

Zaker Hussain Ershad*

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ISLAM AND POLITICS IN CONTEMPORARY AFGHANISTAN

Abstract: In Afghanistan, Islam and politics are interlinked. In the history of Afghanistan, two kinds of such relationships were recorded. Moreover, we can say that Islam, as the religion of 99% of the Afghan people, existed in the all the historical periods of Afghanistan. The history of Afghanistan indicates an interference of Islam and politics as follows:

1. Passive presence: in this context, Islam did not impose just advocated social trade and attempted to justify the policy of the state. During the passive presence, we don't have any structured planning for the state and we don't have any Islamic pattern for public policy as to how we should govern. Afghanistan was defined by this process until 1919.
2. Active attendance: in this context, Islam claims to have a special part to play with respect to the government, as well as in society. The Mujahidins and Taliban advocated for this approach. But in fact they don't have any political plan to manage the country based on Sharia. They just emphasize on the Quran and Sunnat, but not in a clear way. This second Islam approach makes more reference to the doctrine, but it is at the same time a reaction to the internal and international issues, like modernization and so forth.

Keywords: *Islam, Afghanistan, Taliban, ethnic groups, religiosity, politics*

Introduction. Ethnicity and Islam in Afghanistan

The founder of the modern Afghanistan is Ahmad Shāh Bābā (1722-1772), former commander of four thousand Abdali Pashtun soldiers, who became the Chief of Abdali confederation, after the death of Nader Shah Afshar of Persia in June 1747. One of Ahmad Khan's first acts as chief was to adopt the title *Padshah durr-i durrān* ("King", "pearl of pearls"). Rallying his Pashtun tribes and allies,

* Kateb Institute of Higher Education, Kabul, Afghanistan (zakerershad@yahoo.com).

Danubius, XXXII, Supliment, Galați, 2014, pp. 87-100.

he pushed east towards the Mughal and the Maratha Empire of India, west towards the disintegrating Afsharid Empire of Persia, and north toward the Khanate of Bukhara, creating the Durrani Empire (also called the Last Afghan Empire or Sadozai Kingdom).

On the first side, politics in Afghanistan was based on ethnicity and internal crisis since the beginning. Different groups of Pashtun struggled to take over the reins of political power in Afghanistan. It is my belief that throughout the history of Afghanistan, there has been a dedicated challenge between the Pashtun tribes, clans and families, specifically between Sadozai (Popalzai tribe) and Mohammadzai (Barakzai tribe), two families who gave the most rulers of Afghanistan between 1747 and 1979. Perhaps this is the main source for all the crises in Afghanistan.

On the other side, Islam was used as a tool that can justify social issues and legitimizes the policy carried out by politicians and the government. This process continued until 1979.

The relationship between religion and politics in Afghanistan has been articulated since 1979 by different forms, ranging from the secular state with marginalized Islamic groups and principles to the most fundamentalist religious government. All forms of interaction between Islam and politics in the country can be traced back to different theoretical interpretations of the Islamic teachings regarding politics, based on the political conditions that brought about a particular perception of Islamic tradition on politics.

Islam, in general, and Hanafi in particular, as the most influential religious cult, have experienced three different types of interactions with politics that could be categorized in these approaches: Islamic Society, Secular State, Islamic State and Islamic Emirate, and Islamic Republic. So, the discussion of the relationship between Islam and politics can be further divided into three aspects: Islamic State, Islamic Emirate, and Islamic Republic.

I. Islamic Society

Here, the Islamic Society refers to the relative separation between Islam as religion and the political affairs; according to this approach, the sphere of Islam is limited only to some aspects of social life without expanding its domain to define structure of the government and characteristics of rulers. The position of the Hanafi groups, making up for the majority of Afghanistan's population, against monarchy regimes in many decades of Afghanistan history had been justified based on this perspective. This interpretation of Islam was due to ethnical relations and the Dominance theory (Ghalaba theory); Since its establishment as a country in 1747, Afghanistan was indeed the outcome of tribal politics; traditionally, the Afghan

Kings were recognized as representatives and symbols of the Pashtun Tribe; therefore, in contrast with other ethnic groups, they latter usually supported the monarchies, because in tribal terms, a Pashtun King was as a symbol of dominance of the Pashtun Tribe in the country. In addition, the loyalty of the kings was justified religiously, based on theory of *Ghalaba*, a classic political theory among Hanafi scholars; according to this theory, if any ruler (just or unjust) become dominant in a society, the people are required to obey, because whenever faced with the choice between justice or the security of the society, the second choice takes priority over the first one. In addition to these points, there were other social reasons for the decline of the political dominance of religious discourse and groups: (1) the *tribal leaders*- in Afghanistan, as a traditional and ethnical nation, tribal leaders had been an influential social group in the political life, and they were always in a hidden competition with the religious leaders of the Afghan society. The monarchic system of the country considered the tribal leaders to be an important source for its legitimacy and a good social support for the monarchy as a whole; the cooperation between government and tribal leaders had made them a powerful competitor for the religious leaders.¹ (2) Sunni Islam has no established and organized clergy system;² as the clergy depends on the financial resources of landlords (*khans*) and government aids; this was a barrier in the battle for power. (3) With the withdrawal of the British forces from the Indian subcontinent, global politics changed; Afghanistan faced a nationalism discourse, not an Islamic movement.³ In the twentieth century, Afghanistan witnessed a remarkable mobility of modern intelligentsia, western education and press. In the early decades of the twentieth century, the rulers opened western and secular schools with foreign aid and teachers from France, Germany, the United States and Great Britain, to educate the statesmen. After the mid-1950s, the modern school system developed with expanded foreign aid. The government established primary schools in villages and districts, secondary schools in many provincial centers, and secondary boarding schools in Kabul for some graduates of provincial primary schools. A secular system of higher education has also been established.⁴ Therefore, the nationalist intellectual's role in the public and private sector of the Afghan society increased, while the position of graduates of religious schools was declining.⁵

¹ John L. Esposito, *Islam in Asia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 84.

² Olivier Roy, *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 4.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Barnett R Rubin, "Political Elites in Afghanistan: Rentier State Building, Rentier State Wrecking," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (February 1992):79- 81.

⁵ Ibid.

II. The Communist Regime: toward a secular state

The formation of a communist regime on April 27 1978 in Afghanistan was a unique phenomenon in the history of the country, a nation with a well-founded tradition and Islamic culture, once faced a secular state with signally hostile to religion including Islam. The communist regime tried to monopolize its power by subordinating all social forces in the country to one ideology and party.⁶ The regime emphasized on the clear separation between Islam and politics and the necessity of respecting religious rituals as long as they were separate from politics. Taraki, one of the leaders of the Khalq Party, addressed the matter and said: “there are some people who combine religion and politics and take the True Religion of Islam as an instrument for politics. After the Saur [April] Revolution there is no place for such endeavors. We honor our clergymen and religious leaders. As repeatedly emphasized, when they do not intervene in politics and do not oppose to the Saur Revolution, we will respect and honor them. But should they engage in demagoguery, deceive the masses, and do the veil of religion to rise against the Saur Revolution, we will not permit it.”⁷

The communist party was facing a serious problem, the majority of the Afghan people considered the communist regime as an enemy of Islam, and public opinions in the country were against the regime; the communist leaders gradually became aware that Islamic values are an irritating reality that could not be ignored; therefore they changed their tactic, instead of being hostile to religious values, the regime began to use religion to make legitimacy on the eye of the public; but the contrast between Islamic principles and communist ideals was a problem which needed to be resolved properly. The solution was to publicize the regime’s interpretation of Islamic values based on the Marxist theories to persuade the public opinion with regard to the similarity between Islam and Marxism. Taraki, a senior member of the Khalq Party claimed that the guideline for this is “serving the masses”. According to this criterion, we, compared to others, are the true servants of the masses.⁸ Our every single step and action is according to Islam and Sharia.”⁹ The regime had to step forward to picture its legitimacy through religious leaders (Ulama). In 1979, the regime established a religious council containing a number of clergymen.¹⁰ The declaration issued by the council in support of the regime shows the goals of its establishment: “Our Khaliqi state is the servant of the creatures of God and the protector of the religion of Islam and the sharia of Prophet

⁶ Esposito, *Islam in Asia*, 86.

⁷ *Anis Newspaper*, March 11, 1979, 3.

⁸ *Ibid*, May 24, 1971, 1.

⁹ *Ibid*, June 14, 1979, 3

¹⁰ Esposito, *Islam in Asia*, 88.

Mohammad... All the policies of this regime have been in accordance with Sharia and all the edicts issued have been according to Islam.”¹¹ Using Islam as a source of legitimization was highlighted by Parcham, another faction of communist party that came to power with the aid of the Soviet troops and after the invasion of Afghanistan. The Parcham members knew of the invasion intentions of their supporter, the Soviet Union. This made Afghans angry and so the regime’s legitimacy declined. Therefore, they increased their persuasive measures for the public opinion and tried to present a positive picture of the regime in the society. Karmal, member of Parcham, called the Soviet Invasion an “act of God.”¹² He also declared that “the Holy Religion of Islam and our national heritage are inseparable aspects of our national culture.”¹³ The efforts made by the regime to ensure legitimacy were not effective; in the Afghans’ perspective, the ruling party was similar to its supporter, the Soviet Union. The regime’s propagandists publicized the theory according to which the October Revolution presented the Muslim population of the Soviet Union with rights and freedoms that had been previously denied to them. Muslim religious leaders from the Soviet Union had been invited to Kabul and Afghan clergymen were sent to the republics of the Soviet Union.¹⁴

It is interesting to understand that the secular state of the communists, despite all ideological contradiction, had a huge hidden function in forming and expanding the first waves of Islamist movements which finally led to the establishment of a religious state after the collapse of the communist regime. Uprising against the communist regime and the invasion of the country by the Red Army, became indeed a historic opportunity for Afghan Islamists.

III. The Islamic State

The Intervention of religion in the political affairs of the country was induced by the Soviet Union’s invasion of Afghanistan in 1979; it caused the uprising of different fundamentalist and Jihadi groups. During the resistance against the Red Army, the Islamic parties gained a golden opportunity for fundraising and receiving considerable resources from the US and the Arab nations, both from the public and private sector. The formation of the Islamic resistance parties, mostly outside the country, led to the collapse of the communist regime headed by Najibullah in April 1992 and the establishment of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, a turning point for Political Islam in Afghanistan’s history. While Najibullah regime was coming down, Afghan Mujahidin, mainly Hanafis,

¹¹ *Anis Newspaper*, August 11, 1979, 1, 7.

¹² *FBIS Daily Report: South Asia*, June 20, 1980, c/ 1-5.

¹³ *Anis News Paper*, January 26, 1980, 1.

organized a transitional government; but instead of being an Association consensus, it became a battlefield on distribution of power among different parties. Despite the continuation of fighting for power and disagreement among Mujahidin, the first Islamic State in the country was established. In a political system whose structure and process of presidential election were based on a specific interpretation of Islamic political thought, the president was elected not through a public election but by an Islamic Council named Shura Ahl Al-Hal wa Al-'aqd (Council for problem solving and agreement-making); an Islamic council was first held to elect Caliph after the death of the prophet Mohammad in 632. This interpretation of the Islamic Political thought was considered a formal decision-making process which served for electing the president and facilitated the opportunity for some Jihadi groups including Jamiat Islami and its allies to monopolize political power in the country. Shura Ahl Al-Hal wa Al-'aqd as an electoral mechanism which, on one hand, could prevent the secular parties from taking power and on the other hand gave some religious groups a chance for political manipulation.

Contrary to the former Islamic Society's approach, the Islamic State had a determining role for Islam both with regard to the social life of Afghanistan and the political system, including the structuration of government and the election of the head of the State.

IV. The Islamic Emirate

The Islamic Emirate was a unique type of interrelation between politics and religion in Afghanistan's history; an illustrative example of tribal and totalitarian interpretation of Islamic concepts regarding politics. In the Islamic Emirate, political Islam was interpreted on a tribal context and used as instrument for the Pashtun hegemony on the territory of Afghanistan, where other ethnics were excluded from participation to the political system and women were deprived of their basic rights. The head of the government was elected by a council of clergymen in Qandahar, not as a leader or president but as an Emir, in this case, a Pashtun clergyman named Mullah Mohammad Omar. To explain the appearance of the Taliban in the battlefield of power in Afghanistan, we need to focus on its ideological roots and social background and the part played by the regional power in the creation of this fundamentalist Islamic movement; indeed, the Islamic Emirate, as a unique model of the Islamic political system in recent times and as an exclusive interpretation of the Islamic thought, can be explained in terms of three mentioned factors:

¹⁴ Esposito, *Islam in Asia*, 89.

IV.1. Ideological roots

During the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union, many Afghans fled to Pakistan, a country that had the most effective role in the support of Afghan resistance groups against the Soviet invasion, as a front line in the Cold War, hosting many fighters from all around the world, of the increasing motivations for fighting against the Soviet led to a Jihadi Ideology; therefore, many religious schools were established for young Afghans who had the potential of being future fighters. Many of these Afghan students were thought the Deobandi interpretation of Islam in schools administered by Jamaiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam, led by Maulana Fazl-ul-Rahman.¹⁵

The Deobandi derives from a religious school named Darul Uloom Deoband in Deoband, India; it was founded by influential muslim scholars in 1866.¹⁶ The Deobandi movement developed as a reaction to the British colonialism in India, which was considered by Muslim theologians to be corrupting Islam. Fearing its consequences, a group of Hanafi Muslim scholars founded an Islamic seminary known as Darul Uloom Deoband. It is here that the Islamic revivalist and anti-British ideology of the Deobandis began to expand. Their influence spread throughout the region, and hundreds of religious schools affiliated with Deoband expanded throughout India and Pakistan.¹⁷

The founders of this school were dogmatic Hanafis; they strayed to revive Islamic thought in the Indian Subcontinent and remove western education from their educational program.¹⁸ The pioneers of Deoband systematized this very flexible curricular template according to their own ideological needs and sensibilities; most notably they removed texts dealing with logic and philosophy and spread the significance of Hadith studies. The School then begun political activities and established a religious and political organization in 1919 called Jamaiat-e-Ulema-e-Hind. When the Muslim League was campaigning for Pakistan's independence from India, some members broke from the Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind in 1945, after the organization backed the Indian National Congress against the Muslim League's lobby for a separate and independent Pakistan and formed the Pakistani branch of the School which continued its religious and political activities

¹⁵ Neamatollah Nojumi, *The Rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan* (New York, Palgrave, 2002), 119.

¹⁶ "About DarulUloom," accessed July 13, 2013, <http://www.darululoom-deoband.com/english/aboutdarululoom/introduction.htm>.

¹⁷ Rama Sankar Yadav, B.N Mandal, *Global Encyclopedia of Islamic Mystics and mysticism*, Vol. 1 (New Delhi: Global Vision Publishing House, 2009), 64.

¹⁸ Ibid.

in Pakistan under the name of Jama'iat-e-Ulema-e-Islam as a political party.¹⁹ It then split into three separate parties known by the name of their heads: Jama'iat Ulema-e-Islam (Fazlur Rehman), Jama'iat Ulema-e-Islam (Sami ul Haq) and Jama'iat Ulema-e-Islam (Nazariati).

The most important principle of the deobandi movement, including the Taliban, is the revival of Chaliphate. Shah Waliullah, one of the pioneers of Deoband School, believed that Chaliphate would be formed through one of these four options: Shura Ahl Al-Hal wa Al-'aqd, Shura, Nasb (Appointment) and Ghalaba (Dominance).²⁰ According to this approach, Taliban established their state as an Emirate based on the Chaliphate theory of the Deobandi political thought; in this theory, such democratic mechanisms like elections are a lawful way of selecting the head of an Islamic country.²¹ They criticized the ex-Mujahideen leaders for not following the way of forming an Islamic Chaliphate. As a close source to the Taliban, Mohammad Mossa from the Darul Ifta-e- Wal Irshad writes: "thus the election of a Khalifah, the formation of a government was extremely sensitive and important in those blessed days of long ago and here in the present times the Mujahideen were asked to form a government in installment! This was the biggest mistake as it provided an opportunity for creating disturbance to every enemy of Islam. Another greater mistake was that Caliphate was purposely not mentioned anywhere, faithfulness to the martyred blood had demanded the use of terms Khalifa and Khilafat instead of president and prime minister. A Caliphate should have been established based upon the golden rules of Sharia, but this was not so".²² According to the Taliban, establishing an Islamic state means enforcing the Sharia in Afghanistan and bringing security and stability to the country. They considered it a religious obligation for the movement, and the leadership was committed to such an establishment. The Taliban supreme leader, Mullah Mohammad Omar, described the aims of the movement as follows: "To end the mischief in the country, to establish peace and security, to protect life, wealth and honor and to enforce the Sharia, do Jihad against the leaders who were devoted for power, and endeavor to make the land of Afghanistan an exemplary state."²³ To implement these ideas, they formed a special unit of police named Amr-e- Bil

¹⁹ Douglas Allen, *Religion and Political Conflict in South Asia: India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka* (US: Greenwood Press, 1992), 77.

²⁰ Shah Waliullah al-Dahlawi, *Hujjatullah al-Balighah*, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dar al-Jil, 2005), 137-8.

²¹ Nojumi, *The Rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan*, 152.

²² Mohammad Mossa, "The Taliban Movement and Their Goals," *Darul Ifta-e-Wal Irshad*, Peshawar, Pakistan, 7th Moharram 1417 (June 20, 1998).

²³ Nazir Laghari, Mufti Jamil Khan, Interview with the Amirul Mumineen, Peshawar, Pakistan, June 1998.

M'arouf, the General Department for the Preservation of Virtue and the Elimination of Vice. This organization, headed by Mawlwi Qalamuddin, had thousands of informers in the army, government ministries and hospitals who monitored foreigners and western aid agencies.²⁴

IV.2 Social Background

The Taliban is not just a religious party that can only be identified based on their religious relationship with the School of Deobandi and Wahhabism, but indeed the group is a product of ethnic relations and culture in the southern area of Afghanistan; this movement raised within a Pashtun region; therefor it has to be understood in term of its ethnic history.

As the ancient kings of Afghanistan, the Pashtun constituted nearly the full ranks of the Taliban government. The war in Afghanistan was not a simple religious war. For the Pashtun, it was an ethnic war, a war of revenge of plots by warring tribes and a struggle for power. Afghanistan appeared as an independent country as the Durrani confederation (1747-1818), a powerful Pashtun tribe; it derived its power from the tribal relations in different periods of time and historic developments. The distinctive feature of the Durrani confederation was its tribal structure: the government was ethnically Pashtun and religiously the Sunni interpretation of Islam. The Confederation brought all Pashtuns together under one political system. Pashtuns constituted the backbone of the confederation's military forces, and they were treated more preferentially than other ethnic groups in the country, with lower taxes and enjoying large land distribution. During the Durrani kingdom, the Pashtuns enjoyed an institutionalized military, economic, and political dominance in the country. Therefore, as Ahadi writes: now "the Pashtuns believe that they constitute the majority in Afghanistan, that the Afghan state was formed by the Pashtuns, that Afghanistan is the only Pashtun state in the world, and that the minorities should accept the Afghan character of the state".²⁵ But things did not happen as they expected. Ahadi writes: "The collapse of the Najibullah regime in Kabul in April 1992 not only ended the communist era in Afghanistan but also heralded the end of Pashtun dominance in Afghan politics. Indeed, for many commentators as well as politicians this change in ethnic relations was more significant than the defeat of communism".²⁶

A long history of living as the ruling class and then losing that position was very painful for the Pashtuns. To go from an undesirable position and reach to what

²⁴ Ahmad Rashid, "Scourge of God," *Far Eastern Economic Review* (August 7, 1997): 55.

²⁵ Anwar-ul-Haq Ahady, "The Decline of the Pashtuns in Afghanistan," *Asian Survey* (July 1995): 634.

was desired gave way for a serious need to change the political players, the current players. Pashtun Mujahidin were not able to restore the Pashtuns to their historical position because of the following reasons: firstly, the formation of different non Pashtun political parties against the invasion of the country by the Soviet Union made the interethnic relations more competitive than before; following the formation of non-Pashtun factions, the struggle for power became serious and sometime led to conflicts.

Secondly, the Pashtuns suffered from a political division, as there were six Pakistan-based Pashtun resistance parties which enabled the Pashtuns to receive more than their fair share of foreign military and financial aid, but it also promoted rivalry, suspicion, and frequently violent clashes between them. This intra-Pashtun conflict prevented the leaders of Pashtun-dominated organizations to coordinate their military activities and take a united political stand during the chaotic downfall of the communist regime.²⁷

Thirdly, the gap between the Pashtun resistance parties and the Pashtun masses affected the trust between them, and weakened their position in the interethnic relations.

All of the above gave way for a new movement that could restore the past to the Pashtuns. Therefore, the Taliban played the role of saviors for Pashtuns; which led to the formers attracting the support of the majority of the Pashtuns. So, in addition to the sense that the Taliban was a religious movement, pro- Taliban Pashtuns were motivated by a kind of ethno-nationalism.²⁸

III. 4 International Actor

Throughout its history, Afghanistan has been the subject of a geostrategic competition between regional and international players. In the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Afghanistan was as a battlefield between Russia and Britain. To resist the Russian expansionism, the British tried to establish a defensive zone that included parts of Afghanistan. Despite the Russians having their eyes set on the Indian shores, they were also worried that Britain sought to dominate South Asia. Therefore, Russia maintained its military presence in northern Afghanistan and Iran.²⁹ When the British left the region in the late 1940s, the US replaced them as a challenger of the Soviet and the new superpower in the

²⁶ Ibid., 621-2.

²⁷ Ibid, 626.

²⁸ Robert D. Crews, Amin Tarzi, *The Taliban and the Crises of Afghanistan* (Harvard University Press, 2008), 219.

²⁹ Steven R. Galster, "Rivalry and Reconciliation in Afghanistan: What Prospects for the Accords?," *Third World Quarterly* (October 1988): 1507.

region. The invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union intensified the competition between two super powers. The US and its allies spent a lot of resources to back Afghan Mujahedin and defeat the Soviet. When the Soviet withdrew from Afghanistan, the country suffered civil war for many years, and the US remained neutral without any intervention for or against any side; during these years, the US followed its interests indirectly through Pakistan. In order to have more control on Afghanistan, Pakistan organized the Taliban with the aid of the financial support of Saudi Arabia and the private sector of the Arab countries. Pakistan did everything while coordinated by the US. Each of these three countries had their own aims with regard to the support of the Taliban; Pakistan followed its influence on Afghanistan in order to use it as its strategic ally in a prospective confrontation with India and to access to Central-Asian markets. Saudi Arabia saw the Taliban as a useful instrument to use in order to expand the religious influence of the Salafi interpretation of Islam on the region against the Shia Muslim country, Iran. The United States encouraged Saudi Arabia and Pakistan to support the Taliban, certainly right up to their advance on Kabul on September 26, 1996; on one hand the US did this to torment Shia Iran by supporting the Salafi Taliban, who saw the Shia as their religious enemy; on the other hand, the US intended to use the Taliban as an instrument for security of the prospective gas and oil pipeline from Central Asia to Pakistan.

V. Islam in the Present Regime

Given the relation between religion and the political system in Post-Taliban Afghanistan, the current Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is also formed as an Islamic Society, where the Islamic values are respected, religious principles play a defined role in regulations, but the structure of the political system is secular and the election of rulers are regulated by democratic principles.

The current regime, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, is a combination of Islamic principles and secular values. On one hand, there is an emphasis on the enforcement of Islamic rules in the country; on the other hand, there is a commitment to democracy and human rights which is mandatory. Article 1 of Afghanistan's Constitution states: "Afghanistan shall be an Islamic Republic, independent, unitary and indivisible state." Additionally, Article 7 states that "No law shall contravene the tenets and provisions of the holy religion of Islam in Afghanistan". In Article 7, which deals with the obligation of the State to promote education at all levels, the development of religious education and improvement of the conditions of mosques, religious schools and centers are specially emphasized. This duty is further emphasized in Article 45 where the State is required to implement a unified educational curriculum based on the provisions of Islam and to

develop the curriculum of religious subjects on the basis of the various Islamic schools of thought existing in Afghanistan.

Besides the emphasis on Islam, observance of human rights and democratic values is also highlighted in Afghanistan's Constitution, as it announces that "The state shall be required to create a prosperous and progressive society based on social justice, preservation of human dignity, protection of human rights, realization of democracy, attainment of national unity as well as equality between all peoples and tribes and balanced development of all areas of the country".³⁰

In the current regime, the religion's position is defined in terms of two main determinant factors: expectations of the international community and social condition, including the past experience and the current situation of the country. The new Afghanistan and the overthrowing of the Taliban were indeed the great achievements of the US and its allies, attained with remarkable sacrifices and costs; in establishing the new Afghanistan, they had their own expectations regarding democracy and human rights. Afghans, as partners of the US and NATO, had to consider the international viewpoints in forming the new state. Afghanistan is seriously dependent on US and EU support in different fields including financial, political and technical aids.

Another determinant factor with regard to the religion's position in the present political system of Afghanistan is the social condition of the country; the experience of Afghanistan plays an important role in the relations between politics and religion. Emphasis on democracy and human rights, indeed, is a response to the dictatorship of the past; unfortunately the dictatorships in the country always used all instruments to sustain their system, including religion and ethnicity. In Afghanistan, as a multi-ethnic country, religion could be used as a justification for discrimination and injustice against minorities; the massacre of Hazaras during the reign of king Abdur Rahman, the civil war with thousands of casualties and the killing of minority groups by Taliban government, all had been done with a somewhat religious justification, but at least these painful experiences had illustrated that a religious government in Afghanistan could be more of a source of suffering than happiness.

Conclusions

As mentioned above, we have three periods which could help us explain the relationship between Islam and politics in Afghanistan: the period of mujahedin, Taliban and the present regime. The Islamic Principles have interfered with politics

³⁰ "The Constitution of Afghanistan," accessed July 15, 2013, http://www.afghanweb.com/politics/current_constitution.html.

in all these periods. Especially in the first and second period, the society of Afghanistan was influenced by the values of Islam, subject to Taliban and mujahedin interpretation. We can say that the political Islam was born during these times. According to the rigidity of this interpretation, the society of Afghanistan was faced with civil strife. So the different groups reject the interferences of Islam in the political sphere. Moreover, we can state that this kind of political Islam is a reaction to conflict. For example when the mujahedin regime fell and Afghanistan was faced with anarchism, the Taliban groups appeared in Afghanistan. When the Taliban induced hostility among of people of Afghanistan and led the country to religious fervor, this regime was also overthrown and new one was established, today's Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

REFERENCES

- "About DarulUloom." Accessed July 13, 2013. <http://www.darululoom-deoband.com/english/aboutdarululoom/introduction.htm>.
- Ahady, Anwar-ul-Haq. "The Decline of the Pashtuns in Afghanistan." *Asian Survey*, July 1995.
- Al-Dahlawi, Shah Waliullah. *Hujjatullah al-Balighah*, vol. 2, Beirut: Dar al-Jil, 2005.
- Allen, Douglas. *Religion and Political Conflict in South Asia: India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka*. US: Greenwood Press, 1992.
- *Anis Newspaper*, March 11, 1979.
- Crews, D. Robert and Amin Tarzi. *The Taliban and the Crises of Afghanistan*. Harvard University Press, 2008.
- Esposito, L. John. *Islam in Asia*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.
- *FBIS Daily Report: South Asia*, June 20, 1980, c/ 1-5.
- Galster, R. Steven. "Rivalry and Reconciliation in Afghanistan: What Prospects for the Accords?." *Third World Quarterly*, October, 1988.
- Laghari, Nazir, and Mufti Jamil Khan. Interview with the Amirul Mumineen. Peshawar, Pakistan, June 1998.
- Mossa, Mohammad. "The Taliban Movement and Their Goals." *Darul Ifta-e-Wal Irshad*. Pakistan: Peshawar, 7th Moharram 1417 (June 20, 1998).
- Nojumi, Neamatollah. *The Rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan*. New York: Palgrave, 2002.
- Yadav, Rama Sankar, and B.N Mandal. *Global Encyclopedia of Islamic Mystics and mysticism*. Vol. 1, New Delhi: Global Vision Publishing House, 2009.

- Rashid, Ahmad. "Scourge of God." *Far Eastern Economic Review*, August 7, 1997.
- Roy, Olivier. *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986.
- Rubin, R. Barnett. "Political Elites in Afghanistan: Rentier State Building, Rentier State Wrecking." In *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, February 1992.
- "The Constitution of Afghanistan," Accessed July 15, 2013. http://www.afghan-web.com/politics/current_constitution.html.