]Russia has dominated the Central Asian market for a long period but now food items and textile from China are the major articles seen in Central Asia. Russia is still the largest

[23] Alexander Jackson, "China and Central Asia," *The Journal of the Turkish weekly*, No. 33 (May 19, 2009).
[24] Whitmore, *Central Asia: Behind The Hype*, online.

trading partner of CARs but China's trade with Central Asia is growing with a fast pace and it is right behind Russia.[25]

This shows that in order to reach its economic interest in Central Asia, China is busy in the creation of "New Silk Road" consisting of railways, highways, pipelines, airlines and energy cables. The traditional Silk Road was just route for camel caravans passing through Central Asia, transporting goods and ideas from and to China but now the new one has made Central Asia the focus of attention and a destination in itself, especially for China's investment; almost twenty five billion dollars until now.[26]An American author Parag Khanna, says in his new book, "How to Run the World" that these new pipelines, highways and railroads radiate out of China into Central Asia, "like five fingers on a hand." [27]

Economic relations between China and Central Asia have strengthened and bilateral trade has increased significantly during the past decade. China-Kazakh bilateral trade witnessed a rise from 1.5 billion dollars in 2001 to 5.8 in 2005 and 20 billion dollars in 2011 while Russia-Kazakh bilateral trade reached 23 billion dollars in 2011. In fact, China has already replaced Russia as a major trade partner in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan where the Chinese trade remained at 1.5 billion dollars and 5 billion dollars respectively in 2011 in comparison to 1 billion dollars Russia-Tajik trade and 1.4 billion dollars Russia-Kyrgyz trade. Kashgar hosts the world biggest market where every Sunday 150000 businessmen come from Central Asia and exchange commodities with their Chinese counterparts.[28]

China is not only investing in developmental activities directly, it is also providing loans to Central Asian Republics on very soft terms: $10 billion, $4 billion and $360 million to Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan respectively. Central Asian States prefer these loans because they are not linked with strict conditionalities like those of the other international financial institutions. In the political sphere, Chinese influence is minimum, which is part of its broader global policy. China considers economic influence as a more effective instrument to maintain its sphere of influence.[29] China due to geographic proximity, dynamic economy and trade promoting policy towards Central Asia is designed to maintain political

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[25] Fyodor, *Sino-Russian relations*, online.

[26] James Brooke, *China Displaces Russia in Central Asia*, (Accessed on 23 Feb., 2012); available from http://www.voanews.com/english/news/asia/China-Displaces-Russia-in-Central-Asia-108478134.html

[27] Parag Khanna, *How to Run the World* (New York: Random House, 2011): 201.

[28] Bhavna Singh, *China's Modernization Rush: Kashgar at Crossroads*, January 16, 2012 (Accessed on March 15, 2013) available from www.ipcs.org/article/china-modrnization-rush-kashgar-at-crossroads-3556.html

[29] Mark Burles, *Chinese policy toward Russia and the Central Asian Republics* (Washington DC: RAND Corporation, 1999): 55

stability through economic development.[30] China uses Central Asian raw material and mineral bases effectively to advance its own interior areas which on the other hand proving a good market for Central Asian mineral and hydrocarbon resources.

## Conclusion

China has a significant geostrategic role in Central Asia throughout history. Due to the Soviet occupation this region remained isolated from the world for almost a century but the breakup of USSR, once again brought it into the lime light of international politics. Regional as well as international powerful nations took keen interest in Central Asia. China due to various internal as well as external elements laid special focus on the region. China's 'Go West' policy undoubtedly focused on economically developed and thus a peaceful 'West' i.e., western region of China. Defusing discontent in its western region Xinjiang was one of the primary determinants of China's Central Asian policy during the decade of 1990s. Close relationship with the leadership of Central Asian Republics can prevent support to Uighur of Xinjiang from Central Asian co-ethnic brothers. China, therefore, concentrated on creating peaceful borders with Central Asia throughout the 1990s while later on started focusing on trade and economic relations.

China also remains suspicious about the intentions of the US presence in Central Asia and it is using bilateral as well as multilateral forums to minimize its influence on Central Asia and safeguard its own interest. Chinese economic growth is one of the highest in the world and its demand of energy is increasing day by day. US military presence along the water route can affect China's import of oil and therefore Central Asia is an alternative source of energy from where transportation through land routes is very much feasible, secure and economical. China also realised the fact that Russia due to its historical legacy is present in all the social, military, political and economic spheres of Central Asia. China therefore improved its relations with Russia in order to have access to Central Asian consumer and energy markets though the US presence also pushed China and Russia closer. All these factors have shaped China's policy towards Central Asia and it is into a long-term partnership with Central Asia, for which it has been investing heavily in the development of basic infrastructure especially the means of communication and pipelines for energy transportation. Chinese multi trillion dollar projects in Xinjiang to develop two special economic zones on Pak-China and China-Kazakh borders will turn the western land locked areas of China into a regional trade hub. Scholars at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences stated that "China is not investing massively in

[30] Bhagaban Behera, Central Asia-China Relations Since 1991, (Delhi: Vista International Publishing House, 2006):6.

its trade infrastructure with Central Asian countries for reasons of charity – but to stabilize its own restive Xinjiang Uygur province by turning it into a trade hub for this region"[31].

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[31] Raffaello Pantucci and Li Lifan, *Decision time for Central Asia: Russia or China?* Accessed on 01 Feb., 2013); available from http://chinaincentralasia.com/2013/01/30/decision-time-for-central-asia-russia-or-china/

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# The Status of Islam in the 20th Century Uzbekistan

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***Ayjaz Ahmad Wani*****

## Abstract

Religion is one of the most important concepts in social science. It is considered as a design for living or a roadmap that guides the behaviour of the members of a society. Some consider it as part of culture and opine that it does not remain static and adopts changes with time. The Central Asian societies flourished from the ancient times mostly because of the Great Silk Route that benefited the peoples of Central Asia both materially and culturally. New religious ideologies were assimilated in sedentary as well as tribal areas. Islam was one such religion which created hub of Islamic civilization in Uzbekistan to create institutions that provided growth and development to Islamic ideology. However, the Soviets under the banner of communism were averse to religions and successfully introduced the change in the institutions of religion either by force or persuasion. After the fall of USSR, there started a process of religious revivalism in Uzbekistan but the revivalism is not of such intensity and magnitude to create the atmosphere that would guarantee the religion to control affairs at all levels of life.

## Background

Islam was introduced in Central Asia, including Uzbekistan, by expanding Arab armies who marched towards there in 7th century[1], soon thereafter the dynasty of Takarids (821-873) governed major provinces of present day Uzbekistan and propagated Islam in other areas of Central Asia.[2] Subsequently, under Samanids (875-999) and Karakhanids (1000-1211), urban centres like Bukhara, Samarkand and Khiva became major centers of

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1 Demeteius Chaaeles Boulgee, *The Life of Yakoob Beg, Athalik Ghazi, and Badaulet; Ameer of Kashgar*, Allen & Co., London, 1878, p, 24.

2 P L Roudik, *The History of the Central Asian Republics*, Green Wood Press, London, 2007, p. 32.

Islamic culture [3] as well as for rich cultural ethos, marvellous arts, crafts, inventions, etc. Islamic learning was imparted through numerous *Maktabas*[4] and *Madrassas*[5] and many of these were known for their excellence as in them were taught variety of disciplines to multinational students[6]. In spite of the 13th century Mangol invasion which temporarily halted the prosperity of the Islamic tradition there,[7] Timur (1336-1405) allowed free space to Islamic culture to grow and dominate once again.[8] Side by side, two popular sects of Sufism, *Yassaviya* and *Naqashbandiya*, played their role to attract people towards Islam. Their shrines were thronged by the Central Asians to adhere to their teachings.

**Ethos of Islamic Civilisation**

Islam, as a religion served as a cohesive and vibrant force to unite the diverse ethnic groups in Central Asia besides allowed a complete cultural system to develop.[9] Whatever the status of the Muslims, their rulers adhered to the tenants of Islam, as most of the time governance was based on Islamic methodology; Islamic jurisprudence was prevalent in administration as important matters were settled on the advice of the scholars of Islam.[10] Even though the judicial system was supplemented by the *Adat* (customary laws) yet the *Shari'at* and the *Qur'an* provided basic substance for laws to settle the issues. There is evidence that *Qazi* (Muslim judge), heading a court, was

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[3] Bukhara was called the Dome of Islam; theological scholars from all over the caliphate of Bagdad met there and taught in its religious schools. These areas became the home of many renowned scholars, philosophers and historians of Islamic sciences like Al-Bukhari and Al-Termazi. Richerd Fry, (Bukhara, The Medieval Achievement, 1966, p, 212.) writes that the cultural flowering that created new Persian literature was, in fact, a successful attempt to transform Islam, to release it from Arab background and make it a richer, more adaptable and universal culture; see also P L Roudik, *The History of the Central Asian Republics*, pp. 30, 33, 34.

[4] In the *Maktabas* the students were taught how to read the *Qur'an* and memorize the selected verses from it. They used to memorise it, usually its last chapter was memorised first. Most of the students dropped out after finishing any one of these to end their elementary education; M. Mobin Shorish, *Traditional Islamic Education in Central Asia Prior To 1917*, p. 326.

[5] *Madrassas* were meant for secondary and higher education. These formal educational institutes, in early Islamic history, developed into full fledged colleges by the 10th century AD; Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Traditional Islam in the Modern World*, London, 1987, p. 125.

[6] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Traditional Islam in the Modern World*, p.126; J. Pederson, "Some Aspects of the History of Madrassa", *Encyclopedic Survey of Islamic Culture*, Vol. 3, Ed, Mohamad Tahir, New Delhi, 1997, p. 3.

[7] Mansura Hyder, *Medieval Central Asia*, Delhi, 2004, p. 173.

[8] The vestiges of other religions such as Nestorian Christianity that had lingered on to exist till date were wiped out; Mark Dickens, *The Uzbeks*. 1990, p. 9; www.oxuscom.com

[9] Micheal Rywkin, *Moscow's Muslim Challenge: Soviet Central Asia*, New York, 1982, p. 84.

[10] Mansura Hyder, *Medieval Central Asia*, pp. 170, 71.

appointed on the basis of his merit[11] as were *Muftis* (Jurists), *Ulemas* (Learned men in *Qur'an*), *Imams* (prayer leaders), *Mullahs* and *Sheikhs* (holy men) and all were highly revered and respected by the people.[12] Such learned men were granted endowments, *Waqfs*, for running the charities including *Maktabas* and *Madrassas*. Besides the rich contributed to the *Waqfs* sometime land was given in charity.[13] The rulers at times were checking if all followed the laws and kept a special force known as *reis*, to check the women quarters and give punishments for not obeying Islamic law and *Shair'at.*[14]

Given the geophysical status of Central Asia, Islamic governance was more prevalent in oasis cultures and in urban centres like Bukhara, Samarkand, Merve, Khiva, etc than in the rest of Central Asia; as the terrain was tough and people were, by and large, on the move. Accordingly the five pillars of Islam, the *Shahdat*, the confession of faith; *Salat*, the daily five prayers*; Si'am,* the fasting during the month of *Ramdan*, the 9th lunar month; *Zakat*, the mandatory contribution of alms to the poor by the rich; and *Hajj*, the pilgrimage to Mecca; were much more known there than in the rest of Central Asia where common people were found avoiding at least the last four pillars.[15]

In spite of this, religious fervour was seen across the region, like on *kichik bayram* (Eid-ul-Fiter), to celebrate the end of the month of *Ramdan*, or on *qurban bayram* (Eid-ul-Duha), the commemoration of Abrahams' willingness to sacrifice his son. Even though both these occasions have religious significance yet there was festivity associated with them as well.[16] Even if the festivity or the sacrifice was in no case an alternative to escape from the fundamentals of Islam yet it kept them alive to proclaim their faith. Many followed the fundamentals very strictly, besides the rituals but there were others who also mixed folk customs with the fundamentals.[17]

The practice of paying visits to the graves or *Mazars* of their ancestors

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[11] Elizabeth E. Bacon, *Central Asians under Russian Rule, A Study in Culture Change,* Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 1966, p. 77.

[12] Elizabeth E. Bacon, *Central Asians under Russian Rule, A Study in Culture Change,* pp. 77-78.

[13] Gulru Necipogulu edt., Muqarnas: *An Annual on Islamic Art and Architecture,* Vol. 12, Brill Laden, Netherlands, 1995, p. 41; Mark Dickens. *The Uzbeks*, p. 10.

[14] People who did not observe *Shari'at* were mounted on camels and in the centre of the market, the *reis* gave them whips by the orders of *Qazi*; Mohan Lal, *Travels in Punjab, Afghanistan And Turkistan*, New Delhi, 1846, p. 126.

[15] Mark Dickens. *The Uzbeks*, p. 10.

[16] In addition, feasts were prepared on these occasions that also provided chances for merry making. Nomadic pastorals had plenty of animals to sacrifice to commemorate the sacrifice associated with *qurban bayram*. The poorest made such a sacrifice at least once in a life time; in any case the sacrificial meat was distributed among neighbours and relatives. The skin as well as the choicest piece was given to *Mullah;* Elizabeth E. Bacon, *Central Asians under Russia Rule, A Study in Culture Change,* p. 81.

[17] Mark Dickens. *The Uzbeks*, p. 11.

and make a material offering there[18] for one or other worldly gains was also seen in Shamanism.[19] Shamanism, the earlier faith of most of the Central Asians, popularised animal sacrifices at the grave sites which subsequently became commemorative with the erection of long poles hoisted with animal (mostly horse) tails.[20] This practice was so common in many parts of Central Asia that commemorative horse tails are still seen in many houses and offices in Central Asia. However, the change inflicted was that *Shamans*, seen at such grave sites where people visited for benefits, material gains or removal of diseases etc, were replaced by *Shiekhs* and *Bakshis* for similar purposes at Muslim shrines or *Mazars* associated with the Sufi faiths of different orders like *Naqashbandi* or *Yassaviyas*.[21] They, therefore, were not orthodox in nature but practised a sort of popular Islam as they also went to faith healers for curing a disease and wear amulets and *tabises*.[22] Whether or not all these things were achieved at these places but the blessing of *Mullahs*/ *Shiekhs* or *Bakshis* were abundantly available at such places that were omnipresent in each locality and among the tribes earning their livelihood in response to their jobs rendered to the visitors.[23]

These sorts of composite practices prevailed throughout one's life irrespective of the fundamental faith in oneness of God, the most merciful and the most benevolent. Material riches not withstanding people in general were simplistic in approach, pure to dogmas set by the traditionalism and customary ritualism of centuries. Traditionalism, during the pre-Soviet times was thus the backbone of cultural ethos, be it in faith or in other matters.

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[18] Lawrence Krader, *Peoples of Central Asia*, Indiana University, Bloomington, The Netherlands, 1963, p. 126.

[19] Gulnara Aitpaeva, *Kyrgyz Religious Beliefs: Popular Conceptions of Mazar Worship and Islam* (Edt.), Aigine Cultural Research Center, Bishkek, 2007, p. 414.

[20] V.N. Basilov, 'Popular Islam in Central Asia and Kazakhstan', *Journal Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs*, vol. 8, no. 1, 1987, pp. 7–17

[21] That people used to flock *Mazars*, to gain for themselves financial benefits, who used to spread dogma that visiting several large *Mazars* was equal to *Haj*. Visiting the shrines or *Mazars* was in no way equal to *Haj* but to pay visits at such places were thought to be responsible to ward off cattle disease, provide boons for the prosperity, or the wellbeing of younger children; Lawrence Krader, *Peoples of Central Asia*, p. 123; Yaccovi Roi, *Islam in Soviet Union*, Colombia University Press, New York, 2000, p. 372; Razia Sultanova, *From Shamanism to Sufism; Women, Islam and Culture in Central Asia*, I. B. Tauris & Company, London, 2011, pp. 32-41.

[22] Annette M B Meakin, *In Russian Turkistan, A Garden of Asia*, George Alien, London, 1903, p. 96.

[23] Elizabeth E. Bacon, *Central Asians under Russian Rule, A Study in Culture Change*, p. 68.

## Sovietisation and Islam

Soviets were opposed to all religions and Islam was considered the most potent threat[24] since it had its own distinctive social, educational and judicial system. Notwithstanding the ideological requirements of Communism and Socialism, Soviet policy towards Muslims of Central Asia changed over the years, granting concessions sometimes otherwise repression against Islam was adhered. Since after October Revolution, the political expediency in Central Asia demanded a conciliating attitude towards Muslims and their institutions during initial stages (a period of civil war and consolidation) Lenin, addressed the Muslims of Central Asia in the decree of December 1917 as:

> "*All you, whose mosques and shrines have been destroyed, whose faith and customs have been violated by the Czar's and oppressors of Russia hence forward your belief and customs, your national and cultural institutes, are declared free and inviolable! Build your national life freely and without hindrance. It is your right. Know your rights, like those of all the people of the Russia, they will be protected by the might of revolution, by the councils of workers, soldiers, peasants and deputies*".[25]

Following the decree, the mosques confiscated by the Czars were handed back to the people, the *Shar'iat* courts were restored, the religious schools were reopened and even the Friday was declared as national weak-holiday.[26] This order lived for a small period of time. Since confrontation between the religion and communism was inevitable, the veil of tolerance was thrown off as soon as Joseph Stalin (1924-1953) took over the reins of the Union. In the years to follow the Soviet approach towards Central Asia was a combination of cultural oppression and economic development, called generally "assault period".[27] On the one hand striking changes were introduced into social structure to establish institutional mechanism for reshaping traditional societies and on the other a massive campaign was launched against Islam and its institutions.

To begin with a series of attacks for abolishing the mosques was initiated in 1928.[28] Mosques, numbering 20,000 according to an estimate in

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[24] Islam came under the attack of Soviet authorities because it was considered more dangerous than Christianity; Geoffrey Wheeler, *The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia*, Wiedenfeld & Nicolson, London, 1964, p. 189.

[25] Cf Geoffrey Wheeler, *The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia*, p. 188.

[26] Alexander Benningsen, (translated by Geoffrey E Wheeler), *Islam in Soviet Union*, London, 1967, p. 140.

[27] Anti Islamic propaganda was mainly organized through the union of Khudasizlar Jamiyati (The union of Godless Zealots (1925-41); Alexander Bennigson, *Islam in Soviet Union*, Pall Mall Press; London, 1967, p. 174.

[28] John Glenn, *The Soviet Legacy in Central Asia*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2003, p. 89.

1917 in whole of Turkistan including Khanate of Bukhara, Khiva, and step region were reduced to 3,000 or 2,000 when Khurshchev (1953-1964) took over,[29] most of these were converted to non religious institutions, like schools, clubs, cinemas, reading rooms and hotels, etc.[30] This number would have been still lesser before the World War II when certain relaxations were granted and the intensity of persecution was changed,[31] allowing some of the mosques to reopen where elderly people offered prayers.[32] It was then that Soviets created four Spiritual Directorates for Islam, each under the chairmanship of a *Mufti*, one for Central Asia and Kazakhstan had its headquarter in Tashkent.[33] It was given the permission to publish *Qur'an* as well as some religious calendars, but in Tashkent facilities for printing the *Qur'an* was not made until 1948.[34] These directorates under the control of the State followed almost the earlier policy and for the sake of name allowed Muslims to do only such practices that were not fundamentally against the Communism. Accordingly Islam was allowed to be a cultural entity rather than a universal religion. Once World War II ended, the government also created a Council for Affairs of Religious Cults, which later became the leading Soviet state organ to curb Islamic fundamentals and reduced it to the legal status of a "cult".[35] This official Islam was developed in order to gain foothold in the Arab world by the Soviets after United States of America made strategic front ports there. To popularise the thought that Soviet Union was not behind the propaganda of anti Muslims in Central Asia, they opened two *Madrassas* in Bukhara and Tashkent where official *Mullahs* trained people in both Islamic and Soviet Studies.[36] This policy continued in the

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[29] Alexandra Bennigson and Marie Broxup, *The Islamic Threat to the Soviet State*, Croomhelm, London, 1983, p. 143; Alexander Benningsen, *Islam in Soviet Union*, pp. 144-45; Alexander Benningsen, S, Enders Wimbush, *Muslims of the Soviet Empire*; *A Guide*, C. Hurst & Co., London, 1985, p. 17.

[30] Adeeb Khalid, *Islam after Communism: Religion and Politics in Central Asia*, California Press, London, 2007, pp. 72-73.

[31] Hagheyeghi Mehradad, *Islam and Politics in Central Asia,* Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 1996, pp. 27-28.

[32] In return to these concessions Muslim religious directorate appealed people to help USSR in defending their "mother land"; Robert Conquest, *Religion in USSR*, London, 1968, p. 67.

[33] Directorate was also in charge of a museum of rare Islamic manuscripts, including a copy of the *Qur'an* from the seventh century which reputedly belonged to Osman, the third Islamic *caliph* (the title given to the successors of Prophet Muhammad) and which was recently returned to the Directorate by the republican government: "Thousands cheered and wept as the invaluable Holy Book was moved from a museum to the new headquarters mosque." Mark Dickens, *The Uzbeks*, 1990, p. 13; John Glenn, *The Soviet Legacy in Central Asia*, p. 89.

[34] Hagheyeghi Mehradad, *Islam and Politics in Central Asia*, 1996, pp. 27-28.

[35] Ahmed Rashid, *Jihad, The Rise of Militant Islam In Central Asia,* Orient Longman Private limited, India, 2002, p. 39.

[36] Out of 28 subjects studied in the two *Madrassas*, only six had religious content and the rest concerned with other subjects; Nancy Lubin, "Assimilation and Retention of Ethnic Identity in Uzbekistan," *Asian Affairs*, Vol. 68, No. 3 (1981), p. 280; Hagheyeghi Mehradad, *Islam*

Brezhnev era (1964-82) and again then Islam was used as a strategic and diplomatic weapon for Soviet foreign policy,[37] and accordingly several more mosques were reopened or remade.[38] The Grand Mosques in places like Bukhara and Samarkand became public show cases for visiting diplomats and other dignitaries. Many of these were renovated by the Soviets with beautiful tile work still available there.

Notwithstanding these policies, Soviets pressurised people not to offer five time prayer on the ground that it caused stoppage of work[39] which was considered economic sabotage and involved serious retribution.[40] In fact they considered Islam reactionary and *Mullahas* were perceived preventing the progress and education[41] and therefore the policy was to convert the people into urbanised proletarians. Accordingly economic development was pursued in a manner that education was popularised vigorously that provided no moral education but transformed the people in gaining material well being. Friday from 1930 onwards was declared as working day there by restraining the Muslims from offering even the congregational Friday prayers. There were nevertheless exceptions like some currents of "unofficial Islam" were going on side by side. One was that at places people did offer the prayers but without causing the Soviets to alarm. Even during the time of Great Purge the daily practices were performed in one way or other way, in the absence of the Imams, prayers were lead by elders of a village, or in a collective farm and were held secretly in local c*haikhanas* (tea houses).[42] But as Soviets, in particular Muslim soldiers, lost their lives during the World War II, people in a state of fear restarted offering the prayers openly. This rethinking and reposing belief in God was not stopped by Soviets. Most of them were elders, primarily because they knew how to offer it. It was a disturbing trend for Soviets as not only believers but even atheists were turning back to Islam once they reached the age of 40-45.[43] Thus during 1950s the number of worshipers started increasing.[44] By the

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*and Politics in Central Asia*, pp. 27-28; Ahmed Rashid, *Jihad, The Rise of Militant Islam In Central Asia,* p. 35.

[37] Moscow had to show that it tolerated Islam in its own country, especially in Central Asia to make socialism possible in other countries; Ahmed Rashid, *Jihad, The Rise of Militant Islam In Central Asia,* p. 39

[38] Alexander Bennigsen, "Islam in Retrospect" *Central Asian Sur*vey, Vol. 8, No. I, 1989, pp. 89, 109.

[39] Mark Dickens, *The Uzbeks,* 1990, p. 12.

[40] Geoffrey Wheeler, *The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia*, p. 189.

[41] Ahmed Rashid, *Jihad, The Rise of Militant Islam In Central Asia,* p. 36.

[42] Mohiaddin Mesbahi, *Central Asia and The Caucasus After the Soviet Union,* Florida, 1994, p. 55.

[43] A phenomenon which had been recorded amongst staunch party members; Aleexandra Bennigson and Marie Broxup, *The Islamic Threat to the Soviet State*, p. 143.

[44] In 1952 more than 5,000 Muslims assembled prayers in a mosque of Tashkent and in 1954 over 10,000 are reported to have offered prayers in the central mosque in Tashkent and about 20,000 at the Shahi-Zindan Mausoleum in Samarkand; Shams-ud-din, *Secularization In The USSR, A Study of Cultural Policy in Uzbekistan,* New Delhi, 1982, p. 188.

time this elderly generation was replaced by younger ones the practice almost disappeared even in the homes and thus the mosques available for prayers after 1965 were poorly attended, for the reason that Islam was no longer strong in Uzbekistan.[45] Surveys conducted during the 1970s demonstrate that daily prayers had not been widely observed. According to Soviet sources only 30% and non-Soviet sources 30-40% of the adult population regularly performed the daily prayers.[46]

Similarly fasting in the month of *Ramdan* was a particular target because it was thought that it reduces the efficiency of workers and those observing the fast were severely punished[47]. Several methods were used to curb the practices. It was reported that many times in the month of fasting "officers used to hold the conferences with the subordinates where they offered drinks or cigarettes"[48] and refusals to accept it were deemed tantamount to the observance of fasting and lead to expulsion from work.[49] Despite the destructive policy of Soviets against Islam, the *Ramdan* survived and people in one way or other performed it in 1940s.[50] Although during 1960s to 1970s 50% Muslims were observing fast in urban areas and 80% in the rural areas throughout the month[51] but in 1980s especially younger generation was observing it en masse.[52]

Administrative pressures and punishment were also used against the payment of *Zakat* and performance of *Hajj* was forbidden by the Soviets.[53] During World War II *Hajj* highly on a selective and controlled basis was allowed for the officials in the spiritual directorates[54] but general public desirous to perform this obligation found it very difficult to fulfil. The trend continued thereafter as well even though certain relaxations were granted during the Brezhnev era. Most of the time their applications were rejected on health grounds, at other times on the ground of prevalence of epidemics in Middle East or refusal of the neighbouring Muslim states of transit visa.[55]

Since the shrines of the Sufis had played a significant role in socio-political character of Uzbekistan, these were also closed for the visit of the people and some of them were changed into museums and stores.[56] For this the government used the official *Muftis* of the directorate of Tashkent to

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[45] Yaccovi Roi, *Islam in Soviet Union*, p. 180.
[46] Micheal Rywkin, *Moscow's Muslim Challenge: Soviet Central Asia*, Armonk, New York, 1982, p. 89.
[47] Alexander Benningsen, *Islam in Soviet Union*, p. 151.
[48] Elizabeth E Bacon, *Central Asians under Russian Rule, A study in Culture Change*, p. 178.
[49] Phool Baden, *Dynamics of Political Development in Central Asia*, Lancer books, Delhi, 2001, p. 39.
[50] John Glenn, *The Soviet Legacy in Central Asia*, p. 90.
[51] Micheal Rywkin, *Moscow's Muslim Challenge: Soviet Central Asia*, p. 84.
[52] Alexender Bennigsen, *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 8, No. I, p. 97.
[53] Elizabeth E Bacon, *Central Asians under Russian Rule, A study in Culture Change*, p. 174.
[54] Robert Conquest, *Religion in USSR*, p. 67.
[55] Shams-ud-din, *Secularization In The USSR, A Study of Cultural Policy in Uzbekistan*, p. 188.
[56] Mark Dickens, *The Uzbeks*, 1990, p. 12.

issue several *futwas* (legal pronouncements) against the practice of visiting Sufi shrines.[57] However, the dimensions of the World War II and the killing of the people in the war as well as denial of travelling for the performance of *Hajj* made people to throng the shrines to seek the help.[58] By 1964, forty nine such shrines were operating in Uzbekistan[59] and appeared to have become the centres of religious activities in the urban areas. Not only the less-educated but even highly educated people visited the shrines.[60] The pilgrimage was also made to those shrines which were once converted into non-religious museums by the Soviets, as was the case of the tomb of Bahauddin Naqashbandi in Bukhara,[61] the founder of *Naqshbandiya* order.

The people in Uzbekistan found a novel way of making it possible to visit these shrines and most of the time they held public ceremonies and festivals there.[62] Many of the people visited shrines soon after the marriage ceremony was conducted, either through Islamic pronouncement of *nikah* or civil court. Likewise some of the shrines were used to commemorate a festival like Eid where fairs were held to make merry. *Eid-ul-fitr* was commonly celebrated at these places with an *iftar* (fast breaking party)[63] and despite the restrictions or surveillance, Eid prayers were offered at the shrines and even in the mosques that were allowed to remain open. It is reported that in 1960s many Kolkhoz members in Uzbekistan abstained from work to attend the necessary prayers of Eid.[64] Nevertheless, *kurban barham* (*Eid-ul-duha*) lost its significance as a public celebration that required sacrifice of an animal on the eve which was not possible either because of the nationalization of the stocks or these were not readily available in the markets. Many people did observe the Eid within a house, "windows shut and doors locked"[65] to slaughter an animal very secretly. The situation continued almost up to the middle of World War II, but it got relaxed of its own once people in the war got killed and for the fear many more may be done away people restarted slaughtering of the animals at a larger scale on the Eid and other occasions in particular at the shrines.

On the other hand, to undermine the influence of Islamic festivals in Uzbekistan, Soviets attempted to replace some of the religious rituals with secular alternatives, such as agriculture festivals were observed with hue and

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[57] Marine Broxup, "Islam in Central Asia since Gorbachev", *Asian Affairs*, Vol. 74. No. 3, 1987, p. 286.
[58] Yaccovi Roi, *Islam in Soviet Union*, p. 370.
[59] Yaccovi Roi, *Islam in Soviet Union*, p. 380.
[60] Elizabeth E Bacon, *Central Asians under Russian Rule, A study in Culture Change*, p. 179.
[61] Mark Dickens, *The Uzbeks*, p. 16.
[62] Yaccovi Roi, *Islam in Soviet Union*, p. 380.
[63] Abdullah Wattani, "Ramzan in Soviet Central Asia", *Islamic World Review*, Vol. 6, No. 70. 1987, p. 60.
[64] Elizabeth E Bacon, *Central Asians under Russian Rule, A study in Culture Change*, p. 178.
[65] Elizabeth E Bacon, *Central Asians under Russian Rule, A study in Culture Change*, p. 178.

cry in place of certain religious ones.[66] They also were successful in attempting to eradicate religious mind of the people and what was untouchable till then was forced upon them like the introduction of the pig farming which grew at an alarming pace in the erstwhile Muslim Central Asia.[67]

As per their policy *Waqaf* grants were liquidated[68] and Muslim theological institutions like *Maktabas* and *Madrassas* which prior to 1920s, existed in thousands were closed. From 1920-1941 all the religious schools were closed and all religious instruction came to an end, the government organs deployed different means to cut their funding,[69] closing them by transferring educational responsibilities to new state schools. But after the World War II the government opened two *Madrassas* in Bukhara (1945) and Tashkent (1958).[70] Under the official control these *Madrassas* started providing training to Muslim clergy all over USSR. Some Muslim students were allowed to go abroad (usually to Al-Azhar University in Cairo) for further studies.[71] All this was done to silence the opposition of some of the countries that always accused Soviets or else the political situation that arose after the conflict in West Asia.[72]

Since the spread of the Communist ideology was the sole objective of the Soviets, the *Shari'at* courts in Uzbekistan were done away and Muslim clergy was targeted. The Muslim courts which functioned in accordance with Islamic laws and *adat* (customary laws) and to which local people turned for social and theological justices from centuries were banned and systematically cases transferred to civil courts. In 1925 eighty seven *Shari'at* courts existed in Uzbekistan but within next three years not a single existed in the entire Central Asia.[73] *Qazi*s of *Shari'at* court were dubbed as deceivers of working people and were put into prison. They were charged with the crimes like bribery, theft, corruption, and finally with immorality.[74]

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[66] *Navroz* was the occasion that was celebrated with religious festivity but henceforth it became a festival of sowing the seeds only; Nancey Lubun, "Assimilation", *Asian Affairs*, Vol. 68, No. 3, 1982, p. 280.

[67] In 1916 there were 30,000 pigs in Central Asia reared by Jews and Christians, whereas by 1941 these were raised in kolkhozs where all people irrespective of religious faith were involved in their raising and their figure reached to 247,000 and in 1969 it reached to 610,000; Nikolai Gavrilorich, *Vegetation Degradation In Central Asia Under The Impact Of Human Activities,* Springer, 2002, p. 68.

[68] The revenue from these *waqf* lands which comprised almost 10% of total cultivable land in 1920s was used to support the religious schools and Muslim clergy. The land was redistributed among landless peasants in wake of Collectivization; Alexander Benningsen and Wimbus S. Enders, *Muslims of Soviet Union, A Guide*, p. 11.

[69] Geoffrey Wheeler, *The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia*, p. 191.

[70] Alexander Benningsen, S, Enders Wimbush, *Muslims of the Soviet Empire; A Guide*, p. 19.

[71] Ahmed Rashid, *Jihad, The Rise of Militant Islam In Central Asia*, p. 39.

[72] Alexander Benningsen and Wimbus S. Enders *Muslims of Soviet Union, A Guide,* p. 39.

[73] Mark Dickens, *The Uzbeks*, 1990, P. 12.

[74] Alexander Benningsen and Chantal, (translated by Geoffrey E Wheeler), *Islam in Soviet Union,* p. 151.

## Post Soviet Era and Islamic Resurgence

Religion, traditions and customs of pre-Soviet era have assumed new significance in the post Soviet era. All Soviet propaganda has disappeared, atheism is getting dismantled, and religious preachers have surfaced. Accordingly a new socio-cultural order is developing where remote past and immediate past are getting mixed up as we see in the present Uzbekistan. Before the breakup of USSR there was some kind of Islamic resurgence in Uzbekistan, when a sort of scandal came into forefront in 1989. It led to demonstrations in the streets of Tashkent against Mufti Shamsuddin Babakhanov, chairman of the Tashkent Directorate, whose reputation was summed up by one elderly Uzbek: "Our *mufti* is a terrible man. He drinks, he smokes, he plays billiards, and he's been photographed with prostitutes in Sochi. There are five Islamic laws and he breaks them all."[75] As a result of the public outcry, Babakhanov was forced to resign. What the demonstrations therefore allow to deduce is that even during the Soviet period, in spite what the regime pronounced and enforced, common man had not altogether forgotten the past.

In spite of the Soviet government polices there was an upsurge to adhere to the Islamic code and fundamentals, more so during the latter period. Congregational Friday prayers were being offered in bigger mosques. *Otins*, the female religious teachers, were somehow, spreading the word of Allah among the younger people keeping them close with the religion. Sensing the demise of USSR, Islam Karimov, therefore in May 1991, attacked the cultural policy of Soviets and announced that, "everything was banned, religion was persecuted, mosques were closed down, and everything that was deeply national was suppressed, mocked and discredited".[76] It was, besides political reasons, an announcement that was aimed to find support for the revival of religion.

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union Islam has played a significant role in unifying the people of Uzbekistan. Soon after its independence, a new wave of ethno national and religious resurgence swept the region and Uzbekistan as a result experienced a significant revival of the practices of Islam.[77] To honour the sentiments of the people the president of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov, took his oath on the *Qur'an*[78] and went to Mecca for *Umerah*[79]and Bukhara renamed "Dome of Islam".[80] Uzbekistan

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[75] Angus Roxburg, "Soviet scandal that must go away" *The Sunday Times*, Feb. 1989, p. 6.
[76] K. Warikoo, *Himalayan and Central Asian Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 1-2, p. 74.
[77] M. Bakhrom, Madrakhimov, *The Rise of Islamic Fundamentalism in Uzbekistan*, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, 2002, p. 1.
[78] John Glenn, *The Soviet Legacy in Central Asia*, Palgrave Macmillan New York, 2003, p. 105.
[79] Maria Elisabeth Louv, *Every day Islam In Post Soviet Central Asia*, Rutledge, U S A & Canada, 2007, p. 24.
[80] K. Warikoo, *Himalayan and Central Asian Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 1-2, p. 77.

has witnessed an Islamic renaissance; mosques have once again become a common feature in the towns and villages of the country. In 1994 it was estimated that 7,800 mosques were opened in Central Asia, of which half were located in Uzbekistan alone.[81] The early years saw that many Muslim countries helped these new states to establish the Islamic institutions[82] and funds were made available for the spread of Islamic faith. At times there were nongovernmental organizations as well that spread their networks in the region. They came from various schools of thought, and from many countries in the neighbourhood and as far away as Saudi Arabia, Egypt etc, to help the people to adopt the faith in true spirit.[83] Accordingly religious literature became increasingly available and programmes were broadcasted on television and radios to educate the people.[84]

Uzbekistan by 1997 had 5,000 religious schools.[85] Also in 1997 the Uzbek government helped to establish the first Islamic University in Tashkent[86] strictly controlled by Muslim Board of Uzbekistan. The university explores the tenets of Islam as well as historical and philosophical origins.[87] Also the number of students has tripled in the two major *Madrassas* of Mir Arab and Barak Khan, enrollment in Al-Bukhara Higher Education Institute for Islamic Education has doubled since independence.[88] In addition several students have been sent to various Middle East countries to receive Islamic training.[89]

Uzbekistan is the only country in Central Asia to have two *Madrassas* for women, in Tashkent and Bukhara. Although these *Madrassas* are run by the women, they too are governed by the Muslim Board of Uzbekistan. The board appoints the directors, the teachers and other personnel.[90] There are classes five days a week and no classes on Fridays and Saturdays.[91] The curriculum is dictated by the Board and includes the history of Uzbekistan, the knowledge of president's books, the constitutional history of the country, the history of religion, the recitation of *Qur'an*, Islamic jurisprudence, Uzbek literature,

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[81] Jahtin Kumar Mohanty, *Terrorism and Militancy in Central Asia*, Kalpaz Publications, New Delhi, 2006, p. 122.

[82] Some of the institutions such as Mirza Gulab Masjid were financed by Pakistan and Saudi Arabia; Asif Jeelani, *West Asia, Nayee Azadi Nayai Challenge*, Delhi, 1995, p. 38.

[83] They were mainly emissaries of totally different Islamic movements, parties and religious organizations from Arab countries, Pakistan, Jordan and less frequently from Iran; B. Babadzhanov, *"The Fergana valley: Source of victim of Islamic Fundamentalism", http://www.ca-c.org/dataeng10.babadzh.shtml*

[84] Maria Elisabeth Louv, *Every day Islam In Post Soviet Central Asia*, p. 24.

[85] M Bakhrom, Madrakhimov, *The Rise of The Islamic Fundamentalism in Uzbekistan*, p. 6.

[86] K. Warikoo, *Himalayan and Central Asian Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 1-2, p. 78.

[87] M Bakhrom, Madrakhimov, *The Rise of The Islamic Fundamentalism in Uzbekistan*, p. 6.

[88] *Strengthening Education in the Muslim World*, Country Profiles and Analysis, Bureau of Policy and Program Coordination, USAID, 2004, p. 19.

[89] Jahtin Kumar Mohanty, *Terrorism and Militancy in Central Asia*, p. 123.

[90] Habbi Fathia," Gender, Islam, and Social, Change in Uzbekistan" *Central Asian Review*, Vol.25, No.3, 2006, p. 313.

[91] Feride Acar and Ayse Gunes Ayata, *Gender and Identity Construction; Women in Central Asia, The Caucasus and Turkey*, Brill, Netherlands, 2000, p. 241.

geography, pedagogy, English language, cooking, sewing etc.[92] The *Madrassa* not only teaches girls but also adult women who receive a diploma after four years of study. Besides, some women have managed to travel aboard to study at prestigious religious institutes such as Al-Azhar in Egypt.[93] Another *Madrassa* in Tashkent is *Ahmadcan Kari Madrassa* that provides free and voluntary education for men and women and is supported by a *waqf*.[94] The *Madrassa* teaches ritual prayers and observance of other religious practices and is also under the supervision of Muslim Board of Uzbekistan.

Since Uzbeks have for generations together believed in the liberal rather in orthodox Islam for which shrines played significant role, the government, therefore, accorded highest priority to reopening these and restored to the people of Uzbekistan those which were closed by the earlier government. People, after independence, throng these shrines with the same faith as was prevalent before the Soviet period; evidence available at the Shrine of Bahudin Naqashbandi where people enter bear footed to pay reverence, a practice not available during the Soviet era.[95] The government also constructed new roads to make these shrines easily accessible. This patronization of shrines has been one of most common reference point for the government to mark the rehabilitation of the age old traditions, the agenda Islam Karimov recognises most.[96] Today, the government has separated out religion from politics and thus non-religious secular thinking parallel to Islam is growing. In fact Karimov has promoted the idea that such ideology gives "richness, variety and development" to the human race[97]

This "new thinking" of Karimov developed more because of Fargana uprising. Till then his government allowed many institutions and organizations of various schools of thought to come to Uzbekistan. But people were caught in a dilemma as to which school of thought was suitable for them. Debates were held on the Iranian and Turkish models or else free secular model was also discussed.[98] Since the constitution of Republic of Uzbekistan, adopted on December 8, 1992, guarantees the freedom of conscience, and prohibits propagation of religious ideas in forceful manner[99] and forbids the formation of associations and parties on the basis of national and religious differences[100]

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[92] Habbi Fathia, *Central Asian Review*, Vol.25, No.3, p. 313.
[93] Habbi Fathia, *Central Asian Review*, Vol.25, No.3, p. 313.
[94] Feride Acar and Ayse Gunes Ayata, *Gender and Identity Construction; Women in Central Asia, The Caucasus and Turkey, Brill, Netherlands, 2000.* p. 241.

[95] Maria Elisabeth Louv, *Every day Islam In Post Soviet Central Asia*, p. 42.
[96] Even president Karimov inaugurated the restored Shrine of Bahudin by cutting the ribbon in 1993; Maria Elisabeth Louv, *Every day Islam In Post Soviet Central Asia,* p. 50.
[97] J. R. Pottengar, "Civil Society, Religious Freedom, and Islam Karimov: Uzbekistan's Struggle for a Decent Society."*Central Asian Syrvey*, Vol. 23(1), 2004, p. 65.
[98] A Il'khamov, "The Phenomenology of "Akromiya": Separating Facts from Fiction," *China and Euro Asia Forum Quarterly*, Vol. 4, 2006, pp. 39-48.
[99] Article 31, Constitution of Uzbekistan.
[100] Article 57, Constitution of Uzbekistan.

as well as declares the separation of religion from state,[101] the government therefore took a stand to screen such activities. To curb those who claim greater role of Islam in political and social life[102] the government in 1998 passed law on religion that sharply restricted all forms of religious practices which are not regulated by the state.[103] From 1997 some 27 students have been expelled from schools and universities for refusing to abandon the fundamentalist practices like wearing of veil by women and keeping of beard by men.[104] The Uzbek nation today faces the dual challenges of building a secular democracy and allowing for free practice of Islam and other religions. All of the post-independence constitutions of the Muslim states of Central Asia emphasize their secular nature, as well as the principle of the separation of church and state. All these constitutions also state that there should be no discrimination among citizens based on ethnic, religious, or gender differences. The emphasis on the secular nature of the Central Asian governments means that Islam does not occupy any special position in relation to other faiths, such as being the state religion.[105]

Accordingly all Muslims in Uzbekistan do not offer five prayers a day and in a mosque many of them do not yet know how to offer it. Islam is therefore part of culture and not necessarily a religion to be followed as per its fundamentals.[106] Even though *Hajj* is officially sponsored[107] and many elderly people perform it yet it is also true that many others take vodka even when they go to shrines[108] to seek blessings. The government encourages such happenings and it is why that at a shrine a cultural programme including dance was performed in order to not to stick to the true spirit of Islam.[109] For the said purpose the SADUM has been replaced by the Muslim Directorate of Uzbekistan (O'zbekiston Musulmonlar Idorasi), which functions as an organ of the state, firmly under the control of the regime.[110]

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[101] Article 61, Constitution of Uzbekistan,

[102] Maria Elisabeth Louv, *Every day Islam In Post Soviet Central Asia,* p. 23.

[103] Article, 14, *Law of Freedom of Consensus*, Constitution of Uzbekistan.

[104] *Human rights watch*, Tashkent, May 26, 2000.

[105] Shireen Hunter, *Journal of Islamic Studies*, Vol.7, No.2, p. 275.

[106] "Muslim Board of Mawaraunnahr, its activities and aims", *Dialogue Today,* Vol. VIII, No. 3, Delhi, 1994.

[107] Adeeb Khalid*, "*Secular Islam: Nation, State, and Religion in Uzbekistan", *International Journal of Middle East Studies,* Vol. 35, 2003, p. 587.

[108] Not only at shrines but the drinking of vodka has also become part of all national customs and rituals; Adeeb Khalid, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 35, p. 579.

[109] In 1996, at a 200 years old shrine, which served to atheism during the Soviet period, the festival of *Navroz* was held and there dancing competitions of women were held to reflect the ethos of cultural compactness of yesteryears; Laura L Adams, "*Performing National Identity in Uzbekistan"*, p. 12. *lladams2@earthlink.net*

[110] The Muslim Directorate has a monopoly over religious instruction and the organization contacts with the rest of the Muslim world. New *Madrasas* have appeared under its auspices, and it organizes the *hajj* for several thousand citizens every year. It also controls all mosques and their personnel in the country. Mosques not controlled by the directorate,

It is to check and watch the activities of the people that live there, in particular of people like those who were responsible for the events like Andijan, in May, 2005. The political regime does not allow any kind of relaxation in the strangulations it has put on them by curbing the activities of organizations like Hizb-i-Tahir and others. Accordingly the government has promoted a religious culture that does not stress too much on following the fundamentals of Islam but allows pursuing a moderate way, thus non followers have even share to build the ethno-cultural state. The Muslim Directorate of Uzbekistan cannot promote to create a theocratic state but it is also not promoting true essence of Islam. It is there to create secular attitude and promote visits of people to the shrines for nationalistic reasons.[111]

**Conclusion**

The present status of Islam is not therefore of an orthodox religion, when 1/3rd of Uzbeks are not able to translate correctly the *Shadah*- the first canon for the belief. There are 44% who, claim following the religion of Islam, do not offer prayers and only 23% do it occasionally.[112] Today Uzbeks have moved away from godless society to a God fearing one where only such religious practices are being promoted which do not, in no way, stop Islam Karimov to rule. One can also add hastily that authoritarianism, in the proclaimed democratic set-up has not allowed any individual organization to spread their word beyond the given proportions. One can hardly expect that people in a country like Uzbekistan will be able to follow their life as per the dictates of *Qur'an*, till they manage to get Islamic education properly. Ideological doctrines of Communism are no more promoted but its physical appearance is still available in many ways in the country. It may take many more years to eradicate once the socio-political apparatus changes to a true democratic one. The present religious condition, therefore, is carefully tempered and monitored as per the wishes of the government in place.

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by contrast, are deemed illegal and many of them have been closed like in the Soviet era; Adeeb Khalid, *International Journal of Middle East Studies,* Vol. 35, p. 587.

111 Adeeb Khalid, *International Journal of Middle East Studies,* Vol. 35, p. 587.

112 Ajay Patnaik, *Nations, Minorities and States in Central Asia*, New Delhi, 2003, p. 168.

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# British Imperialism, the Great Game and the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878-80): A Critical Appraisal

***Salman Bangash**** 
***& Shahida Aman*****

*Asia is a living body and Afghanistan its heart*
*In the ruin of the heart lies the ruin of the body*
(Allama Muhammad Iqbal).[1]

## Introduction

British Empire at its zenith and peak was the leading imperialist and colonial power that the world had ever recognized and acknowledged. In the midst of its enormous and gigantic empire, India was one of its prize-worth possessions. Losing India would be therefore, a fatal blow to the British affluence, status and supremacy. For this very *raison d'être* and *rationale* the safety and protection of India became the prime objective of the successive governments in Great Britain.

Throughout the 19th century British government made enormous efforts to make sure that the Great Powers of Europe kept their hands not just off their empire in India but all the states located in the vicinity of India. The British perceived Russian advancement in Central Asia as a threat to India and feared that Afghanistan might become a staging post for a Russian invasion of India. As a consequence Afghanistan assumed importance for the British government in India. It was important for the British to secure Afghanistan and to make it a barrier and bulwark against British adversaries. To fulfil its objectives the British twice invaded Afghanistan; first in 1838 and then in 1878 when conservative government in Great Britain under Benjamin Disraeli decided to bring Afghanistan under the influence of British Empire to keep watchful eye on Russian movements and activities in Central Asia. This particular paper critically analyses factors behind the invasion of Afghanistan, its significance and outcome.

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1 Jason Elliot, *An Unexpected Light: Travels in Afghanistan* (Picador, 1999), p. 13.

## British Interventionist Policy in Afghanistan

By 1875 Great Britain was at the pinnacle of its imperial power. The archetypal Victorian, Benjamin Disraeli replaced the government of William Gladstone. The new cabinet, as energetic in foreign affairs, contained many members who had long chafed at the policy of masterly inactivity. Thus, the old policy was replaced by a forward foreign policy, imperialistic goals, and inspiring diplomacy. The new policy meant the extension of Great Britain sway right up to the frontiers of the Hindu Kush, to form a strong fence against Czarist Russia's expansionism in Central Asia.[2]

This new policy was communicated to Lord Northbrook, the Viceroy of India, who in returned opposed and raised a voice against expansionism. Lord Salisbury the new Secretary of State for India succeeded to hound Northbrook out of office, with an inexorable barrage of telegrams demanding that British agents be stationed on Afghan soil in order to keep a vigilant and watchful eye on Russian movements and activities in Central Asia, a *diktat* that Salisbury knew would fly in the face of Northbrook's close border proclivities.

Northbrook as a result he resigned[3] and was replaced by Edward Robert Bulwer- Lytton, Lytton came to India commissioned to inaugurate a new Afghan policy. The retirement of his predecessor and the vicissitudes of party government in England had thus replaced Gladstone, the Duke of Argyll, and Lord Northbrook, as Premier, Secretary of State, and Viceroy respectively, by Disraeli, Lord Salisbury, and Lord Lytton, and there 'could hardly have been a more striking change in the personality of the men themselves or the ideas they represented,'[4] i.e a 'spirited foreign policy, imperialistic aims, and a subtle and provocative diplomacy.'[5]To back their cause they were supported by the most distinguished proponents of the forward school, Sir Henry Rawlinson, Sir Robert Montgomery and Sir Bartle Frere, who were members of the powerful Council of India.[6]

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[2] A.B. Awan, *Across the Rivers and over the Hills*: *a collection of articles* (Islamabad: Pangrahic, 1982), p. 112. Bartle Frere, a supporter of interventionist policy in a memorandum setting forth a new policy toward Afghanistan, which called for the military occupation of Quetta and for a British officers to be placed in Herat and Kandahar, an infringement and contravention of promises made to Shir Ali the amir of Afghanistan by both Mayo and Northbrook. (see Arnold. Fletcher, *Afghanistan: Highway to Conquest*. Ithaca, N.Y., Cornell University Press, 1965 , p. 128).

[3] Northbrook resigned over the difference with Salisbury regarding opening negotiation with the Russian over fixing boundaries of Afghanistan which was rejected by the home government and his opposition to force the Amir to accept British demands of agents. He argued that there was no need to revise the policy of Lord Lawrence and Lord Mayo.

[4] P. E. Roberts, *British rule in India*: *India Under the British Crown 1856-47*, vol. 2 (Dehradun, India: Reprint Publication, 2006), p. 431.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Sneh. Mahajan, *British Foreign Policy, 1874-1914: The Role of India* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 51.

The Disraeli-Salisbury-Lytton triumvirate lost no time in pursuing their imperialistic and expansionist policy. Lytton immediately opened negotiations with Sher Ali and without any ground reality demanded that the Amir should accept a European-staffed mission in Kabul. Nur Muhammad, Amir's envoy informed the British that the Afghans could not resist militarily the British might, but he warned that the Afghans were self-willed and independent and prized their homes above their lives. He further explained 'You must not impose upon us a burden, which we cannot bear; if you overload us, the responsibility rests with you.'[7]

The problem with the British was that they demanded more but in return offered nothing substantial. Even on the issue of assistance in the event of foreign aggression, the British hedged and reserved the right to judge the situation, in order to provide material help to the Afghan Government.[8]

The new Viceroy maneuvered his policies with great pace, the arguments advanced by John Jacob in 1850s that troops should be stationed at Quetta[9] was given a practical shape. Quetta was occupied after a treaty with the Khan of Kalat in December, 1876. Quetta became an important centre of military operation during the second Anglo-Afghan War.[10] In the meantime efforts were made to establish closer relations with Sher Ali of Afghanistan in order to stem the tide of Russian advance toward India.[11] Such rapid shifts in policy confused Sher Ali and he greeted these new British overtures with suspicion.

Lord Lytton wanted the co-operation of Amir as it would enable a British- Indian army to be fed as it marched through Afghanistan into Russian Central Asia in the event of war in Europe.[12]

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[7] Bosworth Smith, *Life of Lord Lawrence,* vol. 2 (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1893), p. 629.

[8] Louis. Dupree, *Afghanistan*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1968), p. 450.

[9] C. C. Davies, *The Problem of the North-West Frontier, 1890-1908: With a Survey of Policy since 1849* (London: Curzon Press, 1975), p. 8.

[10] Ian Talbot, *Pakistan: A Modern History*. London: Hurst & Company, 2009), p. 56.

[11] Dwight E. Lee, *A Turkish Mission to Afghanistan, 1877,* The Journal of Modern History, Vol. 13, No. 3 (September, 1941), pp. 335-356

[12] The crisis developed in Europe when nationalist forces in the Balkans rebelled against Turkish rule in 1878. The Russian son behalf of them intervened and the nationalists hailed it as a war of liberation. Disraeli's government considered it as a flagrant attempt to infiltrate south-east Europe and possibly seize the Straits and it would be a serious threat to British interest in India. When the Russian forces approached the northern shore of the Bosphorus and came within sight of Constantinople's skyline, war seemed imminent. The British also tried to get the support of Sultan of Turkey to bring Amir Ali closer to Great Britain. The Russo-Turkish War came to an end after the Turkish humiliation and in order to save their capital accepted the Russian dictated Treaty of San Stefano. Had the terms been allowed to stand, Alexendar II could have claimed a wholly and solely Russian solution of the 'Eastern Question' and a leading position in western Asia and to add to his triumphs farther east. The Treaty caused great resentment and alarm in Great Britain. War was only averted by the

Lord Lytton believed as he wrote to Lord Cranbrook, a conservative politician that in case of war with Russia in Europe, the British Government in India could strike hard the Russian's in Central Asia, because he believed that in India the British were very strong and the Russian were comparatively weak[13] and he proposed to the high ups in London that the Government of India should at once take the offensive in Central Asia[14]making 'the disintegration of the Russian empire an object of British policy'[15]

The forward school advocated that the only way to halt the Russian advances was by getting Afghanistan first, either by invasion or by creating a buffer or vassal state and control of the likely invasion routes. [16]

During the height of the Russo-Turko crisis the Russians under pressure in an attempt to stave off the inevitable, played a move to weaken British resolve and secure more favourable terms at the conference table in Berlin. India was the projected target of this stratagem. At the beginning of the hostilities and in anticipation of British moves, General Mikhail Skobelev had proposed temporary occupation of Kabul. According to Foreign Minister Gir Russian advances in Central Asia were not to conquer India but to apply pressure to England and tie down its army.[17]

In January 1878, with an exhausted Russian army checkmated outside Constantinople, General Kryjhanovsky, the Governor of Orenburg, suggested a diversionary expedition into Persia. The war ministry rejected this plan because funds were short and all available troops had to be concentrated in the Near East to face a possible Anglo-Austrian counter-offensive. The only alternative which was left was a small-scale demonstration on the Oxus and a well-publicised political mission to Kabul.[18]

During the month of May General von Kaufman mobilised his entire force of 20,000 men and declared that he was ready to establish a Russian sphere of influence over Afghanistan. One of his officers said: 'Now we

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mediation of Germany. The British with their spectacular diplomatic victory were able to exploit Russia's embarrassments in the Balkans by reversing the Treaty of San Stefano (1878) with that of Congress of Berlin (1878). Russia was forced to back down and accept political defeat. Britons whipped up their martial enthusiasm with the Jingo song in their music halls; Salisbury won Britain's greatest victory at the Congress of Berlin by the sheer force of his intellect.

[13] Lee, *A Turkish Mission to Afghanistan, 1877.*

[14] S. Gopal, *British Policy in India1858- 1905* (Cambridge University Press, 1965), p. 80.

[15] M. Cowling, *Lytton, the Cabinet, and the Russians, August to November 1878*, The English Historical Review, Vol. 76, No. 298 (Jan., 1961), pp. 59-79.

[16] Peter. Hopkirk. *The Great Game: On Secret Service in High Asia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 6.

[17] W.B Walsh, *The Imperial Russian Staff and India: A Footnote to Diplomatic History*, Russian Review, Vol.16, No.2 (April, 1957), pp.53-58.

[18] Ibid.

march to India and drive out the English.'[19] At the same time, General Leonid Stoletov rode to Kabul, ignoring Afghan protests, and delivered the Czar's terms to the Amir, Sher Ali, but it was too late; the Berlin agreement was signed in July and he was immediately recalled to St Petersburg. In James Long words 'The antagonism of England to Russia in Turkey means the hostility of Russia to England in India, the vulnerable *Achilles heel*.'[20]

The issue of Central Asia, India, and Turkish Questions were closely connected in this respect, as much as the former used by Russia as a leverage to ease England's action against it in Turkey, or, as a Russian James long put it "the diplomatic dispute in Constantinople will be transferred to the slopes of Peshawur: antagonism to Russia in Turkey implies antagonism to England in India."[21] In the Duke of Wellington's view, "The Ottoman Empire exists not for the benefit of the Turks, but for the benefit of Europe; not to keep the Mahomedans in power, but to save the Christians from a war of which 'it would be impossible to define either the object, extent, or duration.'[22] The matter; however was that if England opposes the Russian advance in Turkey; Russia will checkmate her by a policy in Central Asia disturbing the position and prestige of England in India.[23]

Von Kaufman's sabre-rattling on the Oxus and Stoletov's brief appearance at Kabul had far-reaching repercussions. As predicted, they created consternation in Calcutta, where Lytton was already considering ways to bring Afghanistan more closely into Britain's orbit. Lord Lytton, confidently, if perhaps naively, had developed grandiose plans to "flank the Russian power" and "sweep it out of Asia,"[24] Lord Roberts in his secret military notes on the Central Asian Question and the Frontier Defences of India explained that "The true solution of the problem of the defence of India will be found in our troops, holding the country up to the Hindu Kush mountains, and our being in force at such points as will enable us to frustrate any attempts of the Russians to gain an entrance into Afghanistan proper by the passes over that range, or by the easier route via the Helmand to Kandahar."[25]

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[19] Ibid.

[20] James. Long, *The Eastern question in its Anglo-Indian aspect. A paper read before the East India* Association, on Wednesday, May 16, 1877 Foreign and Commonwealth Office Collection, 1877. p.3. http://www.jstor.org/stable/60235120, (accessed April 10, 2009).

[21] Long, *The Eastern question in its Anglo-Indian aspect*, p. 18. As the Great Eastern Crisis brewed, Salisbury wrote to Lord Northbrook and suspected Sher Ali might be about to defect to the Russians, and feared that Russia "in possession of the dominant party' in Kabul would be able 'to besiege Constantinople from the heights above Peshawur."

[22] Long, *The Eastern question in its Anglo-Indian aspect*, p. 6.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Maurice Cowling, *Lytton, The Cabinet, and the Russians, August to November 1878*, *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 76, No. 298 (Jan., 1961), pp. 59-79.

[25] Secret Notes on the Central Asian Question and the Frontier Defenses of India 1877-1893, p. 108. L/MIL/17/14/80.

The Conservative government in London and Lord Lytton wanted Afghanistan to be transformed from a neutral buffer state into a British satellite, with an Amir firmly under the thumb of the British resident in Kabul.[26] Sir Bartle Frere argued that the ill-appreciated danger to India was not of Russian invasion but of a Russianized Afghanistan.[27]

Lord Lytton also wrote to the Secretary of State for India about his proposal to create a separate West Afghan Kingdom consisting of Merv, Maimena, Balkh, Kandahar and Herat under a ruler of British choice and dependent on British support for existence.[28]In a letter to Frere Lytton wrote "Afghanistan must… be made POLITICALLY ours, before it can be of any use to us….from a MILITARY point of view." [29]

On August 1878, the Viceroy demanded the Amir to accept a British mission in order to counter the Russian mission. Lytton dispatched a mission through the Khyber Pass, only to have it intercepted by Afghan troops and turn them back at Ali Masjid fort. The refusal of Sher Ali to allow Sir Neville Chamberlain's mission to cross the frontier was more than diplomatic rebuff, the British accused the Amir of procrastination.[30]

The government in London could not ignore the matter. It was not just a question of affront and insult to the government of India but of checking Russia's advance towards India's frontier. Many members of the Cabinet Lord Chancellor, Lord Cairns, Home Secretary R.A. Cross and Salisbury expressed misgivings about the plan to invade Afghanistan. Disraeli was able to convince the Cabinet and particularly Salisbury to support the decision and the Cabinet asked the Viceroy to send another message to the Amir and required 'in temperate language an apology and acceptance of a permanent mission within the Afghan territory.'[31] The Viceroy and his 'war party' were in control at Simla and determined upon military adventure. It is probable that the Viceroy would have 'heard of the halting of the mission with satisfaction'.[32] Lord Lytton once stated that Lord Auckland's expedition

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[26] Balfour quoted by Fletcher in *Afghanistan: Highway to Conquest*, p. 131.

[27] John Lowe Duthie, *Pragmatic Diplomacy or Imperial Encroachment?: British Policy Towards Afghanistan, 1874-1879, P.478.* British feared that Russian agent at Kabul, could provoke unrest among the its subject in india, or even impel Asiatic marauders onto the Hindustan plains. (Ibid).

[28] Betty. Balfour, *The History of Lord Lytton's Indian Administration, 1876 to 1880: Compiled from letters and Official Papers* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1899) , p. 247.

[29] John Lowe Duthie, *Pragmatic Diplomacy or Imperial Encroachment?: British Policy Towards Afghanistan, 1874-1879, p.486.*

[30] Dupree, *Afghanistan*, p.408

[31] Sneh. Mahajan, *British Foreign Policy, 1874-1914: The Role of India* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 52.

[32] Fletcher, *Afghanistan: Highway to Conquest*, p. 132. S. Chakravarty stated that Salisbury had suggested in September 1878 that it might be more convenient simply to seize those provinces which were economically and strategically the most advantageous. (See S. Chakravarty, *Afghanistan and the Great Game* (Delhi : New Century, 2002), p. 231. There

into Afghanistan had lasting misfortune upon India, 'for it has paralysed the commonsense of all his successors, and bequeathed to the Government of India a perfectly unreasoning panic about everything that concerns our relations with Afghanistan.'[33] It seem like Lytton was seeking a *casus belli* rather than negotiation.[34] The affront to Sir Neville Chamberlain was only the "pretext" for it.[35]

## Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878-80)

When Neville Chamberlain the leader of the mission was declined permission, he demanded from his government that the safety of British rule in India depended on British ability and determination to crush Sher Ali and prevent at any cost the establishment of Russian ascendancy in Afghanistan. The ultimatum was dispatched on 31st October, requiring him to apology for his conduct by 20th November.[36] According to Noyce "a comparatively harmless incident was, by a dexterous concealment of material facts, magnified into an important rebuff, the only possible way of avenging which was by war."[37]Unfortunately the British chose to exert pressure at Kabul rather than at St. Petersburg.[38]Once more Great Britain was committed to a war with Afghanistan. In British Parliament, Gladstone condemned Lytton's policy in these words:

> *We made war in error upon Afghanistan in 1838. To err is human and pardonable. But we have erred a second time on the same ground and with no better justification…this error has been repeated in the face of every warning conceivable and*

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were different opinions about best protected British interest against supposed Russia ambitions in Afghanistan; such as:

a) an independent and centralised state with institutions that could withstand encroachments from Russia;

b) a weak client totally dependent on external military support and subsidy;

c) a buffer whose territorial integrity was best protected by agreement between the two main protagonists in the mutually acknowledged interests;

d) totally dismembered and permanently weakened. (See Fromkin, David. *The Great Game in Asia*, Foreign Affairs, Vol. 58, No. 4 (spring, 1980), pp. 936-951.)

[33] Ibid.

[34] W.F. Moneypenny and G.E. Buckle, *The Life of Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield* , Vol. I. (New York: 1913 & 1920), p. 382.

[35] Herbert Allan, *Plundering and blundering": a political retrospect 1874-1879*, Manchester Selected Pamphlets, 1879. p. 51.http://www.jstor.org/stable/60238088, (accessed April 10, 2009).

[36] The text of the ultimatum accuses Sher Ali of taking the Russian side in the imminent war between Russia and Britain.

[37] F.Noyce quoted by Bisheshwar Prasad, *The Foundations of India's Foreign Policy 1860-1882*. vol. 1(Madras: Orient Longmans Ltd., 1955), p. 209.

[38] Roberts, *British rule in India*: *India under the British Crown 1856-47*, p. 427.

*imaginable,…May heaven avert a repetition of the calamity which befell our army in 1841*.[39]

Once again in the name of the security and protection of the Indian Empire against the aggressive and belligerent designs of Russia, the story of the thirties was repeated in the Second Afghan War. On 21st November, 1878, thirty six years after Britain's disaster and catastrophe on the retreat from Kabul, the British army once again crossed the Khyber Pass and as a consequence the Second Anglo-Afghan War broke out.[40] .

Columns of the Indian army marched concurrently towards Kabul and Kandahar, using the three famous passes Khyber, Kurram and Bolan. With prophetic insight Lord Northbrook once warned Lord Salisbury that to force Sher Ali to receive an agent against his will was probable to risk one more needless and costly war in Afghanistan.[41]

Amir Sher Ali, who had earlier signed a defensive alliance with Russia in desperation, appealed for aid when the British invaded Afghanistan. General Kaufmann refused, tactfully and delicately emphasizing the impracticality and impossibility of transporting troops and material across the Hindu Kush in winter. While the Russians and the rest of the world watched the folly of the Second Anglo-Afghan War, Sher Ali died in Balkh on February 21, 1879.[42]The success of war ideally fitted the plans advocated by apostles of the forward policy. Afghanistan was to be transformed from a neutral buffer state into a British satellite, with an Amir firmly under the thumb of the British resident in Kabul.

Before his flight, Sher Ali had released his imprisoned son, Yaqub Khan, and appointed him governor of Kabul. After the death of his father,

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[39] Gladstone quoted by Roberts in *British rule in India*, vol. 2, p. 441.

[40] Abdul Ghani, *A Brief Political History of Afghanistan* (Lahore: Najal Publisher, 1989), p. 472.

[41] Bernard Mallet, *Thomas George earl of Northbrook, G.C.S.I: A memoir* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1908), p. 105.

[42] Dupree, *Afghanistan*, pp. 408-9. Oliver Wendell Holmes recorded the Afghan war in this fashion.

*Over the hill-sides the wild knell is tolling,*
*From their far hamlets the yeomanry come:*
*As though the storm–clouds the thunder–burst rolling,*
*Circles the beat of the mustering drum.*
*Fast on the soldier's path*
*Darkens the waves of wrath.*
*Long have they gathered, and loud shall they fall;*
*Red glares the musket's flash,*
*Sharp rings the rifle's crash,*
*Blazing and clanging from thicket and wall.*

(Oliver Wendell Holmes quoted by Charles Gray Robertson, *Kuram, Kabul & Kandahar Being A Brief Record of Impression in Three Campaigns under General Roberts*, p. 108)

Yaqub Khan declared himself Amir and opened communication with the Government of India. Negotiations for a settlement were started and on 26th of May 1879 a treaty was signed, known as the Treaty of Gandamak[43]also termed by some Afghans as the "Condemned Treaty"[44]

The Treaty of Gandamak marked the apogee of Lord Lytton's Afghan policy. He claimed that it fully secured all the objects of the war. Lord Lytton was delighted at the success of his policy and his satisfaction was shared by the Government at home. Lytton claimed Great Britain was not interested to take an inch of Afghanistan's territory, but at the same time would not allow any other power to interfere or influence Afghanistan or whose interests clash with that of Great Britain.[45]

A few weeks later Disraeli, the Prime Minister, sent a fulsome letter, saying that "we have secured a scientific and adequate frontier for our Indian Empire."[46] According to Akhtar Kazmi the treaty of Gandamak made the Amir of Afghanistan fundamentally a feudatory of Great Britain.[47]

The Liberal opposition denounced the war as immoral; for them the lives, property and freedom of the Afghan people were sacrificed merely to prepare for a war which might never occur. Gladstone termed the invasion of Afghanistan as a malicious and cruel act, which destroyed and ruined the country and "added to the anarchies of the Eastern World."[48] For the British all seemed and worked according to the plan. In the meantime a British mission with Sir Pierre Louis Napoleon Cavagnarias its head reached Kabul in July 1879, but six weeks later, they were attacked on 3rd September and almost the entire mission was killed and as a result the second phase of the war started.

Lytton's policy was in shreds and it was very important for him that Britain's status and standing was restored quickly and resolutely. General Roberts was sent to Kabul to restore British prestige and honour with the instructions from the Viceroy 'Your objects should be to strike terror and strike it swiftly and deeply; but to avoid a "Reign of Terror?"[49] Those implicated in what Lytton called a national crime were to be 'promptly

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[43] The principal clauses of the treaty engaged the Amir to conduct his relations with foreign states in accordance with the advice and wishes of the British Government, and to receive a permanent British representative at Kabul and elsewhere in Afghanistan as required. The British were to retain control of the Khyber Pass and of Kurram, Pishin and Sibi, and to pay the Amir a subsidy of £ 60,000 a year. (See Tytler , *Afghanistan: A Political Developments in Central and Southern Asia*, p. 146)

[44] Dupree, *Afghanistan*, p. 425.

[45] Fletcher, *Afghanistan Highway to Conquest*, p.128.

[46] Arthur, Swinson, *North West Frontier People and Events 1839-1947* (London: Hutchinson and Co Ltd., 1967), p. 167.

[47] S.S. AkhtarKazmi, *Anglo-Afghan Tussle* (Lahore: National Book Foundation, 1984), p. 75.

[48] Gladstone quoted in Joseph Hendershoot Park, *British Prime Ministers of the Nineteenth Century: Policies and Speeches* (New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1970), p. 286.

[49] James, *Raj: The Making and Unmaking of British India,* p. 376.

executed in manner most likely to impress the population.'[50] Retribution rather than justice was to be the order of the day.

On the home front the Afghan war had formed one of the main issues of the 1880 elections in England. In April 1880, the Liberals came to power with an overwhelming majority and Gladstone became the Prime Minister. As a symbol of change in policy Lytton was replaced by Lord Ripon as the new Viceroy of India. Thus ended Lord Lytton's 'fancy prospect…'painted on the blank wall of the future of bequeathing to India the supremacy of Central Asia and the revenues of a first class power'.[51]The new Secretary of State for India Lord Hartington, in his first dispatch to the new Viceroy criticized the invasion of Afghanistan and its outcome.[52]

Kabul at that time was practically without a government, Herat in intimidating hands, and Britain's hold on Qandahar was doubtful. The new Viceroy was greeted in India with the news of Maiwand debacle to the north of Qandahar in July 1880 leaving hundreds dead on the battlefield.[53] The battle was fought on July 27, at Mahmudabad, near Maiwand. This defeat, was one of the few suffered by a nineteenth century British army in Asia during open battle. This defeat provided the British public with a somewhat horror at the thought of soldiers wounded and left on Afghanistan's plain[54]. Arnold Fletcher summarised British military intervention in Afghanistan in these words:

> *The two Afghan Wars motivated by fear of the Russian threat to India, and was set off by the appearance of a Russian mission in Kabul. It now seems clear that these fears by the British were unfounded… Without question, all that the British sought could have been gained by negotiation; but the temper of the nineteenth century had little of the requisite patience for negotiating with Asian rulers.*[55]

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[50] Ibid.

[51] Roberts, *British rule in India*: *India Under the British Crown 1856-47*, vol. 2., p. 450.

[52] Lord Hartington wrote "It appears that as the result of two successful campaigns, of the employment of an enormous force, and of the expenditure of large sums of money, all that has yet been accomplished has been the disintegration of the State which it was desired to see strong, friendly and independent, the assumption of fresh and unwelcome liabilities in regard to one of its provinces, and a condition of anarchy throughout of the country". (See W.K. Fraser. Tytler, *Afghanistan: A Political Development in Central and Southern Asia*. London: Oxford University Press, 1967, p. 153).

[53] Mahajan, *British Foreign Policy, 1874-1914: The Role of India*, p. 52. No imperial monument was dedicated for those killed in this particular battlefield.

[54] As shown in the writings of Kipling:
*When you're wounded and left on Afghanistan's plains,*
*And the women come out to cut up what remains,*
*Jest roll to your rifle and blow out your brains*
*An' go to your Gawd like a soldier… (See* Rudyard Kipling, *The Young British Soldier*. http://www.kipling.org.uk/kip_fra.htm, (accessed April 22, 2010)

[55] Ibid., p. 141.

Meanwhile, in July, 1880, Abdur Rahman Khan, the most powerful candidate in the field, was informed that the British were prepared to recognise him as Amir of Kabul provided he acknowledged British right to control its foreign affairs. Amir Abdur Rehman, like his predecessors had no other option but to comply. As a result, the British got paramount influence over Afghanistan without stationing a single solider. The Liberal Government which came to power in 1880 initiated a new policy and strategy towards Afghanistan: that was to have a well-defended frontier and Afghanistan under the political control of Great Britain.[56]In David Dilks words 'The British had committed themselves to the protection of his territory, not for its intrinsic value nor because they could defend the whole of it, but because they were determined to avoid having a land frontier with a first-class power.[57]

Interestingly the liberals who had condemned the Afghan war as 'an example of reckless aggression unworthy of a civilized government' brought Afghanistan under the British influence, although there were some Liberals like Northbrook who criticised this sort of action[58]. Lawrance James elaborated the British strategy in the following words:

> *Ever since Napoleon's invasion of Egypt, British regional policy was guided by the need to create as cheaply as possible a vast buffer zone stretching from the eastern Mediterranean to Afghanistan, which would serve as India's defensive glacis. Its perimeter encompassed the Turkish Provinces…Persia and Afghanistan. A web of discreet power had been spread across this area. Its strands were treaties in which pet potentates exchanged subsidies for privileges; a string of consulates in major ports and cities; and a flotilla of warships which cruised in the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf and on the Tigris and Euphrates. There was a naval base and Anglo-Indian garrison at Aden and the Mediterranean fleet which, among other things, was an earnest of Britain's intention to support the Turkish sultan and preserve the integrity of his empire. By these devices, India was protected by a cordon of weak states which Britain pledged to uphold. If she failed to do so, the area was sure to be parceled out by the European powers, most* notably Russia…India's safety would be jeopardised if Russia was allowed to proceed…[59]

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[56] Vartan. Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), p. 117.

[57] David. Dilks, *Curzon in India. I. Achievement* (New York: Taplinger Pub. Co; 1970), p. 166.

[58] Mahajan, *British Foreign Policy, 1874-1914: The Role of India,* p. 60.

[59] Lawrence James, *Raj: The Making and Unmaking of British India* (New York; St: Martin's Press, 1998), p. 368.

In the coming years the military initiative tilted in favour of Russia in Central Asia and by 1884 the Russian's subjugation of Central Asia was completed. The British felt it necessary to demarcate the northern frontiers of Afghanistan for fear that Russia could claim on the Afghan territories. The process of the demarcation was completed by1895. The whole process of delimitation continued without the Amir of Afghanistan. The position of Amir and Afghanistan was rightly observed by D.P. Singhal, as "demarcation without representation" [60]

The settlement thus reflected mutual acknowledgement of the current state of power in Central Asia., and mutual reluctance to risk war in the course of modifying it. The boundary pillars set up by the two European powers on the Hindu Kush and by the Oxus confirmed the first premeditated and practical endeavor made by them to stave off the contact of their unremittingly growing Asiatic empires.

## Conclusion

To defend and safeguard the frontiers of India and its routes became an accepted maxim of British foreign policy. The British focused on the containment of any threat to their interest in the region. To Vartan Gregorian, 'this policy called for an accelerated consolidation of British power in India and an extension of British political influence in nearby countries,'[61] through an elaborate and well-planned system of buffer zones. Both powers, Russia and Great Britain wanted to expend their sphere of influence in the region, but at the same time wanted to avoid armed conflict. In this diplomatic wrangling Afghanistan was a major bone of contention between the British and Russia. Afghanistan due to its strategic location was considered by the British as a buffer zone, a bulwark and a first line of defence, against the foreign encroachments towards the North-West borders of British India. The British policy towards Afghanistan was based on inducement, pressure and armed interference and at the same time not to allow any other power to control it. In order to fulfil its objectives Afghanistan was twice invaded; first in 1838 and later on in 1878.

The Second Anglo-Afghan war commenced when Britain invaded Afghanistan for reasons that had less to do with the Afghans than with the Russia. Russia's advances in Central Asia were seen in Calcutta and London with great alarm and anxiety and any Russian move or attempt to develop good relations with Afghanistan was closely watched by the British. Both powers considered each other as potential threats to their interest in the region. Russia, which championed the cause of Pan-Slavism and was

[60]Singhal, *India and Afghanistan A Study in Diplomatic Relations 1876-1907,* p. 107.

[61] Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of modern Afghanistan* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), p. 92.

loggerhead with the Ottoman Empire, forced the British policy makers to support the Turkish Empire against the Russian aggressive foreign policy in the eastern Mediterranean, in order to maintain its domination in European politics and therefore, the issue of Central Asia, India, and Turkish Questions were closely linked together in this respect.

As a result of the Second Anglo-Afghan War the British installed Amir Abdur Rahman as the ruler of Afghanistan, granted him local autonomy and the British gained control of the country's foreign affairs, without stationing a single solider on its soil, a clever and wise move that served the British strategy in the region. The war unleashed a potent force in Afghan nationalism, which inculcated an ardent love of fatherland and national pride among the Afghans. The Second Anglo-Afghan War further deteriorated the relationship between the two countries and in the subsequent years, mistrust, enmity, animosity and hatred continue between Afghanistan & Great Britain.

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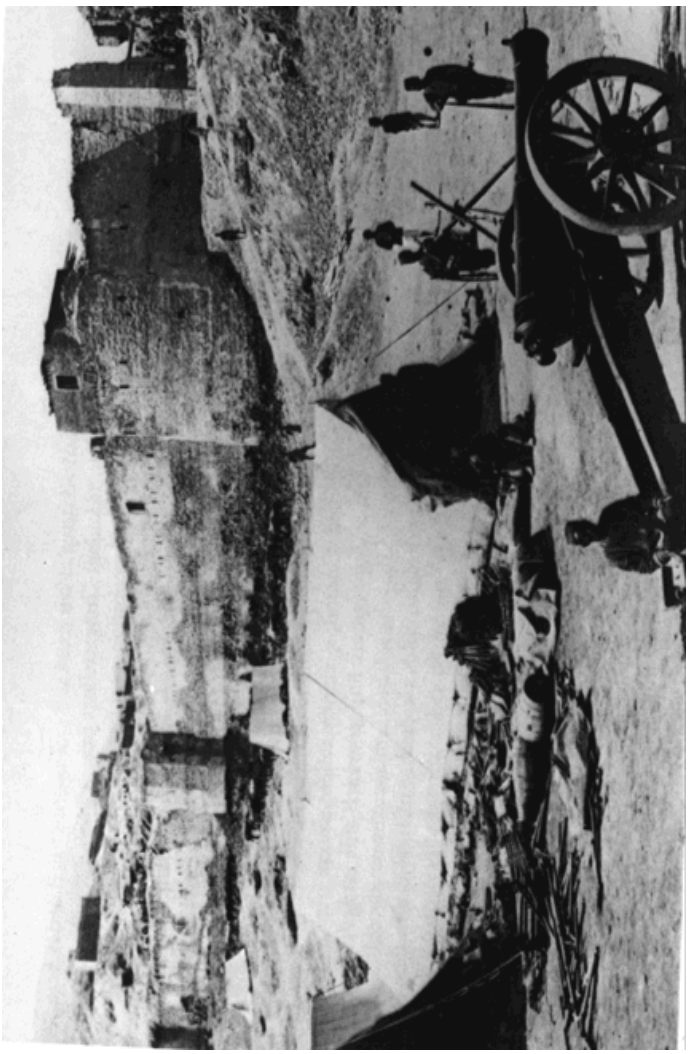
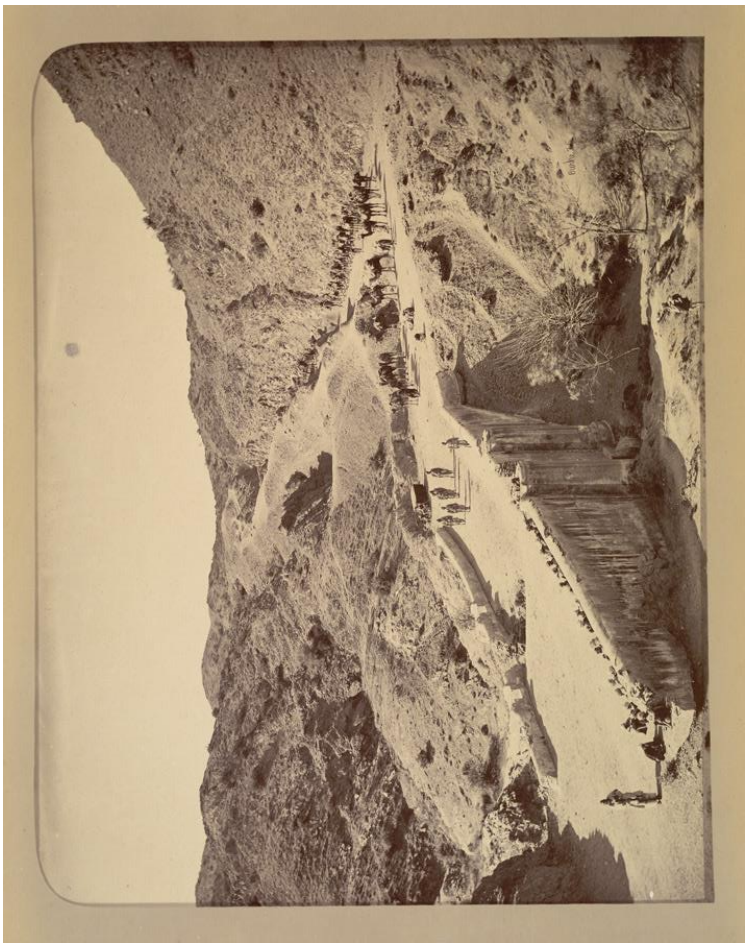


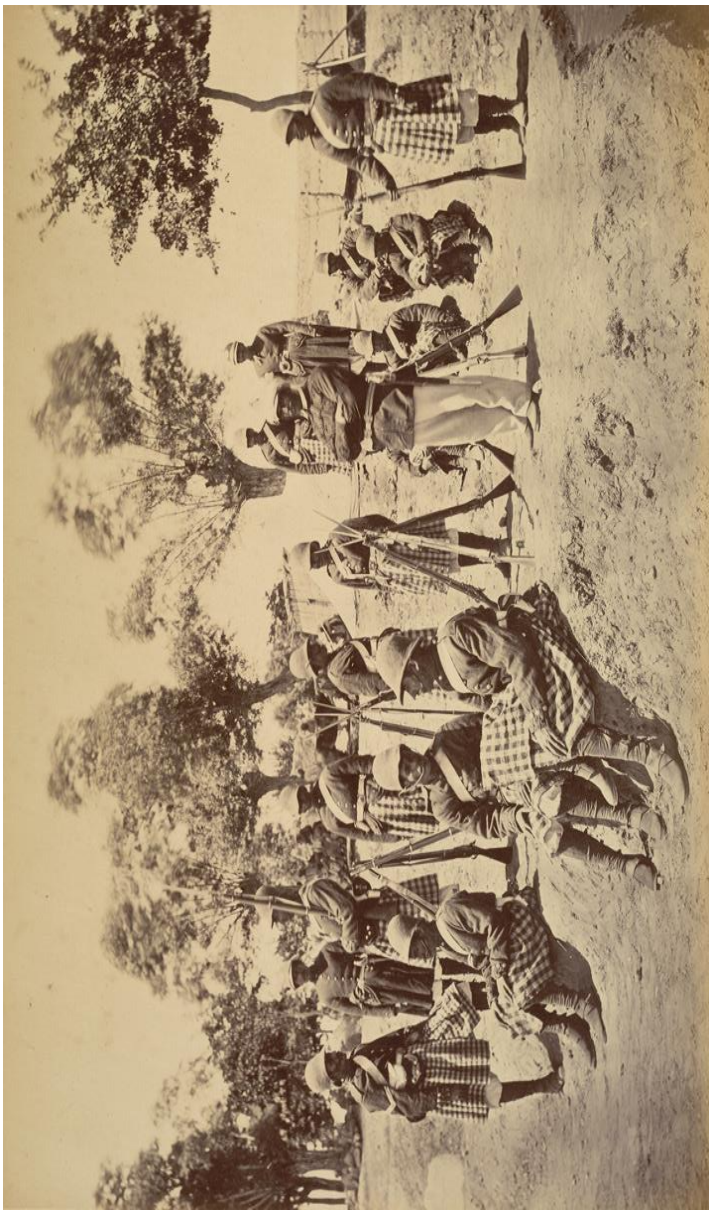
Bala-e-Hisar fort at Kabul, photographed from the British Residency in Kabul



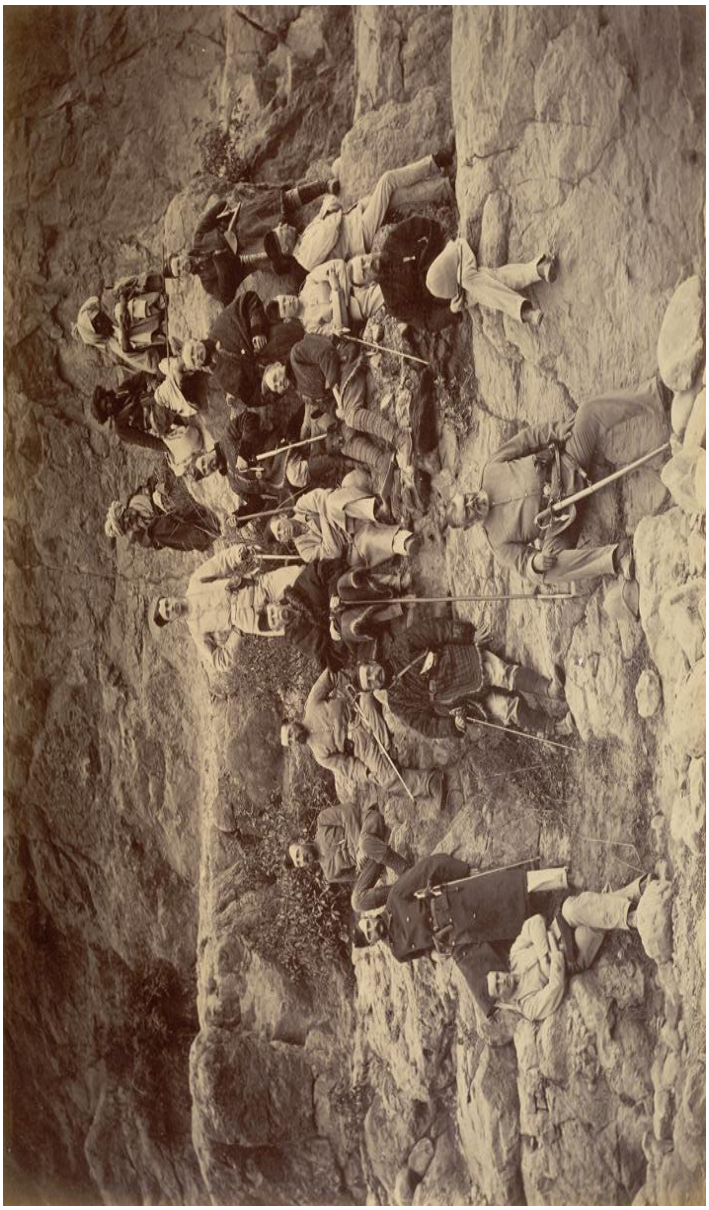
Column of troops advancing through the Khyber Pass during the Second Invasion of Afghanistan

The Last Stand at Maiwand, Gandamak 1880

Drummer James Roddick of the 92nd Gordon Highlanders, defending Lieutenant Menzies during hand-to-hand fighting in Kandahar 1880



Soldiers around the time that Britain and Afghanistan signed the Treaty of Gandamak



Men of the 51st King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry near Ali Masjid in the Khyber Pass

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# Ancient Peshawar: Historical Review of Some of its Socio-Religious and Cultural Aspects (3rd BCE - 7th AD)

***Syed Waqar Ali Shah****

India, due to its fertile soil and riches, had always remained a big source of attraction for the Western world in general and Central Asia in particular. Fortune seekers in the form of invading armies or individuals, from all around the world, repeatedly took the route of India to accomplish their unfulfilled desires. Looking at the topographical outlook of Central Asia (big deserts, and Mountainous ranges with less chances for cultivation) one can easily conclude that there were very less opportunities and means of subsistence for human kind. It was this factor that encouraged them to look and shift towards neighboring India known for its riches and opportunities at various phases of its history.

In all this story of need and greed, the location of Peshawar gave it a distinct status of its own. Being placed next to the famous Khyber Pass it turned out to be the resting place or abode of quite a good deal of visitors, travelers and invaders of India, and occasionally from India. People invading or moving towards India had to make use of this border town to re-energize and refresh themselves and their beasts for their onward move. All types of deficiencies were adequately met and taken care before the re-start of the journey. The interesting thing to note over here is that the number of visitors was never any problem for Peshawar. If, for individuals and smaller groups the town of Peshawar catered the needs, for large numbers and armies the whole of Peshawar valley opened its arms in reception. So space was never any issue, which made Peshawar a favorite and a place of choice for the invaders. This geographical and strategic status of Peshawar was there with it, in all phases of its history. For the sake of clarity it seems appropriate to mention that the focus of our discussion, in this paper, will be the activities in and around the city of Peshawar.

Peshawar was part of different Trans-Indian and Indian governments including Acheamenian, Macedonian, Mauryan, Greco-Bactrian, Saka,

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Sytho-Parthian, Kushan, Hepthalite, Turki Shahi and Hindu Shahi (870-1021 AD). With all those governments and setups Peshawar enjoyed status of either capital, local capital or an important post. It usually happened to be centrally located, in a sense that on both Indian and Central Asian sides it was governed by one authority. In the presence of some physiographical distinctions like being surrounded by mountain ranges and river Indus, which can conveniently serve as a natural boundary too, the worth of Peshawar was always exalted for the successful continuation of rule and authority in either direction. The study of history reveals that whenever there was a strong single government on both sides of Peshawar, its worth got multiplied both strategically and culturally. To the extent that at time it even wore the crown of government and authority by being the capital of those governments. It also happened to be and served as the center of cultural and philosophical moves like that of Buddhism, Gandhara Art and Islam. Peshawar not only accommodated and welcomed these new ideas and cultures but after being thoroughly tainted with those also provided an effective and successful base for their furtherance towards other directions. The promotion of Buddhism in Central Asia, and Islam in India owe much to the service of Peshawar.

## Nomenclature and Location

There is a variety of names available for Peshawar linked with it for some distinct reason of their own. These include:

*Parshapur*[1](the land of Parshas on the basis of the long sway of Persians (Achaemenids) in this region); *Pesh awardan*,[2] which in Persian language means the 'one coming forth;' *Bashapur* meaning the 'City of the King;' Munshi Gopal Das referring a tradition recorded by Hamdulah Mustawfi, the author of *Nuzhatul Qulub* credits Sassanian emperor Shahpur (240-73 AD), son of Ardeshir, for the reconstruction of Peshawar. It was because of this act of emperor Shahpur that the city is said to be named after him that with the passage of time became *Bashapur* (Peshawar).[3] *Posha-pura* This name is taken from one earliest written record of Peshawar. It was inscribed on a rock, in Kharoshiti language, found at a place called Ara, near Attock dated 119 AD.[4] Sten Konow argues that *Posha* represents Pushpa which means flowers in Sanskrit language. If this suggestion is accepted then the phrase *Posha-pura* would mean 'The City of Flowers.' *Folusha*: Buddhism comprises one significant part of the history of Peshawar. It was this

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1 Ahmad Hassan Dani, *Peshawar: Historic City of the Frontier*, (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel, 1995), 16.

2 Munshi Gopal Das, *Tarikh-i-Peshawar*, (Lahore: Globe Publishers, N.D.), 141.

3 *Ibid*., 49.

4 Sten Konow, *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum,* vol. II, *Kharoshthi Inscriptions.* (Calcutta: Govt. of India, Central Publication Branch, 1929), 165.

Buddhist link that attracted visitors from different parts of the world, particularly China, to come and place their reverences to one of their holiest sanctuaries. Now these Chinese visitors and pilgrims to Peshawar were also responsible for minting some new names and pronunciations or expressions to the city. One such Chinese pilgrim Fa-hian who visited Peshawar in 400 AD recorded it as *Fo-lu-sha*.[5] Another Chinese visitor to Peshawar, Hiuen Tsang (629-645 AD), calls it *Po-lu-sha-pu-lo*.[6] The famous Muslim historian and geographer al-Masudi (871-957 AD), also known as the 'Herodotus of the Arabs' for he wrote a 30-volume history of the world, spelt Peshawar as *Pershadwar*.[7] *Purshawar* or *Purushavar*: Abu Rayhan Al-Biruni (973-1048 AD), the Arab geographer and historian records two variants for Peshawar; *Purshawar*[8] and *Purushavar*.[9] *The Peshawar Gazetteer* records a Hindu tradition that the name *Parashapur* was after a Hindu king called "Purrus" or "Porus." That Hindu tradition says that the name Peshawar has got its roots from that seat of government of Hindu king Purrus or Porus.[10] However we could not substantiate with evidence the existence of any Hindu king with these titles from any other reliable source.

## Location

Peshawar is located in the Northwest of India as well as Pakistan. At the moment it is the capital of Khyber Pukhtoonkhwa province of Pakistan. On the other hand this Peshawar title also stands for a larger land mass including all the territory in the valley of Peshawar. Peshawar valley comprises of five districts including Charsadda, Mardan, Swabi, Nowshera, and Peshawar, known for their fertility and produce. According to one estimate it covers an area of some 8,800 square miles, lying about 1,100 feet above sea level.[11]

This Peshawar valley was protected from north, south and west, like a crescent, by mountains. The open end of this crescent of mountains, towards east, is covered by yet another natural boundary in the form of Indus River. Prof. Shafi Sabir relates the geography of Peshawar with a house having four openings. On the three mountainous sides of the valley there are passes which serve as doors of entry to it. In the north is the historical Malakand

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5 Hiuen Tsiang, *Si-Yu-Ki: Buddhist Records of the Western World,* (tr.) Samuel Beal, vol. 1, (Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1969), XXXII.

6 *Ibid*., 150.

7 Alexandar Cunningham, *The Ancient Geography of India, The Buddhist Period,* (Varanasi: Indological Book House, 1963), 12.

8 Al Beruni, *Kitabul Hind,* tr. E.C. Sachau, *Alberuni's India,* Vol. I, (Lahore: Sh. Mubarik Ali, 1962), 276.

9 *Ibid*., 453.

10 *The Gazetteer of the Peshawar District, 1897-98.* Compiled by Punjab Government, (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 1995), 44.

11 Mahmood ul Hasan, 'The Pleistocene Geomorphology of the South-Eastern Part of Peshawar Vale,' PhD Thesis, Department of Geography, University of Peshawar, 1995, 13.

pass (Shah Kot). For long ages it has served as a route for travelers from Russia, China and Kashghar to Peshawar valley. In the south is the Kohat pass and in the west is the Khyber Pass. Khyber begins from the Tartara hills of the Suleiman Mountain. At places it is about a mile wide but at some places it shrinks to a mere few hundred yards. This narrow, rugged, barren and serpentine pass has romantic attraction for travelers and a peculiar attraction for one well versed in the military arts and affairs. Anyone coming from the eastern door is obstructed by the river Indus.[12] In this way we find well defined boundaries of the valley of Peshawar being protected from all side by one strong natural defense system. (Map 1)

Top priority for any progressive military regime remains to secure the economic veins of any region. The topographical protections and natural fertility of the land with some exceptional irrigational blessings also rendered Peshawar a distinct enhanced status of its own kind. This status of Peshawar received one natural boost when turned out to be a part of the famous Silk Trade Route of medieval times.[13] This proximity gave it a high status with the traders and trade caravans to meet and exchange their commodities here at Peshawar. Being a part of South-Central Asia it literally turned out to be one very important part of the famous Silk Route. (Map 2)

The geo-strategic importance of Peshawar can be judged from the fact that the Mughal King Humayun thought that if he can take control of Peshawar, he can easily control India. Even the British, for the protection of Peshawar, upgraded Nowshera, Kohat, and Jamrud etc. in terms of military oriented establishments.

## Foundation of the City

Munshi Gopal Das in his book *Tarikh-i-Peshawar* (History of Peshawar) fixes the responsibility for the start or foundation of Peshawar to the Persian Achaemenids dynasty. According to him it was one Hoshang Pashedao, son of Siyamak and grandson of Kaiumars,[14] who founded the city.[15] When Hoshang entered eastern Afghanistan of which Peshawar Valley was also a part he found it under the control of some Hindu Raja Pardaman. Hoshang after getting control of the valley laid foundation of a city called 'Farsawar' which later on was known as Peshawar.

Hayat Khan in his book *Hayat-i-Afghani* (written in 1867) tells us that the city after being destroyed once was rebuilt on the same site by one Hindu Raja Bikram. The name of that Hindu Raja provided Peshawar with yet some other names in history. These names were Bikram or Bagram. This

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[12] Muhammad Shafi Sabir, *Story of Khyber*, (Peshawar: University Book Agency, 1966), 7-8.
[13] Fidaullah Sehrai, *Hund: The Forgotten City of Gandhara,* (Peshawar: Peshawar Museum, 1979), 5.
[14] Founder of Persian Achaemenid Empire.
[15] Das, *op.cit*.

title of Bagram was used by Mughal King Babur and some Pushto poets like Khushal Khan Khattak, Rehman Baba and Kazim Khan Shaida. However, according to Hayat Khan the name given to it by that Hindu Raja was 'Purshor', which ultimately became Peshawar.[16]

For the foundation of Peshawar Dr. Moti Chandra relates a story referred in a French work which says that 'a deity in the form of a shepherd pointed to Kanishka a place where to rise the highest stupa of the world and the city of Peshawar was founded there.'[17] Now if we try to analyze this view of Dr. Moti that the city was developed around the stupa of Kanishka that happened to be quite distantly located in terms of time we will be required to ignore all the past references for the foundation of the city, which in my opinion would not be fair. Whatever may be the reality behind the real start of this city; recorded history tells us that the city we know today as Peshawar attained its actual fame and glory under the Kushans, a Central Asian tribe of Tohorian origin, somewhere over 2,000 years ago.[18]

## Peshawar as Part of Gandhara

Peshawar and the city of Taxila were the most significant cities of the kingdom of Gandhara. They happened to be the capitals of the different kingdoms of the past. Peshawar saw probably the best days of its prosperity and recognition due to being the center for some Indo-Greek, Scythian, Parthian, and Kushana empires.[19] Besides socio-cultural advancement under those regimes it was blessed and beautified by nature through enchanting rivers, mountains, valleys and climate.[20] Gandhari, the mother of the Kurus of the Epic Age who fought the Mahabharata war was the native of this region.[21]

## Gandhara Art

Gandhara art evolved in the Peshawar valley when it was ruled by the Kushan dynasty (200 AD). Being initiated and developed at Peshawar it was basically a merger of Greek, Syrian, Persian, and Indian artistic tastes. In Buddhism it got its strongest source or medium of expression. To the extent that there is a thought that the art was promoted and developed for the

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[16] Muhammad Hayat Khan, *Hayat-i-Afghani*, tr. Major Henry Priestly, *Afghanistan and its Inhabitants*, (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 1999), 34.

[17] Dr. Moti Chandra, *Trade and Trade Routes in Ancient India*, (New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1977), 9.

[18] Ihsan H. Nadiem, *Peshawar: Heritage, History Monuments*, (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 2007), 45.

[19] Moti Chandra, *op.cit.*

[20] Fidaullah Sehrai, *The Buddha Story in Peshawar Museum*, (Peshawar: Peshawar Museum, 1978), 1.

[21] *Ibid.*

propagation and popularization of Buddhism through visual means among the masses. The art usually revolves around Buddhism and Buddha who is attended by gods and devotees in the panels. Various expressions of this art show the exalted and prominent position enjoyed by Buddha among other human beings.[22] Each and every important scene belonging to the life of Buddha transformed to Gandhara Art.

Gandhara art entered upon a new phase with the coming of Kushana rulers in Peshawar (1st to 5th AD); particularly in its initial phase (75—225 AD) it crossed milestones of its history. As a matter of fact it was during the Kushana period that the unification of Gandhara art and Buddhism took place. The rise of Mahayana Buddhism during this period under the patronage of Kushan king Kanishka (128—151 AD) was one significant impact of this unification. For the first time ever in the history of Buddhism Buddha was represented anthropomorphically (in figure art).[23] Under the patronage of Kushana rulers (1st-2nd Century A.D.) this new school of art flourished and received a great push in the Gandhara region, i.e. Peshawar and its surroundings. Because of the strategic geographical position of the region, the new discipline also started moving swiftly in all direction resulting in its introduction and establishment. This on its turn also gave way for the further extension of this art through mingling and interactions with foreign and other established ideas.

## Buddhism in Peshawar

Buddhism was first founded in eastern India around 520 B.C. by Buddha (563-483 BC) and it reached Gandhara in the 3rd century B.C.[24] courtesy to the excessive interest of Ashoka. King Ashoka provided the first royal patronage to Buddhism while king Kanishka provided the second royal patronage. The fifth of Ashoka's Edict at Shahbaz-Garhi indicates that Ashoka regarded Gandhara as a frontier country 'still to be evangelized'.[25] According to Sinhalese chronicle the *Mahavamsa,* Gandhara was converted to Buddhism during Ashoka's reign by the apostle Madhyantika[26] somewhere around 256 B.C. Gandhara received its second impetus towards Buddhism during the reign of great Kushan king Kanishka. With Gandhara being the center of his vast kingdom and his excelling dedication towards Buddhism an all impressive link of Peshawar and Buddhism was established. It turned out to be a landmark feature for both Peshawar and the

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[22] Syed Abdul Quddus, *The North West Frontier of Pakistan,* (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1990), 40-41.

[23] Radha Banerjee, "Buddhist Art in India", *Kalakalpa, Journal of Indra Gandhi National Institute of the Arts.* http://ignca.nic.in/budh0002.htm retrieved on 20/10/07.

[24] W. Zwalf, *The Shrines of Gandhara,* (London: British Museum, 1979), 5.

[25] Alferd Foucher, *Buddhique du Gandhara,* tr. L.A. Thomas & F.W. Thomas, *The Beginnings of Buddhist Art,* (London: H. Milford, 1917), 21.

[26] *Ibid.,* 22.

religion. One can say that Peshawar enjoyed an all times high status and worth as a result of Kanishka's commitment. On the other hand Buddhism also witnessed a rapid growth of it philosophy in all direction around Peshawar as a result of this interest of the sovereign. Slowly and gradually Gandhara attained a very high spiritual status amongst the Buddhist for it being the home of some of their monasteries and relics. One can even say that it became the 'second holy land' of the Buddhists frequented by the Chinese converts who were absolutely satisfied with the visit without making further pilgrimage to the Ganges basin.[27] Hiuen Tsang in giving a picture of the Buddhist Gandhara relates that about a thousand Buddhist monuments existed in Gandhara alone.[28]

## Fourth Buddhist Council at Peshawar

The Buddhist activities started with full force in Peshawar when Kanishka became a Buddhist. It was from here that Buddhism travelled to Swat, Gilgit, Tibet, China, Afghanistan, Central Asia, Mongolia and the Far East. The next targets achieved by Buddhism happened to be Korea and then Nara in Japan, the country of Mahayana Buddhism. Kasyapa Matanga, a Buddhist missionary from India, went from Peshawar and introduced Buddhism in China somewhere about the first century AD while Asvaghosa[29] and Nagarajuna[30] stayed in it to compose the Mahayana Buddhist texts. Majority of the Buddhists of the world are Mahayanists. Kanishka fully patronized and propagated this sect of Buddhism. With Kanishka perched at the highest pedestal of government at Gandhara, the time was best ripe for any major show of Buddhism. Kanishka convened the fourth Buddhist Council (conference) in Gandhara, somewhere around the middle of 2nd century CE. Most probable venue for this congregation could be Peshawar,[31] capital of the rulers, where once stood the great monastery and stupa of Emperor Kanishka. It was attended by about 500 monks, including Vasumitra, Asvaghosa, Nagarajuna and Parsava. Vasumitra was the President and Asvaghosa the vice President of the conference. It is said that the Mahayana Buddhism formally rose after this period. Voluminous commentaries on the three Pitakas[32] were prepared. The entire Buddhist literature was thoroughly examined and the comments were collected in the book Mahavibhasha. The decisions of the conference were engraved on copper plates and deposited in a stupa specially built for this purpose. Taranath, the Tibetan historian informs us that the conference settled

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[27] *Ibid.*, 123.
[28] *Ibid.*, 124.
[29] Indian philosopher and poet (b. 80AD Ayodhiya India d. 150 AD Peshawar).
[30] Another Buddhist philosopher.
[31] Sehrai, *op.cit.*, 10.
[32] Buddhist religious stories.

disputes between eighteen schools of Buddhism which were all recognized as orthodox. Kanishka planted the sapling of the Bodhi tree in Peshawar under which the Buddha had achieved the enlightenment at Bodh Gaya in India.[33]

## Buddhist Monuments in Peshawar

During the Buddhist period Peshawar was studded with a number of sacred structures – *stupas* and *sangharamas* (Monasteries)—which drew towards itself a number of travelers and turned it into a veritable place of pilgrimage for the followers of Buddha. Unfortunately most of these monuments have disappeared altogether, others are in the process of decay, and only a few have survived the ravages of time and man. Gor Khatree, Shahji Ki Dheri[34] (Hazar Khani) Buddha's Begging Bowl, Buddha's Casket, Kanishka's Monastery, Bodhi Tree (Pipal Mandi-Dhaki Nalbandi) etc are among some of the very famous and important Buddhist relics of Peshawar.

## Brahmanical Religions in Peshawar

Religious history of the period reveals that despite the outstanding Buddhist influence upon the region Brahmanical religion in all its variety of sects[35] was largely in vogue in those times. It so often challenged Buddhism in Peshawar. These Brahmins were responsible for the persecution of Buddhist in the history of this region. Somewhere in the 2nd century BC, when Pushpamitra overthrew Muriyan dynasty, he on the instigation of Brahmin priests persecuted the Buddhist, massacring their monks.[36] Some popular Brahmin cults of the region were:

## Shivaism[37] and Saktism

Shivaism was one popular religion at Gandhara centuries preceding the Christian era. This is supported by the archeological finds from the Sindhu Valley consisting of prototypes of Shiva as Pasupati and his emblem the Shiva-linga.[38] Some early Greek writers like Strabo refer to the tribes of Punjab and Gandhara like Siboi and Oxydrakai as regarding themselves as descendants of Shiva. The early Indian coins hailing from Taxila bearing

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[33] Fidaullah Sehrai, "Peshawar's Buddhist Past". *Dawn Magazine* 6 March 2005.
[34] Also known as Kanishka's Stupa.
[35] Viz., Shivaism, Saktism, Karttikeya worship, Vaishnavism, Sun worship etc.
[36] *Gazetteer, op.cit.*, 45.
[37] His followers considered him as the creator, preserver and destroyer of the worlds he created.
[38] BK Kaul Deambi, *History and Culture of Ancient Gandhara and Western Himalayas: from Saradha epigraphic sources*. (New Delhi: Ariana Pub. House, 1985), 86-7.

theriomorphic and anthropomorphic figures of Shiva also tell us for the popularity of Shivaism in this region.[39] Similarly some coins of Indo-Greek king Demetrius who ruled in Gandhara around 200 BC bear the figure of Shiva's emblem, the trident on the reverse.[40] Even during the Kushan era at Gandhara Shiva succeeded in maintaining its distinct identity which is evident from the fact that the coins of the Kushana rulers like Kadaphises II, Kanishka, Huvishka and Vasudeva contain the figure of Shiva and his emblems like trident and the sacred bull.[41]

In the post-Kushana rulers times Shivaism survived in Gandhara under Sassanian patronage. One gold coin, issued under the sovereignty of Shahpur I (AD 256-264) shows Shiva grabbed in Sassanian dress.[42] Shivaism must have enjoyed an elevated status during the Hun King Mihirakula who was not well disposed towards Buddhism or Buddhists and was an ardent devotee of Shiva. The Chinese traveler Hiuen-Tsang has left account of two shrines related to the Shiva cult.[43] One was situated on the top of a high mountain about 50 li or so to the north east of *Polusha*, modern Shahbazgarhi. The shrine was that of *Bhimadevi*, the consort of *Ishvaradeva* (Shiva).[44] The other temple was dedicated to *Mahesvaradeva* at the foot of that mountain. These two shrines were very important in the 7th century AD and were "great resort of devotees from all parts of India."[45] In the Mahabharata we find a *tirtha* named *Bhimdevisthana* beyond *Pancha-nada*, in the account of various sacred places of India.[46] It seems that this *Bhimdevisthana* of *Mahabharata* is actually the *Bhimadevi* shrine which Hiuen-Tsang is referring.

The discovery of Shiva-image (*Mahesha* also called *Trimurti*) from Charssada also tells us that Buddhism was not the only religion practiced at Gandhara. The deity is three-headed, three-eyed, and six-armed, and stands before the bull *nandi*, holding the *damaru*, *trisula* and *kamandalu*. The style is Indianised Gandhara art of the third century AD.[47] Vasubandhu, a famous Brahman of Peshawar, tells us about two sects of Shivaism, Pasupata and Kapalika in the Gandhara.[48]

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[39] JN Banerjee, *Development of Hindu Iconography,* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1974), 112ff.

[40] VA Smith, *Coins of Ancient India,* (Delhi: Indological book House, 1972), 9.

[41] Deambi, *op.cit.,* 87.

[42] E Herzfeld, *Kushano-Sassanian Coins,* Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, No. 38, Coin # 7.

[43] T. Watters, *Yuan Chwang's Travells in India*, (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1904), 88.

[44] *Ibid.*, 221.

[45] *Ibid.*

[46] Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, *Mahabharata,* (New Delhi: Hindustan Times, 1950) 67, 103-04.

[47] John Hubert Marshall, *Archaeological Survey of India,* Annual Report, 1913-14, (New Delhi: Director General, Archaeological Survey of India, 2002) P1. LXXII.

[48] Jaya Goswami, *Cultural History of Ancient India (A Socio-Economic and Religio-Cultural Survey of Kapisa and Gandhara),* (Delhi: Agam Kala Prakashan, 1979), 51.

One latest discovery and theory forwarded by M. Nasim Khan is regarding Gandhara being either the first or one of the earliest abode of Shivaism in India. His theory revolves round some of his discoveries made at a place called Kashmir Smast near Mardan. The icons, plaques and masks, ceremonial and other pots, moveable and immoveable inscriptions, seals and sealings, coins, jewellery and other personal ornaments found at the site ties its links with an altogether unknown past.[49]

Another branch of Brahmanism known as Saktism was also quite popular in the Gandharan society. The places where the Devi or Sakti was worshiped were known as the *Pitasthana*. One such *Pitasthan* was situated at Peshawar that was visited by Hiuen-Tsang and mentioned as a great center of Saktism.[50]

## Karttikeya Worship

The inscription on the relic casket discovered at Shah-ji-ki-Dheri, outside Ganj gate of Peshawar shows that Karttikeya[51] worship was popular with the Buddhists at the time of Kanishka. The inscription talks about some Mahasena that according to Sanskrit texts means Karttikeya. The discovery of some sculptural remains of god Karttikeya belonging to the earlier and later periods show that the worship of Karttikeya cult was strongly patronized by the local people of the region.[52]

## The Cult of Folk-gods

Worship of folk-gods was also practiced at Peshawar, from old times. *Yaksha*[53] *Puja* was an important cult both in Brahmanical and non-Brahmanical faiths during the time under consideration. A detailed list of *Yakshas* who were associated with different places of North Western India is given in the northern Buddhist literature, *Mahamayuri*. The popular *Yakshas* of Gandhara were Pramardana and Vaikritika. According to a Parthian amulet[54] a *Yaksha* named Bis-Parn occupied Puska-vur. Here Puska-vur is undoubtedly identified with the ancient Purushapura i.e., modern Peshawar. The *Yaksha* Bis-Parn has been identified with Visvapani, "the fifth of the *Dhyani Bodhisattvas"* in northern Buddhism. Though Peshawar or Purushapura is not mentioned in *Mahamayuri* list, Gandhara is referred

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[49] Muhammad Nasim Khan, *Treasures from Kashmir Smast (The Earliest Shaiva Monastic Establishment)*, Peshawar: 2006.
[50] Goswami, *op.cit*, 52.
[51] A war god.
[52] B.N. Mukherjee, 'Nanā on lion: a study in Kushāṇa numismatic art.' *Journal of Asiatic Society*, vol. XIII, No's 1-4, (Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1971), 192-93.
[53] Deities.
[54] *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 1946-48, vol-XII, 47ff.

twice. With the passage of time these *Yakshas* became famous as local gods and goddesses and some interesting myths and mythologies were created around them.[55]

## Sun Worship

The sun has been honored by number of old cultures. It was a source of power and energy, light and warmth. It was what made crops grow every season and promised prosperity to many. Some cultures went to the extent of adoration of it for its grandeur and excellence. We have not sufficient data to say with any certainty that how much sun worship was popular at Peshawar (Gandhara) in its earlier history. Nevertheless, there are certain archaeological findings that help us draw some image about it, based on documents. There are some coins issued by the Kushana Empire that bear the figure with the name *Miiro* (Mihiro)[56] by its side. Similarly one of the white marble sculptures of the 5th century A.D. discovered from Khair-Khaneh in Afghanistan represents the solar deity and his acolytes. This is one most important sculpture that throws some light on the popularity of solar cult of the region in the post-Kushana period.[57]

## Peshawar in the Accounts of Chinese Travelers

Buddhism gained grounds in China due to the missionaries sent from Peshawar. This was the reason why Peshawar attained a sacred position for the followers of Buddhism and pilgrims from near and far visited the holy places located here. The account of these travelers is an important source for the writing and rewriting of the ancient Indian history/ Pakistan history or Peshawar history. These foreigners included Koreans as well as Chinese, mostly the followers of Buddha. Though they came here probably for obtaining knowledge and enlightenment about Buddhism but their records also furnish with some really valuable information about the land, its geography and politics. The visitors included Fa Hien, Song Yun, Huan Tasang and Huei-ch-ao. They have left some valuable information about the city and its surroundings.[58] Of all the visitors Huan Tsang sharing of geo-political environment of Gandhara and its surroundings is more extensive and valuable.

The first Chinese traveler to come to this region was Shi Fa-Hien. He came to Peshawar in the beginning of fifth century AD. He was a Buddhist monk and belonged to a place in China called Shansi and later went to

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[55] Goswami, *op.cit.,* 58.
[56] R.B. Whitehead, *Catalogue of Coins in the Punjab Museum,* Coin # 61, (Varanasi: Indic Academy, 1971), 187.
[57] Goswami, *op.cit.,* 56-57.
[58] S.M. Jaffar, *Peshawar: Past & Present,* (Peshawar: S.M. Sadiq Khan Publisher, 1946), 1.

Changan to study Buddhism.[59] However, he was never satisfied with the material available over there. This led him along with some of his colleagues[60] to undertake a journey to India in search of books which were not available and known in China. This coming and search of Fa Hien at Peshawar also leads us to conclude that this region was enjoying a unique reputation for its knowledge and learning in the Buddhist world of that time. Fa-Hien left Changan in AD 399 for India. During his stay in India he kept an accurate record of day-to-day knowledge which later composed the history of his travels. He returned to china in 414 AD and died at the age of eighty-six,[61] in the monastery of Sin at King-Chow.[62]

Fa-Hien left some very interesting information about Peshawar. He calls it Fo-lu-Sha[63] and makes a distinction between Gandhara and Peshawar. For him Gandhara stood for Pushkalavati (Charsada) and he does not say that Peshawar was the capital, either in Kushan or earlier times.[64] Fa-Hien also tells us about some relics and religious places of Buddhism at Peshawar. These included the stupa of Kanishka at Shahji-ki-Dheri, and the begging bowl of Buddha. For the stupa he said that it was 400 feet in height and "adorned with all manners of precious things." For him it was superior to all other "topes" in ancient India, both in height and beautification.[65] About the begging bowl he says that it was placed at a stupa served by more than 700 monks. The place was called Patra Chitaya and the begging bowl long remained enshrined there in a vihara.[66]

The next Chinese visitor to Peshawar was Hwai Sang who came here in 500 AD.[67] However, he is reported to have left less account of the city. Next in 518 AD another Chinese traveler Sung Yun visited the kingdom of Gandhara. From his record we learn that the kingdom of Gandhara was at war with the king of Kabul.[68] At the time of his visit the Huns were enjoying authority in the region and he thought that they were responsible for the destruction of Buddhism. About the common people he says that they were Brahmans and had great respect for the law of Buddha.[69]

The important and rich in information, about the city, of all these visitors was the visit of Hiuen Tsang. He visited Peshawar in the seventh century (somewhere in between 629-645 AD) and found the towns and

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[59] *Ibid.*
[60] Huwn-King, Tao-Ching and Hwuy-Wel.
[61] Tsiang, *op.cit.,* XII..
[62] Basanta Bidari. *Lumbini, Past Present and Future with Master Plan*. (Singapore: 2000), 20.
[63] *Gazetteer, op.cit.,* 43.
[64] Tsiang, *op.cit.,* 17; Dani, *op.cit.,* 50.
[65] Cunningham, *op.cit.,* 13.
[66] Jaffar, *op.cit.,* 15.
[67] Bidari, *op.cit.,* 21.
[68] *Gazetteer, op.cit.,* 45.
[69] Tsiang, *op.cit.,* 67.

villages deserted with few inhabitants. He left a valuable account of his travel.

> *The kingdom of Gandhara is about 1000 li from east to west, and about 800 li from north to south. On the east it borders on the river Sin (Sindh). The capital of the country is called Po-lu-sha-pu-lo; it is about 40 li in circuit. The kingdom is governed by deputies from Kapisa. The towns and villages are deserted, and there are but few inhabitants. At one corner of the royal residence there are about 1000 families. The country is rich in cereals, and produces a variety of flowers and fruits; it abounds also in sugarcane, from the juice of which they prepare "the solid sugar." The climate is warm and moist, and in general without ice or snow. The disposition of the people is timid and soft; they love literature; most of them belong to heretical schools; a few believe in true law. From old time till now this borderland of India has produced many authors of Sastras; for example, Narayanadeva, Asanga Bodhisattva, Vasubandhu Bodhisattva, Dharmatrata, Manorhita, Parsva the noble, and so on. There are about 1000 Sangharamas filled with wild shrubs and solitary to the last degree. The stupas are mostly decayed. The heretical temples, to the number of about 100, are occupied pell-mell by heretics.*[70]

Hiuen Tsang also tells something about any "royal residence." It was a fortified or walled portion of the town, in which the Palace or the Royal Residence was located. Dr. Dani thinks this place to be comprised of area including the present Bala Hisar and Andar Shahr, surrounded and protected by Bara River at that time.[71] Hiuen Tsang then gives account of some Buddhist sacred places like his begging bowl placed near Panj Tirath and the Pipala tree with its unique height (100 feet) and spreading branches. About Kanishka's stupa at Shahji-ki-Dheri, he says that it was approximately 400 feet high and had large quantity of Buddha relics.[72] To the west of this enormous stupa Kanishka also built a monastery. It was a two story building but was in much ruined form. Nevertheless, some monks were still there who professed Mahayana doctrine of Buddhism.[73] His description of number of Buddhist stupas and Buddha's statues shows the archeological richness and importance of Peshawar with regards to Buddhism at that time.

The history of Peshawar is studded with multiple political and socio-cultural land marks. It had a note-worthy identity for the travelers and invaders, to and from India. Even the socio-cultural drives in India and Central Asia did not fail to consider for that worth. Peshawar witnessed

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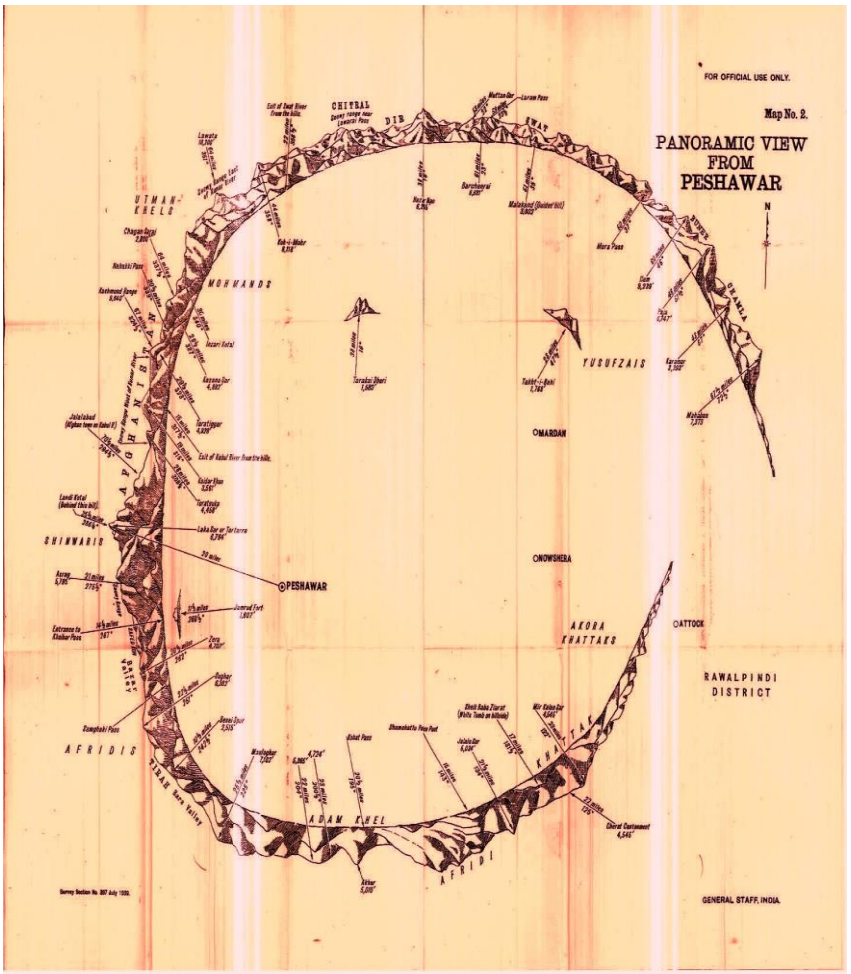
[70] Dani, *op.cit.*, 50-51.
[71] *Ibid.*
[72] The relics casket obtained from the excavation is now at the Peshawar museum.
[73] Cunningham, *op.cit.*, 13.

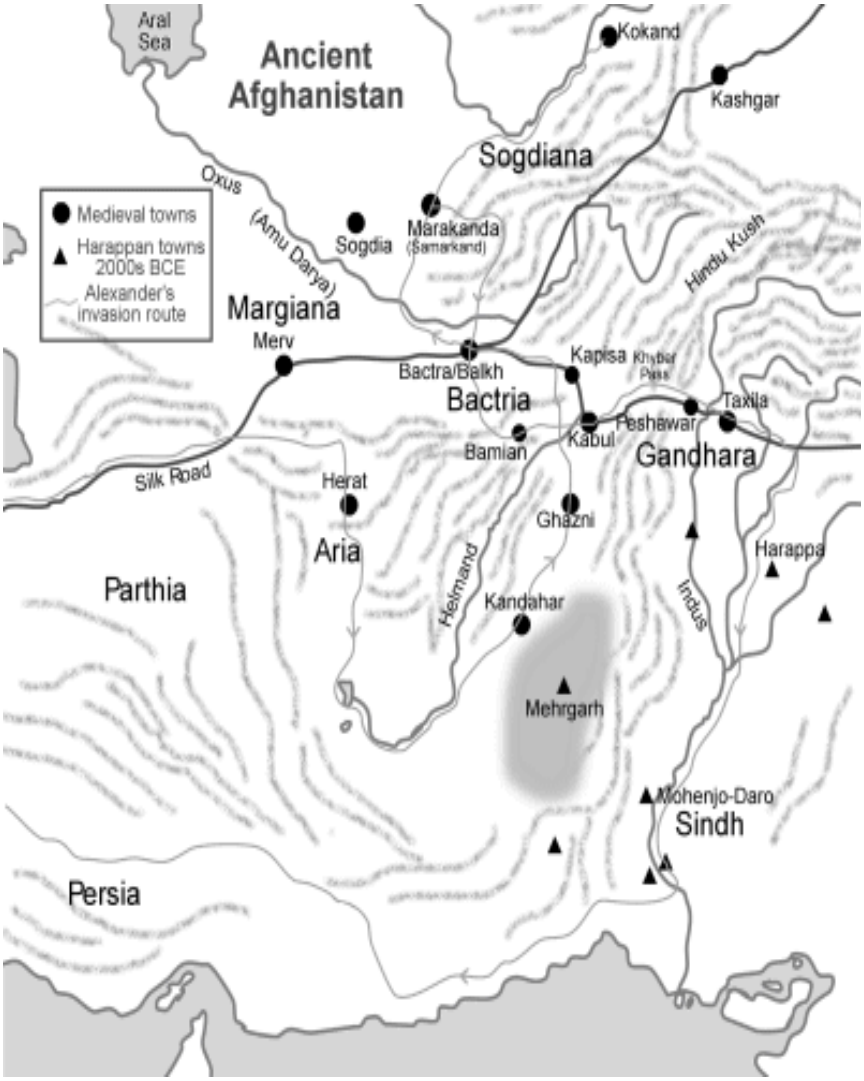
some intensive military, literary, economic, ideological and other cultural activities at various phases of its history. However, due to some negligence on the part of recorders of history and also due to some non-conducive political environments, a good deal of multiple facets of its history needs to be restructured for the fair understanding of those missing links. The level of involvement of some high profile and well known political entities of their time on both Indian and Central Asian sides of Peshawar tells us about its strategic worth for them. They not only used it as an effective military base but also invested in its socio-cultural and economic arenas for the multiplication of their returns. Even today it is one vibrant hub of socio-political and economic activities of the region. One tangible irony of its history happens to be that this blessed status of strategic worth at times turned out to be a curse. The power centers in the surrounding or even located distantly in order to minimize chances of success of their opponents fell severely upon it causing repeated devastations and destabilizations of it. Keeping in view its established worth it is important that the region be paid extra ordinary attention for its security and effective positive role in the growth and development of itself and its environs.

**Map 1**: Valley of Peshawar




*After: The Gazetteer of Peshawar District 1897-98*

**Map 2**: Peshawar linked with Silk Route




*After:http://www.palden.co.uk/palden/p4-afghanistan.html Retrieved on 16/5/2010*

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# Eradication of Illiteracy and Development of Education in Uzbekistan by Soviets

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## Abstract

By October Revolution of 1917, the literacy level of Uzbekistan was just 3.6%. Thereafter Russians (Soviets) made revolutionary changes in the country to change the educational scenario. A large no of primary, secondary and higher schools/institutions were opened in the country. Different policies were adopted to eliminate illiteracy and get the masses educated. A huge expenditure of efforts, money and labour was spent to bring about a change. With the result the literacy level of the country reached up to 11.6% in 1926 to 78.7% in 1939. By 1959 the literacy had reached up to 98% and by 1970 to 100%. The research paper is aimed to study the growth and development of primary and secondary education in Uzbekistan during the Soviet era. It aims to discuss the Soviet policy of education in Uzbekistan, system of delivery, consequences and measures taken for its introduction and subsequent spread. Since Soviets ruled Uzbekistan for 70 years they devised a policy of educating the people and eradicating mass illiteracy in the area through some harsh and appeasing measures.

The October Revolution of 1917 changed every aspect of life in Russia. Power came into the hands of working class, with the concept of the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat". In the economic sphere private property was abolished and all of it came into the hands of the state, with the establishment of workers control over the industries. In agriculture, land was nationalized and as such was owned by the state and given over to the peasants for use. Socially the Revolution laid the foundation of the classless society and the state guaranteed every citizen free medical care, work to earn wages, equal access to culture and cultural developments with free and equal education to all.

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All these changes were also visible in the colonies (Eastern Europe and Central Asia) of the former Czars, which subsequently came under the control of the Russians to form Soviet Union. In this paper, we will try to understand the educational changes that took place in Uzbekistan soon after the Revolution and thereafter the formation of USSR. All these changes would be analysed under two broad segments as: 1) Soviet policy of education, and 2) System of delivery.

## Soviet Policy of Education

Soviet education in the USSR as well as in all Union Republics including Uzbekistan was based on the policy of socialism and Communism established on the Marxist-Lenin approach. Lenin wrote:-

> "*Our object in the field of school is the same struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie; we openly declare that a school outside life, outside politics is a lie and hypocrisy.*"[1]

Lenin envisioned the whole cultural problem for Russia and her colonies, once he became the head of the state, "we can build Communism", he declared in 1920, "only on the sum of knowledge… only on the stock of forces and means left to us by old society. You must assimilate this knowledge critically so that your mind is enriched with all the facts that are indispensable for the modern man of education." For the practical schooling to eliminate ignorance, Lenin advised youth: "It is not enough to understand what electricity is; it is necessary to know how to apply it to industry and to agriculture. We must learn ourselves and teach it to the whole young generation of toilers."[2]

The decisions regarding the Soviet education were that schools should be administered in a decentralized system of control under a central authority, socially non discriminatory, be tuition free (primary), be compulsory up to age 17, practice co-education, provide pre school keeping of infants for mothers, exclude religious confessions for instruction, give material aid to pupils, relate school to work experience, require ideological loyalty, and Soviet patriotism from the teachers, provide adult literacy and cultural programmes, involve parents in school programmes and teach a materialistic, systematic and technical labour base.[3]

The post Revolutionary chaos in Central Asia was thought by the Soviets to be removed by educating the natives. Therefore to begin with

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1 V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 37. Moscow, 1929, p. 77.

2 W. K. Medlin, W. M. Cave, F. Carpenter, *Education and Development in Central Asia: A Case Study of Social Change in Uzbekistan*, Lieden, 1971, p. 93.

3 W. K. Medlin, W. M. Cave, F. Carpenter, *Education and Development in Central Asia: A Case Study of Social Change in Uzbekistan*, Lieden, 1971, pp. 93-94.

there were also political and colonial considerations in the educational policy of Uzbekistan as well as in other colonies. In this connection a particularly interesting article by a communist S. Dimanshteyn on the education of Soviet national minorities appeared in *Vowy Vostok* in 1929. The author says "all the main border regions of the Soviet Union are inhabited by non-Russian peoples….. the safety of our frontiers depends not only on the strength of Red army but also on the frontier population to the Soviet Government. In this field much can be achieved by correct nationalities policy, i.e. one whose task is to unite these nationalities into a single whole. This will strengthen and decrease the danger of war."[4]

The traditional school and their instruction was continued to function as a necessary compromise in Soviet strategy.[5] To this effect the Soviet Council of Peoples Commissar issued an appeal in 1918 to all the Muslims of the Empire that as the "Czars and Oppressors of Russia have violated all your national and cultural institutions like mosques and shrines and faiths and customs" and "hence forth your beliefs and customs, your national and cultural institutions are decreed free and inviolable. Build your national life freely and without hindrance. You have the right to do it. Know that your rights, like those of all the peoples of Russia, are being protected by all the might of the Revolution."[6] Accordingly to achieve this objective the new rulers devised a policy that looked free from bias and opposing to that of Czars.

But this friendship and enthusiasm did not last long. Soon after as the Bolsheviks firmly controlled Uzbekistan and other Central Asian countries the traditional educational institutions were closed in 1927 and other Muslim institutions like Shari'at courts and mosques were abolished.[7] It was because the new socialist state was contradicting its fundamental principals of existence. There was no room for the faith, customs, history, etc. The Revolution and its architects had vowed to build new society and system differently and unknown so far for the purpose of socialization and Communism.

## System of Delivery

The establishment of Soviet power in Central Asia was followed by the formation and development of the Soviet system of public school education as early as 1917 and 1918; Lenin signed approximately thirty decrees on public education and cultural construction. The most important were: "on the

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[4] "Trends in Education in Central Asia", *Central Asian Review*, Vol. II, No 1, London, 1959, p. 314.

[5] W. K. Medlin, W. M. Cave, F. Carpenter, *Education and Development in Central Asia: A Case Study of Social Change in Uzbekistan*, Lieden, 1971, pp. 58-59.

[6] Ivor Spector, *The Soviet Union and the Muslim World, 1917-1958*, U S A, 1958, P. 35.

[7] John Glenn, T*he Soviet Legacy in Central Asia*, New York, 1999, p. 89.

institution of the state commission for education" (Nov. 9, 1917), "on transforming affairs of upbringing and education from religious authorities to the peoples commissariat of education" (Dec. 11, 1917), "on freedom of conscience and church and religious societies", which stipulated the separation of church and state and school and church (Jan. 20, 1918), "on the organization of public education in the Russian Socialist Soviet Republic" (June 18, 1918) and many others.[8]

To achieve what Lenin desired and proclaimed the Commissar of Education, Anatoly Lunacharsky in 1918, prescribed universal compulsory education. He also called for establishment of universities for higher education for all the people in Russia, which include home education and Peoples University, experimental education, school medicine and hygiene, technical schools and polytechnic education. Even though Central Asia was guaranteed freedom from new socialist approach but in April 1918 whole Central Asia was placed under the Russian Federation in the name of Turkistan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. The design of the governance required that Central Asia also follows the Russian SSR in the implementation of its policies, including that of education. Central Asian governors, therefore, helped Russian SSR in this respect as early as on 14 May 1918 as the "Committee of Peoples Commissar of Turkistan Republic took the decision of organizing uniform schools and in 1919 co-education."[9] Both of these decisions were radical in the context of Central Asia; uniformity meant to level the system and co-education meant to bring women out of their veil.

However, before 1920 the government of Turkistan had hardly exacted laws requiring the secularization of education. The decree of January 1918 on freedom of conscience and religious societies laid down that the teaching of religious doctrines is not permitted in any state, public or private educational institutions was not enforced immediately and therefore they continued as before.[10]

By 1920 the Government of Turkistan supported by generous subsidies from Moscow embarked upon an ambitious programme of school construction and in October 1, 1921, a total of 2333 educational institutes of various types were in operation.[11] This massive drive was still insufficient to

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[8] M. Y. Sharpe, "Soviet Education", *A Journal of Translations*, Vol. XX, No. 4, New York, 1978, p. 12.

[9] Vishvanath Thakur, "Development of Public Education in Soviet Central Asia (1917-1939)", *The Journal of Central Asian Studies*, Vol. III, Srinagar, 1992, p. 51.

[10] Geoffrey Wheeler, *The Modern Soviet Central Asia*, London, 1964, p. 205.

[11] These consisted of 1965 primary schools with 1,65,700 pupils, 58 secondary schools with an attendance of 7450, 203 kindergartens with 24175 pupils and 107 other schools with enrollments of 7,840 pupils; Alexander G. Park, *Bolshevism in Turkistan 1917-1927*, New York, 1957, p. 360.

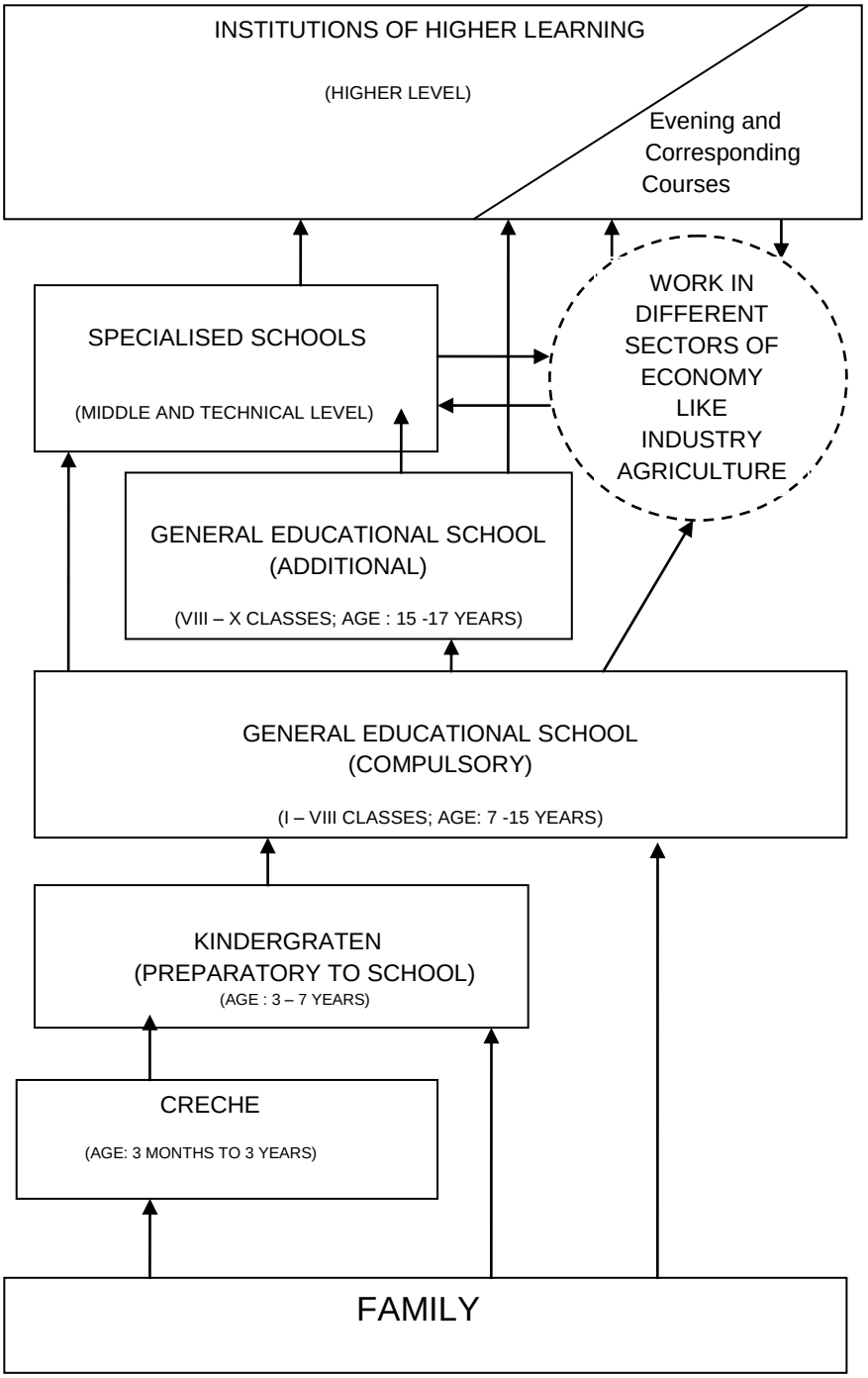
satisfy even the most elementary educational needs of the local population. But in 1922 Moscow government's subsidy given earlier was withdrawn, with the result many Soviet operational educational institutes closed their doors and the village school, the backbone of the Soviet education in the Muslim community almost disappeared. In response to this the Turkistan government assigned 40% of the entire budget to education, but was able to support only 1669 educational institutions.[12]

However, at the beginning of 1923 it was decided to give incentives to all educational institutions. Soviet school specialists were also pressed into service. These measures strengthened the Soviet system of public school. In 1924 all Turkistan Congress of Soviets observed that the "Soviet power gave freedom from coloniser, gave land and the will to remove illiteracy, and collective financial help to teachers and students.[13] Accordingly steps were taken to implement the decision of the congress with the result there was massive increase in the number of native students who joined such schools.

In 1924 Uzbekistan Union Republic was created by the re-division of the people and the territories of the Turkistan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. With it education got a fresh impetus in Uzbekistan SSR. The new set up allowed, Uzbekistan to adopt the Soviet educational policy in full swing. This system started from crèche to the institutions of higher learning. Delivery of education below gives the visual representation of the Soviet education system delivered through various learning units at different levels. It was a universal system in whole of Soviet Union with little changes, here and there, taking place at various periods of time. Uzbekistan SSR soon after its formation in 1924 followed this system in particular after Stalin enforced the Soviet policies in letter and spirit even with the might in his command. The result was that the traditional system of education disappeared and only the new system was allowed to run and deliver at various levels.

[12] Alexander G. Park, *Bolshevism in Turkistan 1917-1927,* New York, 1957, p. 361.
[13] Vishvanath Thakur, "Development of Public Education in Soviet Central Asia (1917-1939)", *The Journal of Central Asian Studies*, Vol. III, Srinagar, 1992, p. 54.

**System of Educational Organization**



It is interesting to note from the graphic that there was diversity of ways to get enrolled in the general compulsory schools and get the variety of jobs just after completing the general education of 8 or 10 classes.

One can study the new education system under the following sub-heads to know how well the delivery of education was carried forward. The aim is to understand how the facilities were created by the Soviets to spread education among the masses for producing people who would serve the state in a desired fashion.

1) Pre school education.
2) School education.
3) Women education.
4) Curriculum
5) Teachers training. and
6) Language of instruction

## Pre School Education

The concept of incorporating pre school upbringing, consisting of crèches and kindergartens into the system of people's education was based on freeing the families from the upbringing of their children. In this way the state from the very childhood started to inculcate in the children the new designs of Soviet programmes envisioned in the Revolution. The preschool education guarantied the right to work and equality of women, in all spheres of social, economic and political life which was not possible without freeing the women from the responsibility of looking after children.[14]

At the age of three months, a child if parents desired, could be put in a crèche. After attaining the age of three years a child from the crèche or from the home entered the kindergarten, again if the parents desired.[15] In Uzbekistan the programme of pre school education started in 1918 at a moderate level. In that year four such institutions were opened in Tashkent for Uzbek children. However, natives did not patronize them immediately as they looked them as centers of Russification. For example it took about ten years to raise the number of such institutions to 68 with a native enrollment of 3799. As the governance changed the life in Soviet Union in a rather harsh way and at quicker pace, there was thrust to implement the Soviet education policy more forcefully, in particular in Central Asia. This was to achieve obedience besides attainment of uniformity in educational sector as well as other sectors dependent on it. Further to overcome the resistance, Bolsheviks encouraged the employment of the native women in these

[14] Javed Ashraf, *Soviet Education Theory and Practice,* New Delhi, 1978, p. 77.
[15] Basile Kerblay, *Modern Soviet Society*, London, 1983, pp. 152-153.

institutions.[16] Consequently the rate of growth of pre school children showed tremendous increase as shown in the table I.

**Table – I**

**Growth of pre school institutions in Uzbekistan**

| Years | No. of institutions | No. of children |
|---|---|---|
| 1924-25 | 11 | 887 |
| 1928-29 | 68 | 3797 |
| 1932-33 | 576 | 27092 |
| 1938-39 | 927 | 36710 |

**Source:** Shams-Ud-din, *Secularizatioin in the USSR: A Study of Cultural Policy in Uzbekistan,* p. 90.

By 1940 there were 33,700 infants enrolled in preschool programmers in Uzbekistan. Post war plans called for increase in enrollments 60,000 by 1950, but the actual figure reached only half that number. Thereafter steady progress raised it to 68,600 in 1956, to 83,500 in 1958 and to 1,40,100 in 1961.[17] In 1970 there were 3,48,000 and in 1980 there were 8,48,000 enrollments of preschool children.[18] The high ratio of enrollments from 1958 is due to high birth rates of 34 per thousand of population and as such from 1959 to 1970 the Uzbek population increased by 53%.[19] The pre school institutes were usually located in urban centers, with very few rural areas having access to them. As such by 1980 there were 6000 children enrolled in 500 kindergartens of Tashkent city alone.[20]

By 1940 there were not even 5% (33,700 out of total 8,50,000) children[21] of the preschool age group going to these schools but by the end of the Soviet period in 1993 the percentage had reached up to 35%.[22] Thereby meaning that after the harsh measures of Stalin Central Asian's, to some extent shed their age old orthodoxy in favour of a new, possibly forced system.

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[16] Shams-Ud-din, *Secularizatioin in the USSR: A Study of Cultural Policy in Uzbekistan,* New Delhi, 1982, p. 90.

[17] W. K. Medlin, W. M. Cave, F. Carpenter, *Education and Development in Central Asia: A Case Study of Social Change in Uzbekistan*, Lieden, 1971, p. 101.

[18] Akhmad Ulmavov and Mannon Aliyar, "Living Standards in Uzbekistan on the Rise", *The Socialist Uzbekistan A Path Equaling Centuries*, Ed. P. N. Fedoseev, Moscow, 1982, p. 86.

[19] Mark Dickens, *Soviet Language Policy in Central Asia, www.exus.com*

[20] Ali Mohammad, *Social Transformation in Central Asia*, New Delhi, 2004, p. 68.

[21] W. K. Medlin, W. M. Cave, F. Carpenter, *Education and Development in Central Asia: A Case Study of Social Change in Uzbekistan*, Lieden, 1971, p. 101.

[22] Country studies education, *www.Country-studies.com.*

## Operational System

The crèches and kindergartens were headed by a director, who was a graduate from pre school pedagogical institution. The children were looked after by the matrons who are especially trained for the purpose. Besides these, there were special instructors for music, dance, and fine arts and so on, with service personal like doctors, nurses, cook and sanitary personnel, etc.[23]

In the kindergartens socio-ethical, aesthetic and similar aspects were taught in the first two years. In the third year elementary preparation was made to allow the child to join the school one year later. Thus the child was trained to understand alphabet and basic numbers in the mother tongue.[24]

The objective of these institutions was to inculcate among the children social equalities through a uniform socialization and a sense of group belonging and collective living.[25] The children were made to be orderly, co-operative, helpful, obedient and conforming. This was achieved by a combination of friendly persuasion, individual attention, and careful programmed conditioning involving speech training, group games and media effects.[26]

Pre school education was not wholly free. The upbringing of a child in a preschool institute was costing 414 rubles a year. The parents were paying 18% of this some, the remaining 82% was provided by the state.[27]

## School Education

The general education in the whole USSR as well as in Uzbekistan SSR was imparted at different levels in various types of schools run by the government. These were primary schools, first cycle secondary or incomplete secondary (middle schools) and second cycle secondary or complete secondary.[28] The total number of school years varied from time to time. To begin with the system of school education that was in place in Russia was adopted. However, certain changes were brought in it after the Revolutionary forces were established in the country. The Russian's brought changes periodically in the system. Say for example, in 1918 the People's Commissariat of education introduced a uniform labour school of nine years with five years of primary education and four years of secondary education.

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[23] Javed Ashraf, *Soviet Education Theory and Practice,* New Delhi, 1978, p. 80.
[24] Javed Ashraf, *Soviet Education Theory and Practice,* New Delhi, 1978, p. 54.
[25] Shams-Ud-din, *Secularizatioin in the USSR: A Study of Cultural Policy in Uzbekistan,* New Delhi, 1982, p. 89.
[26] Vadin Madish, *The Soviet Union,* New Jersey, 1991, pp. 225-226.
[27] A. Ulmasov, "Living Standards in Uzbekistan on the Rise", *Socialist Uzbekistan: A Path Equaling Centuries,* Ed. P. N. Fedoseev, Moscow, 1982, p. 81.
[28] Basile Kerblay, *Modern Soviet Society*, London, 1983, p. 158; Shirin Aknier, *Islamic Peoples of the Soviet Union,* London, 1986, p. 21.

In 1920 the first party conference on public education recommended to replace the nine years of general education with seven years of education. After the restoration from World War and civil war a four year primary education and five year secondary education was introduced.[29]

However, in July 25, 1930 the Central Committee of Russian Communist Party passed a historical resolution under the head, "on all general compulsory education" which declared that from academic year 1930-31 there would be free compulsory education up to the fourth grade and seven year compulsory education in industrial cities and workers settlements.[30]

In 1934 for the first time a generalized unified system of general education was introduced. It consisted of four years of primary education (grades 1-4), three years of incomplete secondary (grades 5-7) and three years of full secondary (grades 8-10).[31] Thus creating a system of three tier of school education was to replace the earlier two tier one. By this arrangement it was required that all the children in the Soviet Union would get free primary education of first four grades[32] and as well were required to study compulsorily for the next three years the middle classes up to grade seven.[33] The further higher classes of three years were left to the chosen will of the children. This was changed in 1977 when all the grades were made compulsory.[34] Further to enhance the years of secondary education it was resolved in 1984 to raise the years of schooling from ten to eleven.[35]

The eight year programme (incomplete secondary) required full time study; the additional years required for complete secondary was achieved by either part time or full time study. Most of the schools provided full range of educational classes, but in some rural areas primary school existed as separate units. In such cases the children transferred to the nearest secondary school to complete their education.[36] The academic year began on the same day in early September and ended in late May, working through out the year

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[29] M. Y. Sharpe, "Soviet Education", *A Journal of Translations*, Vol. XX, No. 4, New York, 1978, pp. 23-31.

[30] Vishvanath Thakur, "Development of Public Education in Soviet Central Asia (1917-1939)", *The Journal of Central Asian Studies*, Vol. III, Srinagar, 1992, p. 56.

[31] M. Y. Sharpe, "Soviet Education", *A Journal of Translations*, Vol. XX, No. 4, New York, 1978, p. 35.

[32] From 1966 the period of primary education was reduced from four to three years; Ann Sheehy, "Primary and Secondary Education in Central Asia and Kazakhstan, The Current Situation", Central Asian Review, London, 1968, p. 147.

[33] In 1949 and 1959 Universal compulsory education of seven and eight years was introduced respectively; Basile Kerblay, *Modern Soviet Society*, London, 1983, p.158; Shirin Aknier, *Islamic Peoples of the Soviet Union*, London, 1986, p. 155.

[34] Javed Ashraf, *Soviet Education Theory and Practice,* New Delhi, 1978, p. 55.

[35] Soviet Union, Secondary Education, *www.country-data.com*

[36] Shirin Aknier, *Islamic Peoples of the Soviet Union*, London, 1986, p. 21.

with some official holidays and vacations. There were six working days in a week with five or six classes per day.[37]

It is noteworthy that education was free not only up to general secondary education but also up to higher learning. It costed the state annually 144 rubles to teach one pupil at general schools, 557 rubles at specialized secondary schools and 92 rubles at higher educational establishments.[38]

## Growth of Primary and Secondary Schools

On the eve of the Revolution there were about 160 schools in Uzbekistan. By the academic year 1924-25 their number rose up to 907[39] with the support of the Soviet government. The Soviet government was aware of the fact that illiteracy of the region was to be eradicated with the tool of education not only to press on the message of Communism directly through curriculum and literature but also to address the issues that were envisaged by the labour leader's way in the Revolution of 1917. Accordingly the architects of the Revolution brought about a set of changes in the education system. The major thrust to the education development in Uzbekistan was achieved by adopting mother tongue as the medium of instruction. Second was that it guaranteed employment to almost all educated and trained persons in various institutions.[40] As the Sovietisation became almost complete in Uzbekistan with the formation of Uzbekistan SSR, the Soviet thrust became more visible and instructional materials in the Uzbek language-teacher's manuals, curricula and syllabus outlines, classroom aids became available in substantial quantities from 1926 onwards. There was gradual increase in the number of schools from 1928 onwards. With the implementation of compulsory education there was requirement of increased number of schools, which grew very fast.[41] All these trends of schools are summarized in table II.

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[37] Vadin Madish, The *Soviet Union*, New Jersey, 1991, pp. 226-227.

[38] A. Ulmasov, "Living Standards in Uzbekistan on the Rise", *Socialist Uzbekistan: A Path Equaling Centuries*, Ed. P. N. Fedoseev, Moscow, 1982, p. 81.

[39] Shams-Ud-din, *Secularizatioin in the USSR: A Study of Cultural Policy in Uzbekistan*, New Delhi, 1982, pp. 91-93.

[40] Shams-Ud-din, *Secularizatioin in the USSR: A Study of Cultural Policy in Uzbekistan*, New Delhi, 1982, p. 91.

[41] W. K. Medlin, W. M. Cave, F. Carpenter, *Education and Development in Central Asia: A Case Study of Social Change in Uzbekistan*, Lieden, 1971, p. 97.

**Table – II**

**Growth of Primary and Secondary Education in Uzbekistan (1924-25 to 1937-38)**

| School Year | Number of schools | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total | Rural areas | Primary | | 7- year Middle schools | | Secondary | |
| | | | Total | Rural areas | Total | Rural areas | Total | Rural areas |
| 1914-15 | 160 | 52 | 135 | 52 | 13 | - | 12 | - |
| 1924-25 | 907 | 640 | 867 | 638 | - | 2 | 24 | - |
| 1928-29 | 2320 | 1898 | 2194 | 1880 | 83 | 17 | 38 | 1 |
| 1929-30 | 2720 | 2293 | 2622 | 2265 | 96 | 26 | 2 | 2 |
| 1930-31 | 5038 | 4568 | 4861 | 4502 | 170 | 66 | 7 | - |
| 1931-32 | 7061 | 6368 | 6855 | 6283 | 206 | 85 | - | - |
| 1932-33 | 6444 | 5935 | 6167 | 5801 | 265 | 134 | 12 | - |
| 1933-34 | 5906 | 5503 | 5573 | 5332 | 298 | 170 | 35 | 1 |
| 1934-35 | 5514 | 5128 | 5083 | 4880 | 390 | 247 | 41 | 1 |
| 1935-36 | 5216 | 4794 | 4577 | 4370 | 476 | 420 | 63 | 4 |
| 1936-37 | 4506 | 4065 | 3592 | 3405 | 824 | 655 | 90 | 5 |
| 1937-38 | 4614 | 4162 | 3449 | 3275 | 989 | 825 | 176 | 62 |

**Source:** Shams-Ud-din, *Secularizatioin in the USSR: A Study of Cultural Policy in Uzbekistan*, p. 92.

The Soviet rule was much more concerned to establish a wide network of primary schools. The first ten years or so (by 1929-30) the increase of the primary schools was many fold not only in urban areas but through out the republic. The objective was not only to create favorable conditions for inculcating new values among the younger generation,[42] but also to see that the network of school spreads to all areas to introduce what Soviets wanted a uniform pattern of education through out the Union. However, it was the period when contrary to its fundamental principals, Soviets also allowed Muslim schools to exist. Notwithstanding the figures, education was aimed to produce literate workers who were entirely available to work for Soviet might. From 1930 onwards Soviet Union passed through a new phase of Communism based on coercion and oppression. The era of Stalin was marked by the use of force to lead the people to adopt and follow what Communism and socialism was meant for. Accordingly in Uzbekistan, besides many other forced measures the development of education was

[42] Shams-Ud-din, *Secularizatioin in the USSR: A Study of Cultural Policy in Uzbekistan*, New Delhi, 1982, p. 93.

vigorously forced. The number of schools was raised not only to two to three times but in many schools there were conducted double shifts to engage the children. It was only by the middle of the 1930's that the number of middle and secondary schools showed signs of increase correspondingly to cater the needs of large number of children leaving the primary schools.

The rate of growth of the pupils at different levels of education also suggest that right up to school year 1928-29 the government concentrated on primary schools. In the academic year 1924-25 the total number of pupils in primary institutions was 565 thousands while in the middle and secondary levels of education there were 74 and 116 thousands respectively, a ratio of 3 to 1. This increasing ratio of primary education continued but with the onset of Stalin era this increased many fold in the mid thirties as shown in the table III.

**Table – III**

**Rate of growth of pupils in schools of Uzbekistan SSR (1924-25 to 1932-33) (In thousands)**

| School year | Number of pupils in schools | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Primary schools | | Middle schools | | Secondary schools | |
| | Total | Of which In rural areas | Total | Of which In rural areas | Total | Of which in rural areas |
| 1924-25 | 56.6 | 30.7 | 7.4 | 0.9 | 11.6 | - |
| 1925-26 | 73.2 | 42.7 | 12.9 | 1.3 | 12.9 | - |
| 1926-27 | 87.5 | 50.5 | 18.5 | 1.9 | 16.3 | - |
| 1927-28 | 100.5 | 57.7 | 19.7 | 2.0 | 19.6 | 0.3 |
| 1928-29 | 123.7 | 81.0 | 22.7 | 2.4 | 21.5 | 0.4 |
| 1929-30 | 167.5 | 100.0 | 23.4 | 3.3 | n. a | 0.5 |
| 1930-31 | 297.0 | 253.6 | 60.0 | 8.3 | 6.5 | - |
| 1931-32 | 427.9 | 364.7 | 87.0 | 10.5 | - | - |
| 1932-33 | 474.5 | 402.3 | 81.0 | 22.0 | 12.9 | - |

**Source:** Shams-Ud-din, *Secularization in the USSR: A Study of Cultural Policy in Uzbekistan*, p. 94.

Primarily the Soviet policy in Uzbekistan was to spread primary education but the ratio of primary education to secondary education created serious problem for the nativization of the Soviet socio-political apparatus at different levels. However, once Stalin government accelerated the process of development of middle and secondary education, the result was that there was sharp increase in number of middle and secondary schools and in their intake as shown in the table IV.

**Table – IV**

**Rate of growth of different types of schools and their corresponding enrollments during the school years from 1933-34 to 1937-38**

| School year | No. of schools | | | No. of students (in thousands) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Primary | Middle | Secondary | Primary | Middle | Secondary |
| 1933-34 | 5573 | 298 | 35 | 424.3 | 85.0 | 26.1 |
| 1934-35 | 5083 | 390 | 41 | 427.3 | 117.6 | 29.4 |
| 1935-36 | 4577 | 476 | 63 | 436.0 | 143.6 | 49.4 |
| 1936-37 | 3592 | 824 | 90 | 428.0 | 241.5 | 69.8 |
| 1937-38 | 3449 | 989 | 176 | 446.3 | 303.4 | 111.5 |

**Source:** Shams-Ud-din, *Secularization in the USSR: A Study of Cultural Policy in Uzbekistan*, p. 95.

Compared to 1914 the number of schools in 1938 increased 29.3 times with primary schools at the ratio of 22.3 times and middle at 81 times.[43] In spite of the measures, appeasement and enforcement and the sharp increase in the number of schools and the school going children there was still a good number of children who were not attending any school. In 1926 there was only 26/1000 who received instructions. Even though by 1933 it was 260/1000 and in 1939 it was 340/1000, yet there was just one person in every three who had some kind of elementary knowledge meaning that Stalin measures by then were still showing very low results. Stalin measures in fact showed better results in urban areas than in rural areas in particular at the middle and secondary levels.

The table V below gives the distribution of pupils by grade wise in rural and urban areas during 1938-39. in fact the figures show that middle level education was picking up as compared to secondary level one because by then it was compulsory to study up to grade seven and join a job; second the workers were not interested in to pursue education for gaining knowledge.

[43] Vishvanath Thakur, "Development of Public Education in Soviet Central Asia (1917-1939)", *The Journal of Central Asian Studies*, Vol. III, Srinagar, 1992, p. 57.

**Table – V**

**Urban-Rural distribution of pupils by grade levels during (1938-1939)**

| Administrative Unit. | Total No. of students | Primary Classes I-IV | % | Middle Classes V-VII | % | Secondary Classes VIII-X | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| USSR | 1106457 | 887746 | 80.2 | 191399 | 17.3 | 16014 | 1.4 |
| Bukhara Oblast | 244030 | 204030 | 83.9 | 35272 | 14.5 | 2106 | 0.9 |
| Bukhara city | 6741 | 4894 | 72.6 | 1595 | 23.7 | 252 | 3.7 |
| Samarqand Oblast | 196119 | 164287 | 83.8 | 25710 | 13.1 | 1710 | 0.9 |
| Samarqand City | 23820 | 16433 | 69.0 | 6394 | 26.8 | 993 | 4.2 |
| Tashkent Oblast | 218480 | 157880 | 72.3 | 51028 | 23.4 | 7842 | 3.6 |
| Tashkent City | 92747 | 58842 | 63.4 | 27182 | 29.3 | 6723 | 7.2 |
| Fargana Oblast | 313595 | 250648 | 79.9 | 58479 | 18.6 | 3380 | 1.1 |
| Fargana City | 6330 | 3991 | 63.0 | 1911 | 30.2 | 428 | 6.8 |
| Khorezm Oblast | 59081 | 46091 | 78.0 | 12266 | 20.8 | 639 | 1.1 |
| Kara-kalpak ASSR | 75182 | 64032 | 85.2 | 8644 | 11.5 | 337 | 0.4 |

**Source:** W. K. Medlin, W. M. Cave, F. Carpenter, *Education and Development in Central Asia: A Case Study of Social Change in Uzbekistan*, p. 110.

To achieve what was, the Uzbekistan government had a concern that all were not going to school and therefore had adopted a ten year plan for the abolition of illiteracy among urban dwellers between the ages of 18 and 35 and among rural inhabitants between 14 and 30 by the end of the 1934.[44] In addition to that, government organized general educational recourses to raise "the cultural and political level" of adults in urban centers. Library, clubs, cottage reading rooms, and peasant houses were established in numerous towns and villages. In order to encourage workers to master literacy and other basic educational skills the government promised higher wages and technical work levels of those who met the higher requirements, like to pass special tests to qualify.[45]

To recover those youth who failed in primary schools or simply did not enroll compulsory primary schools were organized for those aged between 11- 15, a form of remedial primary education.

By all these measures taken by the Soviet Uzbek government and the decree of universal primary education in 1930 the literacy level which was just around 3.6 before Revolution reached up to 11.6 in 1926 and 78.7 in 1939.[46] What the tremendous increase in educational achievements indicates is that the measures went a long way to eradicate the illiteracy.

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[44] Alexander G. Park, *Bolshevism in Turkistan 1917-1927,* New York, 1957, p. 372.

[45] W. K. Medlin, W. M. Cave, F. Carpenter, *Education and Development in Central Asia: A Case Study of Social Change in Uzbekistan*, Lieden, 1971, p. 99.

[46] Victor Kozlow, *The Peoples Of Soviet Union,* London, 1988, p. 160.

The results started to appear after the Stalin measures were wholly pursued and by 1939-40 there was not only 78.7% literacy but also almost 80% enrollment in the schools. The number of students attending the higher secondary classes was not significant as there were only 35 students per 1000 of population attending these schools[47]. It looks that there was thrust only on primary education rather than on higher. As compared to primary level literacy rate of 78% the middle level had reached only up to 17% and higher to meager 1.4%. As the primary level was compulsory the results so achieved were therefore on that account. By the year 1949 it became mandatory to read up to middle level (grade 7) and therefore in 1956 the percentage of these enrolled raised to 48% and by then there were nearly 19% (almost 1/5) of enrolled in grades 8, 9 and 10, (with out technical secondary students). The ratio of pupils in secondary schools was more in urban areas than in rural areas as is suggested by:-

Samarqand city 41.6/1000
Samarqand oblast 34.4/1000[48]

The growth in the opening of new schools and the increase in the number of students were moving at pace that remained almost static till it was decided to make education compulsory up to 10th standard. Once this was done, the growth in the number of students increased at a pace that was almost double. It is what the table VI reveals.

**Table – VI**

**Number of schools and the enrollment from 1940-41 to1983-84**

| Year | No. of general schools of all types | No. of students ( in thousands) |
|---|---|---|
| 1940-41 | 5448 | 1315 |
| 1955-56 | 6418 | 1350 |
| 1958-59 | 6877 | 1373 |
| 1959-60 | 7165 | 1431 |
| 1960-61 | 7511 | 1552 |
| 1970-71 | - | 3142 |
| 1979-80 | 9500 | 4000 |
| 1983-84 | 9400* | 4300 |

*Besides schools for pathological retarded children like deaf, blind etc.

[47] W. K. Medlin, W. M. Cave, F. Carpenter, *Education and Development in Central Asia: A Case Study of Social Change in Uzbekistan*, Lieden, 1971, pp. 109-113.

[48] W. K. Medlin, W. M. Cave, F. Carpenter, *Education and Development in Central Asia: A Case Study of Social Change in Uzbekistan*, Lieden, 1971, p. 115

Compiled on the basis of: Lawrance Krader, P*eoples of Central Asia*, p. 239; Shrine Aknier, *Islamic Peoples of Soviet Union*, P.280; M. Y. Sharpe's *Journal of Translations*, p. 132; Ann Sheehy, Primary and Secondary Education in Central Asia and Kazakhstan, The Current Situation, *Central Asian Review* and E. Yuspov, Achievements Of The Socialist Cultural Revolution, *Socialist Uzbekistan: A Path Equaling Centuries*, Ed. P. N. Fedoseev, p. 112.

It was not only of the fact that school enrollments increased because of compulsarisation of education but also because there was substantial increase in the population of the republic. The high birth rate of 53% of the Uzbek population was recorded from 1959 to 1970.[49]

In the 1960's it was found that the rate of growth of school building constructions was less than the growth of school enrollments. To cope up with the situation the number of schools had to operate in two or three shifts. By 1966 only the capital Tashkent was successful in eliminating the third shift, however, more than 75% of the countries schools were in two shifts.[50] Accordingly a large sum of the countries budget was allocated for building the schools on account of what it was claimed in 1968 that all rural and majority of urban schools were working in one shift. The trend of new school construction continued as during the period 1976-80 new schools were constructed for 8,00,000 pupils.[51] But the situation continued to be grim as by early nineties more than 50% of the schools were in double shifts.[52]

There were far reaching consequences of the higher number of school enrollments. In 1959 the literacy level of primary classes had reached up to 98%, which was only 78.7% in 1939[53] and by 1970 it had reached up to 99 to 100%.[54] In addition to that by 1985 two-thirds of the population aged 10 years and above had secondary or higher education in the republic.[55]

## Women Education

While Russian administration on the eve of the Revolution proclaimed new policies based on the doctrine of Revolution, it had to bring certain changes in the execution of its policies in Turkistan. One of these was to open schools exclusively for women against the set principals of co-education. This was to allow them to uphold their tradition of using *yasmark*

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[49] Mark Dickens, *Soviet Language Policy in Central Asia, www.exus.com*

[50] Ann Sheehy, "Primary and Secondary Education in Central Asia and Kazakhstan, The Current Situation", Central Asian Review, London, 1968, p. 149.

[51] E. Yuspov, "Achievements of the Socialist Cultural Revolution", *Socialist Uzbekistan: A Pat Equaling Centuries*, Ed. P. N. Fedoseev, Moscow, 1982, p. 112.

[52] Country studies education, *www.Country-studies.com*

[53] Viktor Kozlow, *The Peoples of Soviet Union*, London, 1998, p. 160.

[54] John Glenn, T*he Soviet Legacy in Central Asia*, New York, 1999, pp. 82-83.

[55] A. K. Patnaik, "Education, The Press and The Public Health", *History of Civilisation of Central Asia*, Vol. VI, London, 2005, p. 568.

or *paranjan* (veil). Accordingly the Soviet government and the Communist Party of Uzbekistan introduced several legislative and political measures to remove obstacles in the way of female education. Besides co-education special women's schools were opened. During the academic year 1924-25 there were 44 such schools with 2158 native female students. During the succeeding year many more schools were opened as shown in table VII.

**Table – VII**

**Growth of women education from 1924-25 to 1927-28**

| Year | No. of women's schools | Total number of students | Number of native students |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1924-25 | 44 | Not given | 2158 |
| 1925-26 | 97 | 23308 | 9454 |
| 1926-27 | 101 | Not given | 9723 |
| 1927-28 | Not given | 29138 | 9961 |

**Source:** Shams-Ud-din, *Secularization in the USSR: A Study of Cultural Policy in Uzbekistan*, p. 97.

In 1926 the total number of non-Russian girls of school going age, was about 4,44,673, in which only about 2.13% were attending schools, which increased up to 2.25 in 1927.[56] In 1927-28 the percentage of female students to total number of students varied from 1/6 to 1/3 in different districts as shown in table VIII.

**Table – VIII**

**Percentage of female students among the total students during 1927-1928**

| City and District | Total students | Girls | Girls in % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Tashkent city | 11837 | 3192 | 30.4 |
| Tashkent dist. | 24918 | 5557 | 22.3 |
| Samarqand dist. | 17498 | 3572 | 20.4 |
| Andizhan dist. | 20048 | 3516 | 17.5 |
| Namagan city | 2029 | 478 | 23.5 |
| Uzbekistan SSR | 105336 | 19737 | 18.7 |

Source: W. K. Medlin, W. M. Cave, F. Carpenter, *Education and Development in Central Asia: A Case Study of Social Change in Uzbekistan,* p. 95.

[56] Shams-Ud-din, *Secularization in the USSR: A Study of Cultural Policy in Uzbekistan*, New Delhi, 1982, p. 97.

To overcome the slow growth of girl's education the Communist Party of Uzbekistan took many steps. The first was the campaign of emancipation, called *Hujum* (offensive) launched at the end of 1926[57]. Second was the closing down of traditional institutions for girls, called Otin Bibi schools in which the native girls were receiving instructions like the boys in the Islamic institutions of Maktaba, to be able to read the Qur'an and understand some basic elements of Islam.

The Hujum campaign ended in 1932 and that year marked the beginning of a new era for Central Asian women and that of Uzbekistan as it witnessed the first generation of women to be trained and educated by the Communist Party. With the result a good number of girls (both urban and rural) attended the secular co-education and by 1938-39 there was a great increase in percentage of girls attending the schools as shown in table IX.

**Table – IX**

**Percentage of girl students in different regions during 1938-39**

| **Regions** | **% of female students in 1938-39** | |
|---|---|---|
| | **Total** | **Rural areas** |
| Tashkent | 48.3 | 40.7 |
| Fergana | 42.3 | 42.4 |
| Samarqand | 42.1 | 41.1 |
| Bukhara | 42.6 | 42.3 |
| Khorezm | 41.4 | 40.3 |

Source: Shams-Ud-din, *Secularization in the USSR: A Study of Cultural Policy in Uzbekistan*, p. 98.

In 1940 among 8,84,000 pupils enrolled in grades 1-4 nearly 46% were female students.[58] With the result the %age of female literacy reached from 7.3 in 1926 to 73.3 in 1939 and to 97.3 in 1960.[59]

The ratio of female students in secondary classes was again low as there was in general education before the 1960's. In 1960 only 24% of the female population had completed the secondary education.[60] The trend increased by the universal compulsory secondary education as it was in case of general education. By 1970-71, 40% of the total numbers of higher educated were

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[57] Hujum is the official term designating the women's liberation campaign imposed by the Bolsheviks, but this campaign included an offensive against Islam and the old traditional way of life; Habibi Fathi, "Otins: The unknown Women Clerics Of Central Asian Islam", *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 16, No.1, pp. 28-29.

[58] W. K. Medlin, W. M. Cave, F. Carpenter, *Education and Development in Central Asia: A Case Study of Social Change in Uzbekistan*, Lieden, 1971, p. 109.

[59] Viktor Kozlow, *The Peoples of Soviet Union*, London, 1998, p. 160

[60] Alec Nove and J. A. Newth, *The Soviet Middle East: A Model For Development*, London, 1967, p. 73.

women[61] and accordingly in 1979 census 99.6% of Uzbek women were literate of primary classes.[62]

## Curriculum

All the schools imparted education in the mother tongue in Uzbekistan, be it Uzbek or Russian. Up to primary level it was mandatory to teach in the mother tongue to the students. Accordingly in Uzbekistan there were 94.5% schools where the native language or the mother tongue was Uzbek and only in 5.5% of schools Russian was the main language. In accordance to it the curriculum of the two types of the schools was set. While as in the Uzbek Native School Russian was taught in besides the Uzbek, in Russian School it was only the Russian that was taught. The later group of schools therefore led to lesser group of subjects to deal with. To teach Russian as II language became compulsory from 1938[63] even though it was part of the curriculum since the beginning of the Soviet education in the country.

A primary graduate was necessarily required to read and write the native language (Uzbek or Russian). For such a literate it was to prepare one who was able to read or write the language besides have some elementary knowledge of arithmetics, history and for non-Russians to be able to converse in Russian. At the middle level students, besides the mother tongue, attained the knowledge of mathematics, history, geography and natural science. At the secondary level students learned literature, algebra, trigonometry, geography, history, physics, chemistry and foreign language.

In fact the general line schools were meant to prepare a class of educated personal that had enough study of mother tongue, were taught about the history geography and math's besides subjects like biology, physics, chemistry so that one who was to pursue further education had the foundation laid out at the lower level and ones fundamentals were clear to attain heights.

From 1960's there was the innovation of the introduction of optional subjects in the curriculum of $7^{th}$ to $10^{th}$ grades. Among the optional subjects offered were fine and applied art, history of art and music, electronics, radio electronics, technical drawing, agro techniques and short hand.[64] From 1985 onwards computer science was added to among the subjects for the secondary classes.[65]

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[61] Ali Mohammad, *Social Transformation in Central Asia*, New Delhi, 2004, p. 74.
[62] M. Akhunova, "Emancipation of Women: A Great Gain of Socialism", *Socialist Uzbekistan: A Path Equaling Centuries*, Ed. P. N. Fedoseev, Moscow, 1982, p. 141.
[63] Vadin Madish, The *Soviet Union*, New Jersey, 1991, p. 229.
[64] Ann Sheehy, "Primary and Secondary Education in Central Asia and Kazakhstan, The Current Situation", Central Asian Review, London, 1968, p. 203.
[65] Vadin Madish, The *Soviet Union*, New Jersey, 1991, p. 223.

## Teacher's Training

After the Bolshevik Revolution and the Soviet system of school establishment in Uzbekistan, the greatest difficulty was presented by the lack of trained teachers. To overcome this shortage, teachers were selected from different sources like from former Russian schools, Russian native and Muslim schools who were not of the standard that would match with Marxist ideology and intellectualism, therefore they were provided with two to three and some times five to six months instruction or a summer course in pedagogical institutes to qualify them for school teaching[66]. It was also aimed to inculcate among them the philosophy of Marxism so that products were molded in the way the ideology demanded them to be with out noticeable interference.

After that the Turkistan national commissariat of education carried out in 1923 an examination of teachers in order to determine their professional qualifications. The teachers were divided into two groups each of four categories with a careful distinction between their intellectual and political merits. The first group with a satisfactory educational background required political training. The other group was considered 'unworthy element' and was dismissed.[67]

To prepare new teachers, many pedagogical institutes were opened in Uzbekistan. There were four such institutions opened in Tashkent and one in Samarqand in 1920 for the training of teachers of the native nationalities. In 1924 three women's pedagogical institutions were opened each in Tashkent, Bukhara and Samarqand to train the female teachers.[68] During the middle and late twenties, several pedagogical technicums were established in different cities for preparing teachers for lower grades and by 1927 they had a total enrollment of 2500.

All these institutions and technicums hardly supplied teachers on mass basis. By 1930 their total enrollments were about 3500. Substitute arrangements were therefore made for the qualified teachers. As in 1924, 1000 persons were given special summer courses in pedagogy, which by 1925 rose to 1500 and in 1926 to 2500.

In 1930 a new type of teacher training school was established for the upgrading of teaching profession. The institute named as the Institute of Raising Qualifications of Primary Teachers was meant to enhance the qualifications of the teachers and meet the new requirements based on the communist ideology. Besides the main route of imparting training during the

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[66] W. K. Medlin, W. M. Cave, F. Carpenter, *Education and Development in Central Asia: A Case Study of Social Change in Uzbekistan*, Lieden, 1971, p. 121.

[67] "Trends in Education in Central Asia", *Central Asian Review*, Vol. II, No 1, London, 1959, pp. 314-315.

[68] Shams-Ud-din, *Secularizatioin in the USSR:A Study of Cultural Policy in Uzbekistan,* New Delhi, 1982, pp. 99-100.

day hours the institute also offered courses through evening pedagogical schools as well as through correspondence.[69]

From 1930 onwards there was a phenomenal growth of teachers. During the academic year 1928-29 the total number of teachers (natives as well as Russian) was 6308.[70] In 1930-31 the number rose to 11767. Table XVI gives the region wise growth of teachers in Uzbekistan from 1927-28 to 1938-39.

**Table – XVI**

**Region wise growth of teachers from 1927-28 to 1938-39**

| Region (Oblast) | 1927-28 | | 1938-39 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total No. of teachers | In rural schools | Total No. of teachers | In rural areas |
| Tashkent | 2019 | 454 | 7821 | 3788 |
| Ferghana | 1423 | 695 | 9305 | 7323 |
| Samarqand | 820 | 276 | 6116 | 5015 |
| Bukhara | 738 | 451 | 7187 | 4665 |
| Khorezm | 142 | 63 | 1956 | 1783 |
| Krakalpak ASSA | 544 | 209 | 2169 | 1859 |
| Total | 5686 | | 34554 | |

**Source:** Shams-Ud-din, *Secularization in the USSR: A Study of Cultural Policy in Uzbekistan,* p. 105.

In spite of all these measures there were a good number of teachers who had not received any methodological and professional instruction beyond the general education. By about 1940, 85% of the teachers had not completed either a high school or university level education. Teachers with higher qualifications were mostly meant for the upper grades of secondary schools, located primarily in the urban areas. 98% of all teachers with out secondary education were in rural schools[71] and therefore till 1940 all the primary and secondary schools had not the teachers who possessed higher qualification.

By 1955-56 the teacher number increased up to 70,000[72]. With it the teacher qualifications improved substantially both in academic level preparation and in professional training. The result was that one teacher in

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[69] W. K. Medlin, W. M. Cave, F. Carpenter, *Education and Development in Central Asia: A Case Study of Social Change in Uzbekistan*, Lieden, 1971, pp. 122-123.

[70] Shams-Ud-din, *Secularization in the USSR: A Study of Cultural Policy in Uzbekistan,* New Delhi, 1982, p. 105.

[71] W. K. Medlin, W. M. Cave, F. Carpenter, *Education and Development in Central Asia: A Case Study of Social Change in Uzbekistan*, Lieden, 1971, p. 123.

[72] Ann Sheehy, "Primary and Secondary Education in Central Asia and Kazakhstan, The Current Situation", *Central Asian Review,* London, 1968, p. 191.

every five had completed higher education, 1.4 in every five had finished upper secondary and 0.2 in every five had finished high school.[73]

To meet the tremendous increase in student enrollments, the number of teachers also showed substantial increase. In 1966/67 there were about 1,50,000 teachers twice as many as ten years ago. These teachers were better qualified than the teachers before, with fifty percent of them having higher education. To train these teachers a large number of new teacher training institutes and colleges were opened from 1960's. Six new institutes were opened from 1964-67. The teachers were now being trained in two universities, 18 teachers training institutes and 16 teachers training colleges. In spite of these efforts there was still the shortage of teachers in all Central Asian Republics including Uzbekistan particularly in rural areas. In 1967 Uzbekistan was having a shortage of 10,000 teachers and the situation did not improve radically even after.[74]

## Language of Instruction

It is held that Uzbek literary language had begun to take form in the 17th century from the old language of '*Chagatai'*.[75] Written in Arabic script it evolved further during the period of Czarist rule.[76]

Following the 1917 Revolution the Soviets sought to modify the Arabic script universally used by the Central Asians in writing the language. Various reasons were given for the proposed reforms and indeed there were some Central Asian intellectuals who wanted to get rid of the script. One of the chief reasons was that the rich system of vowel harmony found in Turkic languages can not be represented equally by the Arabic alphabet, since the Arabic letters form only three vowel phenomenon. In addition, the script contains several other letters not found in Iranian or Turkic languages and most graphemes have different forms depending on their position in the word.[77]

In 1923, an improved Arabic alphabet was adopted for Uzbek, but it also did not satisfy the elites of the Marxist party on the ground that it was the script of the Arabs. This was because the alphabet of the Qur'an and all the great Islamic literature of the past, whether Arabic or Persian was a powerful symbol of the religious and cultural landscape of the area. Therefore in 1925 by a decree the importation of the materials printed in Arabic was forbidden.[78] As early as 1924, a Latin alphabet had been

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[73] W. K. Medlin, W. M. Cave, F. Carpenter, *Education and Development in Central Asia: A Case Study of Social Change in Uzbekistan*, Lieden, 1971, p. 123.

[74] Ann Sheehy, "Primary and Secondary Education in Central Asia and Kazakhstan, The Current Situation", *Central Asian Review,* London, 1968, pp. 191- 195.

[75] W. P. and Zieda K. Coats, *Soviets in Central Asia,* London, 1952, p. 211.

[76] Elizabeth E. Bacon, *Cental Asians under Russian Rule*, London, 1960. pp. 189-192.

[77] Mark Dickens, *Soviet Language Policy in Central Asia, www.exuscom.Com*

[78] Elizebth E. Bacon, *Central Asians under Russian Rule,* London, 1966, p. 190.

introduced in the Soviet Azerbaijan just across the Caspian Sea.[79] In 1926, at a Turcological congress at Baku (Azerbaijan), it was decided to replace Arabic alphabet by Latin alphabet.[80]

A year later a unified Turkic Latin alphabet was presented for propagation, with a few symbols to represent special Turkic phenomenon. In 1928- 29 the Latin alphabet replaced the Arabic.[81] By 1930 all the languages of the Central Asia had been provided with Latin alphabets and these were used in text books prepared for the new schools being set up and in the news papers, journals, and books published by newly established press.[82]

But Turkey's adoption of similar Latin alphabet aroused new fears in Soviet leaders. There was a potential danger that a new Pan-Turkic literature may develop in the Latin alphabet and that this new script might attract the Central Asian people towards Turkey.[83] So finely the last change came when the Latin alphabet was changed to Cyrillic alphabet by 1 September 1940. The process was completed by January 1942.[84]

In Uzbekistan this step was justified in the following words:

> "*The Uzbek language is enriched every year with new words which have been produced by the Soviet epoch. The existing Latin alphabet is no longer in line with the development of the language and it is in fact an obstacle to the further development of the language and culture of the Uzbek people. The new alphabet will make it possible to establish an orderly system of Uzbek orthography (the rules of correct spelling) and there by to eradicate the existing confusion. Moreover the unification of the alphabet will improve our printing facilities*".[85]

Another advantage of the Cyrillic alphabet was said that it would make the study of Russian easier for native children, as learning the Russian language was made obligatory in 1938. By changing the Arabic script first to Latin and then to Cyrillic, the number of Persian and Arabic words used in Uzbek language declined and that of the Russian increased. In fact the process had already began as between 1923 and 1940 words of Arabic and Persian in Uzbek language declined from 37% to 25% of the total lexicon, while words of Russian origin increased from 2% to 15%.[86]

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[79] Mark Dickens, *Soviet Language policy in Central Asia, www.exuscom.Com*
[80] Gavin Hamby, *Central Asia*, London and Edinburgh, 1969, p. 239.
[81] "Trends in Education in Central Asia", *Central Asian Review,* Vol. II, No 1, London, 1959, p. 319.
[82] Elizabeth E. Bacon, *Cental Asian's under Russian Rule*, London, 1960, p. 191.
[83] Elizabeth E. Bacon, *Cental Asian's under Russian Rule*, London, 1960, pp. 191- 192.
[84] Gavin Hamby, *Central Asia*, London and Edinburgh, 1969, p. 239.
[85] "The Peoples of Central Asia: The Cultural Development", *Central Asian Review,* Vol. VII, No. 4, London, 1959, P. 319.
[86] Mark Dickens, *Soviet Language policy in Central Asia, www.exuscom.Com*

## Conclusion

Before the Soviet occupation, the Uzbek society was illiterate, backward and superstitious. There were hardly any modern educational institutions and as such people were unable to write and read. Soviets made tremendous effort to eradicate illiteracy by establishing a number of educational institutions. Not only by establishing the schools but by making compulsory education of different grades at different stages. In addition to general schools Library, clubs, cottage reading rooms, and peasant houses were established in numerous towns and villages to raise "the cultural and political level" of adults in urban centers. To recover those youth who failed in primary schools or simply did not enroll compulsory primary schools were organized for those aged between 11- 15, a form of remedial primary education. . With it the literacy level which was just around 2 percent before the Revolution reached up to 100 percent during the seventy years of Soviet Occupation, with 2/3$^{rd}$ of the population having secondary or higher education. The female folk which was confined to four walls before the Revolution was liberalized. They too acquired the modern education at par with the males with 100 percent literacy. Well trained teachers were employed in the schools for imparting education. They taught the modern subjects of arithmetic's, chemistry, life sciences, physics, history, culture, computer etc. Uzbeks learnt Latin and Russian besides their native language. The feudal society of medieval times was replaced by the socialist society with equal avenues for all.

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