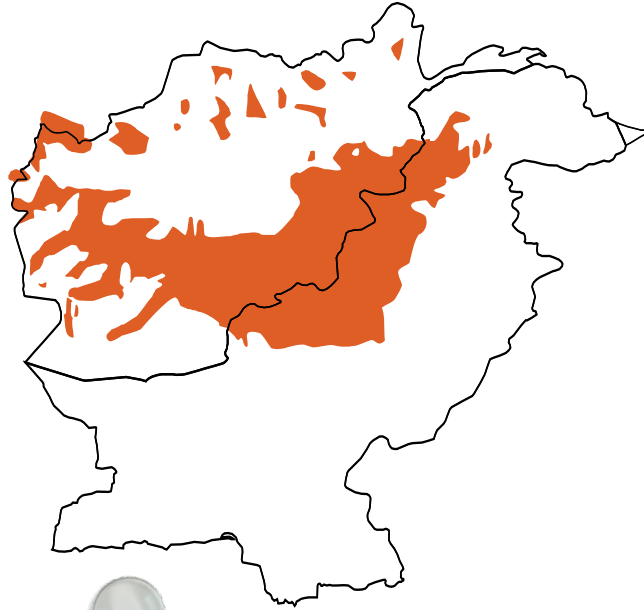




PASHTUNISTAN: PAKISTAN'S SHIFTING STRATEGY?

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About Tribal Analysis Center

Pashtunistan: Pakistan's Shifting Strategy?

The Pashtun tribes have yearned for a “tribal homeland” in a manner much like the Kurds in Iraq, Turkey, and Iran. And as in those countries, the creation of a new national entity would have a destabilizing impact on the countries from which territory would be drawn. In the case of Pashtunistan, the previous Afghan governments have used this desire for a national homeland as a political instrument against Pakistan. Here again, a border drawn by colonial authorities – the Durand Line – divided the world’s largest tribe, the Pashtuns, into two the complexity of separate nation-states, Afghanistan and Pakistan, where they compete with other ethnic groups for primacy. Afghanistan’s governments have not recognized the incorporation of many Pashtun areas into Pakistan, particularly Waziristan, and only Pakistan originally stood to lose territory through the creation of the new entity, Pashtunistan. This is the foundation of Pakistan’s policies toward Afghanistan and the reason Pakistan’s politicians and military developed a strategy intended to split the Pashtuns into opposing groups and have maintained this approach to the Pashtunistan problem for decades.

Pakistan’s Pashtuns may be attempting to maneuver the whole country in an entirely new direction and in the process gain primacy within the country’s most powerful constituency, the military. If successful in this likely strategy, they may plan to snatch the old Durrani strategy of creating “Pashtunistan” out of Pakistan’s national territory by creating their version of Pashtunistan from Afghanistan’s Pashtun areas.¹ A few well-informed Pakistani-origin Pashtuns believe that some powerful fellow Pashtuns within Pakistan have a very chauvinistic belief in the superiority of Pakistan’s Pashtuns when compared to Afghanistan’s Pashtuns. Additionally, they appear to have adopted a plan to support and modernize their Afghan Pashtun cousins in an effort to recover their ethnic group’s lost primacy in South Asia.² As with nearly all ethnic nationalist groups, recovering lost status, power, and territory often becomes a historic necessity of ethnic nationalists and Pakistan’s Pashtuns clearly appear to be on this sort of political and military trajectory.

Additionally, Pakistan’s Pashtuns may also have some intention of recovering lost status within Pakistan, itself, something that may help explain the continuing chaos in the country. Following the logic of Stuart Kaufman in his *Modern Hatreds*, it becomes easier to view the unending violence in both Afghanistan and Pakistan as an effort to recover lost land and missing nationalist pride by people who have not forgotten that the Pashtun empire under the Durrani was the second largest Muslim empire in history and was eclipsed only by the Ottoman Empire, itself.

Daniel Pipes shows how the Alawites of Syria were able to gain power there –something possibly underway in Pakistan – in spite of being a small, generally ignored minority population:

“For many centuries, the Alawis were the weakest, poorest, most rural, most despised and most backward people of Syria. In recent years, however, they have transformed themselves into the ruling elite of Damascus. Today, Alawis dominate the government, hold key military positions, enjoy a disproportionate share of the educational resources, and are becoming wealthy. How did this dramatic change occur? When did the Alawis

1. The possibility of Pakistan’s “Pashtunistan Strategy” was discussed with two very knowledgeable Pakistani Pashtuns, one having a PhD in an appropriate field. Both believe this is a very probable strategy that would neutralize the old Durrani strategy related to the creation of a Pashtun homeland at Pakistan’s territorial expense while allowing Pakistan its “Strategic Depth” desired in its repeated conflict with India. Having family members in Pakistan, both choose to remain anonymous.

2. See Stuart J. Kaufman’s *Modern Hatreds* for a very complete review of ethnic nationalism.

manage to escape their traditional confines, and what was the mechanism of their rise? Sunnis and others unsympathetic to the regime of Hafiz al-Asad answer this question by accusing the Alawis of an elaborate and long-term conspiracy to take power in Syria. Annie Laurent suggests that 'determined to get their revenge' after the failure of a rebel leader, Sulayman Murshid, 'the Alawis put into effect a strategy of setting up cells in the army and the Ba'ath Party, and this won them power in Damascus'. Adherents of this view date the Alawi ascent to 1959, the year that the Military Committee of the Ba'ath Party was formed. Why, they ask, did leaders of this group keep its existence secret from the party authorities? This furtiveness suggests that the Military Committee from the beginning had a sectarian agenda. Matti Moosa argued that 'it is almost certain that the officers were acting not as Baathists, but as Nusayris [Alawis], with the intent of using the Baath and the armed forces to rise to power in Syria.'"³

Little imagination is required to substitute Pashtuns for Alawites in a similar scenario. Pakistan's Pashtuns are frequently well-educated, have military traditions, and serve in senior positions within the Pakistani military. While the evidence isn't readily available, the case may be made that there is increased "Pashtunization" of many of Pakistan's districts. This is readily seen with the recent name change of North-West Frontier Province to Khyber Pashtunkhwa, a long-denied concession made to Pashtuns by the Pakistani government that may have increasing numbers of senior officers in both military and intelligence positions. Applying the Alawite model explained by Daniel Pipes as additional events unfold in Pakistan and Afghanistan may help explain a generally unseen strategy as it unfolds in the background of the actions taken by the various incarnations of the Pashtun Taliban apparently so carefully managed as an armed surrogate of some circumstantially identified Pakistani groups, official and unofficial.⁴

The tension over the Pashtunistan issue has loomed large between Pakistan and Afghanistan, even resulting in Afghanistan becoming the sole vote against the admission of Pakistan into the United Nations. Since the creation of the Durand Line in 1893, Pashtunistan⁵ has remained a major issue between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The Durrani monarch and member of the Barakzai tribe's Mohammadzai subtribe, Zahir Shah, and his Prime Minister cousin and son-in-law, Mohammad Daud Khan, refused to recognize the Durand Line and maintained that Afghanistan had a claim to all of Pakistan's Pashtun areas, particularly Waziristan. Daud seemed to be obsessed with the idea of unifying all Pashtun tribal areas in both Afghanistan and Pakistan into a single nation ruled by the Durrani Confederation. This was what had occurred in the beginning of the Afghan nation when this same region was ruled as a part of what was essentially a Durrani empire under Ahmad Shah Durrani.

Pashtun scholar Olaf Caroe was precisely correct when he wrote the following in an academic journal review of Louis Dupree's book, *Afghanistan*:

"...Pashtunistan, Sardar Daud's dream of a reabsorption of all the Pashto-speakers on the North West Frontier into a Durrani-ruled state."⁶

3. Pipes, Daniel, "The Alawi Capture of Power in Syria," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (Oct., 1989), pg. 429.

4. See Waldman, Matt (2010) *The Sun in the Sky: the Relationship Between Pakistan's ISI and Afghan insurgents*. Crisis States working papers series no.2, no. 18. Crisis States Research Centre, London School of Economics and Political Science, London, UK. Waldman provides more than circumstantial evidence of the relationship between ISI and the Afghan Taliban that was developed through interviews with Taliban commanders.

5. *Pashtunistan* is a southern Pashtun word. The northern variation is "*Pakhtunistan*" and is occasionally referred to as "Pakhtunkhwa," or "Pashtun Quarter". This paper is focused on the southern portion of the Pashtun homeland, the Durrani territory.

6. Caroe, Olaf, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 97, No. 3 (Jul-Sept 1997), pp. 341-342.

Tension between the two neighbors over Pashtunistan resulted in Pakistan closing its borders to Afghan trade for five months in 1955. This blockade allowed Royal Prime Minister Daud the political cover to increase his efforts to develop ties with the Soviet Union. At the same time, however, he also sought to strengthen ties with the United States while maintaining a non-aligned position relative to the Cold War tensions between the two superpowers. When the United States declined to provide any military assistance, Daud turned to the Soviet Union for this aid.⁷

Daud remained obsessed with Pashtunistan and this left him, Zahir Shah, and the rest of Afghanistan in potential conflict with Pakistan's rulers, who were as often as not military men. The tension continued and by 1961, Pakistan ordered its border with Afghanistan closed in an effort to discourage any additional support for the Pashtunistan concept. Unfortunately, serious unintended consequences began to develop as the Afghan government had to shift its trading patterns. The Soviet Union quickly took in Afghanistan's exports as the communist nation became the major trading partner for the landlocked Afghans. Normally, trade patterns precede military connections and the growing economic relationship between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union followed this pattern. Within months, discounted arms sales were also provided to the Afghan military and by 1963, Daud felt sufficiently strong to order his military to move against Pakistan, an action that set him at odds with Zahir Shah. This crisis led to Daud's resignation, but he remained in the background of Afghanistan's politics, festering over the lack of support he had received from Zahir Shah in his planned confrontation with Pakistan over his desire to create Pashtunistan.

After overthrowing Zahir Shah in 1973, probably after 10 years of simmering anger because Zahir Shah called off Daud's order to invade Pakistan in 1963, Daud became the last of the Durrani rulers of Afghanistan. His interest in gaining control over Pakistan's Pashtun areas remained his key goal. He had actually ordered the Afghan army into Pakistan's Bajaur region during 1960 and suffered a defeat as Pakistan's military rulers reacted violently to Daud's provocative act. Daud utilized the time-honored payments to the Pashtun tribes along the border and continued to disseminate hostile propaganda against Pakistan.⁸ This antagonism between the two neighbors continued as superpower politics began to crystallize their positions.

The United States attempted to mediate, but its range of options was limited by its military relationship with Pakistan through the anti-communist Baghdad Pact. In the end, the Soviet Union's prestige in the region had grown significantly as American capabilities to influence events in the region began to wane. The Afghan-Soviet relationship strengthened as Afghan military officers began to attend Soviet military training, including appointments to their prestigious Frunze military academy.

On the other side, Pakistan had extensive experience with Pashtunistan and had felt the military intensity of zealous Pashtuns seeking independence. Outbreaks of violence among the warlike Pashtuns against the British colonial authorities had been frequent occurrences in the border areas. One key leader, the Faqir of Ipi⁹, led a major border revolt that lasted for decades and continued as Pakistan became an independent nation. He maintained his base of operations near the Afghan border and frequently managed to escape military pursuit by moving into Afghanistan. Simultaneously, the leader of a Pashtun peace movement, Ghaffar Khan¹⁰, and his "Red Shirts" worked peacefully, but their goal was also the creation of Pashtunistan. Ghaffar Khan had been affiliated with the Indian National Congress party and was frequently called the "Frontier Ghandi," but his connection to India at a time when Pakistan was facing its larger hostile neighbor led to his arrest.

7. <http://countrystudies.us/afghanistan/26.htm>.

8. *Ibid.*

9. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Faqir_of_Ipi

10. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khan_Abdul_Ghaffar_Khan

Tom Lansford's *A Bitter Harvest: US Foreign Policy and Afghanistan* has an excellent explanation of the animosity between the two South Asian neighbors:

*“During the Soviet occupation, Pashtun rivalries continued unabated and were actually exacerbated by outside actors. For instance, successive Afghan governments had refused to recognize the borders drawn by the British when they established an independent Pakistan following World War II. Because this line of Afghan kings had maintained territorial claims to Pashtun areas of Pakistan, leaders in Islamabad had worked to undermine the Afghan monarchy and had offered support to the Ghilzai clans. This support was most crucial in the aftermath of the Soviet invasion when Pakistan's military dictator General Zia Ul Haq “effectively prevented the ex-king or his representatives from playing any role in the resistance.” Zia sought to ensure that the Durrani did not play any role in any post-Soviet Afghan government. One result of this was the rise of the Ghilzai-based Taliban. Meanwhile, there remained a split within the Afghan Communist Party that reflected the tribal divide between the Durrani and the Ghilzai. Both factions of the Party distrusted each other and worked to undermine the power and influence of the other tribe.”*¹¹



The fissure separating the Durrani Confederation from their Ghilzai relatives was wide and resulted from a long series of Ghilzai defeats by the Durranis and the loss of Ghilzai tribal lands. The separation of these two large Pashtun groups began over two centuries ago, but some of the Ghilzai defeats suffered at the hands of the Durranis were severe and probably remain in the consciousness of many Ghilzai today.

It is generally accepted that much of the modern conflict inside Afghanistan generally can be attributed to animosities between tribes and ethnic groups that go back for centuries. One of the longest series of feuds involves the anger and jealousy of the Ghilzai Confederation over the royal status of the Durrani Confederation. The Ghilzai were once Afghanistan's rulers, but all was lost through military defeats by the Durranis. The Ghilzai, particularly the Hotak tribe, were once the rulers of an empire that included half of Persia and their “vassals,” the Pashtun Abdalis that evolved into the Durranis, rose to prominence by serving as cavalry shock troops for the Persian leader, Nadir Shah (*pictured right*), who rewarded their service with Ghilzai lands. Curiously, this ancient animosity may be repeating itself today, with Mullah Mohammad Omar, a Hotak, trying to gain control of Afghanistan from Hamid Karzai, an Abdali/Durrani.

First, the Hotak Ghilzais had been in control of a broad swath of Afghanistan and nearby Persia. Their most prominent tribal leader, Mirwais Khan Hotak (1673-1715) was a Ghilzai Pashtun from Kandahar who was able to found a short-lived dynasty that ruled Afghanistan and Persia's eastern provinces from 1722 to 1729. A former state hostage of the Shia Safavid Empire, Mirwais (*pictured left*) was the son of Mohammad Bakir, from whom he inherited leadership of one of the Ghilzai clans. He had visited the Persian court and understood their military weaknesses and the Pashtun tribes were bitter under the ruling Safavids because of continued attempts to convert the Sunni Pashtuns to Shia Islam. In 1709, Mirwais organized Pashtun militia forces against Gurgin Khan, the Georgian governor of Kandahar who ruled in the name of the Persians. Gurgin Khan was killed, and the Hotaks took control of the city. Later, Mirwais defeated a large Persian army sent to regain control over the area, and he remained in power until his death in



11. Lansford, Tom, *A Bitter Harvest: US Foreign Policy and Afghanistan*, Ashgate, 2003, pg. 17.

1715. Mirwais was succeeded by his son, Mir Mahmud Hotaki, who took advantage of the political weakness of the Persians and conquered the eastern Persian Empire.¹²

In a culture in which conquerors are soon conquered, the Hotak Ghilzai rulers were able to enjoy their victory in Esfahan's palaces for less than a generation before they were invaded from the west as Persian armies under Nadir Shah captured Herat and forced the Durrani Pashtun tribes there to cooperate with his forces by capturing and holding their families as hostages inside Persia.

And in a time-honored tradition of holding the children of powerful men as hostages to ensure alliances and treaties were honored, two sons of the leader of the Popalzai tribe's Sadozai, the tribe's most prestigious sub-tribe, were imprisoned by the Ghilzai governor of Kandahar. This ensured the cooperation of their father, Multan's ruler, Mohammad Zaman Khan.

After Nadir Shah captured Kandahar, the sons, Zulfikar Khan and his younger brother, Ahmad Khan, were freed and entered the service of the Persian leader, along with large numbers of Pashtun tribes. Historian Muhammad Hayat Khan explains:

“About the end of 1728, Nadir Shah (Irani) taught the Abdali [Durrani] an unwanted lesson of subjection, notwithstanding which they soon after, under the leadership of Zulfikar Khan, older brother of Ahmad Khan, rebelled against their new conqueror, marched upon Mashed, and after defeating an army commanded by Nadir Shah's brother, laid siege to the city. When, however, the famous general, Nadir Shah, himself appeared in force, they raised the siege and fell back to their own country, closely pursued by Nadir Shah who soon appeared before the gates of Harat [sic]. With desperate energy the Abdali, thus pursued to their last stronghold, defended the beleaguered city, and when, after ten long months it surrendered, the enraged conqueror determined to signalize his success that should put an end to Abdali turbulence. He sent 6000 families into exile in various districts of Persia, scattered others to Multan and elsewhere, and forced great numbers to enter his army....

“Nadir Shah had been eleven months engaged in the siege of Daghistan, when he was one evening eating in his tent, a ball struck the ground near and caused some dirt to fly into the dish before him. Seized with a fit of ungovernable fury (the Naderi temper is still a byword) the despot sent for the Abdali chiefs who were with his force and swore that unless the city was taken within 20 hours they should all pay the forfeit of their lives. Upon this Ghani Khan (Alikozai), Nur Mohammad Khan (Alizai), Haji Jamal Khan (Mohammadzai Barakzai), Khanu and Manu Khan (Nurzai) [Noorzai] and the other leading Abdali gathered their fellows together, and at their head made a determined assault upon the city which, after an obstinate resistance, fell into their hands within the time specified. Nadir Shah, well pleased with their gallantry, promised to grant them any request they might make, and the assembled chiefs, putting forward Allahyar Khan (Sadozai) [Popalzai subtribe] as their spokesman (that same that afterwards met his death at Sabzawar), then asked that the ancient possessions of the tribe might be restored to them, that those sent into exile to Persia might be recalled, and that the lands then held by the Ghilzai might be made over to the Abdali. This boon was granted.”¹³



The defeated Ghilzai tribes lost their lands to the Abdali tribes, soon to be renamed Durrani under a Popalzai subtribe, the Sadozai and their

12. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mir_Wais_Hotak accessed 18 November 2008.

13. Khan, Muhamad Hayat, *Afghanistan and its Inhabitants*, (1874), translated by Joseph Priestly, 1981, pp. 62- 63.

new leader, Ahmad Khan – soon renamed Ahmad Shah Durrani (*pictured right*) who took control of the southern Pashtun tribes following Nadir Shah's assassination in 1747 as he returned from a successful raid into India.

Ahmad Shah began his military conquest by capturing Ghazni from the Ghilzai Pashtuns and then wresting Kabul from the local ruler to strengthen his hold over eastern Khorasan, which is most of present-day Afghanistan. Leadership of the various Afghan tribes rested mainly on the ability to provide booty for the clan and Ahmad Shah proved remarkably successful in providing both booty and new lands for his followers. His armies invaded the Punjab three times between the years 1747-1753, captured Herat in 1750, and both Nishapur (Neyshābūr) and Mashad in 1751.¹⁴

In the end of this period, Abdali monarchs were on the throne at Kabul and the Ghilzai tribes lost their lands that extended from central Persia through Afghanistan. Ahmad Khan, once their prisoner in Kandahar, became Ahmad Shah Durrani and continued to conquer additional Ghilzai lands, possibly in revenge for the extended period he and his brother, Zulfikar, spent in Kandahar's captivity. But the pain for the Ghilzai was far from being over. Muhammad Hayat Khan explained the division of lands:

“The distinguished services rendered by the Abdali tribe to Nadir Shah were now to meet with fitting acknowledgment. The lands lying west of Herat, and still held by the Durrani, were made over to them by royal grant. Besides this, the Ghilzai lands were also apportioned among them, the valley of Arghandab falling to Ghani Khan and his clan the Alkozai, and the region of Dawar to Nur Muhammad and the Alizai, while the allotment of the Barakzai was of inferior land.”¹⁵

The conflict continued

“...until the greater struggle between the Durrani and Ghilzai tribes put an end to all lesser ones. When the brothers Shah Zaman and Shah Mahmud quarreled, and owing to the treachery of Ahmad Khan (Nurzai), Zaman Shah was defeated¹⁶, the occasion seemed to the Ghilzai a favorable one for the assertion of their independence.... The new wazir was then appointed to guard the passes, while Abd-ur Rahim went towards Kabul to raise the Suleiman Khel whom the Turin and Ibrahim Ghilzai were prepared to join. The insurgents were however defeated with heavy loss by the Ibrahim Ghilzai, amounting to 5000 to 6000 men, by a Durrani army from Kabul. Abd-ur Khan returned to Kalat-i Ghilzai. A second engagement took place on the Koh-i Surkh, called Surghar in Pashtu, where the Ghilzai gave battle on ground of their own choosing. Here too they were defeated, the Tokhi losing about 600 men, while the Hotaks, who were mostly horsemen, escaped with much less loss. Nothing further was done in the winter, but in the spring (1802 A.D.), that battle took place after which the year is still known as the 'year of the Ghilzai slaughter.'”¹⁷

14. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ahmad_Shah_Abdali accessed 27 December 2008.

15. *Afghanistan and Its Inhabitants*, pg. 33.

16. Zaman Shah, Ahmad Shah Durrani's grandson, was distracted by his repeated invasions of Punjab where he was trying to weaken the growing power of the Sikhs as his half-brother, Mahmud, advanced toward Kabul. Zaman Shah realized the seriousness of the challenge to his power when he learned that Mahmud was supported by Fath Khan, the son of Payinda Khan Muhammadzai who had been executed recently for treachery. Mahmud was also supported by his mother's tribes, the Durrani while Zaman's mother was from the Yusufzai tribe whose territory was located in the region northeast of Peshawar. Zaman Shah was defeated by his half-brother, captured and blinded as the Muhammadzai subtribe of the Barakzai tribe continued to accumulate power. See Vogelsang, Willem, *The Afghans*, Blackwell Publishing, 2002, pg. 242.

17. *Afghanistan and Its Inhabitants*, pg. 99.

The new monarch, Mahmud Shah, used strong measures in an attempt to keep the rebellious Ghilzai under control. Christina Noelle explains:

*“Shah Mahmud attempted to discourage further Ghilzai unrest by having Abd al-Rahim and two of his sons blown away from a cannon. Moreover, he followed Nadir Shah’s example in constructing a minaret from Ghilzai skulls. The effects of the great “Ghilzai War” continued to be felt for years afterward.”*¹⁸

Muhammad Hayat Khan explained the end of this phase of the “Ghilzai War”:

*“In the following year [1803], Ahmad Khan Nurzai, when on his way to Kabul with a detachment, was attacked... by the Jalalzai clan of the Tokhi.... The assailants were repulsed with a loss of 600 killed. Ahmad Shah returned to Kandahar and raising a Durrani army equipped with artillery and armaments, set forth to chastise the Tokhi. He was unable to effect [sic] his purpose, and the Tokhi ... retired to the mountains about Kalat, where they successfully defied the attempts of the Durrani. These, unable to make any impression, suddenly turned to Arghandab, and falling upon the women and children of the Ghilzai, put to death many of these helpless and innocent ones. This was the closing phase in the struggle between the Durrani and Ghilzai.”*¹⁹

With the primary tenet of Pashtunwali being “revenge,” it is unlikely that the Ghilzai, particularly the Tokhi tribe, have forgotten the killing of their families by Ahmad Khan and his Noorzai army. Tokhis are also not likely to forget that they suffered great losses in the battle with Shah Mahmud while the mounted Hotaks escaped the battlefield. Again, Muhammad Hayat Khan explains the animosity between these two Ghilzai tribes:

*“The Ghilzai are vindictive, and are therefore prone to family-feuds and clan-feuds ... the relations between the Hotaki and Tokhi ... the old hatred still exists between them, and does await an opportunity to declare itself with fresh intensity.”*²⁰

Muhammad Hayat Khan, writing in 1881, provides a clue to some current Pashtun behavior:

*“The Kharoti tribe claims to be an offshoot of the Tokhi Ghilzai....”*²¹

Feuds are commonplace within the Ghilzai and the Hotaks feud with the Tokhi. With the Kharoti Pashtuns claiming – and probably believing – that they are a subgroup of the Tokhi, the old animosity between Hotak and Tokhi may help explain one reason for the distance between the Taliban’s Mullah Mohammad Omar, a Hotak, and HIG’s Hekmatyar, a Kharoti, who are somewhere between allies and competitors within the Pashtun insurgent movement.

Following the formation of Pakistan, their leaders knew that Afghanistan’s Durrani leaders were involved in the Pashtun revolts against their

18. Noelle, Christina, *State and Tribe in Nineteenth Century Afghanistan*, pg. 211.

19. *Afghanistan and Its Inhabitants*, pg. 171.

20. *Ibid*, pg. 175.

21. *Ibid*, pg. 179.

rule as the Durrani's Mohammadzai Barakzais advocated the creation of "Pashtunistan." The Pakistani leadership's solution involved efforts to minimize the Durrani within the Afghan government at every opportunity.

Following the Soviet "invasion" of Afghanistan, Afghan resistance leaders moved into nearby Pakistan where they were recognized by Pakistan's leadership as the "Seven Party Alliance," but notably absent were any of the leaders of the Durrani tribes that normally ruled the Afghan nation. Sadar Mohammad Daud had been shot dead along with his family in a coup that left communists in control of Afghanistan as the last Durrani leader of Afghanistan departed the political scene.²² No Durrani leader emerged within the new anti-Soviet political parties in Pakistan as military rulers attempted to resolve their long dispute with the Durrani over the Pashtunistan issue by excluding them from any future Afghan government.

The Ghilzai, however, never forgot their animosity toward the Durrani,²³ and it was into this "fissure" that the Pakistanis began to insert their influence – in the form of the substantial financial and military aid provided by the United States that naively watched the Pakistanis provide the lion's share of the aid to the Ghilzai factions as they minimized assistance to the Tajiks and generally ignored the needs of the Durrani resistance leaders. These tribes, especially the huge Barakzai tribe, the king's tribe under Haji Abdul Latif, and the Alikozai under Mullah Naqib, actually fought the communist government in Kandahar Province to a stalemate and nearly forced the communists into a negotiated settlement, in spite of the absence of aid funneled through Pakistan.

The Pakistanis chose to focus the largest portion of the aid they controlled to Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, Jalaluddin Haqqani, and Abdur Rasul Sayyaf, all Ghilzais having revolutionary aims at establishing Shari'a rule over the post-communist Afghanistan. Just as the Durrani tribes were winning their battles in southern Afghanistan, the Pakistanis sent Hekmatyar to the south and claimed to their international supporters that his forces were having the impact seen in southern Afghanistan. Far away American monitors accepted Pakistani assertions and a great opportunity to end the war was lost in 1987.²⁴

Following the Soviet withdrawal, Pakistan's efforts to maintain the split within Afghanistan's ethnic groups resulted in a civil war as the revolutionary parties controlled or allied with Hekmatyar attacked the traditional parties affiliated with Burhanuddin Rabbani's Tajiks, led by the charismatic Ahmad Shah Masood. This chaos resulted in the emergence of tribal warlords and criminal gangs in the aftermath of the defeat of the last communist, Najibullah and into this vacuum entered the "religious students," also a creation of Pakistan's government.

Pakistan's madrassas under Sami ul-Haq and Fazl ur-Rehman were soon producing large numbers of Pashtun fighters that invaded Afghani-

22. Ewans, Martin, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics*, Harper Collins, 2002, pg. 88.

23. "Storytelling" and visits from wandering Pashtun poets to isolated compounds having few other forms of entertainment, especially during periods of extreme winters, keeps the memory of tribal heritage, religion, and revenge fresh in the minds of succeeding generations. For example, Hafiz Rahmat, the Rohilla chief killed by the British, was a recognized poet and his poetry and tales of his demise probably lingered long among northern Pashtuns. There is a serious connection between Pashtu songs, actually their prized poetry, and the destruction of the Rohilla states. In 1887, James Darmesteter studied their songs and concluded, "... the literary poet, who can read ... who has composed a Divan. Every educated man is a *Sha-ir*, though, if he be a man of good taste, he will not assume the title. Writing Ghazal was one of the accomplishments of the old chiefs. Hafiz Rahmat, the great Rohilla captain, and Ahmad Shah, the founder of the Durrani empire, had written Divans, were 'Divan people.'" "Afghan Life in Afghan Songs," *Science*, Vol. 10, No. 246, October 21, 1887, pg. 195.

24. See Yousaf's *The Bear Trap* and Kaplan's *Soldiers of God* for a good discussion of the provision of aid. Kaplan has an excellent account of the efforts by the Durrani to force Qandahar's communist governor, Ulumi, into a negotiated surrender.

stan and captured an Afghan city, Spin Boldak.²⁵ Not long afterwards, Afghan Pashtuns took control of the “Taliban Movement” and defeated Hekmatyar, who withdrew to Iran. As with the Seven Party Alliance, Pakistan soon gained influence, if not outright control, over the Taliban through Mullah Mohammad Omar, a Hotak Ghilzai, and managed to sustain their efforts at splitting Afghanistan into two warring factions, neither of which was controlled by Durrani Pashtun leadership.

Following the defeat of the Taliban in late 2001, the Taliban commanders and their loyal fighters withdrew into the nearby safe havens of western Pakistan from which they continued to fight against the new Afghan government and its western allies. The results for Pakistan include massive aid from the United States and the issue of Pashtunistan has not been raised since 1978. Pakistan’s long term strategic goals have been met as it continues its efforts to keep the Pashtuns split into two large, warring factions. Realistically, the current conflict in Afghanistan is simply a continuation of the long-running civil war that has plagued the troubled country for decades. The first phase of the conflict involved urban modernists who were communists against rural traditionalists who were rallied to their religion by their mullahs and maulavis. The second phase resulted in conflict between religious traditionalists opposed to religious opportunists seeking to impose revolutionary change on Afghanistan through Shari’a, Islamic law, rule. This phase of civil conflict ended with the arrival of the Taliban on the political scene as the fighting took on a distinct Pashtun vs. the other ethnic groups appearance as the Pashtun Taliban fought the Northern Alliance’s Tajiks, Uzbeks, Pashai, and some northern Pashtuns. The fourth phase began with the appearance of United States and allied military forces on the scene.

Throughout the extended conflict, Pakistan has benefitted from the lack of Afghan Pashtun support for the creation of an independent Pashtunistan that would restore their “lost lands” into both Baluchistan and Punjab provinces. Most Pashtuns, especially the Durrani, remember that their tribal lands once extended from Herat to Multan and beyond into India and that the founder of the “Durrani Empire,” Ahmad Shah Durrani, was born in Multan. Pakistan’s leaders are also familiar with their region’s history and know that the creation of Pashtunistan for the world’s largest tribe to inhabit would be the end of Pakistan, the nation-state. For this reason, Pakistan’s leaders have consistently opposed Pashtunistan’s most consistent advocates, the Durrani Pashtuns. Keeping the Pashtuns split into two warring groups – and by extension, Afghanistan – is a national priority for the Pakistanis.

Outlook

The future is difficult to discern, but it appears that the Pashtun independence movements – and Pashtunistan – had been following the path of least resistance and into Pakistan. “Talibanization” of Pakistan’s Pashtun areas and the radicalization of its population seems to be an unstoppable process. Most of the traditional Pakistani government’s control over its “Federally Administered Tribal Areas,” or FATA, has slipped to local control by powerful Pashtun leaders espousing Islam rather than the traditional, and secular, control of local councils called “jirgas” composed of local leaders representing their village, clan, or tribe held accountable by the Pakistani government’s local Political Agent. Currently, these local leaders have either been killed, silenced through intimidation, or have relocated to urban areas where the government’s control is more visible.

Of equal significance, the current Afghan government and its American and Coalition allies are gradually making significant Taliban opera-
25. Brigadier Yousaf explains the Pakistani connection to the original Taliban Movement in his *The Bear Trap*.

tions inside Afghanistan highly dangerous to consider. As fatalities increase among Taliban elements infiltrating into Afghanistan from Pakistan and operations become more difficult to conduct, the Taliban may choose to remain in Pakistan where they will be able to capture, clear, and hold key terrain within Pakistan's Pashtun regions. Additionally, the "semi-official Talibanization" of North and South Waziristan, a region also claimed by Afghanistan, may become the first territory of Pashtunistan, as Pakistan appears unable to gain control of that entire region as Pakistan, the nation-state, continues in the direction of a failed state. Ironically, Pakistan's efforts to divide Afghanistan and its Pashtun population into warring tribal alliances may now be modified in an effort to form Pashtunistan from increasingly fragmented provinces in Afghanistan's Pashtun belt.

In Afghanistan, Taliban fighters are entering a fourth year without having the capability to initiate any significant major "spring offensives" and this is having an impact on their military credibility, especially in the northern and central sections of the country. Simultaneously, the "Pakistani Taliban" is experiencing both military and political successes. As a result, the Pakistanis may soon see the emergence of additional opportunities to gain the cooperation of Afghanistan's rural Pashtuns while granting additional autonomy to Pashtun-occupied areas in the western part of their country, an initial step toward controlling the demands to create Pashtunistan. This tactic may be more attractive as the US Government enters into quiet, direct negotiations with Afghanistan's Taliban. It is not lost on Pakistan's leaders that this is occurring as a Durrani, Hamid Karzai, is governing Afghanistan from Kabul and may be quietly supporting Pakistan's Pashtun nationalists, providing an additional impetus for the Pakistanis to support Pashtun unity in an effort to control the outcome of the negotiations.

Increasingly, it appears that some component of the Pakistani government is in league once again with the Ghilzai Pashtun Confederation, as they were in the anti-Soviet jihad when the Pakistanis dealt the Durrani Pashtun Confederation out of any leadership positions in the insurgency. It is becoming difficult for even Pakistan's most staunch supporters to deny that a connection exists between their security services and the Haqqani family, Zadran Ghilzai Pashtuns, in relationship that harkens back to the 1970s when Daud overthrew the king, Zahir Shah, and strengthened his efforts to create Pashtunistan.²⁶ To most analysts and observers, the Haqqani family and supporters function as armed surrogates of the Pakistani security services, probably with the promise of autonomy in the Pakistani-dominated Pashtunistan-to-be.

Simultaneously, the Awami National Party (ANP) that is the "direct descendent" of Ghaffar Khan's "Red Shirts," has become a prominent political entity among Pakistan's Pashtuns and previously gained control of Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province's parliament, now renamed Khyber Pashtunkhwa, a concession to the Pashtun population from Islamabad. Ghaffar Khan, also known as Bacha Khan, was an advocate of the creation of Pashtunistan. Khan's grandson and the other leaders of the ANP have traveled to Afghanistan where Hamid Karzai was preparing to create a medal "in the name of Bacha Khan" before these ANP leaders went to Kabul on what resembled a state visit.²⁷

Concurrently, the resolve previously demonstrated with additional forces into Afghanistan, the French president's speech in London that explicitly stated that the Taliban would not be allowed to return to power in Afghanistan, and western decisions to send additional troops is slipping. The impact on the Pashtun Taliban movement is eroding as NATO's resolve begins to slip as quickly as that of the Obama Administration. Also, the Taliban and other Muslim extremist groups remaining in the field may be awaiting the results related to the 2012 US Presidential elections that could end with U.S. troops being withdrawn as the insurgents hope for a Vietnam-like decision for Afghanistan. Much like the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong, the insurgents in Afghanistan have little chance of winning a victory through combat operations and look to the American political

26. See Oliver Roy's excellent article, "The Origins of the Islamist Movement in Afghanistan," *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 3, issue 2, 1984, pp. 117-127 for information on the early movement of Afghan revolutionaries and support they received from the Bhutto government as the Pakistanis sought to counter Daud's efforts to create Pashtunistan.

27. <http://www.khyberwatch.com/forums/showthread.php?t=1141>

process for their survival, since it appears that the current political administration intends to strive for a negotiated settlement in Afghanistan.

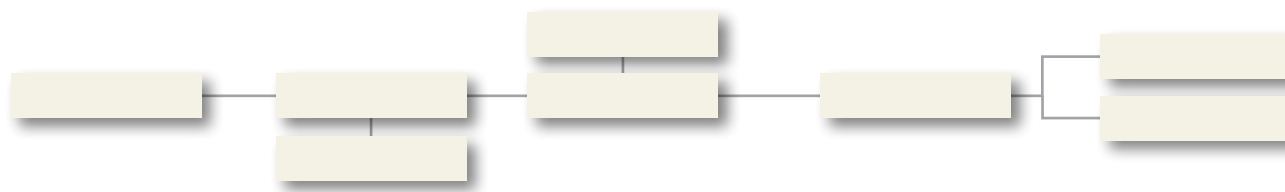
Pakistan's political leadership may now face what they created in Afghanistan as Afghan and Coalition forces continue to stymie the Taliban insurgency and the effort to create Pashtunistan also continues to move east – deeply into Pakistan, itself. Will the people of South Asia realize that these “Dragon's Teeth” were sown by the Pakistanis, themselves, in an effort to ensure that the new Pashtunistan they feared never came into being? Did the Durrani forget what Pakistan's rulers did to them by keeping them from defeating the communists under Najibullah in 1987 when they had both Kandahar and victory in their grasp in order to keep the Durrani from sponsoring the Pashtun homeland? Will the successful creation of any form of Pashtunistan result in the gradual erosion of both Pakistan and Afghanistan?

It is entirely logical to believe that the Pakistani Pashtuns occupying elite positions in the military and government know how widespread the Pashtuns are within their national territory. Peshawar, Lahore, Multan, Sialkot, and many other urban areas in Pakistan were once occupied by Pashtuns. No one knows how many of the Mohajirs emigrating from India in 1947 were Pashtuns arriving from places where large, active Pashtun communities had existed for centuries. Two of these Indian Pashtuns were probably involved in the creation of the Deoband madrassa after the 1857 Mutiny against the British was over, a rebellion in which the “commander-in-chief” was a Pashtun. Historians and politicians also forget that the Mutiny – that the Indians and Pakistanis call a “revolution” – began in the garrison of Meerut, a town within India's Pashtun region at the time. Pakistan's eventual fate is far from settled, unfortunately, and their chronic concern over an Afghan-created Pashtunistan and the Pashtuns may no longer play a major role as Pakistan's elite Pashtuns now focus on the creation of their own form of Pashtunistan at Afghanistan's expense. Equally significant, Pakistan's Pashtuns may be quietly slow-rolling the other players in this iteration of the Great Game as they clandestinely support a Pashtun revolution aimed at their own government.

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Traditional anthropological research conducted among tribes inhabiting remote areas where insurgents and criminals operate has become increasingly difficult to implement. Studies carried out among people living in small-scale societies now are nearly impossible due to the physical dangers associated with the civil and religious unrest found in those areas. Swat, for example, has become so dangerous that Frederick Barth's studies only could be repeated at the risk of the investigator's life. Similar research is not feasible among Burma's Rohingya tribes located on both sides of the border with Bangladesh, as well as with the Pashtuns in Afghanistan's interior and within Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas, where even Pakistan's army enters with reluctance.

Given the difficulties of conducting direct fieldwork in conflictive areas, the Tribal Analysis Center utilizes an indirect approach. Using multidisciplinary research, we seek to collect and analyze data obtained from a wide variety of sources, both current and historical. In the absence of new ethnographic fieldwork to update our base of knowledge, the Tribal Analysis Center compiles and summarizes existing research and documents on tribal societies, combining this material with contemporary press reports and articles. We assume that much can be gleaned from well-informed observers who are not anthropologists, ranging from journalists and travelers to government officials.



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