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AFGHANISTAN X. POLITICAL HISTORY

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The year 1160/1747 marks the definitive appearance of an Afghan political entity independent of both the Safavid and Mughal empires. In 1121/1709 a Ḡilzay uprising, led by the Hōtakī tribal chief Mīr Ways, had freed all of southern Afghanistan from Safavid control, thus establishing the basis of a state which would extend westwards into the heart of Persia (fall of Isfahan, 1135/1722); but the retaliation led by Nāder Shah Afšār destroyed the new state in a few rapid attacks (fall of Qandahār [Kandahār], 1150/1738; of Kabul, 1151/1738), and the Afghan territory was once again annexed to the Persian empire. Nāder's policy towards Afghanistan was based on the support he was able to find among the Abdālīs, traditional rivals of the Ḡilzī, who had newly taken over some of the Abdālī territory; thus Aḥmad Khan (b. 1135/1722), a young Abdālī leader of the Sadōzay branch of the Pōpalzay tribe, also allied to the Alīkōzī on his mother's side, came to be named governor of Māzandarān and then commander of the Paṣtūn contingent of 4,000 men in Nāder's army.

Aḥmad Shah Dorrānī (1160-86/1747-72). (See Table 12.) The political vacuum caused by Nāder Shah's assassination (11 Jomādā II) 1160/9 June 1747) led to the emergence of several local dynasties. Aḥmad Khan was thus elected king

of the Afghans by a *ǰerga* or tribal council of Paṣtūn chiefs; in October of the same year he was crowned at a location not far from Qandahār, the city that became his capital. By this time the Abdālī confederation had changed its name to Dorrānī in imitation of his royal title, Dorr-e Dorrān (Pearl of Pearls). Primarily with the support of the Paṣtūn tribes, whose members made up the greater part of his army and whose aristocracy formed the hereditary royal officer corps, Aḥmad Shah was able to take advantage of the disintegration of the Persian and Mughal empires and pursue a boldly expansionist policy, thus contributing decisively to the emergence of a pan-Paṣtūn national sentiment. At its height (see Figure 19), his empire extended from the Āmū Daryā (Bactria and Badaḵšān annexed in 1164/1751) to the Oman Sea, and from Khorasan (where Šāhroḵ, grandson of Nāder Shah, became his vassal in 1162/1749) to the Ganges plain (fall of Delhi, 1170/1757). For several decades the Dorrānī empire was the dominating regional power. Its victory over the strong army of the Maratha confederation at Panipat (1174/1761) even played a decisive historical role, by giving the British enough time to consolidate the foothold they had gained in Bengal at the battle of Plassey (1170/1757). But the unity of the empire was fragile. Chronic uprisings in the north and northwest clearly indicated that the submission of the non-Paṣtūn populations was more superficial than real, especially since they were burdened by a deliberately unfavorable fiscal policy. At the same time the rise of Sikh power in the east prevented the Afghans from maintaining their hold on the left bank of the Indus (loss of Lahore, 1179/1765).

Tīmūr Shah (1186-1207/1772-93). Centrifugal tendencies intensified after Aḥmad Shah's death (20 Raǰab 1186/16 October 1772) and the accession of his chosen successor, his younger son Tīmūr, who had been governor of Herat. Although he succeeded in containing the Sikh offensive—Multan, lost in 1186/1772, was recaptured in 1194/1780—he surrendered effective control of Sind and a part of Bactria, which were no longer connected to the Afghan empire except through vague and nominal feudal ties. But it was in the heart of the empire that disintegration threatened most seriously. Lacking his father's charisma, Tīmūr Shah looked for support less from the Paṣtūn tribes and more from the urbanized and Persianized (Tajik, Qizilbāš) elements, whose influence was increasing in the army and administration; this new policy was exemplified by the transfer of the capital from Qandahār, in Paṣtūn territory, to Kabul (1189/1775). Although he hoped to reinforce a national consensus and consolidate his power, he only succeeded in alienating the Paṣtūn tribal aristocracy without becoming reconciled with the urban classes,

who were still under great tax burdens. The Sadōzay monarchy rapidly lost its social base; the death of Tīmūr Shah (7 Šawwāl 1207/18 May 1793) led to a period of anarchy, palace revolutions, and tribalism that was to last nearly half a century.

In contrast to what had happened twenty years earlier, no guidelines were known to exist for the succession, which was disputed by the many sons of the dead sovereign (34 sons from 14 different wives have been attributed to him). Each pretender represented a different tribal faction through matrimonial ties. Gradually the empire was transformed into a conglomerate of independent and rival principalities, each centered around a stronghold with unstable boundaries (Kabul, Peshawar, Ḡaznī, Qandahār, Herat). Among these Kabul remained the most prestigious, since its possession conferred the then rather symbolic but envied title “king of the Afghans;” hence the power struggle was waged most ferociously in eastern Afghanistan. Zamān Shah, governor of Kabul at the time of his father’s death, initially succeeded in maintaining his position, but in 1216/1800 he was put to flight by his half brother Maḥmūd, who was supported by the Dorrānī over Zamān because of the latter’s Yūsofzay relations through his mother. Maḥmūd Shah is replaced three years later by one of Zamān’s full brothers, Šoǰāʿ-al-molk, who was in turn supported by the Ḡilzī and the Persianized population of Kabul. Finally Maḥmūd Shah regained his Kabul throne after defeating Shah Šoǰāʿ at Nemla (1224/1809).

Dōst Moḥammad (1235-79/1819-63). While the Sadōzay dynasty continued to exhaust itself in fratricidal conflict, the strong Bārakzay tribe of the Dorrānīs consolidated its political role and became a rival of the Pōpalzī. Once the main ally of Zamān Shah, it refused support him after he put to death their chief Pāyanda Khan (1213/1799), who was from the Moḥammadzay branch of their tribe and had been accused, not without reason it seems, of having conspired against the shah. For over ten years the tribe then followed Maḥmūd, whose mother was a Moḥammadzay; during Maḥmūd’s two reigns, Fatḥ Khan, the eldest son of Pāyanda Khan, became his principal consultant. Fatḥ Khan’s assassination in 1233/1818 by the king’s son, Kāmrān, who was jealous of his prerogatives, triggered a national *badal* (vendetta) between the Moḥammadzī and the Sadōzī and led Dōst Moḥammad, half brother of Fatḥ Khan, to overthrow Maḥmūd Shah (1235/1819), who retreated to Herat. After Maḥmūd’s death (1245/1829), Kāmrān governed western Afghanistan until his assassination in 1258/1842. Although 1235/1819 marks the beginning of the

Moḥammadzay dynasty, which, with the exception of a brief period in 1255-59/1839-43, was to reign until 1973, only in 1241/1826 after a bitter struggle with several of his brothers was Dōst Moḥammad, strengthened by a Qizilbāš alliance achieved because of his mother's origins, able to establish himself firmly in Kabul.

The political convulsions of the last years of the 18th century and the first quarter of the 19th century had led to the empire's dismemberment. A Qajar offensive resulted in the loss of western Khorasan (1209/1795) and a direct threat to Herat, which was besieged in 1249/1833 and in 1253/1837. To the north of the Hindu Kush, various Uzbek principalities entered the orbit of khanate of Bokhara. In the south, the khanate of Kalāt became independent. In the east, the Sikh sovereign, Ranjit Singh, successively took Multan (1233/1818), Kashmir (1235/1819), Dērajāt (1236/1821), and Peshawar (1250/1834). The loss of the rich Indian provinces decisively weakened the Afghan empire, since they had supplied it with essential revenues. The reconstitution of the empire and more particularly the recapture of Peshawar, his former winter capital, was to become Dōst Moḥammad's obsession during his entire reign.

In 1252/1836 Dōst Moḥammad officially took the title *amīr al-moʾmenīn* (commander of the believers), though his predecessors employed the title shah (which was not used again until 1926). At this time he was the leader of a second rate state squeezed between the Hazārajāt, the Hindu Kush, and the Solaymān mountains; the Qandahār region was virtually autonomous under a younger branch of the Moḥammadzī, and the Herat region was a Sadōzay principality. His policy aimed at providing a prosperous economic base from which he could reunify the empire. He instituted a regular army on the European model and turned first towards the east, proclaiming a *ǰehād* against the Sikhs under Ranjit Singh. But the regional geopolitical situation had changed from the previous century; with England and Russia established on Afghanistan's borders, Dōst Moḥammad's plans could not leave them indifferent.

The English became interested in Afghan affairs in the early years of the 19th century, when they established themselves in the upper valley of the Ganges. As early as 1223-24/1808-09 they had sent Mountstuart Elphinstone to Peshawar to negotiate a defensive treaty with Shah Šoǰāʿ directed against Napoleon's oriental ambitions. This marked the beginning of uninterrupted direct contact, whether official or officious, between the two countries. The

first British resident at the Kabul court, Charles Masson, was accredited in 1250/1835; in 1253/1837 an official mission directed by Alexander Burnes arrived in the capital. Three months later a similar Russian mission, directed by Ivan Vitkevich, also arrived; thus began the Anglo-Russian "great game" in central Asia. For a long time to come, Afghanistan lost all initiative in forging its history and became the object of European imperialism.

The English made the first move in the game. Supposing that their Indian interests were directly endangered both by Dōst Moḥammad's territorial ambitions and by the seemingly effective Russian intrigues at Kabul, they initiated a policy of destabilization with the object of replacing the Afghan king by Shah Šoǰāʿ, their former protégé, who was living in exile at Ludhiana. At first the operation was a complete success. Sikh neutrality was obtained, and a rapidly formed "Army of the Indus" approached Afghanistan by way of Sind and the Bolan pass. Qandahār and Kabul fell without hostilities on 10 Ṣafar 1255/25 April 1839 and 26 Jomādā II/7 August respectively. A short while earlier, Dōst Moḥammad had abandoned his throne to Shah Šoǰāʿ and sought refuge in Bokhara. The Sadōzay dynasty was restored, but it was the English who governed the country, in the person of William Macnaghten, "Envoy and Minister on the part of the Government of India at the Court of Shah Shuja al-mulk." The invasion rapidly turned into a disaster; guerrillas, at first coordinated more or less by Dōst Moḥammad himself and later, after his surrender (1256/1840) and deportation to Calcutta, by his son Moḥammad Akbar Khan, incessantly harassed the English garrisons and communication lines. Their operations led to the Kabul uprising of Ramażān, 1257/November, 1841 during which A. Burnes, Macnaghten's assistant, was assassinated, followed a short time later by Macnaghten himself. The British saw their occupation becoming very costly; abandoning Kabul, they kept garrisons only at Jalālābād and Qandahār. Their retreat from Kabul took place in the middle of winter and led to the almost total destruction of an army of 16,000 humiliated and starving soldiers and camp followers. After some hesitation, a punitive expedition was launched. Entering Afghanistan by the Khyber pass, the "army of retribution" under General Pollock marched on Kabul on 18 Šaʿbān 1258/16 September 1842 and was joined there two days later by 6,000 men from Qandahār under General Nott. In the guise of retaliation, the famous covered bazaar of Kabul was destroyed on 9 October. Three days later, the English withdrew from Afghanistan and thus put an end to the first Anglo-Afghan War. Meanwhile, Shah Šoǰāʿ, having lost British protection, was put to death on 23 Ṣafar 1258/5 April 1842. His son Fatḥ Jang declared himself king

but finally decided to abdicate and retreat with Pollock's army. He left on the throne one of his brothers, Šāhpūr, who remained there only as long as it took Dōst Moḥammad to return to the capital (1259/1843).

Dōst Moḥammad's second reign commenced with the same imperatives as his first: to raise the country from ruins before attempting to reconstitute an empire. Renouncing his claims to Peshawar and the rich Indus provinces, which had come under direct English control after the takeover of the Sikh state (1265/1849), the amir sought a British alliance, against the advice of some of his counselors. He finished by obtaining the Peshawar Treaty (1271/1855), which eventually allotted him an annual subsidy. Loyal to his new political line, Dōst Moḥammad made no attempt to take advantage of the difficulties in India caused by the mutiny of 1273-74/1857. Deliberately turning his territorial ambitions in another direction, in a dozen years he succeeded in reconstituting an Afghan state whose boundaries have stayed more or less the same until today. The main stages were the progressive annexation (between 1266/1850 and 1276/1859) of the entire territories between the Hindu Kush and the Āmū Daryā, the reconquest of Qandahār at the death of his half brother, Kōhandel Khan (1272/1855), the annexation of Konar, and finally the recapture of Herat. The last was a difficult task that occupied all the end of his reign, since the city was also coveted by the Persians, who controlled it from 1272/1856 to 1279/1863. At Dōst Moḥammad's death (21 Ḏu'l-ḥeǰǰa 1279/9 June 1863) Afghanistan existed again, although smaller than in Sadōzay times. But its unity remained as precarious as ever; the Ġilzī still could not easily accept Dorrānī sovereignty, and control over the central mountain regions and the east was at best intermittent. It was left to Dōst Moḥammad's successors to consolidate his work.

Šēr ʿAlī (1285-96/1868-79). The lack of a stipulated procedure for succession once again caused difficulties. Šēr ʿAlī, who had a Pōpalzay mother, was governor of Herat at the time of his father's death and the designated crown prince, but he did not succeed in imposing his will on his stepbrothers Moḥammad Afżal and Moḥammad Aʿẓam, whose mother was a Bangaš. At first defeated, they later succeeded in capturing Kabul (1282/1866) and then Qandahār (1283/1867), forcing Šēr ʿAlī to seek refuge in Herat. First Afżal Khan, and after his death (1284/1867) Aʿẓam Khan, became amir of Kabul. Thanks to generous English subsidies, Šēr ʿAlī finally managed to regain the throne in 1285/1868; for ten years he reigned without opposition other than that of his own son, Moḥammad Yaʿqūb, who tried to follow a personal course by finding

support among the population of Herat, where he was governor, and the Mohmands, to whom he was related through his mother.

Šēr ʿAlī's ten-year rule brought about decisive changes. For the first time domestic policy, boldly constructive and geared towards the modernization of institutions, took precedence over the demands of foreign policy. The reforms, according to all evidence inspired by Sayyed Jamāl-al-dīn Afḡānī, may seem superficial, and they were not all carried through; but their importance for the development of contemporary Afghanistan should not be underestimated. The basis for a centralized administration was set down in the form of an embryonic ministerial cabinet and a thirteen-member consultative council. The royal family's monopoly of provincial government functions—a custom that had demonstrated its danger to national unity—was breached. A reform of the fiscal system made cash taxation widespread and put an end to tax-farming. A regular postal service between Kabul and the world was instituted by way of Peshawar. The first public school was opened in the capital and the first Afghan newspaper *Šams al-nahār*, was published. Several industrial establishments, the first of their kind, were created at Kabul and Herat to meet the needs of the national army.

Šēr ʿAlī also engaged in intense diplomatic activity with Afghanistan's neighbors, though this did not change the fact that all important questions concerning the regional geopolitics continued to be handled directly by the interested great powers, England and Russia. A British mission dealt with the Perso-Afghan territorial dispute in the Sīstān region by marking boundaries that did not satisfy either of the two parties (1288-89/1872). In 1290/1873, an Anglo-Russian accord gave each power a zone of influence in Central Asia, with Afghanistan in the English sphere. But the persistent rivalry between the two imperialist powers condemned any such defined equilibrium to constant instability; while Russia methodically continued its penetration into lower Central Asia (fall of Kokand in 1292/1875), the rise to power of the Tories in London (1874) resulted in the adoption of a foreign policy that was determinedly aggressive ("forward") and led to a second Anglo-Afghan war.

The English wanted to control Afghan politics directly by installing a permanent diplomatic mission at Kabul (since the Treaty of Peshawar, only an Indian Moslem *wakīl* represented British interests). A request to install this mission was made several times, but the Afghans never granted it because it was not accompanied by an offer for a formal defensive alliance, which they desired to counter the Russian advance in Central Asia. Meanwhile a Moslem

agent of the czar was accredited in Kabul in 1875, and three years later General Stoletov arrived without advance notice to negotiate a Russo-Afghan treaty. As a result the British pressed even harder to receive the same treatment, and the amir's hesitations were interpreted as proof of Russian interference in Afghan affairs. After sending an ultimatum that was left unanswered, the British dispatched three different columns totaling 30,000 men through the Bolān, Paywār, and Khyber passes (Moḥarram, 1296/November, 1878). Only the second met with some resistance. Jalālābād and Qandahār were occupied without fighting, and the capital found itself threatened when Šēr ʿAlī departed, leaving his son Moḥammad Yaʿqūb as regent. The amir went to Bactria where he hoped to receive aid from the Russians, but they had been diplomatically isolated in Europe since the Berlin Congress (1878) and offered nothing. Šēr ʿAlī died a short while later (29 Ṣafar 1296/21 February 1879). As the new amir, Yaʿqūb signed the humiliating Treaty of Gandamak (4 Jomādā II 1296/26 May 1879). In exchange for a guarantee of territorial integrity and an annual subsidy for the amir, Afghanistan lost control of its foreign policy and ceded the strategic districts of Pishin and Sibi at the mouth of the Bolān pass, the lower Kurram valley, and the Afrīdī territory that crosses the Khyber and Michni passes; these were frontier rectifications aimed at establishing the "scientific frontier" of India, a permanent obsession of English policy in Asia in the 19th century. The treaty also required that an English resident be named to Kabul. After the first holder of this post, Sir Louis Cavagnari, was assassinated by mutinous Afghan soldiers forty-seven days after his arrival (16 Ramażān 1296/3 September 1879), on 12 October General Roberts took Kabul, obtained Yaʿqūb's abdication, and established a military government under his own supervision. During this second occupation of eastern Afghanistan, basic policy differences existed among the British; certain strategists advised the establishment of a British protectorate over Qandahār and the transfer of Herat to Persia, while others favored making the country into a buffer-state between British India and Russian Turkestan. With the return to power of the liberals (1880), the latter solution prevailed.

ʿAbd-al-Raḥmān (1297-1319/1880-1901). There were two potential candidates to rule Afghanistan in its new role. The first, Sardār ʿAbd-al-Raḥmān Khan (b. 1260/1844), was the son of Moḥammad Afżal, the rival of Šēr ʿAlī; he had actively participated in the civil war between his father and uncle before finding refuge in Samarqand, where he lived on a Russian pension for ten years. In February, 1880, he returned to Afghanistan and in a short time was

able to gather around himself the government troops stationed in Bactria. The second candidate was one of Šēr ʿAlī's sons, Sardār Moḥammad Ayyūb Khan, who was at Herat with a powerful and well-equipped army. Despite the fact that the Russians supported ʿAbd-al-Raḥmān, a British offered him the throne, reasoning that he would be more capable of directing a strong buffer-state. On 2 Šaʿbān 1297/22 July 1880, after the ʿAbd-al-Raḥmān had accepted all the clauses of the Gandamak Treaty—although he successfully demanded that the representative of the government of India be once again Sunni Indian and not an Englishman—he was officially declared amir by General Roberts. During this time, Ayyūb Khan with a force of 25,000 men defeated

the occupying English army in southern Afghanistan at Maywand (27 July 1880) and besieged Qandahār, but he was soon defeated by Roberts (1 September). In the following months the English evacuated all of Afghanistan except Qandahār, where a garrison was kept until Jomādā I, 1298/April, 1881.

ʿAbd-al-Raḥmān was an autocrat for whom the unity of the kingdom and the reinforcement of central power went hand in hand, although as a result he was faced with a series of revolts. The most dangerous of these were the successive dynastic claims by two of his cousins, Moḥammad Ayyūb and Moḥammad Esḥāq, the latter like the former the son of an amir (see Table 13) and in charge of an important faction of the Afghan regular army. Moḥammad Ayyūb, whose prestige had increased after the victory of Maywand, was firmly established at Herat and had occupied Qandahār after the departure of the British. In a rapid campaign ʿAbd-al-Raḥmān put a definitive end to his pretensions to the throne (fall of Qandahār, 22 September 1881; of Herat, 2 October). Moḥammad Esḥāq, a popular governor of Afghan Turkestan since the coming to power of ʿAbd-al-Raḥmān, revolted and failed in 1305-06/1888. A second series of revolts originated in the wish of the amir to reduce the fragmentation and autonomy of the tribes, especially by introducing new taxes. Though most of these revolts were rapidly suppressed, the Ḡilzī insurrection lasted until 1304/1887; and the Šinwārīs, who controlled the western access to the Khyber pass, did not give in until 1310/1892.

A final series of military expeditions was undertaken in order to annex territories that had remained virtually independent. The Maymana khanate, which had regained its independence in 1296/1879, was reoccupied in 1301/1884. The difficult conquest of the Shiʿite Hazārajāt (1309-11/1891-93) and the easier conquest of the pagan Kafiristan (1313-14/1896) were both accompanied by ferocious repression; part of the Hazāra were condemned to

exile, while the Kafirs were forced to convert en masse to Sunni Islam. Their country was given the official name of Nūrestān (land of light).

At the end of this national unification process, the representatives of "all the tribes" were assembled in Kabul in 1314/1896 to swear loyalty to the amir and give him the title Żīāʾ-al-mella wa'l-dīn. ʿAbd-al-Raḥmān's spectacular success was due largely to the financial subventions and arms given by England in application of the Gandamak Treaty, though this does not in any way detract from his very real political ability. The strengthening of the royal family's cohesion, the exile or house arrest of influential tribal chiefs, and the promulgation of a rigorous criminal code that instituted a notion of collective responsibility greatly contributed to reinforcing the amir's authority over the entire country. Finally the massive deployment of Paṣtūn colonists north of the Hindu Kush had a decisive impact, since it led to the uprooting of certain rival tribes (particularly Ḡilzī), the winning over of the new colonists through generous land grants, and the pashtunization of north Afghanistan, where the presence of different ethnic and cultural minorities was favorable to the secessionist tendencies encouraged by czarist propaganda.

ʿAbd-al-Raḥmān also introduced innovations in the social and economic spheres. Although it is difficult to imagine that the abolition of the levirate (1300/1883) and slavery (1895) had immediate effects, such measures contributed to a change in intellectual climate. Internal exchange benefited from a campaign against highwaymen and an ambitious policy of constructing strategic roads, bridges, and caravanserais. A state monopoly extended meddlesome control over a large part of the country's internal and external commerce. European industrial technology made a debut when the amir personally recruited English and Indian specialists to construct and direct a whole range of small civil and military industries. English doctors opened the first public clinic in 1895. Yet all of this lacked coherence and remained superficial, since it was concentrated in Kabul, no attention at all was paid to education, and a spirit of isolationism rejected any suggestion of modernizing communications. But the reign's final accomplishments remain positive. When ʿAbd-al-Raḥmān died in his new summer palace of Bāḡ-e Bālā (19 Jomādā II 1319/3 October 1901), Afghanistan was a strong state with recognized boundaries for the first time in its history. A series of bilateral commissions had successively delimited the borders with Russia in the northwest (1301-03/1884-86) and the northeast (1312-13/1895) and with India in the east (1311-13/1894-96), where the famous Durand Line across the Sulaiman

mountains confirmed Afghanistan's loss of control over the principal routes of access to the Indus valley and created a major Paštūn irredentist problem.

Ḥabīballāh (1901-19). ʿAbd-al-Raḥmān had chosen his eldest son Ḥabīballāh as his successor in 1895 and kept him in close contact with the exercise of power. Having ascended the throne without opposition—an accomplishment without precedent since 1186/1772—he took the title Serāǰ-al-mella wa'l-dīn and followed policies little different from those of his father. In 1323/1905 he renewed the personal accord which tied the amir of Afghanistan to the British government. He pursued a careful industrial policy with the opening of a wool-weaving industry at Kabul and the construction of the country's first hydroelectric plant at Jabal al-Serāǰ. And he governed with the same authoritarian methods as his father, a fact that cost him the hostility of a small constitutional party and a series of assassination attempts, the third of which was successful at Kala Gūš (Laḡmān) on 18 Jomādā I 1338/21 February 1919.

One of Ḥabīballāh's first political acts had a large impact: the granting of a general amnesty to all exiles. An elite impressed by foreign culture and exiled by ʿAbd-al-Raḥmān returned and shook the prevailing conservatism of Kabul, turning this city into an active center of intellectual life. The leading role fell to a junior branch of the royal line, the Ṭarzī family, in particular its chief Maḥmūd (see Table 13). A perfect example of Levantine cosmopolitanism—he had lived in Damascus for twenty years—he was a militant nationalist, fervent supporter of modernism, and convinced pan-Islamist; his strong and brilliant personality rapidly attracted a genuine audience. Around him assembled a group of constitutionalist "Young Afghans," who were anti-British and pro-Turk. They established public education for boys and brought Ottoman doctors and military advisors, a first break in the English monopoly on technological assistance. From 1329/1911 to 1337/1918 the group, animated by Ṭarzī, published in Kabul a semimonthly Persian review called *Serāǰ al-aḵbār*, which was widely read abroad. They played an important role in the appearance of modernist Islam in Asia at the beginning of the 20th century.

A second school of thought was represented by the members of a family from another branch of the Moḥammadzī, the Moṣāḥebān or Yaḥyā Ḵēl, who had returned to Afghanistan from India. They rapidly acquired important positions in the Afghan army's general staff. Contrary to the Ṭarzī family, they were proponents of a technological orientation in the manner of Anglo-India. Such ideas had already penetrated Afghanistan superficially, and the amir, himself a great devotee of such things as golf, photography, cars, and alcohol,

was not insensible to them.

A man of weak character, the amir could not decide between these two thoroughly antagonistic schools of thought, in particular concerning the key question of Anglo-Afghan relations. When, despite German pressure, he chose neutrality during World War I, the "Young Afghans" became reconciled with conservative circles, with whom they shared nationalist and anti-British sentiments. This alliance of convenience could not stand the test of the succession crisis that followed Ḥabīballāh's assassination. At Jalālābād, the winter capital where the court was residing, Naṣrallāh, younger brother of Ḥabīballāh and leader of the conservative and clerical faction, declared himself amir. Simultaneously Amānallāh, one of Ḥabīballāh's sons and Ṭarzī's son-in-law, himself close to the "young Afghan" school, also declared himself amir at Kabul, where he had been governor during his father's absence. He obtained the army's support and eliminated his rival by publicly accusing him of being involved in the plot against Ḥabīballāh. The Moṣāḥebān seem to have first supported Naṣrallāh; this cost them a short imprisonment before they rallied to Amānallāh.

Amānallāh (1919-29). The new amir set out to put the "Young Afghan" program into practice. One of his first gestures was to demand full sovereignty in all matters concerning foreign affairs. Confronted with British hesitations, he called for a *ǰehād* which came to be known as the third Anglo-Afghan war and resulted in the strengthening of national unity. While the Afghan forces, aided by Wazīrīs and Masʿūds from India, attacked the Thal garrison, the Indian army advanced on Jalālābād and even launched an aerial raid on Kabul. The hostilities lasted a month; the prospect of a new war on the heels of the 1918 armistice did not appeal to the British, and they feared Paṣtūn tribal uprisings along their borders. Hence they were led to sign an armistice and later the Treaty of Rawalpindi (11 Ḏu'l-qaʿda 1337/8 August 1919), which ended their forty year protectorate in Afghanistan. With Ṭarzī as the minister of foreign affairs, the country began to open up to the world and experience profound and brutal changes, evidenced particularly in the mass arrival of foreign diplomats and experts, the opening of French and German schools in Kabul, the sending of Afghan missions to Europe and the Soviet Union, and the signing of several bilateral treaties with Turkey, Persia, the United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union. In June, 1926, Amānallāh symbolically completed this process by abandoning the less important title of amir for the more prestigious one of shah.

The second part of the "Young Afghan" program, modernization through a profound transformation of society and the economy, fully occupied the regime for a large part of Amānallāh's reign. The first Afghan constitution, approved in 1303 Š./1924 by the 1,052 members of the *lōya ǰerga* (a grand assembly of the country's leaders), defined the general legal frame for an unprecedented revolution in administrative, judiciary, military, and fiscal affairs. With the aid of French and Turkish experts, more than seventy ordinances (*neẓām-nāma*) were published over a period of nine years. Symptomatic of the changes, the solar *heǰrī* calendar officially replaced the lunar calendar in 1301 Š./1922. For the first time in Afghan history encouragement was offered to all private initiatives in economic matters; plots of public land were sold at low prices to strengthen the class of small land-owners, and joint import-export companies were created.

Most of these measures had little effect outside of the cities, particularly Kabul, and several came dangerously close to threatening certain forms of tribal autonomy. A new tax on animal breeding was poorly received, and a law establishing identity cards and passports was interpreted as an attempt to restrict free passage across the Durand Line. The latter became the pretext for a violent revolt of the Mangal of Paktīā (1303/1924-25), which in turn led to a marked cooling of the ruling powers' zeal for reform and a break between the Moṣāḥebān and Amānallāh. Nāder Khan, leader of the former and minister of war from 1919 to 1924, was suspected of being involved in the Mangal revolt, removed from the court, and given an ambassadorial post in Paris; he resigned in 1926 to break free from the policies of the Kabul regime.

The pause in reforms lasted only a short time. During a seven-month trip to the Near East and Europe Amānallāh was greatly impressed by Afghanistan's lag in modernization efforts, especially compared to the achievements of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in Turkey and Reżā Shah in Iran. Upon his return he announced a program attacking a whole range of acquired privileges and ancestral customs; it included the suppression of polygamy, the ameliorization of the position of women, a battle against corruption and family patronage, and the secularization of public affairs. But he was not given time to enact his reforms; a minor revolt of the Šinwārī, perhaps manipulated by the British secret service (ʿAqrab, 1307/November, 1928), gave the *mollā*s the opportunity to launch a violent campaign against him. He was accused from all sides of being a usurper, alluding to the manner he ascended the throne, and an enemy of Islam. In a few weeks all of eastern Afghanistan was in revolt and

the royal garrisons were defeated one after another. In this atmosphere of civil war, a Tajik adventurer from Kalakān (Kōhdāman), Ḥabīballāh, better known as Bača-ye Saqāo (son of a water carrier), a former soldier who had deserted during the Mangal revolt and escaped through Peshawar, attacked Kabul at the head of a band of Kūhestānīs with vague political-religious objectives combined with the more concrete ambition of pillage and the old anti-Paštūn reflex shared by all of Afghanistan's ethnic minorities. Pushed back a first time in Qaws, 1307 Š./December, 1928, he eventually succeeded in taking the town on 25 Jadī 1307 Š./15 January 1929 and even, on the following day, the royal palace. He immediately proclaimed himself amir with the title Ḥabīballāh Ḵādem-e Dīn-e Rasūlallāh (friend of God, servant of the religion of the Prophet).

A double Paštūn resistance was almost immediately organized against the Tajik usurper. Amānallāh, who had abdicated on 24 Jadī Š./14 January in favor of his half-brother ʿEnāyatallāh and fled to Qandahār, tried to raise a counter-offensive on Kabul. His appeals to the injured Paštūn sense of honor were heeded by the Dorrānī of southern Afghanistan and he was able to start marching towards the capital, although an attack by the Ḡilzī obliged him and his men to turn back at Ḡaznī (30 Ḥamal 1308 Š./19 April 1929). Definitely crushed by this resurgence of the old antagonism between the two main Paštūn confederations, the powerless king and his family sought refuge in India before going to Italy, where he lived forgotten until his death in 1339 Š./1960.

Nāder Shah (1929-33). Hearing about the events in Afghanistan, Nāder Khan, who was in France with several of his brothers, went to India and from there to Paktīā where, thanks to tribal solidarity, he had no trouble in raising a motley army which he launched towards Kabul. He was forced to retreat several times and it was not until he had received Wazīrī and Masʿūd reinforcements that he captured and sacked the capital (21 Mīzān 1308 Š./13 October 1929). On 24 Mīzān/16 October Nāder was proclaimed king by his troops and on 10 ʿAqrab/1 November, Ḥabīballāh Bača-ye Saqāo was executed along with his principal aides. The only non-Paštūn ruler of modern Afghanistan, his reign represents the last major occurrence of tribalism in the country.

Nāder Shah's accession closed the unique parenthesis that Amānallāh's reign had opened. He reestablished order and restored the national unity, though Kōhdāman and Herat, bastions of Ḥabīballāh's regime, remained in secession

until 1309 Š./1930 and 1310 Š./1931 respectively. Then he began a rapprochement with England while putting an end to liberalization. Most of the previous decade's reforms were abandoned and a new constitution instituting a bicameral legislature with a strong executive was promulgated (1310 Š./1931). The successors of the "Young Afghans," who had joined the opposition, were tracked down; a policy of assassination degenerated into a vendetta between the Moṣāḥebān and an opposing clan, the Čarḵī of Lōgar, who were loyal to Amānallāh's ideals. One of the episodes of this politico-familial *badal* led to the assassination of the king himself (17 ʿAqrab 1312 Š./8 November 1933).

Moḥammad Ẓāher Shah (1933-73). Nāder Shah's only surviving son, Moḥammad Ẓāher, then nineteen years old, succeeded his father. In reality, the power remained in the hands of two of Nāder's brothers, Moḥammad Hāšem Khan and Shah Maḥmūd, who held the position of prime minister from 1308-25 Š./1929-46 and 1325-32 Š./1946-53 respectively. With the exception of a short period (1329-31 Š./1950-52), Nāder's policies were continued, in particular the fight against all demands for liberalism, which was interpreted as a sign of dynastic opposition. In 1332/1953, a new generation came to power: Moḥammad Dāʾūd, cousin and brother-in-law of the king, became prime minister after a bloodless coup d'état. In internal affairs, conservative policies continued, though a campaign for the voluntary discarding of the veil, theatrically launched in 1338 Š./1959, began a slow but irreversible movement toward the liberalization of the feminine condition. In the field of relations with its neighbor states a more significant change took place: In response to a spectacular rapprochement with the Soviet Union, which gained a virtual monopoly on military equipment and training, and most importantly, a substantial penetration into the country's economy, the existing tensions with Pakistan increased. Ever since the partition of India (1947) Afghanistan had continued to demand a referendum on the political status of "Paṣtūnestān," i.e., all the Paṣtūn regions situated east of the Durand Line. In 1340 Š./1961 the two countries broke diplomatic relations and closed their borders. A landlocked country, Afghanistan was thrown into an economic impasse, since all its commercial transit had to be reoriented, mostly through the Soviet Union, at an important increase in expense. The necessity for a reconciliation with Pakistan led to the fall of the Dāʾūd regime (13 Ḥūt 1341 Š./3 March 1963) and began a period of personal rule by the king. A constitutional amendment excluding members of the royal family from government positions (1343 Š./1964), followed by a relatively liberal law of the press (1344 Š./1965), seemed

to indicate a new phase of liberalism. But the experiment failed because of resistance by the more conservative members of the royal family and the king's lack of statesmanship and decisiveness. The main result was the emergence of well-structured and more or less radical opposition parties such as the communist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (Ḥezb-e Demōkrātīk-e Ḵalq-e Afḡānestān), which held its first congress on 11 Jadī 1343 Š./1 January 1965 and underwent a scission in 1967. Popular and student demonstrations, sometimes violent, were organized for the first time in Kabul (for example, 3 ʿAqrab 1344 Š./25 October 1965), but they only resulted in a strengthening of conservative circles. Finally, an alliance between some of the leftist forces and the Dāʾūd hardliners led to a coup d'état on 26 Saraṭān 1352 Š./17 July 1973. Taking advantage of the king's absence abroad for health reasons, the army put Dāʾūd back in power and a republic was proclaimed with popular enthusiasm, thus ending the longest reign in the history of the Afghan monarchy. Moḥammad Ẓāher's most positive heritage was in the economic sector: Since 1335 Š./1956 a policy of laissez-faire had resulted in the development of small-scale industries, large commercial and banking enterprises, and a modern road network. These results were mostly indebted to the economic assistance provided by Soviet-American competition. The United States, which had been represented in Afghanistan since 1322 Š./1943, had inherited the role of defending the Western bloc's geo-strategic interests in the area from England.

Dāʾūd (1973-78). The left was rapidly disillusioned by Dāʾūd. After being named president of the republic by a *lōya ǰerga* (1355/1977), he abandoned his claims to be a defender of liberties and resumed the authoritarianism and conservatism of the royal era: The Liberty of the press was suppressed, clientalism and corruption flourished, and foreign affairs became more and more unbalanced in favor of the West with a growing demand for economic aid from Iran and Arab states. In this context the communist left managed to reunite in 1356 Š./1977; facing the threat of physical elimination, they defended themselves with a bloody coup d'état on 7 Ṯawr 1357 Š./27 April 1978, during which Dāʾūd and his family were killed. The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan was proclaimed and a revolutionary council was put in place with Nūr Moḥammad Tarakī at its head. A Ḡilzay of rural and provincial background, he was born in 1296 Š./1917 and served as a low-level civil servant, acquiring a certain notoriety for his literary output with its rather lifeless realism. He founded the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan and remained its secretary general. His new government issued a series of

revolutionary decrees, such as agricultural reform, the abolition of usury, and the promotion of women; the repeal of the Afghan citizenship of all exiled members of the royal family had a particular symbolic value. A new treaty of friendship was signed with the USSR (14 Qaws 1357 Š./5 December 1978). But internal dissension within the left reappeared, leading to a progressive paralysis of decision making. The elimination of the Paṛčam branch during the summer of 1357 Š./1978, soon followed by the execution of Tarakī in Sonbola, 1358 Š./September, 1979, by his right-hand man, Ḥafīẓallāh Amīn, created an increasingly chaotic situation. To ensure that the changes instituted by the new regime would survive, the Soviet army intervened on 6 Jadī 1358 Š./27 December 1979 by deposing the Amīn government, which had ruled by terror, and installing members of Paṛčam, led by Babrak Kārmal (born 1308 Š./1929).

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